

Annual Outcome Improvement Report

2024/2025



**Community
Planning
Aberdeen**



By Councillor Allard and Susan Webb

Welcome to our Annual Outcome Improvement Report for 2024-25, which provides an overview of the progress and challenges faced in the work that has been undertaken by Community Planning Aberdeen over the past year.

This report reflects our commitment to support building inclusive and resilient communities through better collaboration across the public sector and by working as equal partners with our third sector and community members.

We are proud to highlight the areas where we have made progress in the report. However, there is still lots more to do; many people and families in Aberdeen are facing enormous challenges and this report sets out where we need to redouble our efforts.

We are pleased to report that, through our collective efforts we have seen reductions in the need for foodbanks since the introduction of cash first payments. We have also seen a sustained increase in numbers of people who are in employment and have achieved our stretch outcome focused on increasing the employment rate to 74.4%. For our children and young people we've seen an increase in the % of children and young people who feel they are always listened to, as well as an increase in care-experienced young people finding positive and lasting opportunities. Under our adults theme, we've achieved stretch outcome 9, with 12% fewer adults being charged with multiple offences. Our initiatives have helped 225 people attend Community Appointment Days for chronic pain support, and 1,777 people aged 50+ are now participating in our Stay Well Stay Connected programs, marking a 169% increase. These achievements highlight our dedication to creating a supportive and thriving environment for everyone. The new community empowerment toolkit aims to support staff and communities to work together to improve outcomes for all.

However, despite the progress, we have not achieved the stretch outcomes which we set around children and young people, reducing alcohol & drugs harms and homelessness nor have we improved healthy life expectancy across our population.

This is not due to lack of effort across our community planning partnership, but highlights that there are many factors affecting these challenges which will require us to look to new ways to work in partnership and to identify and implement innovative solutions to address the challenges people and families are experiencing. We will draw on the learning from the tests of change and will use data and digital opportunities to improve how we do things. We will ensure our approaches are tailored to the diverse needs of our communities and continue to listen to and work with people across the city, with a particular focusing on reaching out and involving people from seldom heard communities.

We remain committed to supporting people build their confidence and skills, take more control over their lives and achieve their aspirations for the future to create a stronger, healthier and more resilient city.



As we look ahead, this report records our progress to date but also provides a clear direction of travel for our future efforts as a partnership. We thank our partners, communities, children and young people, third and private sector organisations for their commitment to improving the lives of people in Aberdeen by coming together to work with us and deliver on the shared priorities outlined in this report.

If you want to get involved, please see all the ways at page 93 or get in touch at communityplanning@aberdeencity.gov.uk



Councillor Allard, Co-Leader of Aberdeen City Council and Chair of Community Planning Aberdeen



Susan Webb, Director of Public Health, NHS Grampian, Vice Chair of Community Planning Aberdeen



SUMMARY OF PROGRESS

This is a summary of our headline achievement during 2024/25 and an assessment of our overall progress towards the 16 Stretch Outcomes (SO) we have set out to achieve in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26. Our assessment is based on current performance compared to 2016 when we started our plan.

Key

Green Achieved/Performance higher than baseline.

Red Performance lower than baseline/Performance declining.

Amber Performance is steady/lower than baseline but improving since last reporting period

Economy		People				Place	
Stretch Outcome 1 20% reduction in the percentage of people who report they have been worried they would not have enough food to eat and/or not be able to heat their home by 2026.		Stretch Outcome 3 95% of all children will reach their expected developmental milestones by their 27-30 month review by 2026.		Stretch Outcome 9 10% fewer adults (over 18) charged with more than one offence by 2026.		Stretch Outcome 13 Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by at least 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate.	
Stretch Outcome 2 74% employment rate for Aberdeen City by 2026.		Stretch Outcome 4 90% of children and young people report they feel listened to all of the time by 2026.		Stretch Outcome 10 Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026.		Stretch Outcome 14 38% of people walking and 5% of people cycling as main mode of travel by 2026.	
		Stretch Outcome 5 By meeting the health and emotional wellbeing needs of our care experienced children and young people they will have the same levels of attainment in education and positive destinations as their peers by 2026.		Stretch Outcome 11 Reduce the rate of both alcohol related deaths and drug related deaths by 10% by 2026.		Stretch Outcome 15 26% of Aberdeen's area will be protected and/or managed for nature and 60% of people report they feel that spaces and buildings are well cared for by 2026.	

Economy	People		Place
	Stretch Outcome 6 95% of children living in our priority neighbourhoods (Quintiles 1 and 2) will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026.	Stretch Outcome 12 Reduce homelessness by 10% and youth homelessness by 6% by 2026, ensuring it is rare, brief and non-recurring with a longer term ambition to end homelessness in Aberdeen City.	Stretch Outcome 16 50% of people report they feel able to participate in decisions that help change things for the better by 2026.
	Stretch Outcome 7 83.5% fewer young people (under 18) charged with an offence by 2026.		
	Stretch Outcome 8 100% of our children with Additional Support Needs/ disabilities will experience a positive destination.		

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What our data is telling us?



How to make sense of the data in this report

Under each theme within this report there is a section called 'What impact have we had?' These sections include run charts which have been prepared using the data available for the improvement aims within the Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26. The purpose of the run charts is to display data over time and help us assess visually whether the changes we are making are resulting in improvement.

-  The coloured line shows CPA performance to date.
-  The black line shows the improvement aim, where applicable set within the CPA Improvement Programme for 2024/26 so we can assess if we are on track to achieve our improvement aims set for the year. Where there is no black line the data does not relate to an improvement aim.



We have also used a traffic light system to help you see at a glance, where we think we are in terms of improvement. The significance of the variation in data over time will depend on the improvement measure **and** population size it relates to. For example, for some improvement measures a 0.5% increase may be very significant, whilst for others it may need to be a 5% increase to be considered significant.

In applying the RAG (Red, Amber, Green) we have taken a rounded view of performance, taking into account subject matter expertise, local context and consideration of progress towards our improvement aims to answer the question:

Are our changes resulting in improvement?

- **Yes (Data shows improving trend and / or achievement of aim)**
- **Getting there (Data shows improving or varied trend and / or on track to achieve aim)**
- **Not yet (Data shows declining trend and not on track to achieve aim)**

Prosperous Economy

What we are working towards	How we are doing
<p><u>SO1</u> 20% reduction in the percentage of people who report they have been worried they would not have enough food to eat and/ or not be able to heat their home by 2026.</p> 	<p>9.4% of City Voice respondents reported in 2024 that during the last 12 months there was a time when they were worried they would not have enough food to eat – up from 8.4% in December 2022 and 5.4% in 2019.</p> <p>24.6% of City Voice respondents reported in 2024 that they were worried they would not be able to heat their home – down from 32% in December 2022 and up from 10% in 2021.</p>
<p><u>SO2</u> 74% employment rate for Aberdeen City by 2026.</p> 	<p>Stretch Outcome 2 achieved with a 74.7% employment rate for October 2023-September 2024.</p>

Progress made during 2024/25

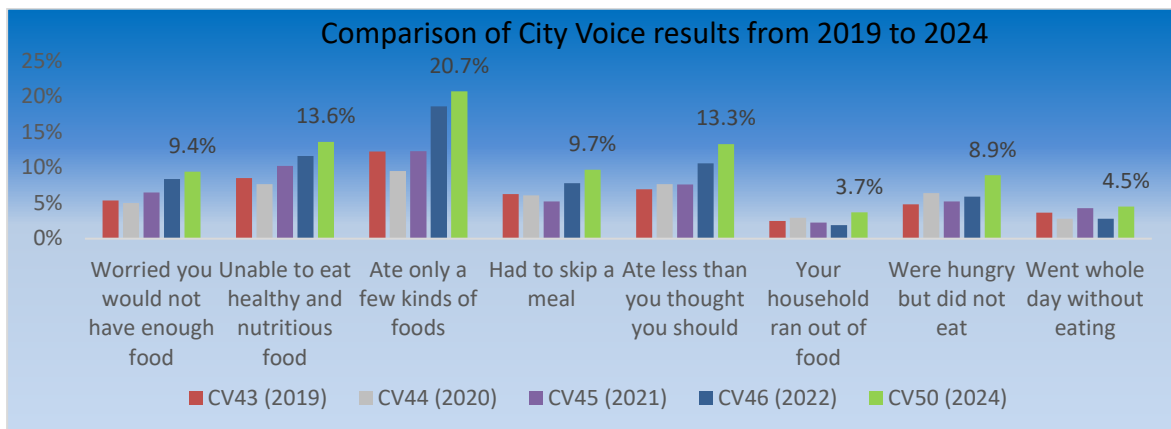


STRETCH OUTCOME 1 **PROGRESSING with 7.4%** fewer people worried they can't heat their home and **3%** reduction in people having to choose between heating and eating.

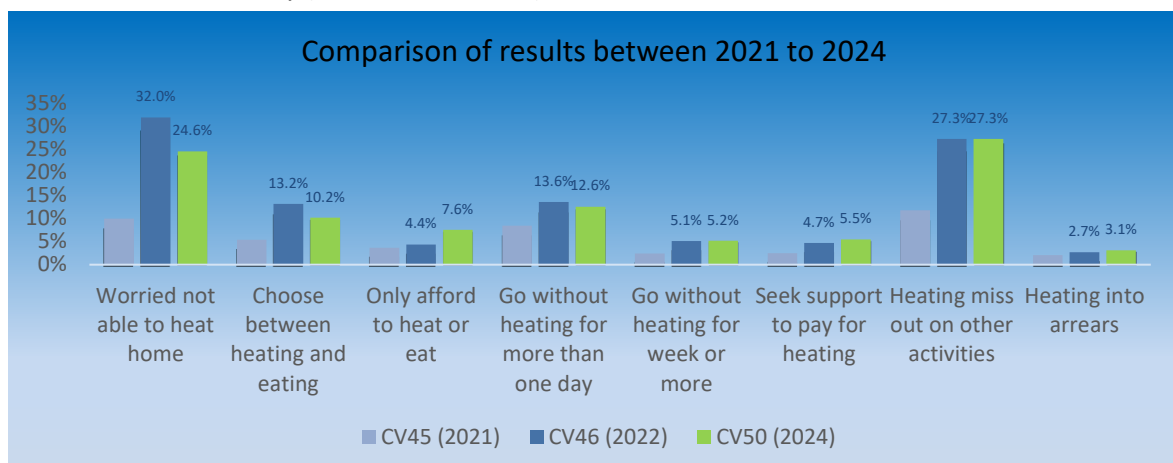
The cost of living crisis, combined with existing inequalities, continue to impact on our communities, with people experiencing increasing poverty and financial hardship. The impact continues to be borne unequally, with increasing costs making it more difficult for financially vulnerable households to make ends meet and we know that this has substantial implications. We are committed to working in partnership, with our communities, to develop and provide targeted, locally based solutions to mitigate against the cost of

living, with projects focused on supporting people access affordable and healthy food, as well as being able to live in homes suitable to their needs and which can be kept warm and dry.

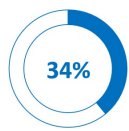
In the City Voice 2024, panellists were asked about their ability to access healthy or nutritious food. Data shows that since the questions were first asked in 2019 and in comparison to when asked in 2022, the proportion of respondents who answered 'yes' has increased in all categories. Since 2019, the largest increase was in the proportion who reported they ate only a few kinds of food (from 12.2% to 20.7%). Whilst, since 2022, the largest increase was in the proportion who reported they were hungry but did not eat (from 5.9% to 8.9%).



The City Voice also asked about respondents' ability to heat their homes. The responses when compared to when they were asked in 2022 were broadly similar, with the exception of worried not able to heat their home which has gone down 7.4% from 32% to 24.6%. The largest increase is in the proportion of respondents who reported being worried they could only afford to heat their home or feed themselves/their family (from 4.4% to 7.6%).



Raising Awareness of Support for Fuel Poverty



Improvement Aim Exceeded

34% of people seeking support removed from fuel poverty.

24% over the project's original aim.

SCARF has been leading a campaign in partnership with other community planning partners to educate people and communities about available support and energy saving practices. The campaign has included social media and the first 'Empower Aberdeen' free drop in community fair held in October 2024. The fair featured 46 not-for-profit and third sector organisations and over 120 professionals offering a

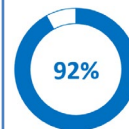
range of advice from energy efficiency, finances and housing to food banks, neurodiversity awareness and wellbeing.

The event, sponsored by Community Planning Aberdeen Responsible Business Partner Vital Energi, was an important extension of existing work to deliver impartial energy saving advice to help lower fuel bills and carbon emissions to householders, communities and businesses throughout Aberdeen. Such was the success of the inaugural showcase, that plans are now in place to repeat this year.



Through awareness raising and being in the heart of our communities, SCARF had 866 enquires for fuel support over the last year. Of the 866 enquiries received in 2024/25, 579 (67%) were in fuel poverty. As a result of the support provided, 197 (34%) were removed from fuel poverty and 28 (5%) removed from extreme fuel poverty.

Making homes more efficient can help lower energy bills, but the upfront cost of energy efficiency measures often puts people off because they can't afford it or would rather prioritise their money in other ways. Bringing properties up to an EPC band C or above can be an easy and inexpensive process, depending on the measures needed to improve the scoring of the property. Simple measures such as loft and cavity wall insulation, new heating controls or improved boilers can drastically improve the energy performance of a property for a relatively small investment. Latest data shows there has been a 1% increase in the % of homes (social housing) with an EPC rating of C or Better between 2023 and 2024, from 91% to 92%. However, we know there is more to do and therefore the project now aim to achieve 94%.



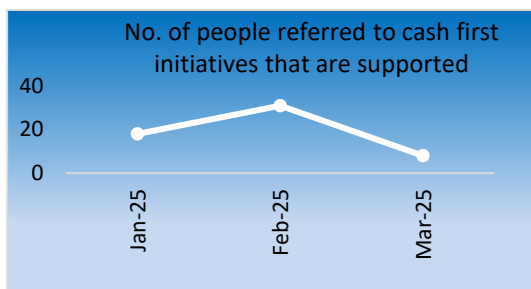
Improvement Aim Achieved

92% of homes (social housing) with an EPC rating of C or Better. **1%** over the project's original aim.

Towards Ending the Need for Food Banks in Scotland

In Aberdeen there are many community food initiatives that provide access to affordable, nutritious and sustainable food. However, emergency food aid is not sustainable and food aid organisations across Aberdeen have reported they are struggling to meet the increase in demand.

Providing people with monetary support alongside income maximisation support instead of food aid gives people more choice and control as people have more agency and can buy what they need. Through various cash first and income maximisation projects across Aberdeen City, the aim is to reduce the stigma which can be associated with accessing food aid.



Our **cash first project** is testing a flexible cash first crisis fund for people facing financial emergencies. Using funding from the Scottish Government Cash First Pilot, ACVO and partners launched the fund on the 4th of November 2024 for single males, aged 18-45, who are in receipt of Universal credit and are presenting at food banks as food insecure. The fund is co-designed by local third-sector organisations alongside 70 lived experience voices; including those from CFINE's lived experience

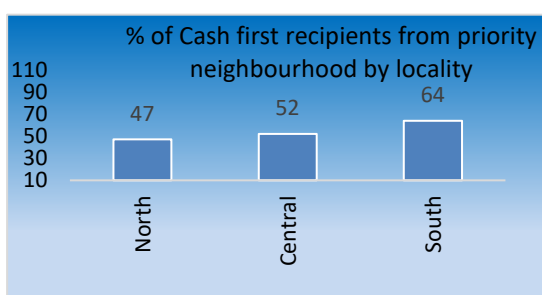
group. Between January to April 2025, the fund has supported 57 individuals, with £29,570.79 of financial support provided. Early data indicates a positive impact, with 81% of people who received cash payments, seeing a reduction in the need for a food bank. Though it is important to consider that many individuals who received cash payments also received wrap-around support, which may be a major contributing factor in reducing food bank use. One of the key learnings to date has been that many individuals accessing the Cash First funding are experiencing debt, highlighting the complex nature of financial emergencies and suggests that the need for emergency food is a symptom of wider issues associated with poverty. Demand for emergency food has spiked again in recent months and the project continues to explore opportunities for scalability."



Cash First Aberdeen

Additionally, the project captures wider Cash First interventions. CFINE's SAFE Team have generated significant financial gain for beneficiaries through welfare rights and benefit support, securing £131,634 in financial gain between January - March 2025. As stated, providing additional wrap-around support may be a major factor in reducing food bank use, including income maximisation. As part of this, the SAFE Team generated an additional £11,704 in financial gain for individuals referred to the Cash First Flexible Crisis Fund.

Out of 57 Cash First recipients between January and April 2025, 53% were from a priority neighbourhood:



- 26% of Cash First recipients were from North Locality, with 47% of those recipients being from priority neighbourhoods.
- 56% of Cash First recipients were from Central Locality, with 52% of those recipients being from priority neighbourhoods.
- 18% of Cash First recipients were from the South Locality, with 64% of those recipients being from priority neighbourhoods.

From January – March, the amount of Cash First Funding provided can be broken down by locality area as per below:

- £7,360.79 of Cash First Funding was distributed to 15 Cash First recipients in North Locality.
- £16,700.00 of Cash First Funding was distributed to 31 Cash First recipients in Central Locality.
- £5,510.00 of Cash First Funding was distributed to 11 Cash First recipients in South Locality.

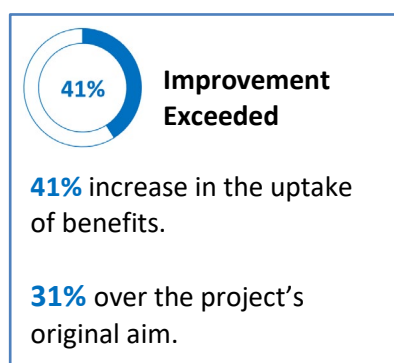
People who received a Cash First payment and subsequently engaged with CFINE SAFE secured Total additional financial gain of: £11,704, with additional financial gain for priority neighbourhood of £10,088. North locality: £1,141, Central locality: £5,239 and South locality: £5,326.

Raising Awareness and Access to Support Through Challenge Poverty Week

During Challenge Poverty week, our Anti Poverty Outcome Improvement Group coordinated efforts between partners and communities providing both a united voice and action towards reducing stigma and improving the lives of people affected by poverty. A range of events were held and promoted, with our fuel poverty project taking a lead on holding “Empower Aberdeen”, a community fair, providing direct access to support available across Aberdeen.



Reaching out to People to Maximise Their Income



Linked to a rise in poverty is growing financial insecurity. Ensuring that household income is maximised through the uptake of unclaimed benefits is a key aspect to supporting households to come out of poverty and improve their financial security. Through our [benefit uptake project](#), we have continued to implement improvements to mitigate barriers known which stop people accessing benefits.

During 2024/25, with funding secured from the Scottish Government secured the development of a “Low Income Family Tracker”. The tracker brings together indicators of poverty from multiple data

sources held by the Council, the Department for Works Pension and other publicly available data. This has enabled us to identify and make direct contact with people eligible for specific benefits to raise their awareness and support them, where required, to apply.

As of February 2025, we identified an additional 96 households claiming Universal Credit who were affected by the benefit cap. We attempted to contact all 96 households, providing them with information about benefit cap exemptions and inviting them to apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP). Of these households, 45% (43) engaged with the Financial Inclusion Team, and of those who engaged, 74% (32) were supported to apply for DHP, with a further three applying independently after being encouraged to do so. Additionally, five households successfully increased their income to a level where the benefit cap no longer applies. So far, 29 of these households have received DHP awards totalling £63,485.77. In March 2025, we also identified 73 families experiencing both relative poverty and fuel poverty. These families were targeted for support through the Rent Assistance Fund, resulting in £69,125.28 being awarded to clear their rent arrears.

We know that one method of communication won't meet the needs of all individuals and communities. Since October 2024, the CFINE S.A.F.E Team have been working from the Middlefield Hub Cafe the first Friday of every month to support people to access the right benefits and with advice on budgeting.

As well as the direct contact, we have continued to test and run a number of different campaigns targeted on specific benefits or towards specific communities to raise awareness of the online benefit calculator. The calculator enables people to self-serve and checks the benefits they're entitled to with privacy and reduces stigma. Two campaign examples are our Pension Credit social media campaign and our family's booklet, and from both we've seen positive outcomes:

Phase one of the Pension Credit campaign: as of November 2024, over £141,993 in Pension Credit has been given to 23 pensioners.

Support for Families Booklet - emailed out to all parents on Group call along with a link to the benefit calculator. The week after the booklet was emailed out (10 July to 16 July) saw:

- 1268 calculations started (1293% increase on the previous week (91 calculations)).
- 549 calculations completed (1730% increase from previous week (30)).
- £135,458.20 per week of new benefits (£3673.09 per week of new benefits)
- 98.5% of the completed calculations showed an entitlement to benefits.

Overall, we have continued to see the impact of our online benefit calculator. Between 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, 7670 people have used the calculator with £85,773.13 per week benefits identified. Of those who completed the calculator 90% had unclaimed benefits identified, with on average £205 per week of unclaimed benefits identified, compared to £171 per week from April to March 2024. This is a 20% increase since April to March 2024 and a 41% increase since 2023/24 in uptake of unclaimed benefits on average per week through the online benefit calculator.

In 2024 there were 1265 homeless presentations in Aberdeen City and through [our financial assessments for people presenting as homeless](#) project we are committed to ensuring that everyone presenting as homeless is accessing the benefits they're entitled to. To support this we have automated our processes so that everyone assessed as statutory homeless receives a link to the online benefit calculator. In 2024, 29.3% (371) people had a benefit check ensuring they were accessing the benefits they were entitled to. Of the 371 people with a benefit check 89.5% (332) had financial gains identified. Total financial gain for 2024 was £181008.03. However, 752 people were unable to be contacted and the project is focusing on changes to improve this and for all to have completed a check.

Fairer Aberdeen Fund 2024-25

The Fairer Aberdeen Fund is allocated by Aberdeen City Council to tackle poverty and deprivation. The Fund is allocated by a deliberative participatory budgeting approach, with a Board made up of Elected Members, Community Planning Partners, and community representatives with lived experience. The Fund supports initiatives and services in priority areas, as well as vulnerable groups across the city. In 2024-25 £1.5m was made available to support this work and 36 initiatives were funded. Impact figures from 23-24 show that over 51,000 people were involved or benefitted from the funded initiatives within the programme and 827 volunteers contributed 139,495 hours of volunteering with a value of over £2m.

965 people took part in employability programmes and 249 people moved into work. 5,473 people received money and income maximisation advice, with 1,558 of them receiving a total financial gain of £2.3m the equivalent of £1,480 per person. 135 parents and families with complex needs were supported, and 751 people accessed mental health counselling provision provided locally. A Community Support Fund was also available for community engagement and an Employment Support Fund addressed financial barriers for people getting back into work.

STRETCH OUTCOME 2 ACHIEVED 77.4% employment rate

We are delighted to report that Stretch Outcome 2 has been achieved with a 5.5% increase in our working age population who are employed (71.9% (Oct 2022-Sept 2023) to 77.4% in (Oct 2023-Sept 2024), and 3.4% higher than the rate for Scotland of 74.0%.

However, we know we have more to do to support employment with data showing an increase in claimants in Aberdeen (4,875 in Dec 2024, up from 4,610 in Dec 2023 and from 3,270 in March 2016). 48% (2,345) of claimants are from our priority neighbourhoods, as was the case in December 2023. A primary focus has been supporting

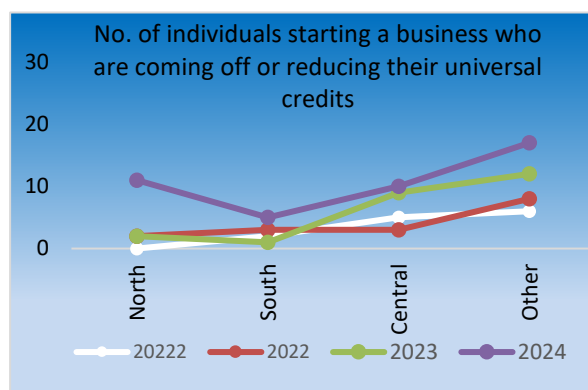
people to access the financial support they are entitled to, whilst enabling their financial resilience in the longer term by increasing the opportunities for unemployed residents to gain good quality work opportunities, where they are able to.

Community Planning Aberdeen are particularly focused on supporting people, from our priority neighbourhoods, into employment opportunities through a variety of improvements such as business creation and providing targeted pathways to support those groups who experience the most disadvantage and inequality while also, increasing the number of accredited Real Living Wage employers within the city.

Supporting new businesses

Through our [business start up](#) project, a total of 98 individuals (45 in 2024/25) have started a business which has either taken them off universal credits or significantly reduced their reliance on universal credits. Of the 98 people who started a business, 54 were from priority neighbourhoods, 15 in North, 11 in South and 28 in Central. This success has been driven by several key changes, including the deployment of dedicated community business advisors within our priority neighbourhoods to provide personalised and accessible support to people on their self-employment journey, targeted funding from ABZWorks seed funding to help remove the financial barriers to setting up a business and a partnership referral pathway.

**98
business
start-ups**



218 people were referred for support, with 45% (98) starting a business. 87 businesses have also been referred to the Seed Funds with ABZ Works for support.

For many participants, the transition from benefit dependency to business ownership has been life changing. Stories of individuals gaining financial independence and confidence show the importance of dedicated and localised support. The impact is reflected in the feedback below:



This is an extremely important service as some people can't travel, for me having business support on my doorstep is perfect, Donna my support advisor has helped me get my business up and running advising me of things I didn't know existed, helping me through my business plan and financial plan and without this support I would have never managed to get to where I am today .

Supporting people from our priority neighbourhoods and over 50s into employment opportunities

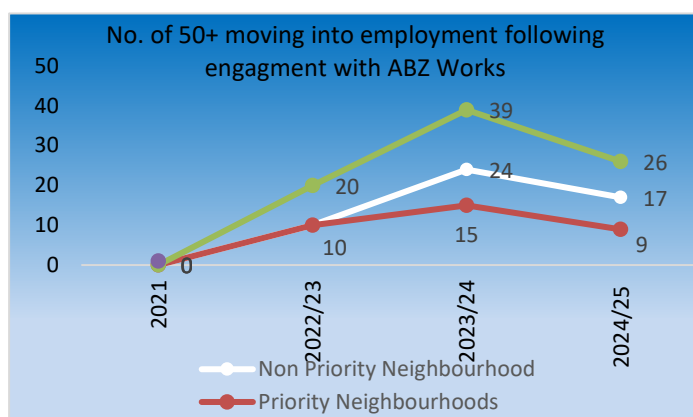


**Improvement
Project Aim
Exceeded**

672 individuals over 50 supported into employment.

572 over the original aim of 100.

Through our [priority neighbourhood and over 50 employment project](#), we have supported over 600 people over 50 years of age into employment. We have tested a variety of initiatives to increase access to support and help people overcome some of the barriers to employment. This has included: dedicated 50+ Work Coaches. Aligning with the Department for Work and Pensions 50+ campaign, dedicated 50+ work coaches providing targeted support such as midlife MOTs were tested citywide. The support was promoted through three big campaigns (in September (Pension Awareness Week), October (Menopause Month) and November (National Older Workers Week)). As a result, since October 2022, nearly **600** individuals over 50 have been supported into employment citywide.



We have also seen a positive impact from our other initiatives (information sessions to front-line staff to increase engagement with employability support, seed funding and an Employer Recruitment Incentive Scheme), with 503 people from priority neighbourhoods and aged over 50 have receiving employability support with ABZ Works between June 2023 and December 2024, from which 51 (10%) have moved into employment.

We know location of services is important and with the success of the dedicated community based business start up support, ABZ Works piloted an Older but Wiser Employability Group. This group was piloted in Torry and a second group was delivered by Pathways and Station House Media Unit. There are also Training Provider members (Pathways, TRE-Life and Aberdeen Foyer) working from different venues in Torry – the Skills Centre, Old Torry Community Centre and the GP practice. As a result, Pathways and TRE-Life have engaged with 61 residents of 50+ from priority neighbourhoods with 31 (51%) moving into employment.

Impact of our support

Person supported from Torry – Individual saw Pathways social media posts and popped into the Torry Skills Centre to arrange an appointment. She had been employed within the fish trade all her working life but redundancy and changes in personal circumstances led to a rethink of career direction. She took part in an 8-week over 50's course facilitated jointly by Pathways and Station House Media Unit. Alongside 1:1 support from Pathways, this course helped to build confidence and employability skills (e.g. Curriculum Vitae, applications and interviews) and was successful in securing a new job that fitted around caring responsibilities.

Person supported from Sheddocksley – Individual came to TRE-Life through a referral from her work coach to TRE-LIFE's drop-in sessions held at the Department for Work and Pensions centre. At that point she was employed part-time but had a strong interest in an alternative field of working with children/ young people. She joined TRE-LIFE's Employability Skills course to focus on the wide range of employment skills, including how to write effective Curriculum Vitae, how to apply for jobs and how to prepare for an interview. During this time, the whole group grew in confidence and this individual used her new-found employability skills to successfully gain employment in an after-school club.

Increasing Real Living Wage Employment Opportunities



**Improvement
Project Aim
Exceeded**

19% increase in Aberdeen employers accredited as paying the Real Living Wage since 2023

9% increase exceeded

We know that people in work are also experiencing poverty. Employers paying the real living wage can mean the difference between surviving and thriving. Since 2019 we have been working in partnership to increase the number of employers accredited as paying the real living wage and we are committed to sustaining and expanding this work. We are pleased to report that there are now 119 employers (March 2025) in the City who are real living wage accredited, with 19 joining in 2024, a 19% increase since 2023 and 190% since the project started (41 to 119). These accreditations have led to over 1,991 employees receiving a pay rise to the Real Living Wage rate to date.

Accreditations during 2024 have come from a range of employers and sectors including Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen Sports Village, First Bus, Katoni Engineering, Aberdeen Inspired, Aspect Communications, and Simeon Care.

Impact of our support

"I feel like I am **breaking the cycle** and **creating opportunities** for my **children** to reach their potential.

All because of a fair wage."



Latest data available showed that 90% of employees in the city were in living wage employment, a 1.6% decrease since 2023 but an 8% increase since 2016.

Improving digital skills and increasing access to digital employment opportunities



**Improvement
Project Aim
Exceeded**

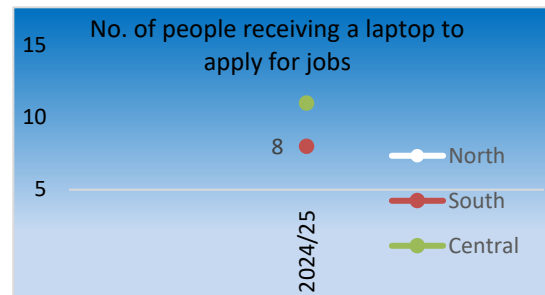
58 people experiencing digital barriers upskilled to apply for employment.

16% over the original aim.

Data shows that digital support and upskilling is required at both a basic digital skill level (e.g. being able to search and apply for jobs on online platforms) and more advanced digital skills required by the job role. Through our [digital skills project](#) we are aiming to upskill people who need for both basic and sector specific digital skills to enhance their employment opportunities.

As of 31 March 2025, **58** people have accessed digital support, with 20

now in positive destinations (6 in employment, 4 in education, 8 in further training and 2 volunteering). In addition, **27** people have received a laptop to apply for jobs, 8 from North, 8 from South and 11 from Central Locality. These laptops were issued by ABZWorks and funded via No One Left Behind. The laptops have provided participants with the suitable resources to help apply and interview for jobs from home, participate and complete online employability courses and support them to complete home tasks set out by employability training providers to help move them towards gaining employment.



Sector specific digital training programmes

We successfully piloted a programme in January 2024, where **7** participants engaged in digital and employability activities, resulting in 57% (4) participants moving into positive destinations.

Based on this success, two new programmes, a digital and media skills and specific IT training programme have been developed and launched in 2024 to offer an enhanced range of digital activities. 20 people started digital and media skills. Of the 20, **13 completed** the course and **4** have since moved into a positive destination. The remaining **9** will move into new provision that will be determined in April. This programme has also just received a 12 month extension that offers 40 more places for 25/26.

20 people, started and completed sector specific training and **2** have already gained employment.

Basic digital skills: Through our new community based supports at Powis Community Centre and Tory Skills Centre:


- **14** people completed CV workshops, and
- **11** people completed job application workshops that focused on using online search engines, software, and platforms, followed by interview workshops to enhance their interview skills.
- **27 laptops**, with 12-month Microsoft licenses, were provided to participants to help them engage in employability programmes.

Impact of our support

"The workshop was useful and the staff very helpful. I felt more confident with what was covered and appreciated the opportunity to write a re-useable draft for cover letters and personal statement, which was proofread and edited by the staff. Overall very happy for the time I spent at this course." Furthermore, an ABZ Works key worker provided feedback and said, "the participant, shortly after attending the session, went on to find a vacancy on his own, apply on his own and land the job in the end so a good success story!" **Participant from the south locality and aged 39.**

Employability support focusing on reducing inequalities

Inequalities in society have increased with national reports evidencing that the impacts of the pandemic and the cost of living crisis have not been evenly spread. In light of this, through different projects, we are targeting employability support to those experiencing the most difficulty, focusing on young parents, and ethnic minority people initially. One example is our employability pathways for [young parent project](#).





Young Parents – It's All About You!
Make Your Voice Heard

Aberdeen parents aged 25 and under: Help us shape employability services of the future!

Share your experiences as a young mum or dad, meet other parents, and develop new skills in this innovative project to design the services you want to support young parents into education, training, and employment.

If you can spare five hours a week for 12 weeks at dates and times to suit you, please get in touch.

Free childcare will be provided.
Call us on 01224 070200 or email abzworks@aberdeencity.gov.uk



We are committed to supporting young parents into training and with the ultimate goal of moving into employment. Ensuring that young people are at the heart of the project is key to the right support being provided. This year 21 young parents have signed up to take part in a short (12 week) programme in which they will share their experiences, identify areas of improvement and ultimately co-design an employability support package for young parents. They will be paid the real living wage during this time, and this will also provide them with the opportunity to build confidence, build soft-skills and provide a taster of employment. The project has also identified 180 young parents in Aberdeen and work is underway to make contact with them to introduce them to financial inclusion support and employability provision.

What impact have we had?

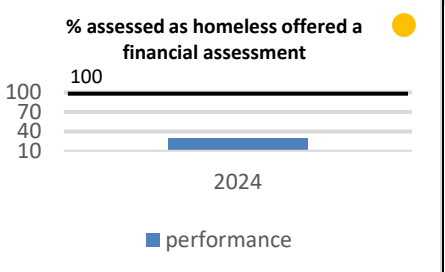
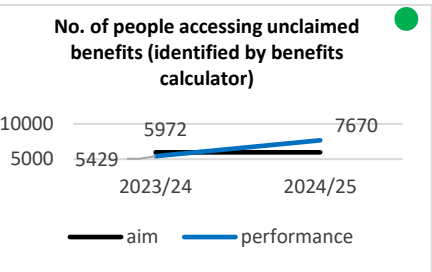
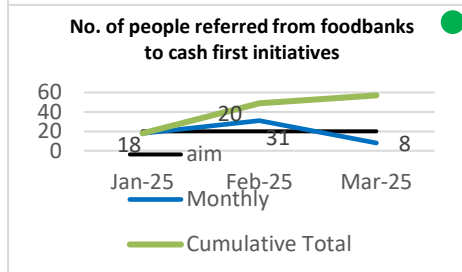
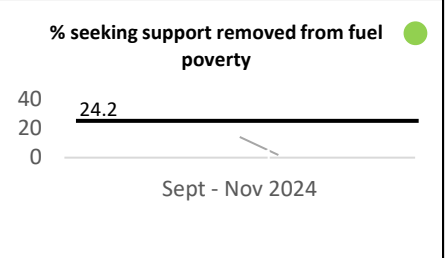
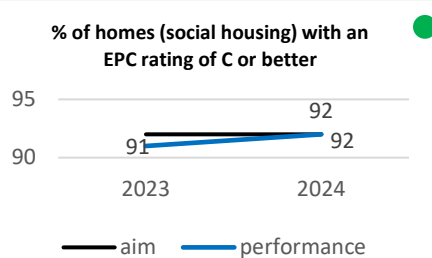
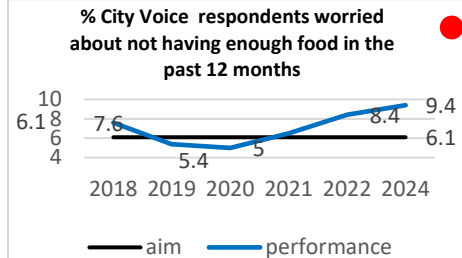


24/25/26 improvement aim

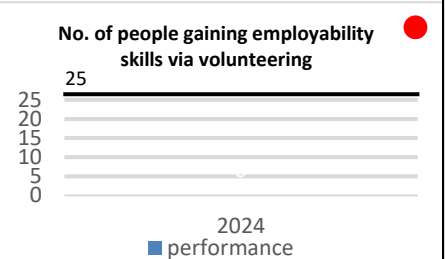
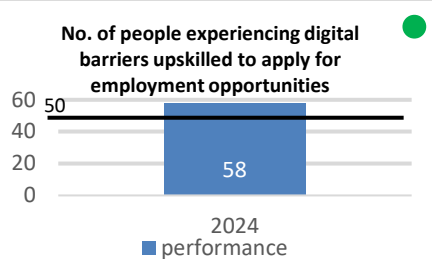
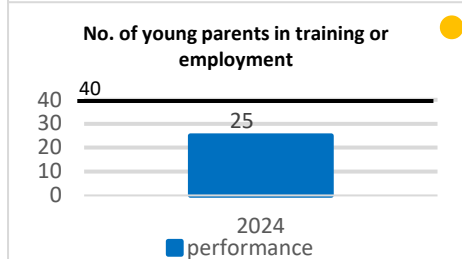
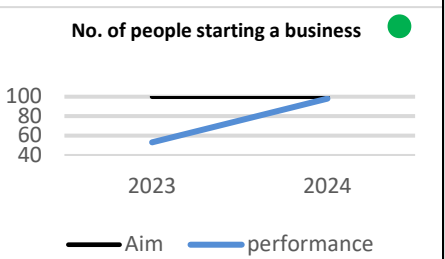
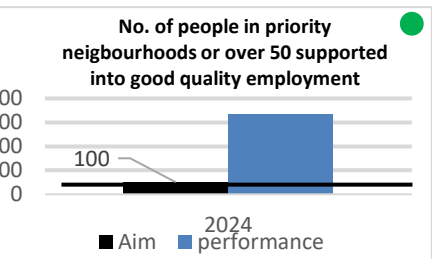
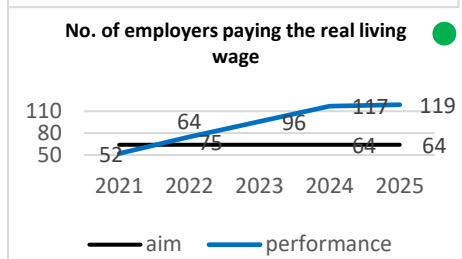
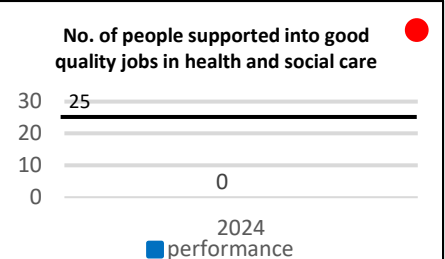
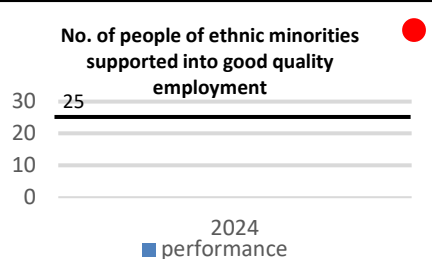
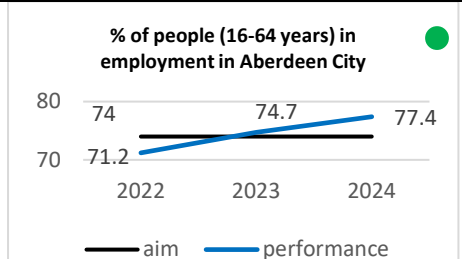
Performance

- Yes
- Getting there
- Not yet

Reducing Poverty



Supporting People Into Employment



Improvement Priorities 2025/26








- Raising awareness of support available to reduce energy bills and the number of households in fuel poverty
- Continue with the cash first crisis fund and look to evaluate the overall impact of all cash-first interventions being provided in the City
- Supporting all households presenting as homeless to complete financial assessments
- Further our use of data to be able to identify and make direct contact, and where possible, auto award, for other benefits to ensure all are receiving their benefit entitlement.
- Coordinating efforts across money advice services to extend community based financial assessment support and meet increasing demand
- Improved communication and awareness raising of the breadth of support available from Community Planning partners
- Supporting young parents and people from ethnic minorities gain employment by co-designing supports to help them
- Continue to test an alternative and better-supported application process for healthcare applications, to support people to gain health and social care jobs
- Enabling new volunteering opportunities to support people to gain employment skills
- Supporting people into sustained, good quality employment, with a particular focus on people on universal credit within the priority localities, particularly Northfield and Tillydrone/Seaton/St Machar and aged between 30-49.



Prosperous People: Children

Our Stretch Outcomes

What we are working towards	How we are doing
<p>SO3 95% of all children will reach their expected developmental milestones by their 27-30 month review by 2026</p> 	<p>89.8% of children assessed at their 27-30 month review met their developmental milestones in 2022/23 up from 87.4% (21/22), however down from 91.8% in 16/17. 67.4% of eligible children assessed in 2022/23, down from 78% (21/22) and 84.8% in 16/17.</p>
<p>SO4 90% of children and young people report they feel listened to all of the time by 2026.</p> 	<p>70% of children and young people in 2023/24 reported feeling listened to all of the time, up from 68% in 2022/23 and 64% in 21/22.</p>
<p>SO5 By meeting the health and emotional wellbeing needs of our care experienced children and young people they will have the same levels of attainment in education and positive destinations as their peers by 2026.</p>	<p>10% reduction in the gap between the % of care experienced young people (81.3%) and all young people (90.1%) achieving a positive and sustained destination in 22/23. 13.9% increase in % of experienced young people achieved a positive and sustained destination in 22/23 (81.3), up from 67.4% in 2021/22 and 73.9% in 16/17.</p>
<p>SO6 95% of children living in our priority neighbourhoods (Quintiles 1 and 2) will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026.</p> 	<p>2.1% decrease in % of Young People from Quintile 1 achieving a sustained positive destination (82.9% in 22/23 compared to 85% in 21/22 and 84.5 in 2016/17) 5% decrease in % of Young People from Quintile 2 achieving a sustained positive destination (83.6% in 22/23 compared to 88.6% in 21/22 and 87.9% in 2016/17).</p>
<p>SO7 83.5% fewer young people (under 18) charged with an offence by 2026.</p> 	<p>40% decrease in number of young people being charged with an offence (590 in 22/23 compared to 985 in 15/16, however an 8% increase since 21/22 (546 to 590).</p>
<p>SO8 100% of our children with Additional Support Needs/disabilities will experience a positive destination by 2026.</p> 	<p>4.4% increase in number of children with Additional Support Needs/disabilities experiencing a positive destination (89.4% in 2023/24 compared to 85% in 17/18). However a 2.2% decrease since 22/23 (91.6%)</p>

To read a full overview of the work of the Children's Services Board read the Children's Services Board annual report 2024/25: [Children's Services Plan Annual Report 2024/25](#)

Progress made during 2024/25



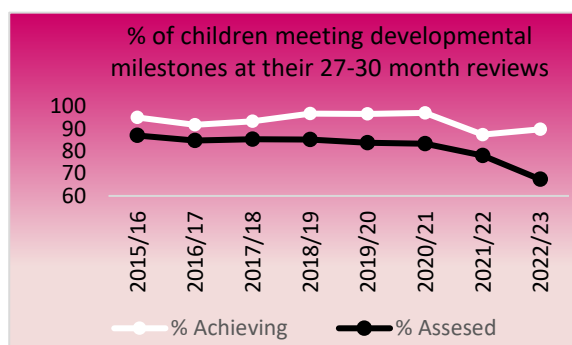
Supporting children to get the best start in life

STRETCH OUTCOME 3
PROGRESSING WITH
89.8% of 27-30 month
old children assessed
meeting their
developmental
milestones.

Ensuring children get the best start in life is a key driver in improving their overall outcomes across the course of their lives. Developmental milestones for children aged 27 to 30 months are critical indicators of their progress in areas such as communication, physical development, social skills, and cognitive abilities.

Latest data available at the end of 2024/25 shows that 89.8% of children assessed in Aberdeen met their developmental milestones in 2022/23, up from 87.4% in 2021/22 and 7.7% higher than the national figure (82.1%).

However, there is room to improve. Data shows that there has been a 10.6% decrease in the percentage of eligible children who received an assessment, down from 78% in 2021/22 to 67.4% in 2022/23. Ensuring all eligible children receive an assessment continues to be an area of focus for Community Planning Aberdeen.



We know that some families, particularly within our priority neighbourhoods, face challenges that reduce their children's ability to reach these milestones. As a result, we have focused on provided targeted support and early intervention focusing on helping families with children under five to maximise income, have access to infant formula through a cash first approach, and access to dental health and parenting support where required, to ensure all children have the opportunity to thrive.

Introducing a cash first approach to accessing infant formula



**Improvement
Project Aim
Achieved**

100% of referrals to the infant feeding in a crisis pathway have received support

Cost of living pressures for families have exacerbated food insecurity difficulties, with many unable to afford infant formula. We are focused on supporting families with infants to ensure that they have the appropriate nutrition to meet their developmental needs. Through our **Access to Emergency Infant Formula** project we have introduced a new infant feeding in a crisis pathway that delivers a 'cash first approach' and supports the family with money for infant formula, as well as support to maximise income.

The project has made significant progress in the development of this pathway, supporting

100% of referrals since September 2023 with 58 vouchers issued to 41 families, and 11 families receiving repeat support. All families have also received follow-up contact from the CFine SAFE team, with 35 families offered financial screening appointments, and additional support with food access, energy grants, and child-related items. The financial gain from the support provided to date is estimated to be around £15,000 per year. All families were also offered access to emergency



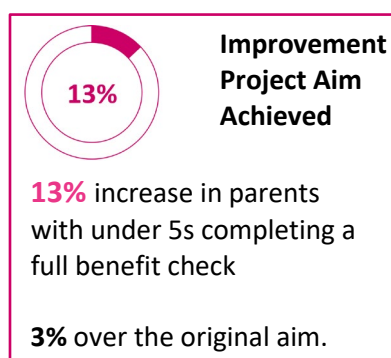
food, a food pantry application, and support with energy-related costs. Positive feedback from participants highlighted the benefits of the vouchers and additional services provided.

The vouchers were a massive help to our family since our daughter requires the anti-reflux formula. This is about 133% of the price of an already expensive one. Monthly this adds up quickly. This has allowed us to prepare for winter, an expensive time generally. The other services such as the safe team and pantry have been a great help also. The pantry really helps us maintain cooking healthy meals without forking out an arm and a leg. The safe team have guided us through almost our first year financially which without, we would be struggling a lot more.” **Local father who Received help from SAFE, Infant Formula Pathway vouchers twice and attends the pantry on a regular basis.**

“You give me £60 voucher for formula, and I also received pantry food, thank you, it has really helped”. **Local mum who received lots of help with various issues relating to their baby.**

The full impact and evaluation of the pathway so far can be viewed in the [project end report](#).

Helping families claim the benefits they are entitled to



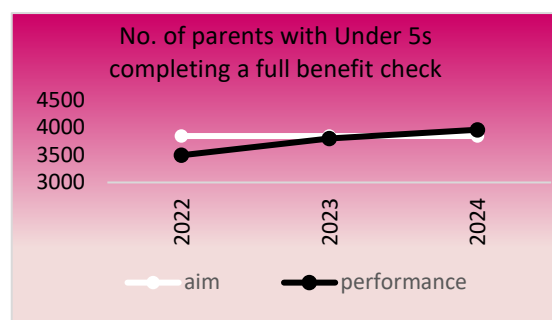
The challenges created by the Cost of Living crisis create a greater risk of families falling into poverty. Around 50% of households experiencing poverty have dependent children driving children and young people to be a key consideration as we work to combat poverty. Maximising income for families, where possible, is vital and supports the early years of children and to enable them to reach developmental milestones.

Our **Early Years Financial Inclusion Pathway** project has developed a financial inclusion pathway which enables Health Visitors and practitioners, to refer parents with children under 5 either for support to complete a benefit check, or where appropriate they self serve and complete the benefit check online.

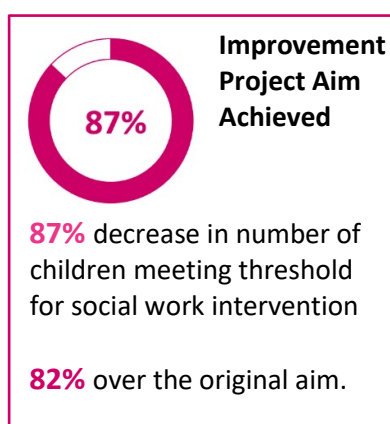
There has been positive impact with a 13% increase in the number of benefit checks (3493 in 2022 to 3956 in 2024) and £762,992.08 in 2024 in financial gains, a 27.3% increase since 2023 (£600,667.29)

As well as the new referral pathway, we have also taken a targeted approach using a new data system, as we have done with our income maximisation project detailed above. With funding secured from the Scottish Government secured the development of a “Low Income Family Tracker”. The tracker brings together indicators of poverty from multiple data sources held by the Council, the Department for Works Pension and other publicly available data. This has enabled us to identify households most in need, allowing for targeted support and effective resource prioritisation. Since 1 November 2024, targeted communications have been initiated with 86 families affected by the benefit cap, of which 51% (44) had a child under 5 years old. These efforts involve engaging households through various channels, offering specific discretionary housing payments to mitigate income losses caused by the benefit cap, and working towards long-term financial improvements to achieve exemptions from the cap.

Full details of the work can be found in the [project end report](#).



Early identification and support for families at risk

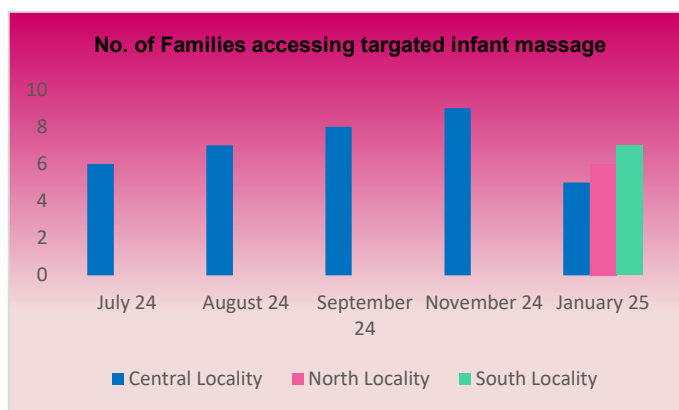


Our 2024 data shows that we are getting better at identifying the early signs neglect among 0-4 year olds associated with Parental Mental Health/Addiction/Domestic Abuse. There has been an increase in referrals for support for families identified by health visitors and family nurses in 2024 in the categories of neglect associated with Mental Health (44%), Substance misuse (71%) and domestic abuse (49%). The increased number of referrals from 2022 to 2023 could indicate that professionals are getting better at early identification of the risks of neglect and support can be implemented.

Whilst referrals have increased, there has been an 87.2% reduction in children who met the threshold for social work intervention in 2024 (5 compared to 39 in 2022), this would indicate that our early identification and provision of support is being impactful.

We have introduced new specific supports to support parents. One initiative has been to deliver infant massage sessions in a group to families with babies aged 3-9 months, targeted specifically where there is domestic abuse, alcohol/ substance misuse or family mental health issues.

Starting in the Central Locality, our community nursery held regular blocks of targeted infant massage for families. This has been delivered to 35 families with positive feedback. Following completion of these sessions, families are keen to move on to another group and are being referred to Peep programmes. The benefits of infant massage are widely recognised therefore, this was rolled out across the city in January 2025. Overall between July 2024 and January 2025, 48 families have been supported.



Feedback from parents following the first block of infant massage included *“we were able to ask questions which reduced anxiety”*, *“we met other families experiencing similar issues”*. Ongoing feedback from families continues to be positive with families reporting they *“feel better connected to their baby”* and families are building relationships with other families and participating in community activities.

Increasing our programmes of support to families

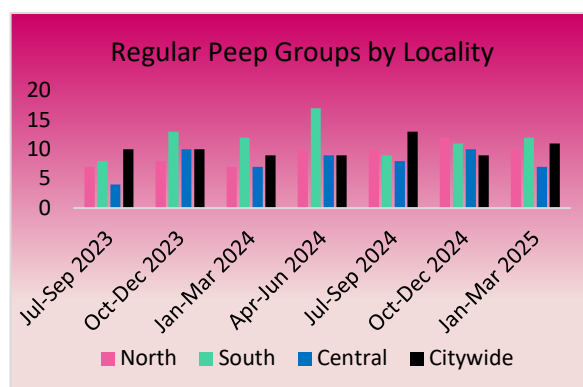
Peep is a research based adult learning programme that supports families with children 0-5 years. The demand for Parents as Early Educators Programme services is more than the team had capacity to meet with 103 under 5s currently on the waiting list as at 2023. In response, our **Parents as Early Educators Programme project** has focused on expanding our offer of the Programme across the city.

To support this we have adopted a multi-agency approach to support and train staff and capacity build, which has included:

- Pairing up partners/services that have similar goals to deliver Peep (i.e. family learning with libraries, ChildSmile/health with nurseries)

- Providing Early Learning and Childcare trained practitioners a term of co-delivery of a group with a Peep team member and/or with a trained practitioner to deliver the Healthier Families pilot.
- Developing a tiered training criteria for Peep delivery, including provision of funded training spaces to mitigate barriers.
- Developing a local Peep Practitioner network

As a result, there has been a 20% increase in the number of multi agency partners delivering PEEP sessions (30 in 2023 to 36 in 2025). Increasing the delivery team has led to a 35.8% increase in the number of families that have benefited from Peep (from 265 in Jan-Mar 2024 to 360 in Jan-Mar 2025). A total of 208 PEEP Sessions have been delivered over 2024. We have provided a number of regular Peep groups throughout our locality areas to ensure people can access the support in their community.

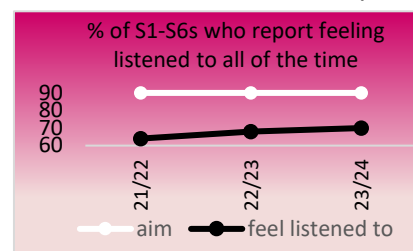


There were 106 responses to our annual Peep survey. Overall, the feedback has been positive. 83.8% of the parents said that their confidence to support their child's learning and development has improved since attending Peep and 63.2% feel their relationship with their child has gotten better. Asked what Peep could do differently, respondents suggested having longer and more sessions available to families.

Developing interventions to support children's mental health

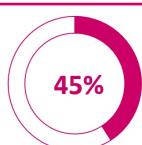
6% INCREASE in young people reporting that they feel listened to all the time.

Improving the mental health and wellbeing of our children and young people is a key priority. Feedback from our annual surveys with school pupils has shown a 6% increase in the number of young people who feel that they are listened to all of the time up from 64% in 2021/22 to 70% in 2023/24, showing progress towards our overall stretch outcome. However, we know



we have more to do to improve the mental health of our children and young people. Our projects during 2024/25 have focused on improving children and young people's confidence and feeling safe in their community.

Improving Confidence and Finding Support

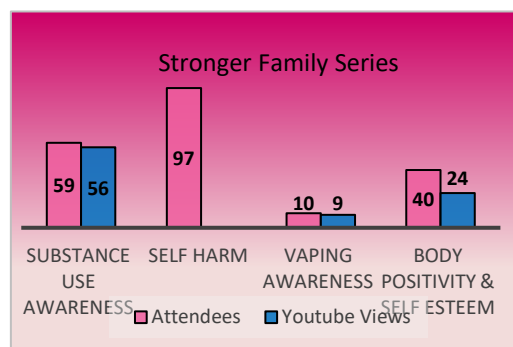


Improvement Project Aim Achieved

10% increase in % of S1-S6 pupils reporting that they always or often feel confident

Central to improving young people's mental health is to ensure that they can be confident, with well developed self-esteem and emotional resilience. Our **improving confidence in Children and Young People** project is working to do just this. With the introduction of new training programmes for key practitioners, helping them to better understand how to recognise and connect with children and young people who may be experiencing issues such as domestic abuse at home or undertaking self-harming behaviours.

The project has also worked with young people to feel more confident in engaging with adults who can help them. One initiative has been development and delivery of a number of stronger families sessions with parents and their children on topics such as self-harm. 206 families have participated and with positive feedback stating that the sessions are having a positive influence, supporting teachers and parents to better connect with their children and young people.

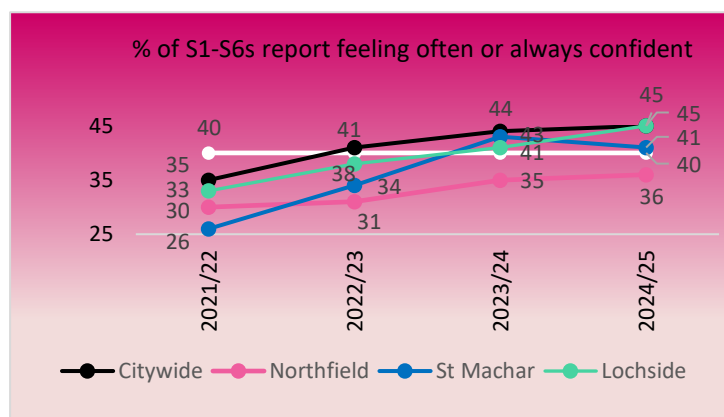


Feedback on the project's pupil and parent support sessions has been very positive:

"All of the information was very valuable. The discussion around the self-harm cycle was particularly helpful and the review of the home portal."

"My daughter has been seen at CAMHS for 8 years and has self-harmed from a very young age. This is the biggest help we have been given with this particular issue, thank you very much"

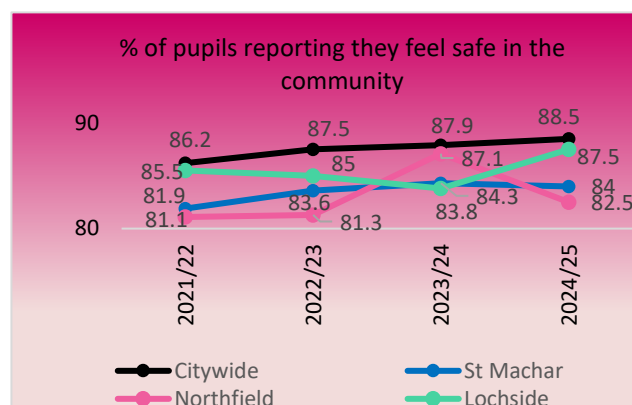
There have also been promising improvements with a 10% increase in the number of S1-S6 pupils reporting that they always or often feel confident from 35% in academic year 2021/22 to 45% in 2024/25. Although lower, this same trend in increasing confidence can be seen among pupils in our priority neighbourhood Academies. The biggest increase being in St. Machar Academy from 26% in 2021/22 to 41% in 2024/25.



Helping Young People Feel Safe in Their Community

Feeling safe in their community is a right for all children and young people and is crucial for their mental health. If a child or young person feels unsafe this could impact on their physical and mental health. They may become isolated and fearful of leaving home, they will be less inclined to make use of green spaces, parks and other amenities in their neighbourhoods.

Since 2021/22 there has been a 2.3% increase in the number of pupils reporting that they often or always feel safe from 86.27% in 2021/22 to 88.5% in 2024/25. This same trend from the baseline period in 2021/22 has also been noted in the Associated School Groups that serve our priority neighbourhoods (as can be seen in the chart below), but the extent to which young people feel safe in those areas is notably lower. Whilst the % for Northfield remains higher than 2021/22, in 2024/25 there has been a 4.6% decrease in % of pupils reporting they feel safe from 87.1% in 2023/24 to 82.5% in 2024/25.



Through our **Children and Young People Feeling Safe** project, we are providing targeted support to young people in the Lochside community. We have been testing a pilot programme of local youth

activity through our school community hubs in Torry. The aim is to support young people to feel safe in their community and improve their overall mental wellbeing. Youth workers have started a group for pupils who use the community wing after school. There has been a notable increase in the percentage of young people reporting they feel safe in Lochside between 2023/24 at 8.43% to 87.5% in 2024/25. Further work will continue to support young people in other communities such as Northfield. Throughout 2024, attendance at youth activities led by the youth work team was 792.

Reducing youth anti social behaviour calls

The work of the young people feeling safe project is also supporting on our **Youth Anti-Social Behaviour** project. This has included providing an increased presence of youth engagement officers and community safety officers in Lochside and the city centre, as well as conducting a number of school visits across autumn/winter 2024.

Youth Engagement Police Officers and Community Safety Police Officers worked in partnership to plan and implement an 8 week program across October to December 2024 of scheduled attendance in the vicinity of City Secondary Schools around the lunchtime hours with the intention of reducing youth anti-social behaviour and providing community reassurance.

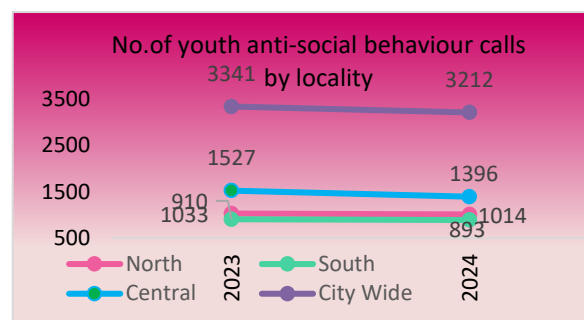
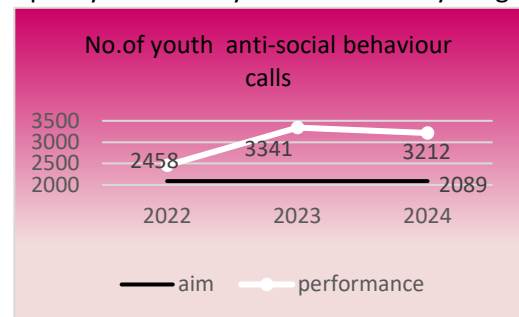
These visits were met with great interest and a positive response from members of the public when conducted in the vicinity of Dyce Academy and area of Asda, Old Machar Academy and the area of Asda, Bridge of Don in the Greenbrae area and Hazlehead Academy and the passageway from the school towards Tesco on the Lang Stracht which included the Hazlehead multi story blocks and Woodend Hospital grounds.



To support increasing the capacity for delivery of activities for young people in outdoor spaces in the city centre the Youth Work team co-ordinated 3 Street Work training sessions for partners involved in the city centre group. Partners included Barnardos, Foyer and

Denis Law Trust. Youth Workers and partners have been engaging with young people in the city centre since Easter 2024. As part of this, four Streetwork sessions were carried out in October 2024 during the holidays which culminated in young people taking part in a “giant cube” team-building activity on the rooftop of St Nicholas Centre. 26 young people engaged with the session.

As well as the city centre the project also supports a number of Steetsports activities in communities such as Garthdee and Middlefield in partnership with the Dennis Law Trust, to engage young people in their community and attract them away from anti-social behaviour. We are beginning to see the positive impact of the initiatives above with a 5% reduction in youth anti social behaviour calls from 3470 in 2023 to 3303 in 2024.



Improving outcomes for care experienced young people

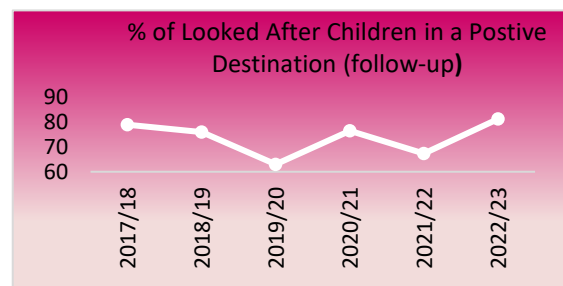
STRETCH OUTCOME 5 PROGRESSING WITH 81.3% of Looked After Children in a positive and sustained destination.

Central to the work of the Children's Services Board is delivery of The Promise. The Children's Services Board reviewed progress in delivering Plan 21-24 in October 2024. The [Keeping the Promise Year 3 Evaluation](#) highlighted that good progress is being made in a number of areas but that there is more to do. This position is reflected nationally.

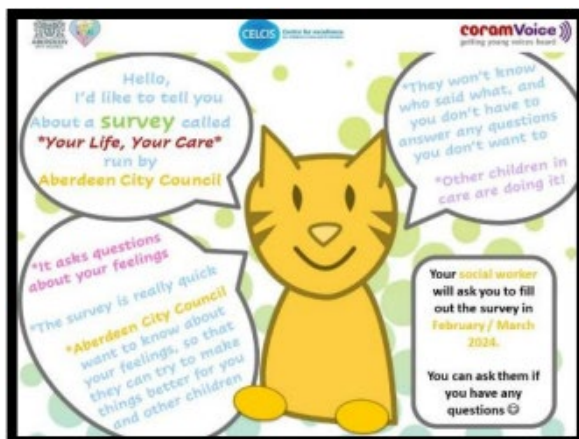
There are some positive indications that our support for Care Experienced Children and Young People is beginning to have an impact with a 10% reduction in the gap between

the percentage of care experienced young people (81.3%) and all young people (90.1%) achieving a positive and sustained destination in 2022/23 compared to 2016/17 (74% Care Experienced Children and Young People and 92.8 for all Aberdeen school leavers). This was a year on year increase of 13.9% from 67.4% in 2021/22.

However, there remain gaps in the outcomes of care experienced young people and those who are not and our projects under Stretch Outcome 5 continue to focus on supporting care experienced young people to have a positive experience into, through and out of care.



Looked after Children's views shaping our improvements



This year our Bright Spots survey developed in partnership with Centre of Excellence for Looked After Children's Care and Protection (CELCIS) and Corum Voice, captured the voices of care experienced young people through the 'Your Life Your Care' survey. 345, 4–17-year-old Care Experienced Children and Young people and 227, 16-26 year shared their view. A full reports on feedback can be found here: [Your Life Your Care \(4-17yrs\)](#) and [Your Life Beyond Care \(16-25yrs\)](#)

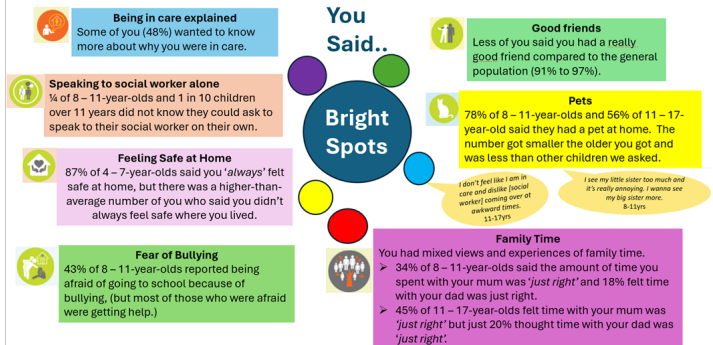
The feedback is invaluable, below are some of the highlights of what is both working well and could

be better. Key areas of focus for coming next year include consideration of how to positively respond to the feedback provided

What is working well for children in care aged 4 – 17 in Aberdeen City?

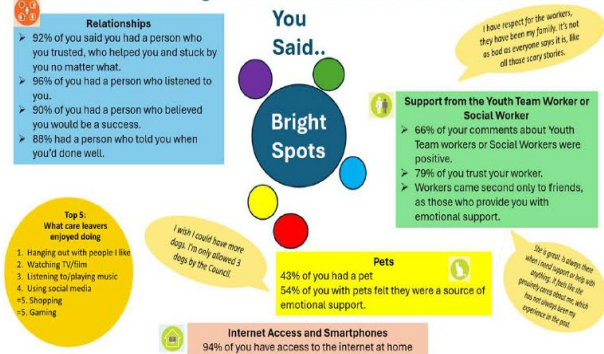


What could be better for children 4 – 17 years in care in Aberdeen City?



Young people aged 16 – 26, what is working well, what could be better?

What is working well for care leavers in Aberdeen?



What could be better for care leavers in Aberdeen?



Bright Spots – A care experienced young person's interpretation

Using the data revealed from the survey, Aiden transformed these insights into a powerful and accessible performance, making the voices and stories behind the statistics resonate on a deeply personal level. It's an invitation to listen, reflect, and understand the real impact of these experiences

<https://youtu.be/z-BbyE-ZosI?si=PxvLKnOo9szVZ1Cx>

PAWN TO KING

AIDAN CARE EXPERIENCED SONGWRITER

Yo, I was told to stay silent, to just fade away,
Told I was too quiet, should never have a say,
Voiceless, worthless, stuck in the shadows of shame,
Carrying blame, living life with a frown, playing the game.
But now I'm questioning, am I really the cause?
Or just a pawn in a system with no pause?
Had to analyze, dig deep into the past,
What did I miss? Why's my voice never last?

But nah, forget that, it's time to change,
Rearrange the board, time to shift the range.
Started as a pawn, now aiming for the king.
Found my voice, now hear me sing!
It's time to rise, open up, realize,
Let the world see what's in us, no more disguise.
Every voice, every choice, it's time to rise,
We got the power to lift, to shine, to rise!

Yeah, I was broken, thought I was lost,
But now I'm waking up, no more paying the cost.
I was a ghost, hiding in the back,
Now stepping forward, I'm taking my track.
Silent pain, it can kill your soul,
But we take control, and we make it whole.
We all got scars, but they don't define us,
It's our worth, our power, it's time to remind us.

But nah, forget that, it's time to change,
Rearrange the board, time to shift the range.
Started as a pawn, now aiming for the king.
Found my voice, now hear me sing!
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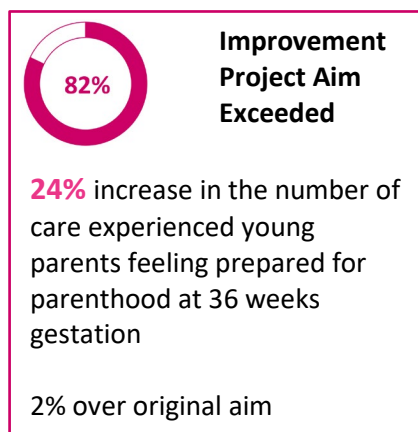
We've been told we don't matter, told we can't fight,
But we stand together, we ignite the light.
One voice, one fight, no more silence,
Every story shared brings down the violence.
The world's been watching, thinking they hold the key,
But we've got the power to set ourselves free.
We've been broken, misunderstood,
But we won't stand down, we're making it good.

But nah, forget that, it's time to change,
Rearrange the board, time to shift the range.
Started as a pawn, now aiming for the king.
Found my voice, now hear me sing!
It's time to rise, open up, realize,
Let the world see what's in us, no more disguise.
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It's our worth, our power, it's time to remind us.

Written for and performed at Care Day,
Westburn Aberdeen, by Aidan.
21.02.2025

Supporting Care Experienced Young Parents



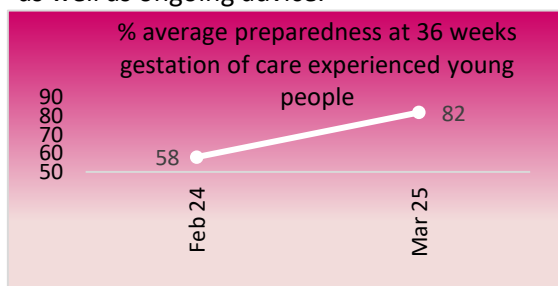
Whilst many young people will find it hard to be a confident first time parent. It is particularly difficult for our cohorts of Care Experienced Young People, who may have had quite traumatic experiences in their own childhood and have less direct family support networks.

Our **Supporting Care Experienced Young Parents** project is aiming to ensure that care experienced young



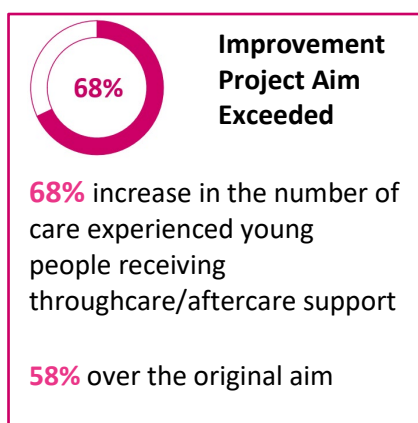
people, as early as possible in their pregnancy, have support for both them and their unborn child, and are testing the Family Nurse Partnership (FNP) Programme.

The Programme is currently supporting 24 under 19 year old care experienced parents and 13, 20-25 year olds. The project provides tailored support for each young person involved in the programme, assessing their confidence throughout and adapting the offer as support progresses. This can range from supporting healthy eating and behaviours for both parent and baby, referral to mental services as well as ongoing advice.



The participant feedback survey completed by the 17 care experienced parents who have finished the programme reported at 36 weeks gestation feeling prepared for parenthood. A significant increase from Feb 2024 - March 2025 by 24% from 58% to 82%. Since November 2024, 100% of the babies of the parents participating have met their developmental milestones.

Supporting Children and Young People Leaving Care

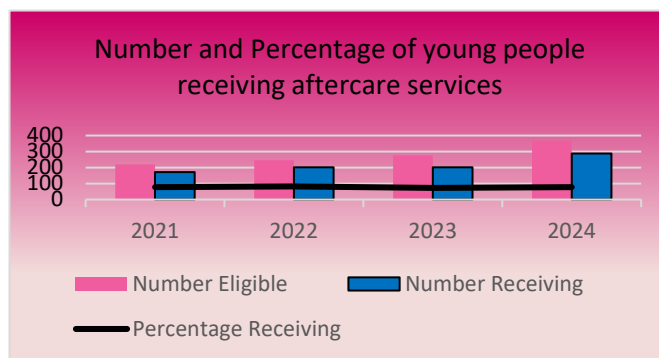


For those leaving care we are working to improve and expand our multi-agency and integrated approaches so that young people receive appropriate and effective throughcare and aftercare when they leave.

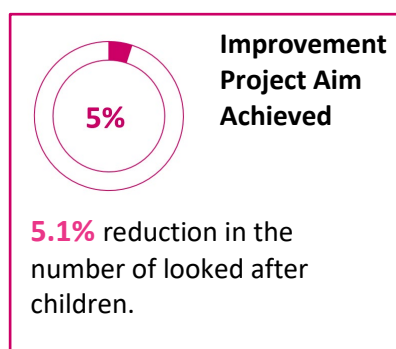
Our **Improving Throughcare and Aftercare** project has introduced a series of changes to our system including for instance: providing more targeted support to help Care Experienced Young People get into education, employment and training; improved welfare assessment training; and working with foster carers to help them better understand their roles in supporting a Looked after Child's transition from Care.

We have seen positive impact of the changes with a 68% increase in the number of eligible young people receiving aftercare (171 in 2021 to 288 in 2024), with 78% of eligible young people receiving support in 2024.

As part of the project, ABZ Works have developed a range of initiatives to help remove barriers and provide support and opportunities to help Care experienced young people feel confident and ready for education, training or employment. In 2024, 74 care experienced young people were supported, a 15% increase from 2023 (63) and 43% from 2022 (42). Opportunities included paid work experience programmes with guaranteed interviews for those who complete, aligned to sectors where we know there are skills shortage. More details on the project can be found in our [Project End Report](#).



Reduction in looked after children



There are multiple reasons why children are accommodated out with parental care. This includes: structural inequality, poverty, poor social housing, homelessness; parental experience of childhood trauma and difficulty accessing universal services.

The Promise (2021) stresses the need for effective multi-agency intensive family support to ensure children and young people remain in the care of their family where it is safe for them to be so. Through our [entering care project](#) we are committed to putting in place the support to enable this. The number of looked

after children in Aberdeen City has been incrementally reducing. As of November 2024 there were 443 looked after children in Aberdeen City. However, in 2023 the service included the 38 young people that were in continuing care in the data. Young people in continuing care are not looked after. This means there was actually 467 children in 2023 and a 5.1% decrease in 2024.

To support families, the project have have tested evaluated the processes and guidance (GIRFEC) in relation to the provision of multi-agency support for kinship placements that are showing signs of vulnerability; accessed therapeutic support for carers and children at points of enhanced vulnerability in the placement; piloted a test of change to deliver holistic family support to parents with addiction needs to increase their capacity to meet the needs of their children in a manner that protects their wellbeing; and Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) since February 2025.

Despite the data showing an overall positive downward trend since November 2023, it is worth noting that a contributory factor has been a 16% decrease in the number of children looked after at home and with friends and family (68 children September 2023 compared to 57 in November 2024). The reduction in the number of children looked after at home mirrors a national trend and reflects Local Authorities moving to embed the Promise (2021) and the move to a prevention and early intervention service delivery model locally and the partnership jointly commissioning services for children and families at Tier 2.

Corporate Parenting Training

In addition to developing interventions to improve children and young people's experience of care, it is one of the key roles of our partnership's delivery of The Promise to ensure that our staff better understand what it means to be a corporate parent. In particular understanding the key role that they play in a Looked After Child's experience of care and the responsibility placed on services to provide many of the supports and functions that might otherwise be provided by a loving family.



Every employee of Aberdeen City Council is a Corporate Parent

This is an introductory course aimed at increasing your understanding of corporate parenting. This course is for all Aberdeen City Council employees, Elected Members and Multi-Agency partners.

This short course will help develop, or provide revision of your understanding of:

- 1 What we mean by Care Experience
- 2 What Corporate Parenting means
- 3 The Promise and a rights-based approach to Corporate Parenting
- 4 How you and your area of service can play a key role in securing a lifetime of equality, respect and love for care experienced people

Through our **Corporate Parent Training** project we are continuing to increase the number of staff and services we train. This year we have developed an online Corporate Parenting Training module for all multi-agency staff. The training has been developed using the latest resources and content from the Promise and has also involved co-development from care experienced young people. 52% of the 7745 staff identified as having a role in supporting those that are care experienced have now

been trained with an ongoing steady month on month increase.

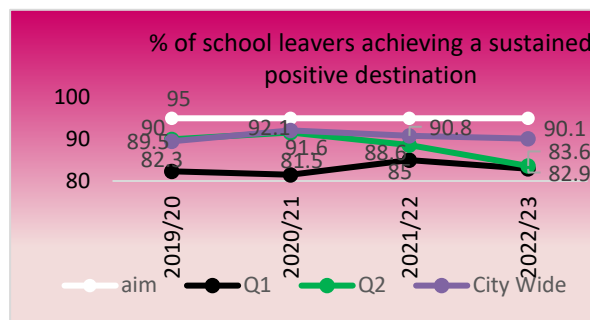
Focusing on young people in our priority neighbourhoods

STRETCH OUTCOME 6


82.9% Positive Destinations in SIMD1 & 83.6% Positive Destinations in SIMD2

Increasing the number of young people who go on to education, employment or training when they leave school remains a key priority for our partnership. Citywide positive and sustained destinations have shown a decline since 2020/21, from 92.1% in 2020/21 to 90.1% in 2022/23, 2.7% lower than the % for Scotland. The data also shows that young people from our priority neighbourhoods, are still much less likely to go onto a positive destination.

Latest data on the cohort of young people that left school in academic year 2022/23 shows that the sustained positive destinations for children in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 1 have decreased by 2.1% (85%-82.1%) and 5% for Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2 (88.6%-83.6%) since 2021/22. Indicating that there is still further work to be done to meet our stretch Outcome to increase positive destinations for this cohort. Extensive work continues to expand and improve our curricular offer across the city to address this.



Improving Our Curricular Offer



125%

**Improvement
Project Aim
Exceeded**

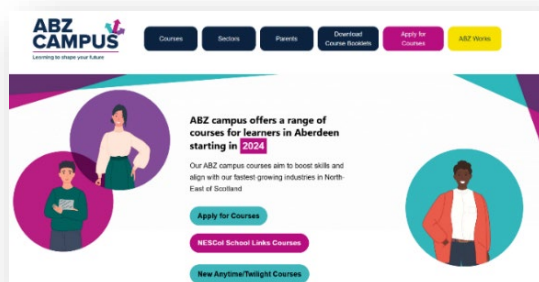
125% increase in rate of completion of National Progression Awards/Foundation Apprenticeships/ Higher National Certificate courses available to young people

115% over the project's original aim.

One of the ways we are seeking to improve positive destinations is through our **ABZ Campus** project, which has been helping up us to achieve significant improvement to the number of young people completing National Progression Awards, Foundation Apprenticeships and Higher National Certificate courses across the city.

ABZ Campus offers equitable access to a citywide curriculum for all pupils regardless of their school. Enabling delivery of different courses and improving links with/delivering courses through other providers such as North East Scotland College. The project has also introduced Pathway Advocates in each of Aberdeen's 11 Secondary Schools to provide bespoke and tailored interventions as well as intensive regular career and

curricular support, increasing attendance and developing positive relationships for our more vulnerable young people.

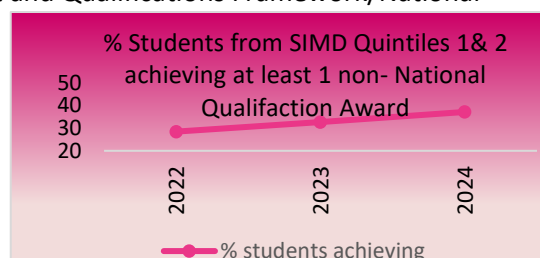


During 2023/24 the Pathway Advocates tracked and supported 248 vulnerable young people, of these 202 (81%) were care experienced. The number of young people supported in each of the 11 schools has differed according to identified need with the number supported ranging from 9 to 57 per school 10 young people are enrolled in an Employability Course as part of ABZ Campus with a further 6 young people benefiting from a pilot programme for young people with additional support needs. 93% (25) of the 27 young people who have been closed to the Pathways Advocate support programme, have moved into a positive destination.

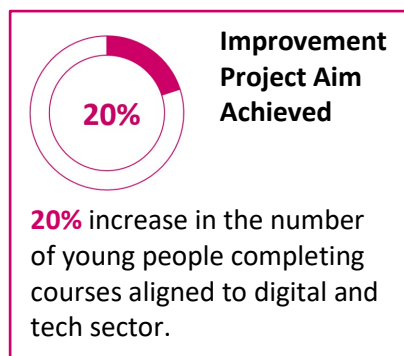
The project has far surpassed its aim of 10% with a:

- 125% increase in completion rates of Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework/National Progression Awards (2265 2023/24, compared to 1005 in 2021/22)
- 20% increase in the completion of Foundation Apprenticeships (127 - 156 students in 2023/24)
- an increase from 0 Higher National Certificates in 2021/22 to 12 in 2022/23 and 9 in 2023/24

You can read more about the ABZ Campus in this [Project End Report](#)



Increasing the Uptake of Digital and Technology Courses



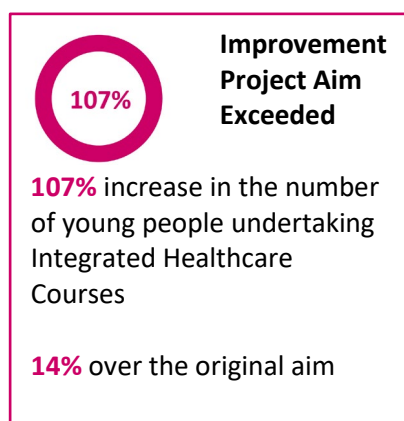
As part of expanding our curricular offer we are also aiming to increase the number of young people completing Digital and Technology courses in the city. Digital and Tech is a key growth sector for the North East and an essential part of the transition away from oil and gas, as the economy diversifies.

Through our **digital and tech project** we have introduced new National Participation Award's at Level 5 and 6 in Games Design, Esports at Level 4 & 5 in St. Machar Academy and adding National Progression Awards Cyber Security to ABZ Campus.

In 2023/2024, 1128 young people completed such courses, an increase of 19.75%. Of the three new digital NPA courses, data for 2023/24 showed:

- Esports - that across Level 4 to 6, 16 young people completed the Esports course with a 100% pass.
- Games Design, 18 young people completed level 6 with a 100% pass rate, with 54 at level 5 and a 85.19% pass rate and 15 at level 4, with a 66.67% rate.
- Cybersecurity - 79 young people completed level 4 and 5 Cybersecurity, with a 65.52% pass rate for level 4 and 24% for level 5.

Integrated Healthcare Courses



A key sector which offers opportunities for young people to achieve employment is in Healthcare. Our **Integrated Healthcare Courses** project, through the development and promotion of expanded opportunities to undertake healthcare courses has helped 112 young people complete such courses, a 107% increase from 54 in 2022/23.

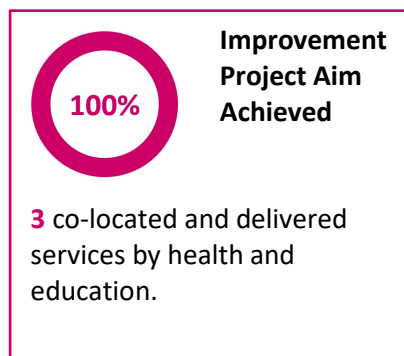
This can be attributed to the development and promotion of the availability of and career progressions associated with healthcare professions. Delivered in partnership with health colleagues, Nescol and through ABZ

Campus to allow wide access. There has been an increase in enrolments of 33% for Academic Year 2024-25 compared to last year.

The integrated Health and Social Care course at SCQF 4 is now well established, and to respond to student needs, the project is also offering an integrated route to support those who are English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).



Increasing co-delivery of education and health services



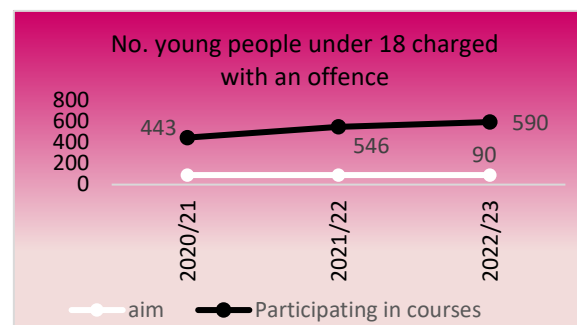
National and local research identified that those living in areas of deprivation have been most impacted by the pandemic and that their wellbeing has been most adversely affected. Following the success of the Links Hubs, partnership integration and delivery model, it was agreed to establish other co-located/co-delivery models was agreed as a priority to support children and young people, regardless of their circumstances, to achieve the same health and education outcomes as their peers.

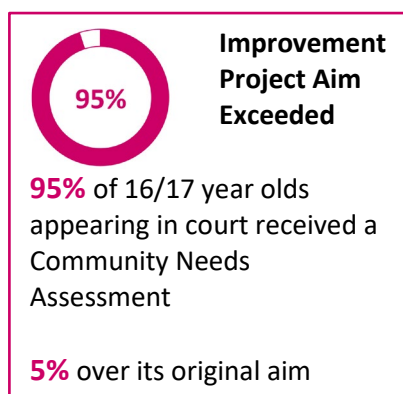
Our **Co-delivery project** has raised awareness and promoted opportunities for co-location and supported and enabled others to progress and sharing learning. As a result there are now 3 co-located and delivered services by health and education. .At the start of the project there was 1 Co-located service at the Links Hub where a Health Visitor is based two days per week. The second service (around attendance) has seen health and education colleagues collaborate at Manor Park School (our second collaboration). In addition, the project team has worked to ensure successful planning for the successful integration of a Children's Social Work team at Kaimhill School (our fourth collaboration/co-location).

Considerable work continues to be undertaken to establish a new integrated service, our Bairsn Hoose, on the Links Early learning and Childcare site. Building work is currently underway and the new integrated provision should be operational by the end of 2025. The opening of this provision will see colleagues from NHSG, Police Scotland, the Third Sector and Courts all co-located to support families who have experienced, or perpetrated harm. At this point, (late 2025) there will be 4 co-located operational services.

Keeping children and young people safe and preventing crime

Our partnership has been taking a coordinated approach to supporting groups of young people who have committed or are at risk of committing crime. Taking preventative approaches to reducing youth anti-social behaviour, as described above, in our communities and providing wrap around supports for those coming into or leaving the justice system to give them the best opportunities to improve their outcomes. Latest data on Strech Outcome 7 indicates that there has been a slight increase in the number of under 18s charged with an offence from 546 in 2021/22 to 590 in 2022/23, however remains a 40% reduction since the baseline period. Our work continues and we have had a number of successes in supporting this cohort through our improvement projects.

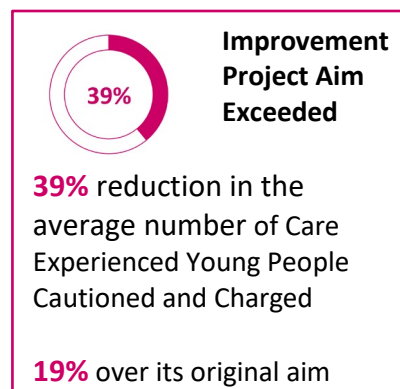




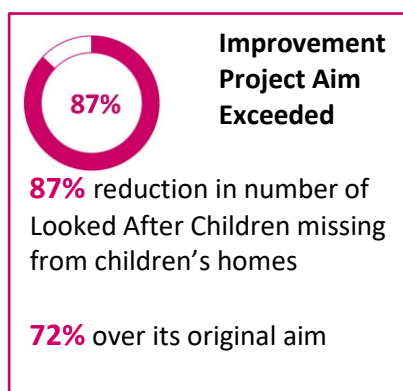
Latest data is showing improvement. As of January 2025 95% of 16 and 17 year olds have been supported by the court pre disposal team to ensure a full assessment of their needs can be effectively communicated in court to help ensure a supportive outcome.

The number of Care Experienced Young People charged per month on average has reduced from 7.39 in 2022 to 5 in 2025,

and the number of Young People on Compulsory Supervision Order charged fell from 3.4 on average each month in 2022 to less than 1 in 2025. This indicates a sustainable reduction in the number of care experienced young people coming into conflict with the law, linked to increased trauma training and improved communication between services.



Reducing Young People Going Missing From Our Children's Homes



Care experienced young people going missing from Children's Homes has been a key concern for the professionals who support them. Looked After Children are much more likely to be vulnerable to risk in the community.

To address this we established our **Missing Looked After Children** project which has had significant success, by changing the way in which Police, Social Workers from the children's homes and the young people themselves communicate through the development of the 'Not at Home' policy.

The 'Not at Home' policy normalises a young person's lifestyle and ensures that despite their care experienced status, their absence from a children's home is managed more in a similar way to that of a non-care experienced young person. The introduction of this policy has seen the number of reported missing care experienced young people drop from 39 in 2022 to less than 5 in 2024. Looked after young people themselves report that it was often much better for them as they would not have the feeling of being "hunted" by the Police. You can find more detail in the [Project End Report](#)

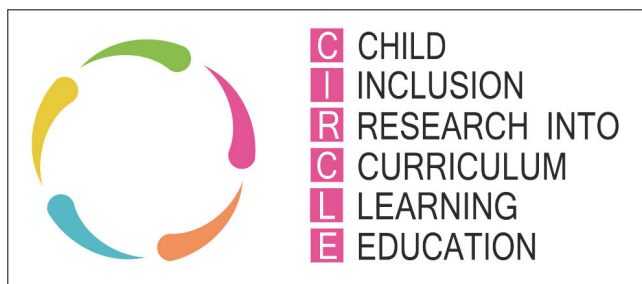
Supporting young people with additional support needs/disability access education and opportunities post school

89% of young people with Additional Support Needs/Disabilities experiencing a positive destination

Since 2019/20 there has been an increase per year in the number of school leavers with Additional Support Needs/Disability. Children and young people who have Additional Support Needs or Disabilities can often struggle to remain in full time education for a range of reasons. Not only that, on leaving school there are a number of barriers that they are likely to experience in progress into a positive destination.

Community Planning Aberdeen are committed to ensuring that the barriers are addressed and that young people with additional support needs/ disabilities attend school and have the support, skills and connections they need to transition into and sustain positive destinations. Latest data shows there has been a 4% increase in the number of young people with Additional Support Needs/Disabilities who have experienced a positive destination (89% in 2023/24 from 85% in 2019/20) and a 2.2% decrease from 2022/23 (91.6%).

Through our **positive destination and school attendance projects**, we are testing a range of initiatives to achieve this. One example is piloting the use of CIRCLE (Child Inclusion Research into Curriculum Learning Education). This supports staff to better understand the various strategies that can be undertaken to provide individualised support for pupils. This has been piloted in the Aberdeen Grammar School, Harlaw Academy and Lochside Academy, with materials adapted to suit the individual schools in and a padlet developed to ensure access to key stages and information. This includes being able to quickly access strategies.

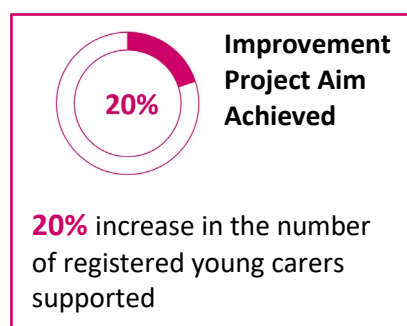


All three secondary schools have increased the percentage attendance for learners with a disability, all above the citywide attendance of 88.27% in 2022/23 and above the national average for all pupils at 90.2%

- Aberdeen Grammar School 2022/23 all pupils 91.92%, disability 97.69%, 2021/22 all pupils 92.14%, pupils with a disability 96.05%
- Harlaw Academy all pupils 2022/23 88.68% pupils with a disability 90.92%, 2021/22 all pupils 89.58%, pupils with a disability 86.08%
- Lochside Academy 2022/23 all pupils 87.36%, pupils with a disability 91.67%, 2021/22 all pupils 87.29%, pupils with a disability 86.46%

This positive outcome is welcome and we hope that through expansion of this we will see a change to the city wide data which shows that the percentage attendance of pupils with Additional Support Needs/Disabilities has declined slightly from 2021/22 to 2022/23 from 89.36% for pupils with Additional Support Needs to 88.54% in 2022/23 and from 88.27% for pupils with a disability to 87.39%.

Increasing the number of young carers supported



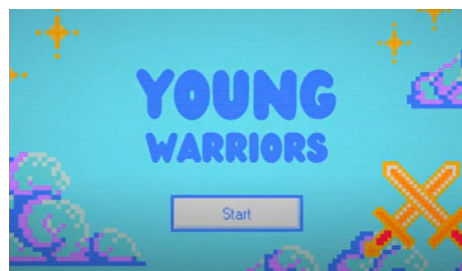
Young carers are one of our the biggest single groups of children in need. Though there is much support available for young carers in Aberdeen, identifying and referring Young Carers to that support can be difficult, many do not realise they are carers. Our **Young Carers** project has focused on increasing the number of young carers identified and supported across the city. Since early last year the project has had continuing success, having increased the number of young carers accessing support by 20% from 126 in June 2023 to 151 in December 2024.

Of those whose address was recorded, data shows there has been increases in the number of young carers supported in two of the localities 53% (21) in North and 75% (23) in South; as well as a 23% increase in Priority Neighbourhoods. There has been decrease in the number supported in the central locality of 20%. The project also saw a moderate increase in the number of black, asian and

minority ethnic Young Carers from 16 in June 2023 to 23 December 2024. However, we recognise we need to do more and further work is ongoing to work with agencies such as Grampian Regional Equalities Council and Touch of Love to support identifying where these young people may be young carers.

The increase has been driven by a number of improvement activities including our targeted promotion and providing the “Think Young Carer Toolkit” training to all schools, external organisations including Health services, Education services, Police Scotland, and numerous Third Sector agencies (15 directly and connecting with others through Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations and the Third Sector Forum). You can read more about the work in our detailed [project end report](#).

Our Young Carers have been proactively involved in recruiting other young carers into the programme working in partnership with Station House Media Unit, in 2024 producing their [Young Warriors Video](#) published during Carers week highlighting the struggles and the experiences of our very own young carers in Aberdeen.



Supporting Families Awaiting a Diagnosis for Autism

There remains limited support available for children and families with or awaiting diagnosis of autism and the waiting times between referral and diagnosis are significant (averaging 12 months). Outcomes for children deteriorate if they or their families do not receive timely and ongoing support through the child development stages.

Our [Neurodivergent Pathways](#) project has been looking to address this by testing a pilot in Woodside Primary School. The pilot supported 10 (42%) of children and families of the 17 that were referred, providing multiagency support for families awaiting an autism diagnosis, looking at various strategies and supports. This has included helping school staff to adapt their learning environments and working with health colleagues to ensure accelerated referral and diagnosis as well as providing extensive support to families in the interim.

In addition to the ongoing support, times between referral to and receiving of supports were significantly reduced. For instance with consent for the first assessment averaging 11.5 days, for a first clinical assessment at 13.5 days and parents receiving feedback within 6 weeks. Considerably shorter timeframes than the average of 12 months from referral to diagnosis. You can read more about the work in our detailed [project end report](#).

What Impact have we had?

The project has received incredibly positive feedback from the parents involved:

“Just finally getting the support for our son, which was all we ever wanted, that’s the main thing, like, obviously the diagnosis helps because you can’t often get supported without a diagnosis, but that wasn’t the thing for us, it was getting the support and educating ourselves and being kind of able to help them.”

“We feel definitely feel like we have more tools and more information now than we ever have, and that is all down to the Test of Change”

What impact have we had?

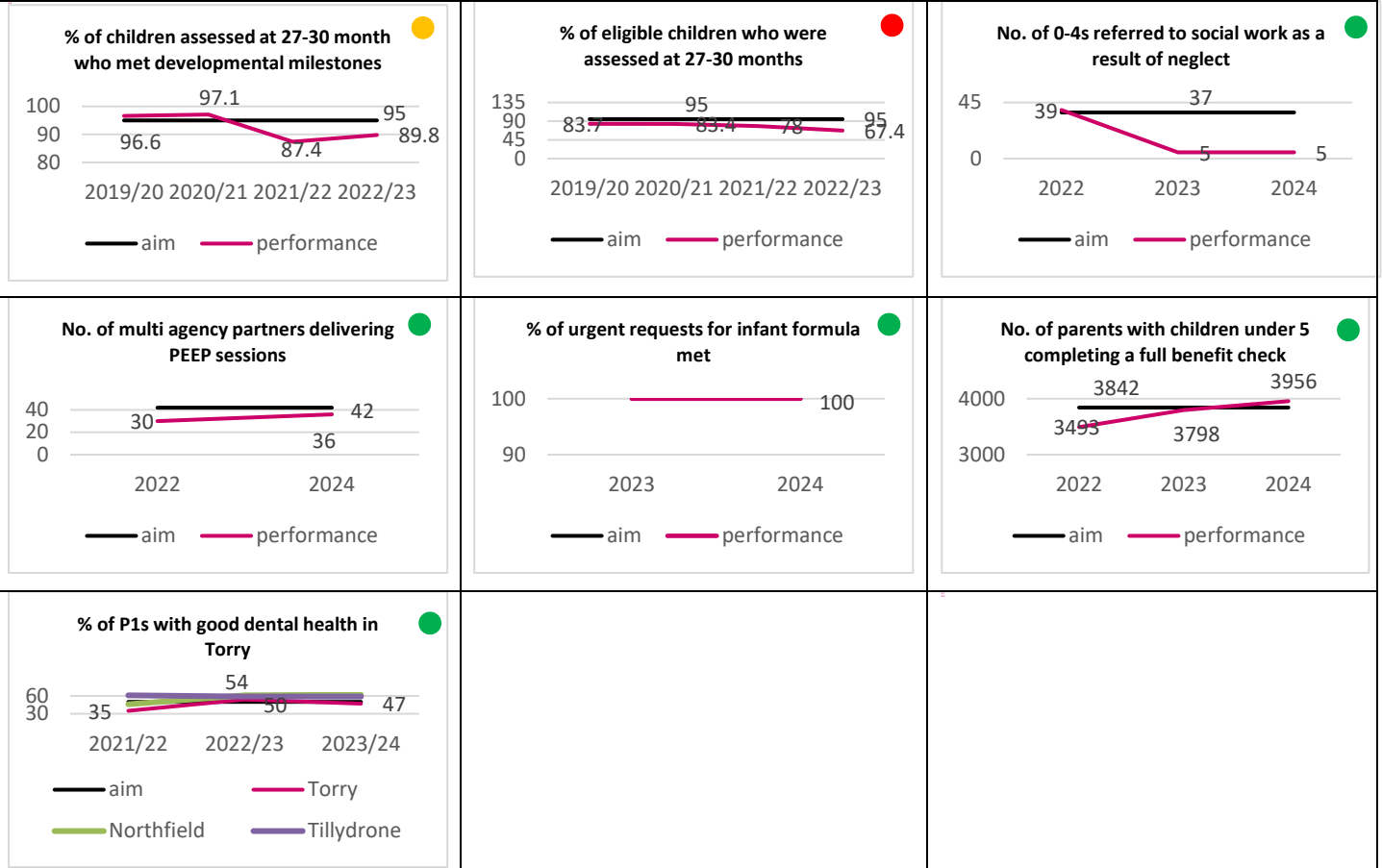


24/25/26 improvement aim

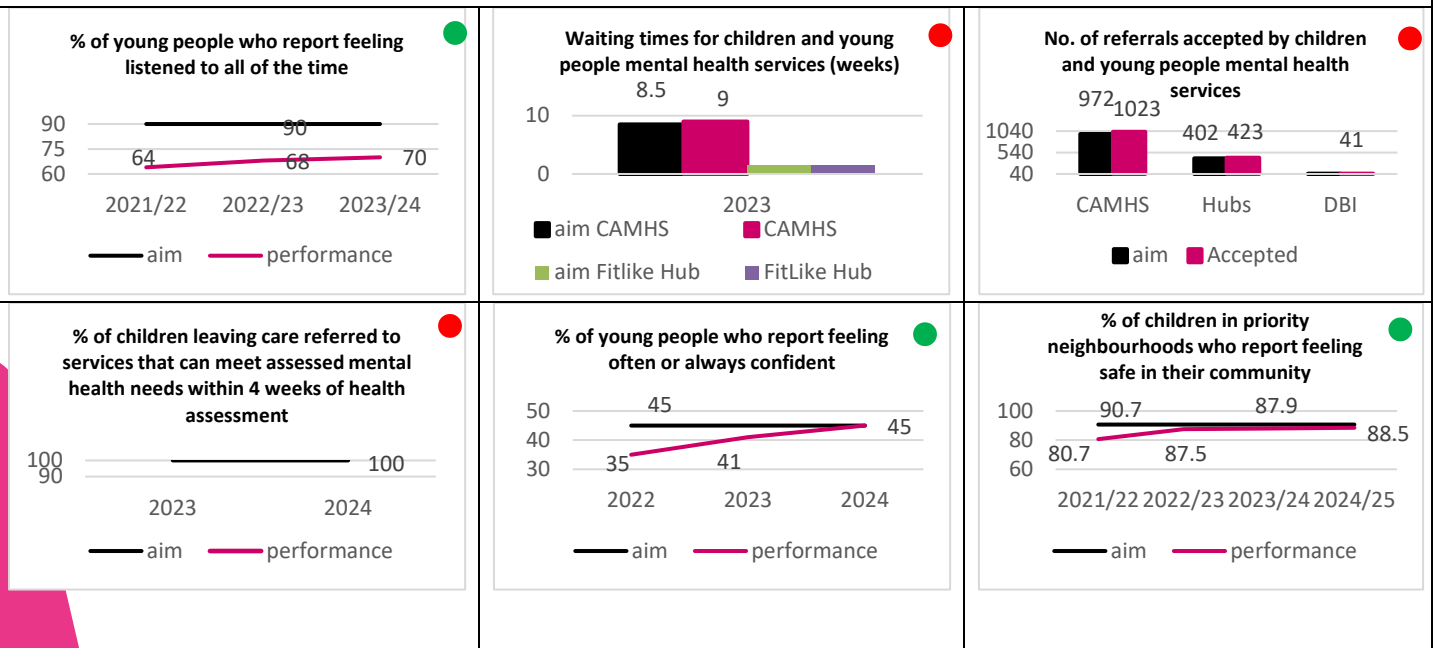
Performance

- Yes
- Getting there
- Not yet

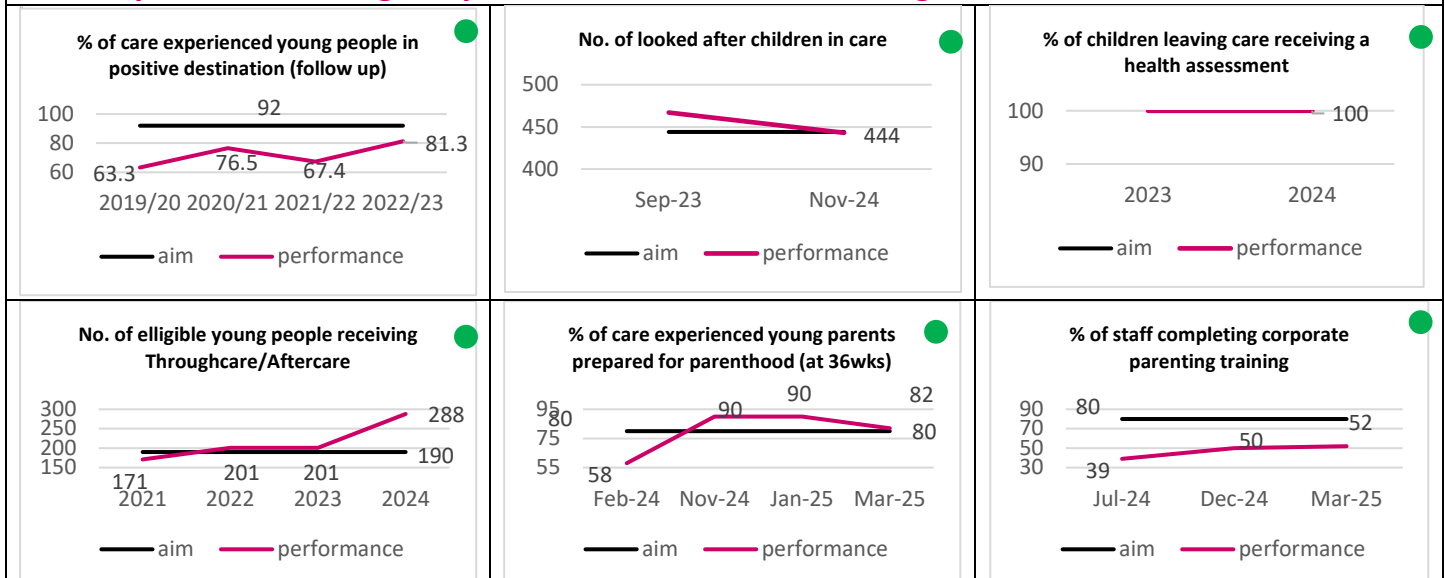
Children have the best start in life



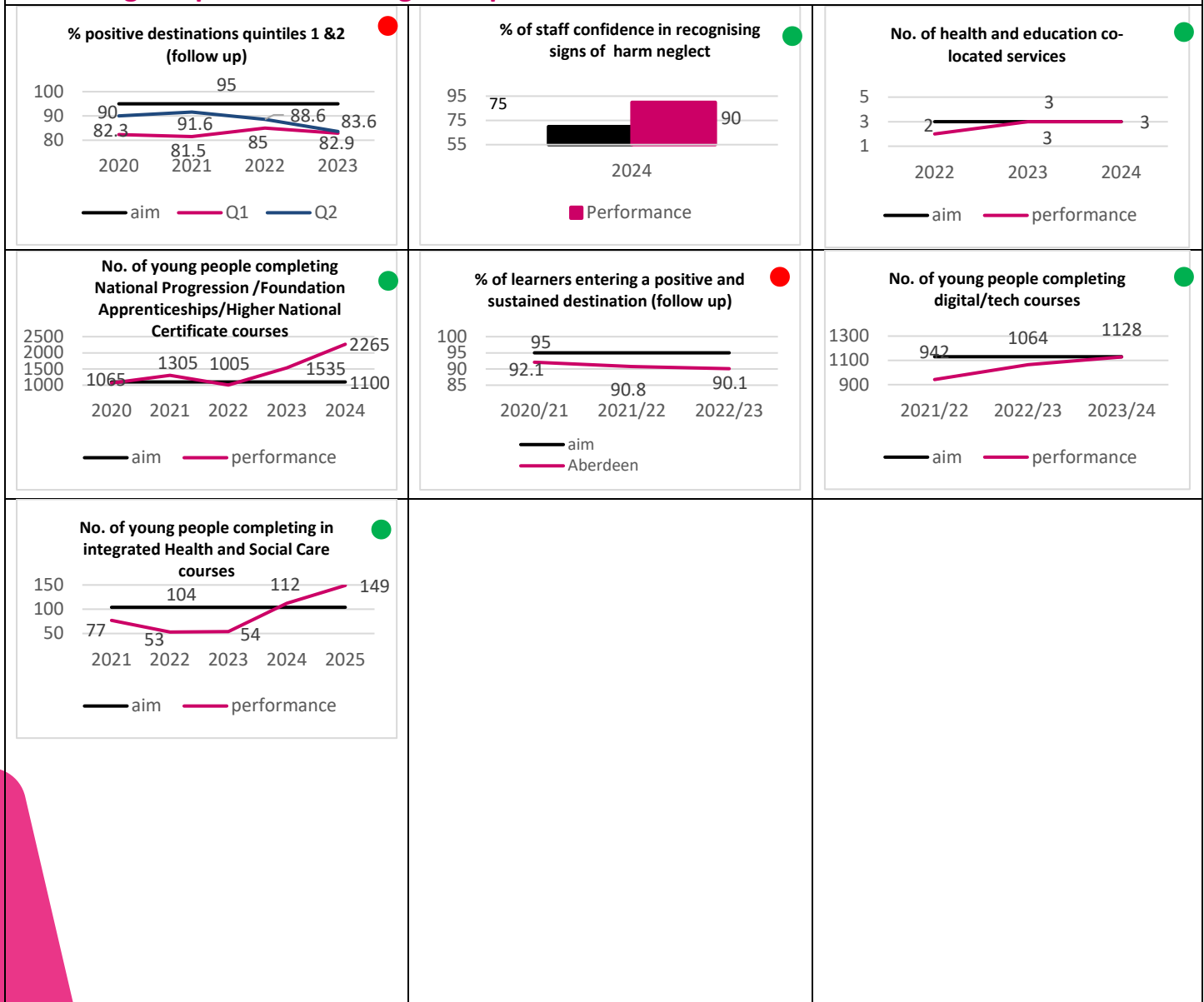
Children are listened to



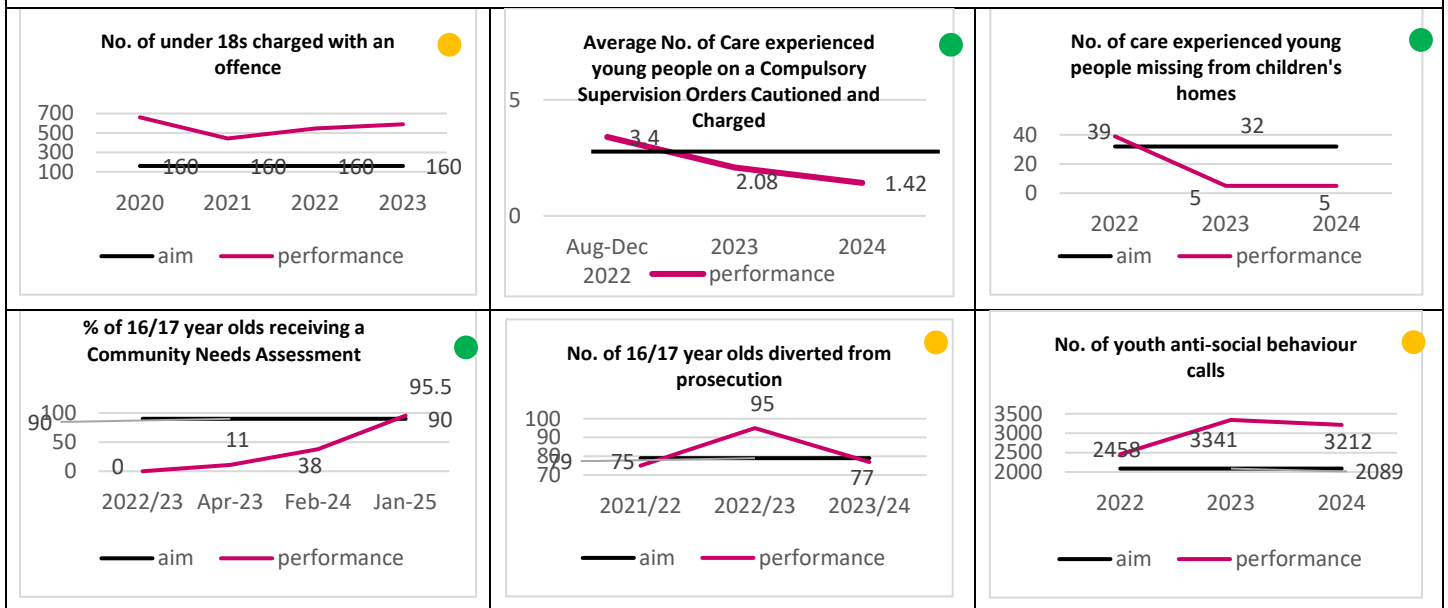
Care Experienced Young People are included and achieving



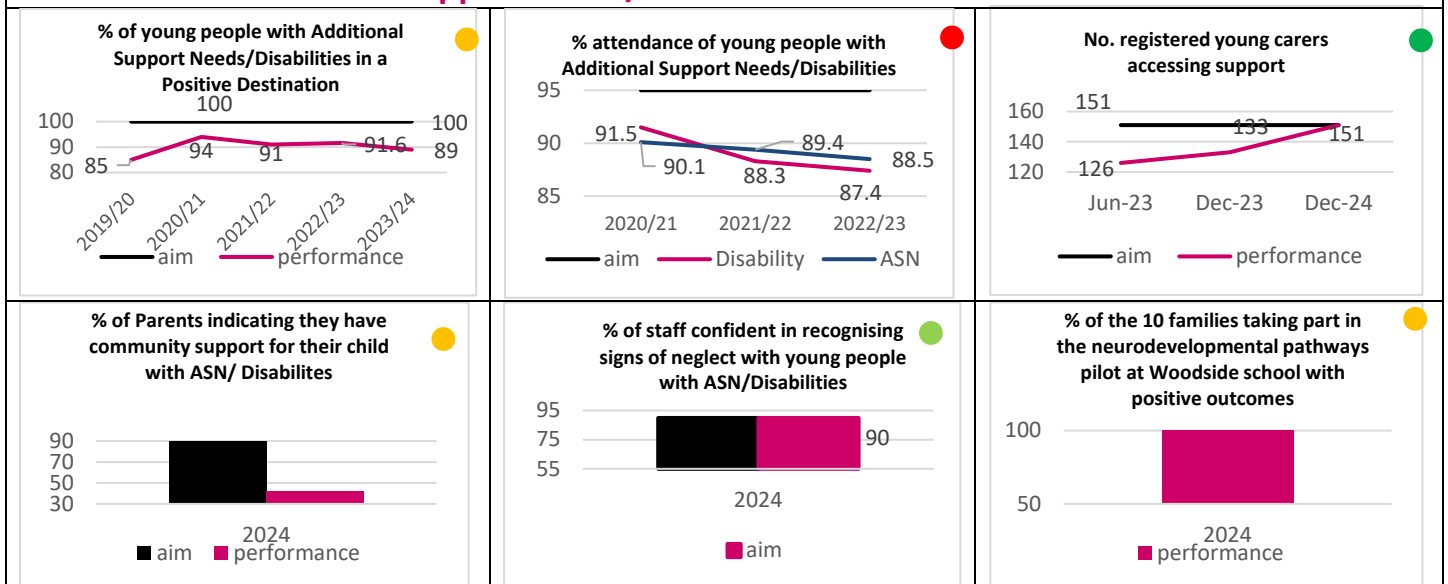
All Young People are achieving their potential



Children are Safe and Involved



Children with additional support needs/disabilities



Improvement Priorities for 2025/26




Our improvement projects will continue to drive improvements for our children, young people and families, here are some of the key priorities for 2025/26:

- Taking a whole system approach to healthy weight and healthy lifestyle interventions through our Healthy Weight Aberdeen Programme
- Try to better understand why more children are presenting at hospital due to asthma in Aberdeen
- Look carefully at what more can be done to prevent suicide and access to mental health support for children and young people
- We will expand the reach of our Whole Family Approach to support more children, young people and parents through the development of our local Family Support Model as part of the Fairer Futures Partnership with the Scottish Government.
- Spread the use of Infant Feeding in a crisis pathway across more the partnership agencies to ensure that regardless of touchpoint that people across Aberdeen City who need this support can be directly referred and use the Pathway.
- Extending supports to the parents and families of Looked After Children to help them to remain home with their family
- Provide increased opportunities to identify and support Care Experienced Young Parents.
- Focus on improving the attendance and attainment of our pupils from our priority neighbourhoods, care experienced young people and young people with disabilities/additional support needs to give them the best possible chance of achieving education, employment or training once they leave.
- Expand the pilot approach to increasing attendance with health colleagues.
- Roll out Phase 3 of ABZ Campus (Session 2025-26) providing an expanded offer for young people as well as linking with other Local Authorities to share our learning.
- Continue to expand the reach of our digital and tech curricular programmes to provide more and more opportunities for young people to achieve qualifications in this field. We are also planning to open an outreach tech space for pupils call ONE Tech Hub in Schoolhill.
- Our readiness for the implementation of the Children's (Care & Justice) (Scotland) Act 2024 will continue to have a strong focus.
- Addressing variation and improving transitions between child and adult services: whilst significant changes have been made to support children transitioning from care, there is still work to be done to support those young people transitioning from child to adult social care, such as those with additional support needs/disabilities. We will focus on helping making these transitions as effective and sustained as possible.
- Seek opportunities to expand our Neurodivergent Pathway to other primary schools
- Test the pilot positive destination project targeted at providing specific opportunities and support for young people with additional support needs/disabilities through ABZCampus & ABZWorks



Prosperous People: Adults

Our Stretch Outcomes

What we are working towards		How we are doing	
<u>SO9</u> 10% fewer adults (over 18) charged with more than one offence by 2026		12% fewer adults were charged with more than one offence, from 1411 in 2020/21 to 1243 in 2024/25. This has declined since 2020 with exception of 2023 with no change from the previous year.	
<u>SO10</u> Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026.	70-73	1.9 years increase in Healthy Life Expectancy (HLE) at birth for Males (60.2) from 2018-20, however 2.6 years lower than 2014-16. 0.1 years increase in estimated Healthy Life Expectancy at birth for Females (61.4) from 2018-20, however 4.9 lower than 2014-16.	
<u>SO11</u> Reduce the rate of both alcohol related deaths and drug related deaths by 10% by 2026.		In 2019-2023, the rate of drug related deaths was 23.7 – the same as in 2018-2022 and similar to the rate for Scotland of 23.6, however up from 17 since 2013-17. In 2019-2023, the rate of alcohol-specific deaths was 19.7 per 100,000 population – down from 20.3 in 2018-2022 and lower than the rate for Scotland of 21.5, however up from 18.7 in 2014-18.	
<u>SO12</u> Reduce homelessness by 10% and youth homelessness by 6% by 2026, ensuring it is rare, brief and non-recurring with a longer term ambition to end homelessness in Aberdeen City.		1763 homeless applications and 481 youth homeless applications in 2023/24, similar 2022/23 (1772 and 470). However, an 18% and 12.6% increase since baseline (2016/17).	

Progress made during 2024/25



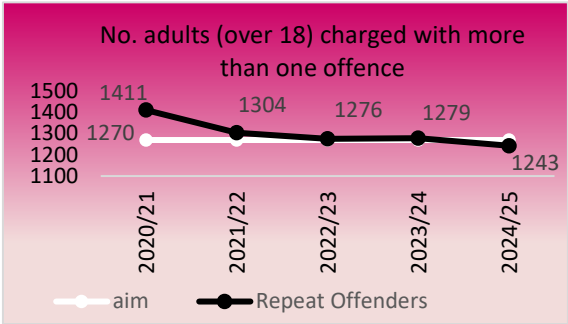
Reducing adults charged with more than one offence

STRETCH OUTCOME
9 ACHIEVED with
12% less people
being Charged with
more than one
offence



We need to support people who have offended, to turn their behaviour around and become contributors to society. Through our projects we are supporting people in the justice system access housing, employability, and professional support, such as intervention and access to drug and alcohol support, to reduce repeat offending and a return to

custody. We are seeing the impact of our interventions with data showing a 12% reduction in people charged with repeat offences from 1411 in 2020/21 to 1243 in 2024/25.



Supporting People to Make Progress on the Employability Pipeline

We have been continuing to work together to increase the number of people who are engaged with different areas of the Justice System being supported to make progress on the employability pipeline.

Using UK Shared Prosperity Fund funding, we provided three construction training courses to prisoners who will be released to Aberdeen, enabling participants to secure the Construction Skills Certification Scheme card which is required for all building site roles. We also funded a World Host Customer Service course. Through ABZWorks we continue to support HMP Grampian and Greene King to deliver activity through the training kitchen, which has continued to be popular and to secure positive results for participants. This activity was heavily featured in the BBC's Women In Prison documentary, particularly telling the story of one female inmate and her progress from prisoner to trainee, and into employment [Jailed: Women in Prison](#)

Through these routes, 67 people in HMP Grampian supported on the employability pipeline in 24/25.

Construction training: 56 city prisoners participated in construction industry training designed to enable them to achieve the Construction Skills Certification 'green' card which is a pre-requisite for working on a construction site. Of those, 5 disengaged from the course, 5 have been offered the opportunity to sit/re-sit the test in the community, 10 successfully passed the test and secured the certification in custody, eight will resit in the establishment, three moved to rehab, three were transferred out, two did not attend the test, one withdrew, one was released before being tried, and others continue working towards it. We do not have a note of employment outcomes at this time.

SVQ Level 1 in Professional Cookery: 16 people started the course, 38% (6) completed, 5 (31%) failed and 5 (31%) are ongoing. 50% of the people (3) who completed the course were employed by Greene King.

Feedback from one individual was:

"I accepted without hesitation also overjoyed to be again given the opportunity to help others succeed. After completing the 10 weeks with the groups I learned so much more skills. There is a new group to start in Sept where I will continue to mentor. The groups I have been involved with were all keen an eager to learn. There is a sense to change their lives to break the chain of returning to crime and being brought back to custody this includes myself. I have already received a written confirmation of employment with Greene King which is an opportunity for me to succeed on my journey."



Ricky, Steven, Keiran and Kevin are graduating from the Greene King Training Academy today. Image: JASPERIMAGE

The past year has also seen ABZWorks provide a broad range of supplies to the prison to support the development of numeracy skills and broader skills among the prison population, via UK Shared Prosperity Fund Multiply monies. This includes craft materials, maths puzzle books, board games with a numeracy focus, fitness equipment, painting by numbers kits, and supplies for the creation of a "Liberation Station" set up by female inmates who are making soft toys and tote bags for prisoners on release from HMP Grampian, to help remove some of the stigma of leaving jail with a plastic bag full of belongings, while simultaneously building a range of employability skills.

No One Left Behind funding from Scottish Government has also been used to provide other skills-focused equipment and activities, including outdoor workwear (Personal Protective Equipment) and safety boots, gardening supplies, and kitchen supplies amongst other things.

ABZWorks has secured £30,000 of UK Shared Prosperity Fund monies from this year's People and Skills allocation for use in HMP Grampian and we are in talks with the prison meantime on how this could best be invested to deliver employability and skills activities for individuals who will be released to the city.

On 19 September 2024, the project team won the 'achieving better outcomes for the most vulnerable' category at the COSLA Excellence Awards.



Raising awareness of hate crimes and domestic abuse

Barriers to reporting crimes, especially hate crimes and domestic abuse, include lack of awareness, fear, isolation, and stigma. Our **domestic abuse and hate crimes** projects aim to increase reporting through awareness and changing attitudes so all people feel safe in our communities and that there is recognition that hate crime and domestic abuse is everyone's responsibility.

We are beginning to see the impact from our focus on public awareness and training with latest data showing increased reporting, with a 1% increase in reported domestic abuse incidents, 2,512 (2023/24) up from 2,488 in 2022-23.

Domestic Abuse

- **16 Days of Action:** On 25 November 2024 we held a Reclaim the Night march with around 100 people attending, to raise awareness of the links between gender equality, human rights and gender-based violence.
- **Training:** new online gender equality training launched
- **388** people completed training in 2024 (108 staff undertook Safe and Together training, 28 the Gender Equality module, 131 domestic abuse training, 36 women received Own My Life Training and 85 staff attended an event hosted by Grampian Women's Aid. This event significantly increased awareness and led to a rise in training registration
- **Safe Spaces:** We now have **2 registered safe spaces**, Aberdeen Art Gallery and Maritime Museum, where people can go for help, or simply to reflect and remember. Staff members have received in-depth specialist training around domestic abuse.



Hate Crime

- **Awareness Week:** we launched new local hate crime reporting promotional materials reflecting changes to legislation.
- **Training:** new training materials for Third-Party Reporting Centres and a training session was held in October 2024 with more than 20 people attending.
- **Reporting Centres:** There are now 9 listed reporting centres across the city and more that are not publicly disclosed.



Substance support for Justice system that identify to have concerns



Improvement Project Aim Achieved

100% of people identified with substance concerns in justice offered or accessing support.

Accessing support at the right time and in the right place can save lives and reduce harm and future re-offending. Through our **justice substance project** we are aiming for all individuals in the justice system with concerns about their substance use are receiving the support they need.

By implementing a new single system screening process in court social work, we have screened 603 individuals for substance support in 2024. Of these, 71% did not require support, whilst 29% did. Among those requiring support (29%) 88% had existing

support already in place and 12% were referred to community-based support. Therefore 100% of

individuals screened and identifying to have concerns with their substance use were offered or accessing support. This screening process, initially tested on specific days, will now be conducted Monday to Friday due to its positive impact.

Ensuring support is available at point of identification of need has also been a key. Through our new pilot single pathway, people within supervised bail and diversion with substance use concerns, are offered an appointment with Alcohol and Drugs Action direct access service. Between May and December 2024, 33 appointments were given out. 64% were attended and 52% of attendees are now receiving ongoing support from Alcohol and Drugs Action.

Feedback has also been given by staff involved in this pathway and this has been captured below.

Staff have found that this helps to **'break barriers'** with service users able to discuss their substance use without fear of how this may further impact on their Justice involvement. **'Works well'** with younger people/first time offenders having allocated appointment times who may be less likely to attend 'drop' in appointments. Will stop potential escalation of offending/substance use at this early stage being linked in with support. Find worker at ADA **'easy to speak to'**

People with lived experience sharing their views and informing our improvements

People with lived experience, such as people who have spent time in prison or been the victim of a crime, have unique insight into what works and what doesn't in the justice system. This is vital to shaping and testing our improvements. However, we need to ensure that we have the systems and support in place to ensure all the all clear on the purpose and how their voice will be used.

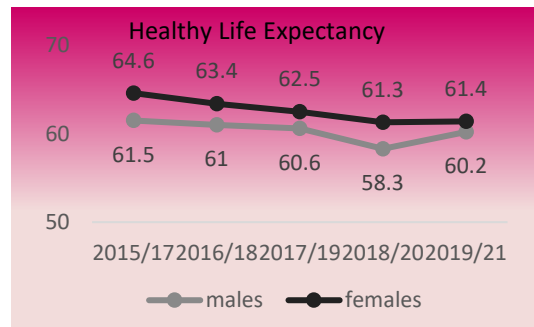
During 2024, the Health Determinants Research Collaboration has been working with Justice Social Work to conduct a lived experience project with aim of gaining an understanding of the following, with the findings to be used across the Stretch Outcome 9 improvement aims:

- how an individual's engagement with the Justice System has impacted on their experience of services (e.g. housing, health, employment, benefits, alcohol and drugs, police), as well as in the community.
- An individual's journey through the justice system - factors affecting an individual's decision to engage/discontinue; and identification of best practice from their perspective.
- the experience of staff working within the Justice system

As part of this, two justice social workers have received training and support on qualitative research. Following which they have been recruiting service users to participate in this project, with 5 service users having been interviewed (by end of March 2025) using a Topic Guide developed by the Team. Different methods of recording and transcribing have been tested by the team, with varying results. Accuracy is crucial and the learning from the different methods and costs will be shared in the evaluation report for other teams to learn from. Recruitment and interviews is ongoing until May 2025, and thereafter the analysis and write up of the findings of the project conducted with a final report available in August 2025.

Healthy life expectancy for all

Latest data available at the end of 2024, shows slight improvement in estimated healthy life expectancy (HLE) at birth (2019-2021) with 60.2 years for Males up from 58.3 years in 2018-2020 and slightly lower than the figure for Scotland of 60.4 years. Whilst estimated healthy life expectancy at birth for Females was 61.4 years, similar to the figure for 2018-2020 of 61.3 years and the figure for Scotland of 61.1 years. Despite the improvement from the previous reporting period, it is recognised that further improvement is required with healthy life expectancy remaining below the baseline period.



Through our improvement projects we are committed to tackling health inequalities through both preventative and targeted approaches. We have focused on highlighting the impact of our individual behavioural decisions and providing specialist outreach and targeted services for particularly high-risk individuals but also addressing wider environmental factors such as reducing youth homelessness, supporting opportunities to be active and part of our communities and ensuring accessibility of services for all.

Increasing access to community based support for people living with chronic pain

Chronic pain can profoundly impact an individual's life, leading to physical limitations, emotional distress, and social isolation. In October 2024, 371 people in Aberdeen were on waiting lists for chronic pain services, with 18.5% from Northfield, Middlefield, Summerhill, Sheddockskey, Mastrick and Hilton areas.

Through the **Chronic Pain Management project**, Community Planning Aberdeen are supporting community-based self-management and pathways initiatives to improve quality of life. A key new approach tested was co-designing Community Appointment Days (CAD), in equal partnerships with communities. Community Appointment Days:

- are centred around the simple concept of understanding what matters to someone, then working alongside them to make that happen
- promote patient empowerment and encourages them to learn more so they can more effectively self-manage chronic conditions
- bring together a range of health, social care, and wellbeing services across private, public, and third sectors all under one roof in a community venue and allows attendees to have personalised conversations on what matters most to them.
- takes a more person-centred and holistic approach to treat such as complex issue.

Chronic pain was assessed as being appropriate to pilot the approach as local waiting lists and times have increased in recent years and patients on the chronic pain waiting list, are also likely to be on other waiting lists for services such as podiatry or mental health. A group of 32 service users, staff and third sector community partners took part in the BIG Conversation to start co-producing the Community Appointment Day. Everybody was equal.

Chronic Pain Support

**5th February 2025
10.00am - 4.00pm
Vaccination & Wellbeing Hub, Bon Accord Centre**

Chronic Pain Community Appointment Day - Free to Attend

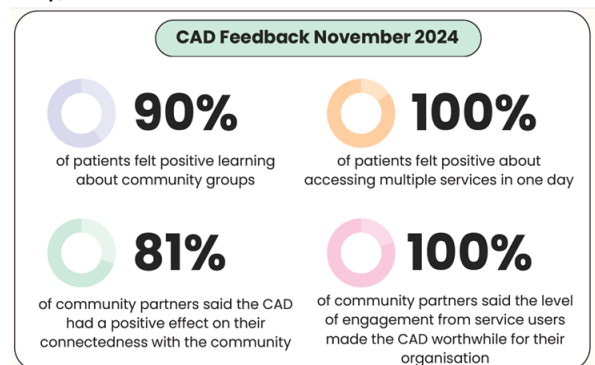
Come along to our Chronic Pain Community Appointment Day - Everyone welcome. Have a chat with our team about "What Matters to You" and take part in an Information and Q&A session delivered by NHS Grampian Chronic Pain Management Team. Gain some peer support in our Pain Cafe (refreshments provided), speak to Allied Health Professionals (i.e. Physiotherapy, Dietetician, Occupational Therapists etc) and visit our community partner stalls which will include the following:

NHS Grampian Chronic Pain Team	Sport Aberdeen
Aberdeen Fibromyalgia Support Group	Versus Arthritis
University of Aberdeen Research Team	Pain Concern
Aberdeen Action on Disability	Employability Support
Nuffield Sport Pain Programme	Aberdeen in Recovery
Department of Work & Pensions	Alcohol & Drugs Action
Mental Health & Wellbeing Support	Financial Support
Wellbeing Co-ordinators	Carers Support
Allied Health Professionals	Housing Support

Information available in other languages and formats by contacting Equality and Diversity on 01224 551116 or emailing gram.communications@nhs.scot

Using the waiting list data, the first Community Appointment Days was held at Get active @ Northfield with 98 people taking part (49% (46) of these were patients from the Chronic Pain Management Service waiting list and 52 were walk-ins, along with 30 carers). The Day also featured 20 Community Partner Stalls introducing people to services, including pain-specific support, mental health, medication and recovery, benefits and employability, and more.

The approach has significantly improved access to support and resources for individuals living with chronic pain, contributing to better management of their condition and overall well-being. Following the first CAD, there has been a 36% increase in people living with chronic pain engaged in self-management initiatives (66 in Oct 2024 to 90 in Jan 2025) and a 300% increase in community services engaging in the chronic pain pathway.



Evaluation data showed:

- 8/10 patients felt that the Community Appointment Day either mostly or completely addressed what mattered most to them
- 94% of people felt a positive impact on their wellbeing from having fewer time-constraints
- 100% of people felt positive about accessing multiple services in one day
- 9/10 people felt positive about learning about community groups
- 9/10 people would recommend this event to friends or family
- 9/10 people felt the venue was easy to find and accessible

Feedback has been positive with participants stating:

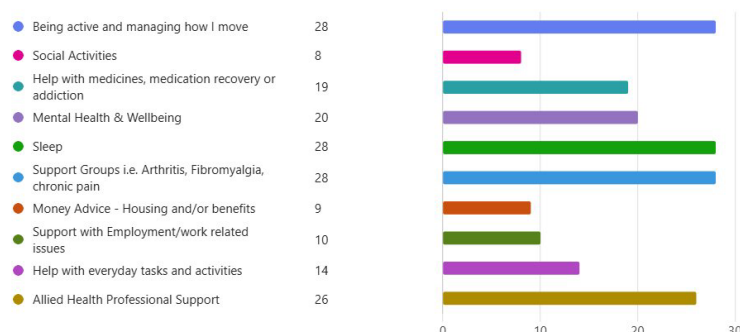
I feel really listened to and looking forward to continued input to developing the Community Appointment Day. Great to have an opportunity to talk to people in the same boat as me and find out what has helped them.

Excellent opportunity to be involved from the start in a new way of working. This has given me hope.

The second Community Appointment Day was held at the Aberdeen Vaccination and Wellbeing Hub on 5 February 2025. 127 people attended, with 61 people pre-booking their place, and 66 walk ins.

Evaluation data showed:

- 77% of pre-booked attendees were female, which is largely reflective of the chronic pain waiting list
- The median age of pre-booked attendees was 64 years, although attendees ranged between 24-83 years
- 86% of pre-booked attendees had no previous contact with the Chronic Pain team, highlighting the importance of taking an a preventative, population level approach
- 37% of pre-booked attendees learned about the Day via social media and 23% via their GP
- The chart below shows which support pre-booked attendees received at the Community Appointment Day

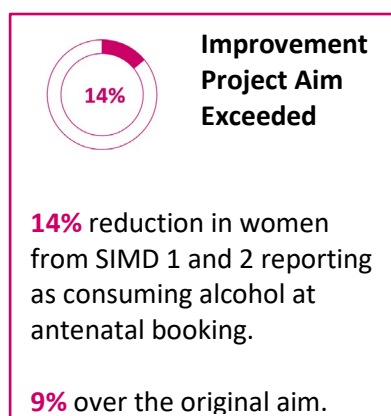


Supporting people in our priority neighbourhoods access support

Through our engagement, our communities expressed the importance of access to community health care and support services. We need to ensure that these services are available when required and in suitable settings. To support this, our **uptake of cancer screening and support for women in pregnancy** projects have focused on people in our priority neighbourhoods.

We have developed a comprehensive care pathway that ensures all pregnant women who smoke, have previously smoked, or have a high carbon monoxide reading are referred to a Health Point member of staff for health and wellbeing discussions. Pregnant women have to opt out of support after this conversation, with the outcomes fed back to the Midwifery team ensuring they can have supportive follow up conversations. The pathway launched on 17 March 2025 and as of 31 March 2025, 13 pregnant women have been referred.

Latest data shows a 0.8% reduction in women who smoked during pregnancy, lower than the rate for Scotland of 10.7% and the 2020-2022 rate of 10.4%. However, smoking during pregnancy is higher in least affluent areas (25%) compared to most affluent areas (2.8%). There has been a 1.4% and 1.6% reduction in % of women from Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 1 and 2 areas who smoked during pregnancy between 2021-22 and 2021-23, compared to a 0.3% and 0.1% reduction in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 4 and 5 areas.



At antenatal appointment booking, we've also seen a:

- 33% reduction in the number of women from Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 1 and 2 areas reporting as a current smoker (146 to 96 in 2023/24).
- 14% reduction in the number of women from Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 1 and 2 areas reporting as consuming alcohol (22 to 19 in 2023).

However, we know that data on alcohol consumption in pregnancy is thought to be under reported, therefore actual levels could be much higher and we will continue to progress improvement activity in this area.

We have also worked with Grampian Regional Equality Council's existing community health champions and recruited 20 new Community Champions in Sunnybank, Old Aberdeen, Powis and or Froghall areas. These individuals are trusted voices in the community and have helped share information about increasing uptake of cancer screening and reducing smoking and alcohol use during pregnancy. By leveraging trusted community voices, we are testing how community voices increase awareness, influence behaviour change, and improve health outcomes related to these issues.

Through community engagement, new communication materials including 'postcard' resources and 3 posters tailored to address the barriers we know people from Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 1 and 2 areas and ethnic minority groups are most likely to face have been produced to encourage uptake.

Enabling people over 50 to Stay Well, Stay Connected in their communities



**Improvement
Project Aim
Exceeded**

169% increase in people engaged in Stay Well Stay Connected projects.

119% over the original aim.

We are committed to providing accessible opportunities for people aged over 50 to stay well and connected in their community. People have different interests and through our **Stay Well Stay Connected project** we are widening the choice of classes and activities to encourage people to participate. As a result 1,777 people aged 50+ are now regularly engaged in initiatives as of December 2024, a 169% increase from 660 people in December 2023.

We have tested a number of new community-based initiatives. These

have included, a new monthly Soup and Sannies session at Cornhill Community Centre which aims to informally support mental wellbeing and expand the number of indoor activities for older people. 20 people have attended between January and March 2025.



We have also co-delivered a new women's health project through the Scottish Football Association's Power of Football programme at Pittodrie. Seven women completed the training programme, and 24 women have signed up to the programme waiting list for 2025. Two co-ordinators from the Health and Social Care Partnership and Aberdeen Football Community Trust are currently undergoing training to become accredited facilitators and are on track to be ready by March 2025. Feedback from women who completed the programme has been very positive.

Definitely feel more educated and equipped with techniques."

"I've enjoyed each week because I've learned something new each time and spent time with a lovely bunch of ladies."

67% increase in carers identified



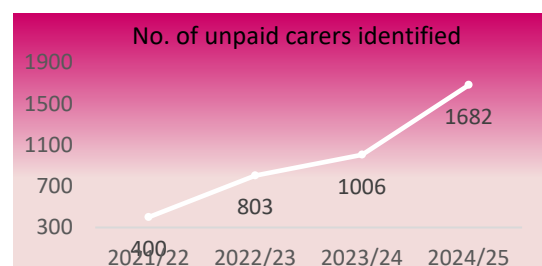
**Improvement
Project Aim
Exceeded**

67% increase carers being supported.

Community Planning Aberdeen recognises the critical role of unpaid carers and the need for early identification and support to improve the quality of life for both carers and those they care for.

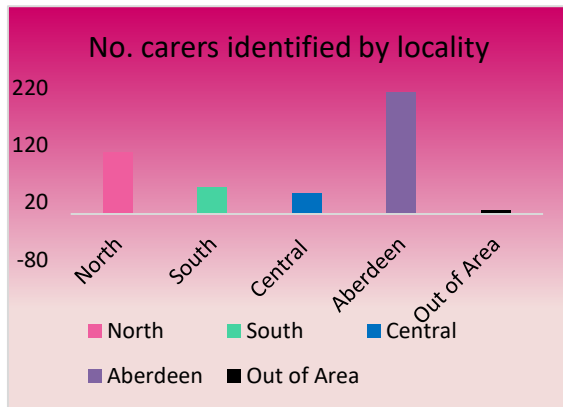
Through our increase the **number of carers accessing support project** we are testing a variety of referral pathways to identify new unpaid carers and ensuring that they receive the necessary support that helps them manage their responsibilities and maintain their own health and wellbeing.

The new referral pathways have included staff now being based within the following locations to identify unpaid adult carers earlier. Presence in these locations has meant that unpaid carers who do not know about the Adult Carers support Service, can seek help and support, face-to-face at a time and a place that meets their individual needs. As well as registering as a carer,



the team regularly signpost and refer unpaid carers to partners who can support them with other challenges they may be experiencing.

- Woodend Hospital at the Specialist Rehab Ward (9 referrals); Alzheimer Scotland Brain Health and Dementia Resource Centre Ward (11 referrals)
- the Wee Blether cafes now in 11 locations (some groups meet weekly, others fortnightly and some meet monthly). New groups being started in coming months



- Quarriers are now also attending the care management resource allocation panels enabling us to refer carers who are not yet supported for support, should they desire this.

As a result, there has been a significant increase in the number of referrals received by Quarriers over the last 12 months, 448 (April 2024- March 2025) compared to 409 in 2023/24 a 10% increase. Similarly there has been a 67% increase in the total number of unpaid carers identified (1006 in 2023/24 to 1682 in 2024/25).

Feedback from carers and staff has been very positive

I had no idea there was support for unpaid carers, I had not heard about Quarriers, today has been helpful. I can speak to relatives when they visit and tell them about the support available.

I am so glad I got the opportunity to talk with you today and complete the registration form, I did not see myself as a carer. **(Vaccination Centre)**

I saw the notice in the coffee shop, my husband has had a stroke, I don't know how I am going to cope. Talking to you today has been a big help. **(Relative Woodend)**

Healthy Weight Aberdeen and Whole Systems Approach

Currently, 1 in 5 Primary 1 children in Aberdeen are at risk of being overweight, with higher rates in least affluent areas. Half of the pregnant women in Aberdeen were overweight in 2022, and this continues to rise year-on-year. Deprivation plays a significant role, with those in the least affluent areas nearly twice as likely to be at risk of being an unhealthy weight. Trends also show inequalities based on gender, age, and ethnicity, with men and boys showing higher rates of unhealthy weight compared to women and girls. Poor diets, low physical activity, and the severe health and economic consequences of unhealthy weight highlight the need for urgent, comprehensive public health interventions.

In response to this position, on 30th August 2024, the Healthy Weight Aberdeen approach event was held. 111 people from a range of sectors attended. The event provided a shared understanding of the reality of the challenge to address healthy weight and an opportunity



to consider how the local system is operating and where there are the greatest prospects for change. The event report is available at [Healthy Weight Aberdeen Report-30 Aug 2024](#) and visit [| Aberdeen City HSCP](#) for highlights. Following the event we have now established a Healthy Weight Aberdeen Systems Network Group to take the approach forward.

Promoting Healthy Life Choices

130%

Improvement
Project Aim
Exceeded

59 low income families in priority neighbourhoods supported to improve healthy eating behaviours and adopt good life choices to support weight.

9 over the original aim

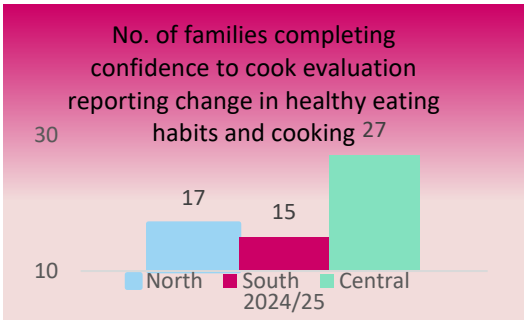
Through our Healthy Life Choices project we supported 59 adults of low-income families in priority neighbourhoods to improve healthy eating behaviours and adopt good life choices to support healthy weight in 2024/25. Of the 59 adults supported 27 were from the Central locality, 15 South and 17 North. During this period, 205 young people were also supported to improve healthy eating behaviours and adopt good life choices, 8 from North locality, 133 from South and 64 from Central.

Through the changes being tested we are providing effective weight management support and clear pathways for

healthier living. Some of the changes are:

Confidence to Cook Programme

In 2024, the project has had a positive impact, by delivering tailored Confidence 2 Cook programmes targeted at a range of people and across our communities, for example Grey Hope, St, Fitticks, Touch of Love, Youth workers, Cairncry Adults Cooking with Confidence; CFINE, Seaton Community Centre, Hanover Community Centre, Barnardos Adult and Gray street allotment (Young Carers Integrated Food Programme-) and Family learning Classes. The programme focused on improving participants' confidence, life skills, and knowledge about healthy eating on a budget. As a result, 205 young people have been supported to improve cooking skills, meal planning, cooking healthy dishes and food safety knowledge. 59 adults have been supported.



Family Food and Fun

Who: Families (up to 3 children) for each session. Age - Primary 4 and above

Every Saturday Starting from Sat 24th August- Saturday 28th September

Morning session - 10:00 am - 12:00pm
Afternoon session - 1:00pm - 3:00pm

2nd course
Sat 2nd Nov- Sat 7th Dec
Morning session- 10:00 am- 12:00pm
Afternoon session- 1:00pm -3:00pm

Cairncry Community Centre, Foresterhill Road, Cornhill, AB16 5HL
Contact details: cairncrycca@gmail.com 01224 698920

Safe, Delicious and Fun!

REGISTER HERE

Feedback from families has been very positive

"I would just like to say how much the confidence to cook sessions that has attended has helped my child so much not just with skills which have come on so well but anxiety as well as confidence. He would never engaged in something like this but now willing to try. Thank you so much for all the support you have given these past months and hopefully will continue in the future."

Lochside ASG Young person attending Confidence 2 Cook classes

To further support communities, a Food Champions Connect Event was held with 27 community members attending. The event promoted and raised awareness on available healthier choices in the community, Confidence 2 Cook classes and address barriers in accessing healthier choices.



A range of supports are required, and we have developed self-management support to enable people to access digital weight management services. Through the Digital Health Information Plus service, with Aberdeen City Libraries, we are connecting people with health information both online and in print. We offer 1-2-1 sessions, for in person support, in any of our community libraries, and can provide a device and wi-fi if needed. In 2024/25, 23 people from the Central locality have been offered 121 weight support.

Reaching out to people at risk and removing barriers to accessing alcohol supports

Alcohol and drugs are two of five lifestyle behavioural risk factors which contribute to the majority of chronic and non-communicable disease in our population. Latest data available at the end of 2024 shows that the rate (5-year average age-standardised) of alcohol-related deaths had reduced by 0.5 from 19.7 per 100,000 in 2019-23 compared to 20.3 in 2018-22. Although a reduction, this is an increase since the baseline (18.7) and we know that the effects of harmful drinking on individuals, their families and communities are wide-ranging, and we strive to sustain the reduction achieved and further this to achieve the Stretch Outcome by 2026.

Similarly, latest data has also shown that the 5 year average (2019-2023) drug related death rate for Aberdeen is 23.7 deaths per 100,000 population, the same as the rate for 2018-2022 and higher since 2017 baseline. Whilst we are seeing impact from some of improvement, we know we need to do more over the year ahead to save lives and achieve our Stretch Outcome.

Improving access to alcohol screening and support

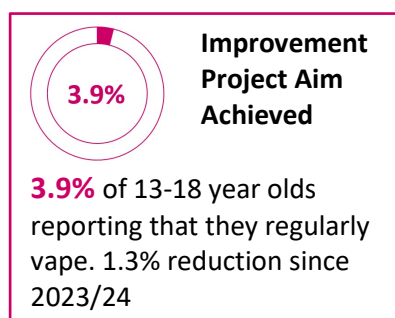


In the City Voice in 2024 less than half of respondents (48.6%) correctly identified 14 units as the maximum recommended number of units with approximately a quarter (24.6%) saying they didn't know. This leaves nearly a third of respondents unclear as to the alcohol content of the drinks they consume.

The data shows that we need to do more and throughout 2024/25 we have focused on widening access to alcohol screening and support, including a promotional campaign and the development of a direct prompt on the screening quiz to offer access support immediately.

- 559 referrals to the Alcohol and Drugs Action alcohol service between 2022-2024, 159 in 2024 a 36% decrease since 2023. 30% of people supported in 2024 were from priority areas for AB16 (17), AB24 (22) and AB11 (9) a 44% decrease since 2023 (86 to 48). The decrease is disappointing and we will explore the reasons for this and what we need to do more to increase referrals to and engagement with alcohol support.
- Through the targeted social media campaign, subsequent levels of engagement with the 'Alcohol Aberdeen' online 'quiz' (AUDIT screening tool) increased. Between May and March 2025, 167 people have completed the 'quiz' 41% (69) completed the during Alcohol Awareness week, demonstrating the effectiveness of having a campaign of paid advertising.
- 4 people have self referred to Alcohol and Drugs Action helpline between January 2025 and March 2025 from the new self-referral process direct from the quiz/screening online process
- The number of Alcohol Brief Interventions (ABI's) have increased by 12% from 2,704 in 2022/23 to 3,035 in 2023/24. Data for 2024/25 is not yet available. Over the last 2 years approximately 40% (2,249) of interventions were carried out by wider settings.
- In 2024/25, there was 21% decrease in people starting alcohol treatment (337 compared to 427 in 2023/24). 39% (133) were from a priority neighbourhood a 3% decrease (133 compared to 179 in 2023/24). Similarly, there has been a 14% decrease in referrals for alcohol treatment (781 compared to 908 in 2023/24). 40% (314) were from a priority neighbourhood a 3% decrease from 2023/24 (393 compared to 314).

Reduction in the number of 13-15 year olds reporting having used cannabis, ketamine and 13-18 vaping



Through our **13-15 year old substance projects** we have tested a range of mechanisms which are prevention focused and aim to both raise awareness of the harm from substance use and vaping, but also provide support to stop using. A key area has been empowering young people to develop the material to ensure it has greatest chance of success.

Pupils from Lochside Academy have started to develop a substance use social media awareness campaign focussing awareness, informed choice, harm reduction and support.

Aberdeen Youth Movement have also developed a vaping social media campaign. The feedback from those involved highlighted several areas of focus for the materials and identified some missing elements. They have pinpointed 6-10 key areas that could be added or improved.

As well as campaigns, we have tested new programmes for pupils and staff to increase awareness the harms from substances. Specially, the Absafe vaping workshop was held with primary 7 pupils in Countesswells to raise awareness of the safety risks of vaping. Feedback from staff and pupils was positive as below. The workshop will now be tested in other primary 7 classes.

The P7 teacher and pupils found the workshop really beneficial. The workshop outcomes were age appropriate and engaging and built on prior knowledge the pupils had as well as extending their understanding. It was centred mostly around vapes and had a great balance between pupil active pupil involvement and information giving.

The Aberdeen City Health and Wellbeing Survey undertaken across all schools in November 2024, data shows that compared to November 2023, shows signs of positive impact, with a 34.5% decrease from 136 to 89 in the number of 13-15 year olds reporting that they have used cannabis. There has also been a 20.8% decrease in the number reporting they have used ketamine from 24 to 19 and 1.3% reduction in % of 13-18 year olds reporting that they regularly vape.

Reducing drug related deaths and increasing access to Naloxone

The Partnership through our [fatal drug overdose projects](#) are focused on reducing drug related deaths (DRDs) through innovative developments and by increasing the distribution of naloxone. Naloxone is an emergency medication that can reverse the effects of an overdose of opioids like heroin or methadone and can save someone's life. There has been a 23% decrease in suspected drug related deaths from 2023/24 (73) to 2024/25 (56), however a 12% increase since 2022/23 (49). 45% (25) of suspected drug related deaths over 2024/25 were from individuals living in priority neighbourhoods, this is 11% decrease since 2023/24 (28) and a 4% decrease since (2022/23).

During 2024/25, the project has focused on using a new data system to show drug deaths, non-fatal overdoses / ambulance call outs, Assertive Outreach referral reasons, weekly and by location so we can better identify locality based harms and trends.

Using the data, interventions in our priority neighbourhoods to increase public awareness and access to naloxone, the life saving drug, to people at risk of overdose, as well as to family members/friends of those in need have been tested. This has included a new app and public access naloxone boxes. The public access naloxone boxes will be installed at four strategic sites.

The Aberdeen Protects app launched in December 2024 promotes the uptake and use of naloxone. The app is for anyone - whether parents, staff or people using substances. Whether its young people at a party, people out at the weekend or people who have used substances for a long time, we can all reduce harm by understanding the risks and how to respond.

It enables people to:

- find nearest stockists of naloxone
- videos on how to use naloxone and respond to an overdose
- understand signs and symptoms of overdose
- harm reduction advice
- order postal naloxone kit online
- links to support services
- links to national drug alerts
- local push notifications of drug alerts, harms and local support



As at the end of March 2025, 533 people have downloaded the app.

We're also getting out in the community and running community learning and development event to raise awareness of naloxone and support available. Morven Court in Torry hosted our first event. Also, for International Overdose Awareness Day, Aberdeen In Recovery, were in various locations across the city to raise awareness and to supply naloxone kits.



It is important that training on naloxone is available for everyone. Our young people are a key part of this. We welcome that all secondary schools have staff members trained to administer naloxone and that from the 2024/25 school session all S4 pupils have been trained in administering naloxone, in addition to the Level 6 first aid course. This provides them with a qualification, as well as the ability to save someone's life. In addition, 88 staff were trained in naloxone in 2024.

Despite the above, there has been a 11% decrease in the total number of naloxone kits issued in Aberdeen from 2023/24 to 2024/25, (1,407 to 1,250). Of the 1,250 kits issued in 2024/25, 77% were issued to Persons at Risk, a 2% reduction from 2023/24. In 2024/25, 12% of kits were supplied due to the previous kit being used, this a 7% increase from 2022/23. From 2022/23 to 2023/24 we saw an increase in supply in Central (12%) and South (7%) Localities, with a slight decrease of 2% in North. However in 2024/25 we saw a slight decrease of 5% (23) in Central, and 27% (51) decrease in South, however a 3% (5) increase in North.

Since January 2024, 33 services have issued Naloxone kits, with 88% of kits issued being supplied from specialist substance misuse services and 3rd Sector/Peer Support Organisations. We know we need to do more. Naloxone is one of many interventions we are testing to reduce drug related deaths. Our projects are also focusing on targeting interventions and providing support at the various settings where people are attending and needing support. We are seeing the impact of this approach, with Crisis Response service showing a 7% increase in referrals from 646 to 692 (Dec to Nov 2024) and a 2% increase in individuals supported (485 to 495 Dec to Nov 2024). In addition, 48 people received the 'Sharp Response' mobile service, this is in addition to the fixed site need exchange sites. With 93% of needles issued returned for safe disposal.

Reaching out to people at risk and removing barriers to accessing supports

There are many barriers to people engaging with drug services and we know that a range of interventions and approaches based in the heart of our communities are required to ensure people, particularly in our priority neighbourhoods, have access to the support they need and that any potential harm is reduced. Through a range of outreach interventions we are aiming support people access the support they need.

Assertive Outreach (AO) is a crucial approach for engaging individuals who are at high risk of substance use harm. The approach provides targeted support to those most at risk, helping to reduce harm by enhancing their existing support or accessing appropriate drug and alcohol services to meet their needs. Through our **Assertive Outreach project**, we have focused on the outcomes of people engaged with service and aiming to increasing the number of people closed who are no longer classed at risk. We have seen a 15% increase in the percentage of people closed from Assertive Outreach no longer considered at risk, with 71% (404) of people closed no longer considered at risk, compared to 56% (291) in 2023/24. This is same, 71% when looking at people closed from priority neighbourhoods in 2024/25.

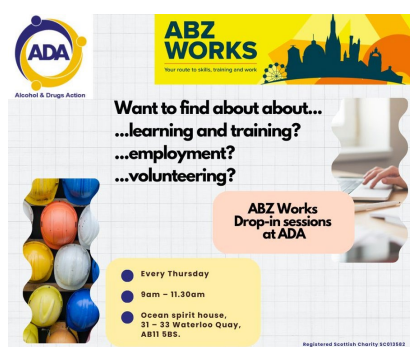
The project have introduced:

- Individualised Approach/ Shared Safety and Care Plans
- Tailored multi-agency interventions and outreach efforts, and
- Process for responding to patterns and risk factors associated with fatal overdoses to enable individuals referred to be supported in their community

As well as positive outcomes for people referred, we've also seen a 10% increase in the number of referrals to Assertive Outreach have from 523 in 2023/24 to 573 in 2024/25. This is the highest they've been since April 2021 and shows that the referral pathways and awareness across our partners is impactful. In 2024/25, 54% of Assertive Outreach referrals were from priority neighbourhoods, this is a 8% increase from 46 % in 2023/24.

Empowering Recovery

Recovery from drug and alcohol-related harm is crucial for creating healthier communities. We know that each person's recovery journey is unique, and that providing a range of supportive opportunities helps sustain their recovery, reduce stigma, and increase resilience. Through **our recovery project** we are committed to building on the treatment, support and community peer led initiatives available and providing recovery support for individual, family, and community levels to help people live free from the potential harm of alcohol and drugs.

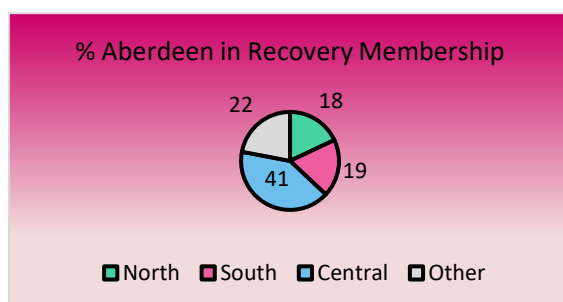


One of the initiatives we have piloted is the co-design of an employability pathway with ABZWorks which aims to support people in recovery into employment through support provided by employability keyworker. When people are work-ready, a paid work experience placement with ongoing employability keyworker is provided. Weekly employability drop-ins at Waterloo Quay started on 6 June 2024, and as at 30 March 2025, 22 individuals (12 males and 10 females) have been referred and 45% (10) are have either moved into employment or training/work placement/volunteering. Read the impact of the pathway on Rob below:

Hi my names Rob, I struggled with alcohol addiction due to mental health issues which have played a massive part on most of my life but with help I'm receiving from the people below will explain why I am in a much better place now than I've ever been before....the journey that I've been involved with over the last 2-years has been life changing in many aspects. I was seeking help and got in touch with ADA (Alcohol & Drugs Action) whom have helped me through tough times and still are today. My Counselling and help from the organisation has helped me adapt and adjust to becoming a better and more productive person than I've ever been and a lot of the credit has to go towards my one to one Counselling sessions with a chap called Finlay who has given me the mental strength to believe in myself again.

Finlay also put me in touch with Kevin at ABZ WORKS whom provided me with dynamic options as regards to connections with getting help back into work related situations such as Skills Development Scotland for help with CV's/ available courses/ job searches throughout Aberdeen city and even helped with funding/ vouchers for buying necessary items to get me through the month and footwear when starting a new job and also advice on life itself which all helped me in a great way.

We have also increased support available over the weekend, with Aberdeen In Recovery (AiR) now running sessions on Sundays and Alcohol and Drugs Action open on Saturdays and Sundays, to ensure that when people need support they can access it. There were 144 members of Aberdeen In Recovery during 2024/25. Of which 41% were from the Central locality, 19% South and 18% North locality. On average Aberdeen in Recovery are running 14 different groups per week with the aim of providing a variety of options to meet the individuals interest and needs. Through Aberdeen In Recovery activities, there were 18229.5 SAFE (Stable Addiction-Free Engagement) hours which equates to 2430.6 days.



Raising awareness of the rights of people affected by substance use

Over the past 18 months Public Health and Alcohol and Drug Partnership colleagues have been facilitating a Grampian-wide Working Group to support the implementation of the [National Charter of Rights](#) with a Grampian voice. The work has focussed on the lived experiences of those people coming into service and opening a dialogue with senior decision makers to make improvements.

In addition, the Working Group co-designed a reporting tool to provide evidence on the implementation of the Charter of Rights to Scottish Government and supplementary data in line with Medically Assisted Treatment Standards. It resulted in Grampian being heralded as good practice by leading national policy makers with aspirations to embed the practice across the rest of Scotland. Grampian colleagues have had the opportunity to challenge current reporting procedures to apply in future a Rights-based approach. This enables a holistic submission on the Substance Use landscape across an Alcohol and Drug Partnership and its community.

Promotional materials have been developed locally in Grampian to promote the local voice along side the National Charter of Rights.



New Stretch Outcome focusing on reducing homelessness and youth homelessness

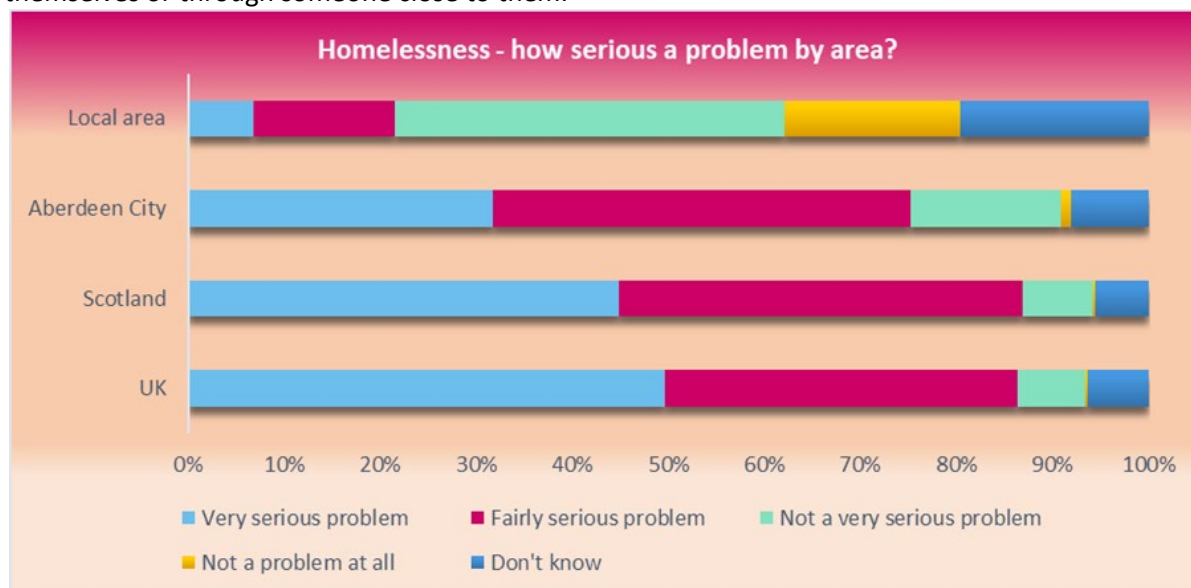
In 2023/24, there were 1763 homeless applications and 481 youth homeless applications and whilst similar to 2022/23 (1772 and 470), this is an 18% and 12.6% increase since baseline (2016/17). In response to this, Community Planning Aberdeen introduced a new Stretch Outcome that aims to “Reduce homelessness by 10% and youth homelessness by 6% by 2026, ensuring it is rare, brief and non-recurring with a longer term ambition to end homelessness in Aberdeen City.”

As part of the city’s ongoing efforts to enact change and reduce homelessness locally, we were delighted that Aberdeen was selected to be one of the six flagship locations of Homewards, a five year locally led programme launched by Prince William and The Royal Foundation of the Prince and Princess of Wales. Through Homewards, Aberdeen has created a coalition of 55 committed people and organisations from private, public and voluntary sectors who are working together to reduce homelessness and youth homelessness.



To support the work to achieve Stretch Outcome 12 and plans of Homewards Aberdeen's Coalition, in 2024, we asked City Voice panellists what it was like to live in Aberdeen, including some of the challenges around seeking secure housing and employment, as well as awareness and understanding of the different forms of homelessness, its causes and solutions.

Respondents considered homelessness to be a serious problem across Scotland more widely (87%), than in Aberdeen (75%) or their local area (22%). It is also clear that homelessness touches many people's lives, with 18% reported having experience of homelessness across its many forms, either themselves or through someone close to them.



When thinking about the causes of homelessness, the top-ranking answers include both structural issues such as poverty and a shortage of affordable housing, as well as individual factors including alcohol and drug problems and mental and physical health problems, indicating some awareness of the complexity of the issue. However, 91.8% of respondents reported drug and alcohol problems as one of the main causes of homelessness, reflecting a common and persistent misconception about homelessness. In addition, 44% of respondents didn't feel they had a role to play in ending homelessness. This supports the need for our **reframing perception and encouraging action** project to raise awareness, through a local campaign, about the breadth of homelessness experiences and the range of drivers of homelessness for individuals, including structural factors.

Creating new employment opportunities

Through our **private sector and youth homelessness projects** we are actively working in partnership to reduce and prevent homelessness through the creation of employment pathways for those at risk of, or experiencing homelessness in the city.

The need for employment pathways is crucial to preventing homelessness. In response to this priority, we welcomed the launch of Invisible Cities in Aberdeen. Invisible Cities is a social enterprise bringing a fresh take to local tourism by offering walking tours of cities across the UK guided by people who have experienced homelessness. Invisible Cities have delivered five training sessions on public speaking, story telling, history, people service, first aid as well as support to design and develop their own tour with. The first graduation of guides was on 27th March 2025 was attended by HRH The Prince of Wales. Tours have now launched, with four people now employed through Invisible Cities (one Project Coordinator and three guides).

As a result of elevating employers' awareness of homelessness in Aberdeen and reframing any existing perceptions, two cafe roles have been filled through Homewards Activator Pret Rising Stars project. One 63 year old and one 23 year old who had experienced homelessness and were referred from coalition partners Aberdeen City Council and Only A Pavement Away.

David Jackson, VisitScotland Regional Director for Aberdeen, said:
 “I am thrilled that Invisible Cities is launching its tours in Aberdeen. Their training is vital in helping those who have found themselves homeless to gain new skills and confidence in public speaking, people service and storytelling”.



Youth employment opportunities

As above, the need for employment pathways has been identified as crucial to preventing homelessness. With our **youth homelessness project**, Homewards, is working with Hays (a Homewards Activator), one of the UK's leading recruitment experts. Through this partnership, Hays will support the programme by securing national and local commitments for employment and training opportunities that will roll out across the six Homewards locations. Hays will also share bespoke data-driven insights that are crucial to understanding and addressing employment barriers faced by those experiencing homelessness.

The new partnership builds on youth employability programme Project Flourish, created in 2022 by Hays and EveryYouth – a national charity that helps 16-25-year-olds at risk of, or experiencing homelessness develop the skills to secure meaningful employment, and provides job-ready training and support.



Image: Kensington Palace

To support embedding Project Flourish in Aberdeen, in March 2025, Prince William and Homewards Advocate, Steven Bartlett, joined a workshop with young people from Aberdeen. During the session young people played “employment bingo” during which they expressed their challenges in finding employment. The image below shows the feedback in picture form:

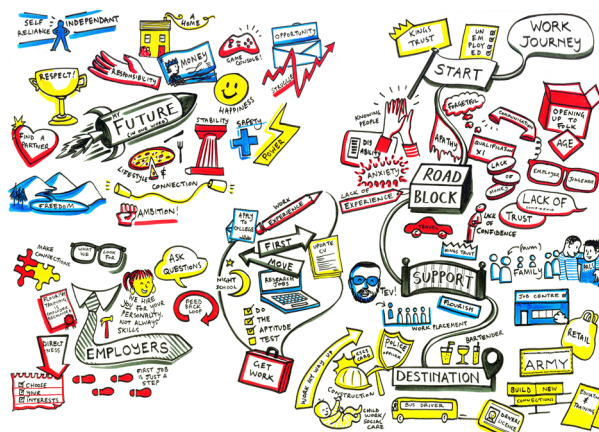


Image: illustrated by Rosie Cunningham for The Royal Foundation

Steven Barlett has also made a commitment to supporting the importance of employment through using his platform to showcase the positive role and impact business can have in efforts to end homelessness. He commented, “This partnership isn’t just about providing jobs, it’s about restoring dignity, possibility, and hope. And if we can prove what’s possible here, we can change the way the country thinks about homelessness for good.”



Image: Kensington Palace

Bringing sectors together to unlock tenancy sustainment

Homewards is bringing together partners to deliver an Innovative Housing Project (IHP) in each of the six locations. The purpose is to test and try new ways to unlock homes to end homelessness in each location. Key to their success will be the ability to scale and replicate our approach, so these initial projects can lead to more homes. The Aberdeen Innovative Housing Project pilot will focus on single adults and young people experiencing relationship breakdown.

The Aberdeen Innovative Housing Project will work initially with local Coalition member, Langstane Housing Association, a registered social landlord to identify ways to bring void properties back into occupation more quickly and in a condition to support more sustainable tenancies by making these houses feel like home with the right furniture and fittings. According to research done by End Furniture Poverty and Sheffield Hallam University, 26% of social housing tenants live in furniture poverty, with 8% living in ‘deep furniture poverty’, without three or more essential items. Working with Langstane, Homewards convened local and national businesses to provide these items in an effort to encourage longer tenancy and help to prevent homelessness. This initiative saw support from Homewards Activator IKEA, Bosch, DFS Group, Dunelm, The Furnishing Service, The Multibank, and local organisations Glencraft and Somebody Cares.

To date 8 private sector employers are supporting initiatives in the city to prevent homelessness which has ranged from supporting local reframing work, providing furniture, white goods, fittings and furnishings, to providing employment opportunities and as detailed above.

Young people helping to reframe homelessness

Data from local and national surveys show the need to reframe perceptions of homelessness. Enabling young people to express their views and support reframing homelessness is key to this. On 7 August 2024, as part of Prince William’s work in addressing homelessness, Homelessness: Reframed at the Saatchi Gallery opened. Homelessness: Reframed is an art exhibition bringing to life the breadth and complexities of homelessness across the country and giving the public an opportunity to engage with, and better understand, the stories of those with experience of homelessness. The exhibition displayed exceptional works from artists in the UK and beyond, sharing pieces inspired by their own, or others’, experiences of homelessness, and include pieces created by children and young people in at a series of creative workshops held across the six flagship Homewards locations.

Through our **reframing homelessness project**, artist Chloé Nicole Farrell worked in collaboration with participants from the Young Ambassadors Creative Learning, Aberdeen to create their work “Better a Wee Bush than Nae Bield” for the exhibition. The title derives from the motto emblazoned on the seal of famed Scottish poet Robert Burns and serves as the inspiration for this Aberdeen door. The young people from Aberdeen visited the Saatchi Gallery to see their exhibition in display.



Image: Kensington Palace

Young people hackathon developing artificial intelligence prototype

Our **Ask and Act project**, presented a pitch to young people from Robert Gordon University during their annual hackathon with the ask that they develop a prototype to prove concept of the development of an artificial intelligence tool that can support roll out of incoming Scottish Government Ask and Act policy. Following the pitch, a number of teams chose the project with one of the teams winning the prize as best prototype or response for a probable Ask and Act Tool. This has now led to further conversations on the possibility of developing a potential solution.



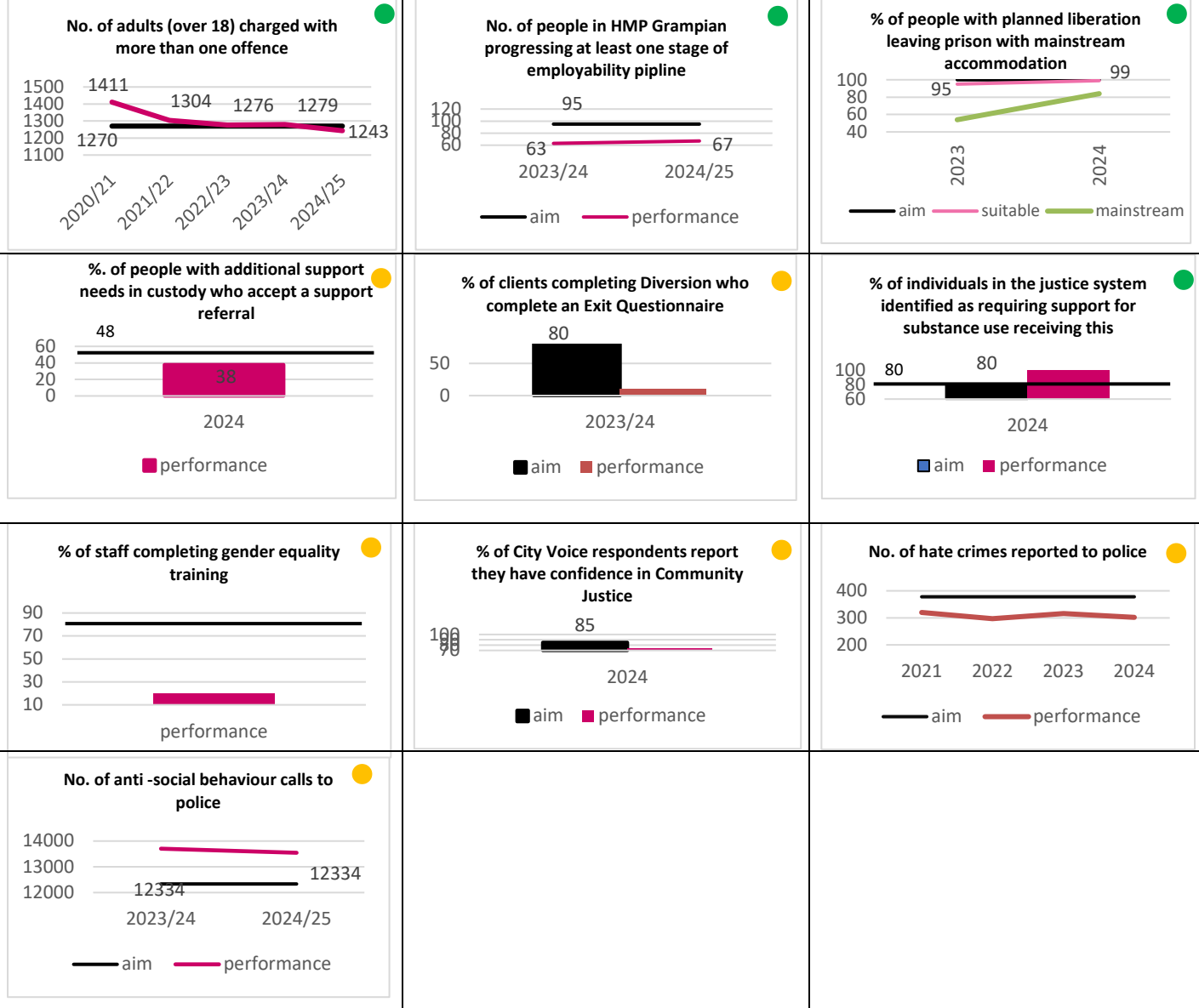
What impact have we had?



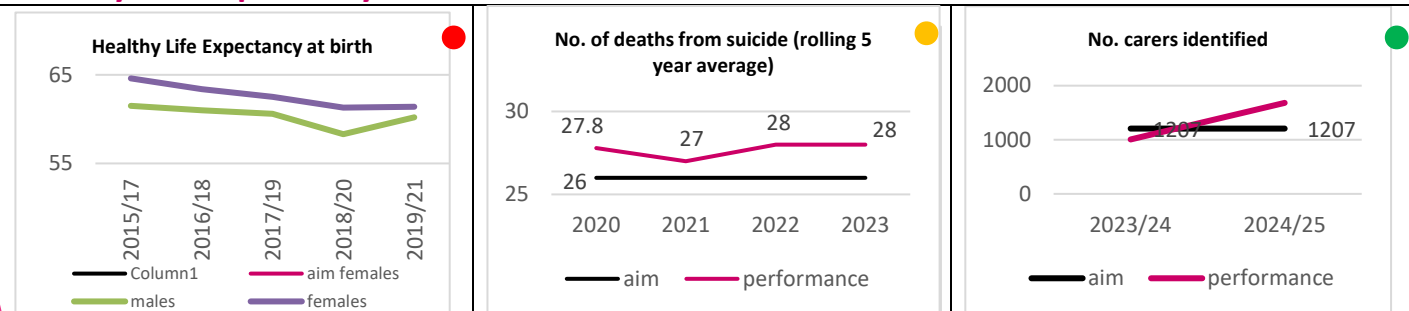
- Yes
- Getting there
- Not yet

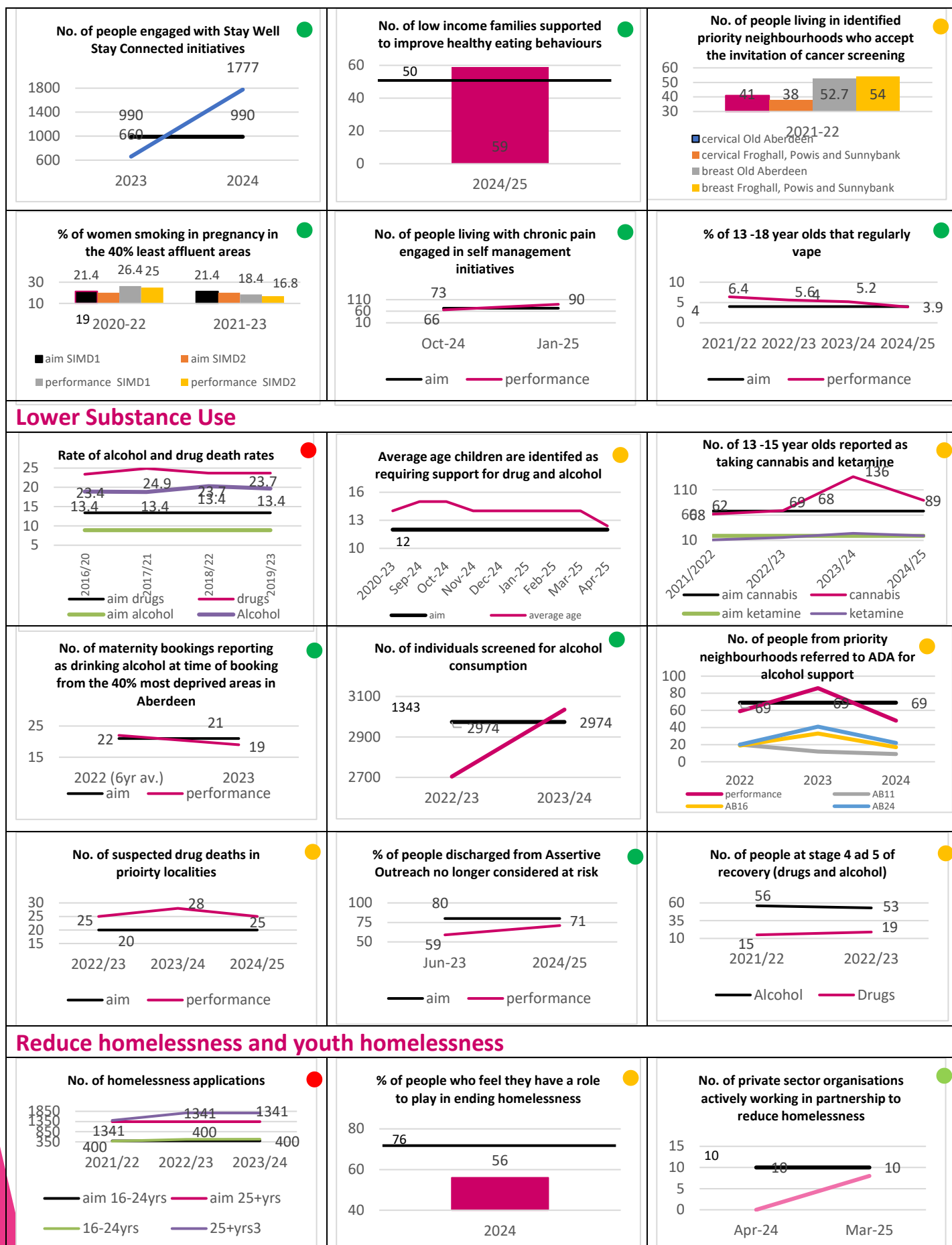
24/26 improvement aim Performance

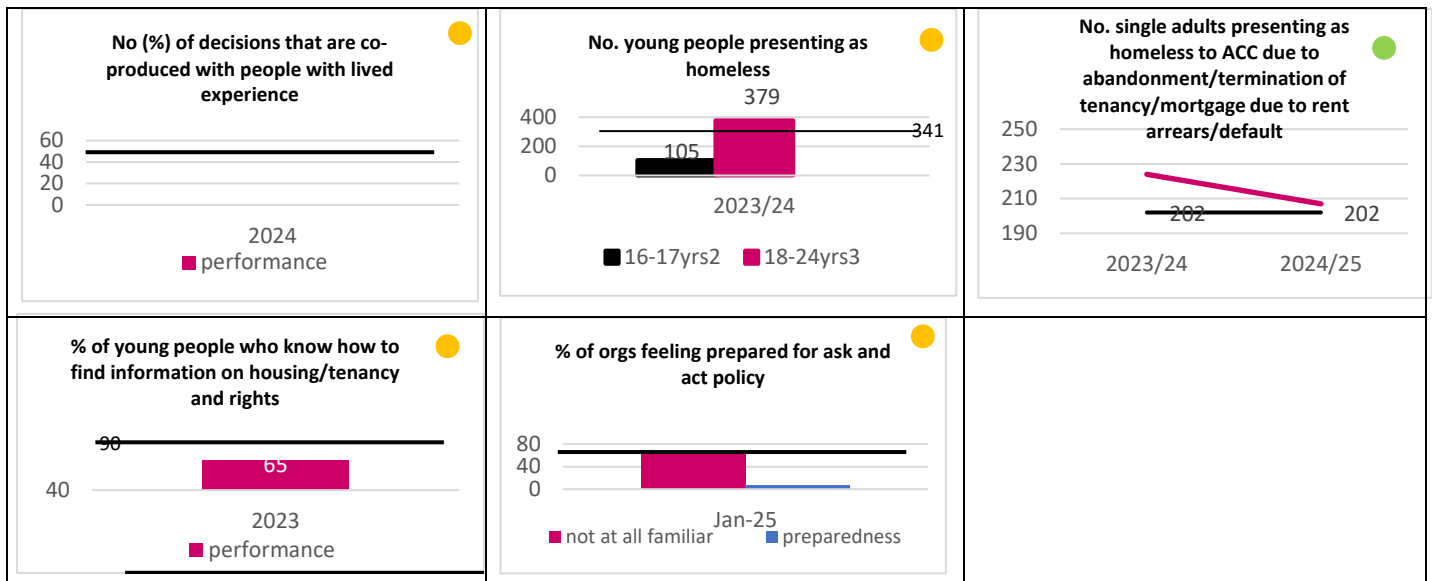
Fewer Convictions and Reconvictions



Healthy Life Expectancy







Improvement Priorities 2025/26



- Supporting people in the justice system access housing, employability, and professional support from all touchpoints to reduce repeat offending and a return to custody
- Test targeted interventions to reduce adult anti-social behaviour
- Use data to identify areas for targeted supports to take preventative measures to reduce suicides and improve mental health.
- Continue to expand and identify new Stay Well Stay Connected programmes such as the next Power of Football programme and a Seven-Week Body Walking course between 31 March-5 May at Westburn Park, targeting over 50s who want to strengthen their mobility and improve overall health and wellbeing
- Implement the whole system approach to healthy weight
- Continue to tackle hate crime through expansion of Third-Party Reporting Centres and training to teams across the partnership who face and support those victimised by hate crimes
- Hold further community appointment days focused on other areas
- Further develop the whole family approach to support a reduction in drug related deaths and increase availability of naloxone through in our priority neighbourhoods.
- Explore the data for alcohol referrals and support and look at ways to increase the number receiving support
- Roll out Alcohol Brief Conversation (ABC) training updating the previous Alcohol Brief Intervention (ABI) approach
- Spread drugs and vaping prevention programmes across schools
- Test innovative approaches to preventing homelessness through participation in the Royal Foundation of the Prince and Princess of Wales Homewards Programme.
- Leverage new employment and training opportunities for people experiencing homelessness through engagement with the private sector.



Prosperous Place

Our Stretch Outcomes

What we are working towards	How we are doing
<u>SO13</u> Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by at least 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate	44.2% reduction in carbon emissions (1063.1 (2022)) from baseline (2005) and a 5.8% reduction since 2021 (1128) to 2022.
<u>SO14</u> Increase sustainable travel: 38% of people walking; 5% of people cycling and wheeling as main mode of travel and a 5% reduction in car miles by 2026.	30% of people walking , a 2% increase from 2017 and 2022.
	1% of people cycling , a 1.4% decrease from 2017 and 1% from 2022.
	4% reduction in car Kms from 1258 in 2019 to 1210 in 2023, however a 4% increase since 2022 (1163).
<u>SO15</u> 26% of Aberdeen's area will be protected and/or managed for nature and 60% of people report they feel that spaces and buildings are well cared for by 2026.	4% increase in % of land is protected for nature 17 to 21.3% in 2025, compared to 17% in 2021
	4% reduction in people report they feel that spaces and buildings are well cared for, 49% in 2021 to 42.2% in 2024.

Progress made during 2024/25

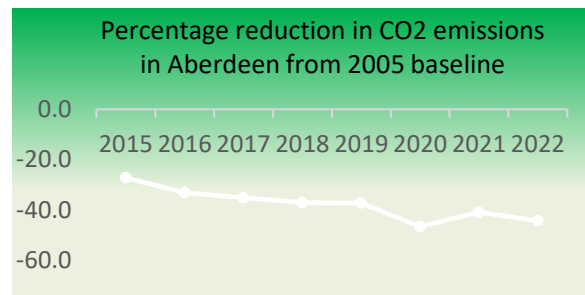


Stretch Outcome 13 progressing with 44.2% reduction in carbon emissions

STRETCH OUTCOME 13 PROGRESSING WITH 44.2% reduction in carbon emissions.



Latest data available at the end of 2024 shows that we have reduced our carbon emissions with a 3.4% reduction since the last reporting period with 1,063.1 ktCO₂e down from 1,128 ktCO₂e in 2021 and a 44.2% reduction since our baseline of 2005.



It is heartening to see the positive outcomes through our collective improvement aims, as well as through national and system based efforts. Our improvement activity through Community Planning has multiple positive benefits on health and environment including active travel and nature for health.

Green Champion led initiatives to reduce public sector carbon emissions

5.5% reduction in public sector emissions.

Latest data shows a 5.5% decrease in public sector emissions between 2021 and 2022 (80.6ktCO₂e – down from 85 in 2021) and an 18% decrease since 2016. Through our public sector emissions project we are committed to our Green Champions, staff volunteers that help identify areas of improvement and drive change within our partner organisations to reduce emissions and encourage

sustainability. The Green Champions have continued to grow in strength with 128 Green Champions across 4 Community Planning Aberdeen partners, a 30% increase since January 2024.

Over 2024/25, we have seen 13 green initiatives tested with **7945kgCO₂e** carbon emissions saved, an increase of 111% since the project started in June 2021. Initiatives have included:

- Monitor switch off
- Step challenge
- Plastic free July and recycle week campaigns

The Green Champions also organised a litter pick at the beach, with 11 people participating, including 2 young people. 14 bags of rubbish collected, with 314.09kgCO₂e emissions collected, saved 24040.87kg CO₂e if used for Energy from Waste compared to landfill.

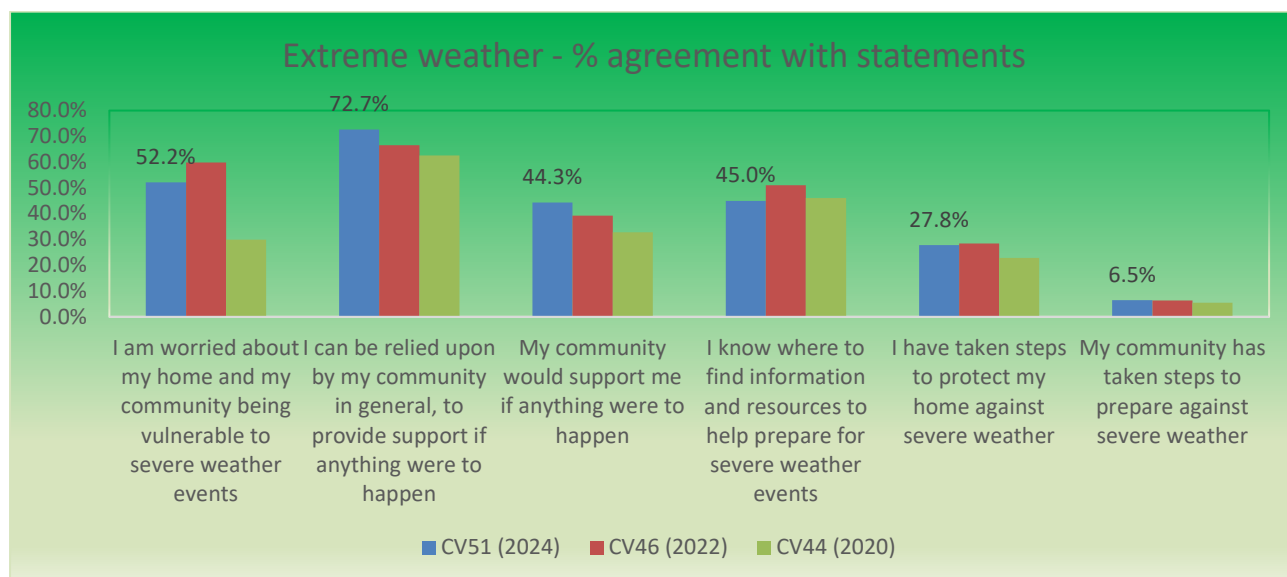


Building community resilience

We recognise the importance of our communities and have supported community resilience, from the development of resilience plans through to volunteering opportunities, and we have seen the positive impact of this during winter 2024/25 when we experienced storms and icy weather.

Through our **community resilience** and **fall prevention** projects our existing Resilience Groups and new volunteers have rallied their communities. To support our communities, we held a further Community Resilience Conference in October 2024. Approximately 70 people attended the conference and feedback was very positive with connections made with community groups/individuals and organisations to support communities take action in extreme weather.

We also know that people want to help their community in extreme weather, but don't know where to find information or the steps to take. Data from our City Voice in 2024, showed that while 72.2% of respondents agreed that they could be relied upon to by their neighbours or community to provide support if anything were to happen, only 45% said they would know where to find information and resources to help prepare for severe weather events.



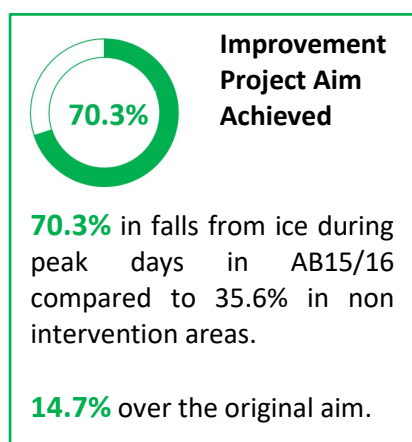
To increase awareness, in November 2024:

- We distributed leaflets on how to prepare for winter weather to target groups and areas of high footfall
- We commenced a social media campaign targeted at communities and put to the front page of Aberdeen City Council web site 'preparing for winter' information
- Our communities shared information across their networks and as highlighted below one Community Council created their own 'Winter Resilience' section on their website.

As well as development of full community resilience plans, we have supported resilience plans and task-specific plans with 47 community emergency resilience boxes issued in December/January 2023 to a variety of community locations. Battery generator packs are also being provided to the 3 existing Community Resilience Groups to assist the overall response to a power outage emergency.



By March 2025 over 40 battery packs had been distributed to the 3 community resilience groups and the Health and Social Care partnership for use in emergencies by the most vulnerable who require powered equipment. The Annual Community Resilience Conference has been confirmed for Friday 10 October 2025 at King's Church, Bridge of Don.

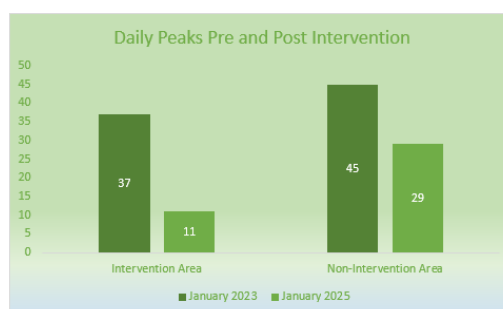


Not all residents are fit and well enough to grit their own paths, and for them the injuries from falls can be life-changing. Through **our fall prevention project**, we have launched a community based approach to falls prevention using the volunteer RNLI model.

Led by 3 community councils, with approximately 20 volunteers and supported by the local authority and NHS Grampian, the volunteer 'ice crews' are gritting high risk pavement areas in AB15 / AB16 to help keep our community out and about. The crews are sent intelligence from the council when road surface temperatures are forecast to drop below zero, at which point they use hand gritters and salt bags provided by the council to

grit the pavements where the highest number of falls were seen the previous winter.

As a result, compared to other areas where Ice Crews are not yet in place, we found in AB15 and AB16 the daily peak of 11 falls in the cold snap in January 2025, was 29.7% of the daily peak of 37 falls in January 2023. A reduction of 70.3%. Meanwhile, in the rest of the city, the daily peak in January 2025 was 29 falls, 64.4% of the peak of 45 falls in January 2023. A reduction of 35.6%. Therefore in the intervention re there was a 34.7% greater reduction. 14.7% over the original aim.



The 3 Community Councils engaged with their communities through their own local communication methods such as newsletters, door drops, community meetings, social media. Through this they were able to recruit volunteers, as well as keep them up to date on the progress. One of the Community Councils visited local schools in their area and engaged with the pupils to help create names for their gritters. The Rosehill, Stockethill Community Council created a [website](#) with information about the project

Do you want to help out the community in a practical way?

We have a volunteer winter gritting team who help grit the pavements each winter.

We have 5 push gritters we can deploy to get key routes gritted when snow and ice is forecast. These gritters were funded as part of [an NHS Grampian project to reduce falls in our community](#).



Feedback has been that an increased sense of community spirit has been built up in some parts:

"There were the practical benefits of having the pavements gritted, but also I felt it was a very practical, visible, way of building community. People saw the salt bags on the streets, spoke to the gritting volunteers, helped themselves and their neighbours. It allowed ACC and the Community Council to engage directly with the community. I think people appreciated that money and time was being spent on the area".

"We found it to be a community building exercise - we worked with the local school kids to name our gritters and local businesses such as the Croft and Cairns and Murdos helped us store equipment and salt".

Improving access to recycling is a key part of supporting a reduction in waste. To support the reduction of electrical waste, a new local small electrical recycling initiative was launched on International E-Waste Day (14th October 2024), to raise awareness of the importance of recycling electricals and significantly reduce e-waste and its environmental impact by making it easier for residents to recycle their electricals.

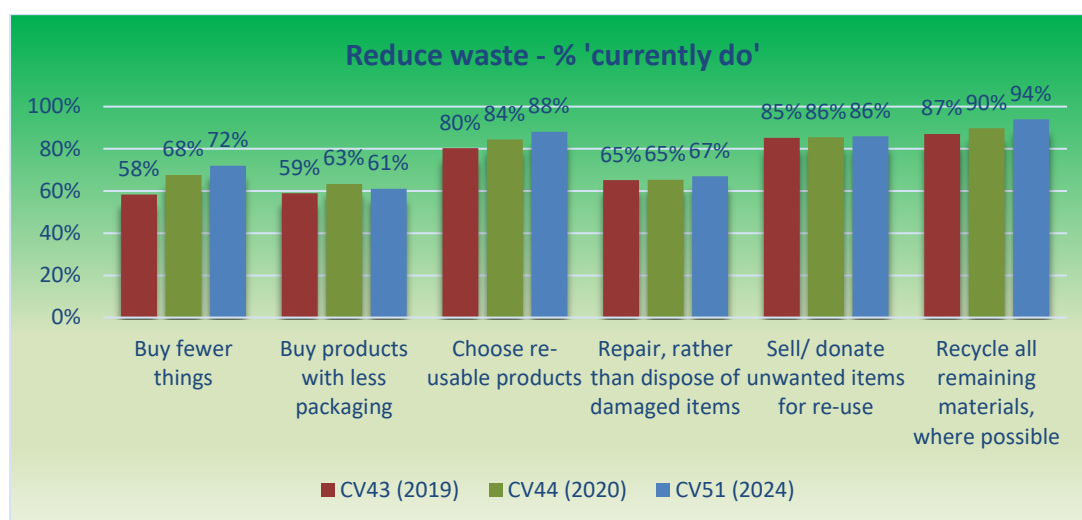


19 striking, large, bright pink collection bins were installed across Aberdeen neighbourhoods, providing locals with easily accessible options at community sports clubs and libraries, to safely dispose of unwanted electrical items. Three additional bins were also toured around schools to help educate young people on recycling.

Over the period Oct 2024-Feb 2025, 8 tonnes of electrical items were recycled. The initiative was promoted via HypnoCat, the Recycle Your Electricals mesmerising pink, fluffy mascot, who is on a mission to hypnotise local residents into recycling their electricals.

In 2023, 89,314 tonnes of household waste were generated in Aberdeen City – up from 88,802 in 2022, however a 7% reduction from baseline of 2016. Of the waste generated, 41.8% was recycled in 2023, the same as 2022. 12.2% went to landfill and 46% managed by other diversions.

Data from the latest City Voice shows a 4% increase in respondents reporting that they currently buy fewer things (72%); choose re-usable products (88%); and recycle all remaining materials, where possible (94%). When data was broken down by locality, smaller % of respondents from north locality and from SIMD1 reported currently doing the actions below with the exception of buying fewer things where 85% of SIMD1 respondents reported this compared to 72% City Wide and Sell/ donate unwanted items for re-use where 87% of North respondents reporting doing this compared to 85.9% City Wide.

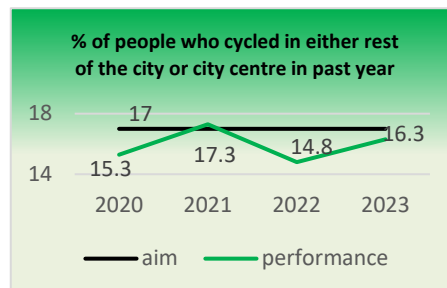


Supporting people to cycle and wheel

Small changes to the way we travel can play a big role in helping to reduce the impact of climate change, as well as health benefits individually and for our communities. We are continuing to work with our communities to promote and enable everyone to walk, wheel or cycle for recreation and transport and to therefore support our environmental and health outcomes.

Data from City Voice in 2023 shows that the percentage of people using a standard pedal bike was 16.3%, with 20% of respondents from the Central locality cycling as one mode of travel in the past year, compared to 18% from the South locality and 12 % from North.

We recognise the barriers to cycling and through our [cycling project](#) we are putting in place initiatives to enable people to cycle, some of these are:



- **I Bike Communities** - delivered in partnership with Sustrans Scotland, the programme engages, enables, and motivates participants to increase their levels of active travel and physical activity, thereby improving health and wellbeing. During 2024/25, a total of 61 cycling training sessions were held, with 130 participants, of which 27% (35) people were from our priority neighbourhoods and 19% (25) were new Scots/Asylum seekers. These sessions allow people to improve their biking skills and build confidence. Many participants had not ridden a bike in several years. **Aberdeen Cycle Hub** - opened in Seaton in Oct 2024 to support the local community in enjoying walking, wheeling, and cycling with the necessary resources. Many young people have either learned to ride bikes or gained confidence through the obstacle course, while adults rediscovered their enthusiasm for cycling. One mother remarked, **“I better get a bike now. My son is off on his bike”** and another shared her joy at riding again after **“at least 20 years since I have gone this fast.”** There is also a selection of adapted bikes stored at the Hub and there has been regular attendance from Heathryburn Primary and Cults Academy, as well as an adult group from Inspire to make use of these bikes during weekly sessions.
- **North East Cycle Hub (NECH):** In 2024/25, 2514 bikes were diverted from landfill, with 920 of these being repaired and reused through Stella’s Voice, on behalf of the NECH project. NECH aims to develop a north east wide hub for bicycle repair and reuse across both the Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire local authority areas, enabling more people to cycle as part of their daily lives and support them as they do so.). The recycled bikes with helmets, locks and lights have been provided to schools in Aberdeen, to the Family Centre, and to refugees in Aberdeen. As of January 2025, they have begun collecting unwanted bikes from the Hazelhead recycling centre, with 198 bikes collected to April 2025.
- **Multistorey secure bicycle storage facilities for Tillydrone & Seaton:** installing safe and secure bicycle storage facilities can help reduce transport challenges for low-income residents and reduce the impact of transport poverty on these households. By promoting cycling for commuting and leisure, secure parking increases the accessibility of cycling and facilitates healthy and sustainable living. Tillydrone and Seaton were selected for a pilot programme where six storage units were installed, providing secure space of up to 12 bicycles. The project was awarded “Best Public Cycle Parking” by Aberdeen Cycle Forum in 2024.



Supporting all children and young people to walk, cycle and wheel

Community Planning Aberdeen are focused on supporting all children and young people to walk, cycle and wheel and safe routes and confidence to cycle are key to that. Through our [walking and cycling projects](#) we have a range of initiatives like the "Champions for Change" which have engaged children, young people, and families at St Machar and Lochside Academies to identify safe routes and priorities, enabling them to realise their rights and provide valuable feedback.

In partnership with Sustrans Scotland we support initiatives that promote active travel, sustainability and community engagement across the city. One such initiative, I Bike Schools, focuses on encouraging cycling and walking among children within a specific school cluster area. For 2024/25, the I Bike Schools officer worked with the St Machar Academy Associated Schools Group to inspire and support students in adopting active travel habits. Between August to December 2024, there were a total of 63 I Bike Schools activities and over 2,037 pupil engagements across 7 I Bike Schools.

In addition, through I Bike Schools, in 2024/25 we have delivered:

Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
6 Bikeability sessions with 73 pupil attendees •3 other Cycling Skills Sessions with 52 pupil attendees •12 led walks with 291 pupil attendees •2 led rides with 31 pupil attendees and •10 Education activities linked with Art and Design, Environment and Science with 203 pupil attendees. There were 18 instances of support from regular volunteers and 4 instances of support from other volunteers.	464 attendees participated in I Bike activities. These have included: •Led rides and walks – 138 pupil attendees. •Interest and Enthusiasm – 247 pupil attendees. •Planning meetings – 2 staff members. These activities have been supported by 9 regular volunteers, 9 parents and 24 staff members.	Q3 saw limited activities due to school holidays.	•15 pupils learned to ride bikes. •108 bikes were loaned to enable participation. •31 instances of support from volunteers •841 pupils attended our sessions.

As well as safe routes and confidence to cycle, we want our children and young people to have access to bikes, and that cycling is inclusive for all. We have seen positive impacts in both areas:

Increasing Accessing to Bikes for Young People

The “**Access to Bikes for Young People**” initiative (funded via the Nestrans’ People and Place Programme 2024/25) at Loirston Primary School is working in partnership with the parent council and a group of parents who are Cycle Trainers to deliver Bikeability. This has identified many pupils lack confidence cycling and do not own or have access to a bike. In partnership with Tyred and Cranky, 45 high-quality refurbished bikes have been provided to families and young people who otherwise would not have access to one. Bikes will help recipients access educational and employment opportunities. Work has also been ongoing with BeCycle to provide 30 bikes to meet requirements of approximately 60 beneficiaries through the Fersands and Fountain Community Project. Dyce academy received support to replace a fleet of bikes for school pupil use after their

previous bike fleet was stolen. 15 new bikes and helmets have been provided to support 20 – 25 young people to ride to school. The school identified beneficiaries, and these include refugees from Ukraine as well as young people in less affluent communities close to the school who would otherwise not have access to a bike

Inclusive cycling for children and young people

In early November 2024, I Bike, in partnership with Grampian Disability Sport and the Grampian Inclusive Cycling Bothies (GICB) hosted a Cycling Festival attended by over 40 families. Participants of all ages enjoyed the opportunity to ride bikes, with many experiencing cycling for the first time or after a long hiatus.

Through the Grampian Inclusive Cycling Bothies, 29 young people with a disability aged between 13-24 have been supported through weekly adapted and targeted cycling sessions, utilising a fleet of adaptive bikes designed to make cycling more accessible to everyone in the community. Through the partnership between I Bike Schools and GICB, hand bikes are available for school based sessions, enabling young wheelchair users, who had never cycled before, to participate in cycling alongside their peers.

The impact was profound, with one young participant exclaiming, *"I'm free!"* and one Pupil Support Assistant couldn't believe how chatty one of the boys became after just one session and both boys were desperate to have another go on the handcycle.



These efforts have improved physical health but also fostered a sense of community and inclusivity. 27 young people participated in the Scottish Disability Sport's Grampian Parasports festival on 27 September, aimed at P4 to S6 pupils with a physical impairment, visual impairment or hearing loss.

Social prescribing of nature

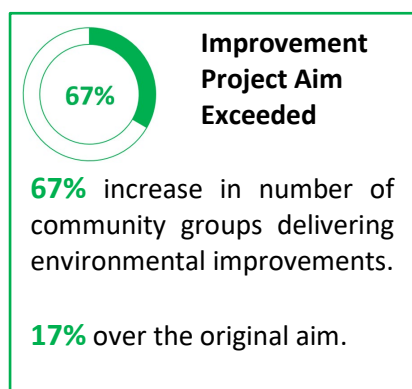
A growing body of evidence finds that connection to nature can benefit physical and mental health in varied ways including reducing stress, boosting the immune system, reducing symptoms of anxiety and depression and improved memory and concentration. Through [our social prescribing project](#), three GP practices in Aberdeen have begun training with RSPB Scotland to roll out 'Nature Prescriptions', an initiative designed to increase patients' physical and mental health through a greater connection with local nature.

A Nature Prescription is a guided conversation with a healthcare professional and patient which explores how wellbeing can be improved through a deeper connection with nature. Alongside the conversation, we have developed a 'Nature Prescription Calendar' which aims to support patients to connect with nature in their area. The calendar was informed by a community co-creation session, with suggested activities include spending time in a favourite nature space close to home, looking for signs of changing seasons, recording the nature you see through photos, drawings or writing, and visiting Torry Battery to go rockpooling.

Between April and December 2024, 13 people have been socially prescribed nature. Feedback from a local Doctor has been positive:

Dr Adrain Crofton, Lead Clinician, Torry Medical Practice said: "This locality-specific and user-friendly programme designed by RSPB Scotland is an excellent tool for us to give to patients who feel this might be something they would like to try but might not otherwise know where to start. The materials are of a high quality and very easy and fun to follow. "The great advantage of the nature prescription is that it is all on your doorstep and is something that can help anyone at any stage of life, and it's free. In many ways, that makes it one of the best treatments we have".

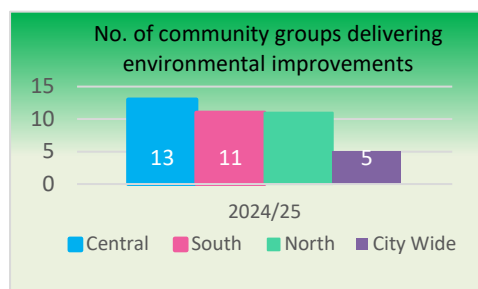
Communities leading environmental improvements



Through our **community environmental project**, Community Planning Aberdeen are committed to supporting communities to lead environmental initiatives which will make a real difference in their neighbourhood and help achieve reaching the targets set out in our collective Net Zero Aberdeen Routemap and Aberdeen Adapts framework.

One initiative tested is the Local Environmental Action Fund, administered by NESCAN Hub, which provides grants of up to £3,000 to support projects in local communities, that provide environmental improvements, support nature recovery, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and support local communities.

Between April and March 2025, 40 community led environmental improvement projects have been funded, 29 via the Local Environmental Action Fund (LEAF) and 11 from the Just Transition Participatory Budgeting (JTPB) Fund, an increase of 67% from 2023/24 (24). Of the 11 Just Transition Participatory Budgeting, 8 are supporting local environmental improvements for green spaces and a further 3 are supporting built-environment improvements such as energy efficiency upgrades for community buildings.



Of the 40 projects, 13 are in Central, 11 in South, 11 in North and 5 are City Wide. 12 projects are working in our priority neighbourhoods, 7 in central priority neighbourhoods and 5 in South.

The funds have been published widely and connections built with black, asian and minority ethnic and other minority groups to enable them to access the funding. Through enabling our communities with funding, support

and expertise provided by NESCAN Hub and the enthusiasm and commitment of community groups working for the benefit of nature, the planet and their community, we have seen a wide variety of the environmental action projects being seen spring up all over the city. Some examples:

Gairn Community Garden

Transforming an unused space along the Deeside Railway line into a vibrant, green community hub. Featuring raised beds for fresh produce, play areas for children, and peaceful spaces for socialising, it will be a place for everyone to connect.

By engaging local nurseries, older residents, and new community members, the garden will bridge generations and cultures, promoting inclusivity and community spirit. Focusing on sustainability, it will enhance biodiversity, reduce carbon footprints, and inspire eco-friendly living.

Bucksburn Academy Friends of the Additional Support Need Wing

Supporting users to modernise the allotment plot, creating a sustainable space for all pupils, staff, school families and young unaccompanied asylum-seekers to learn together. The space will be a haven for learning about sustainable land management, food production, mindfulness and mental health. The plot will be accessible to all users with wheelchair access, raised beds, a sensory garden and sheltered gathering space.

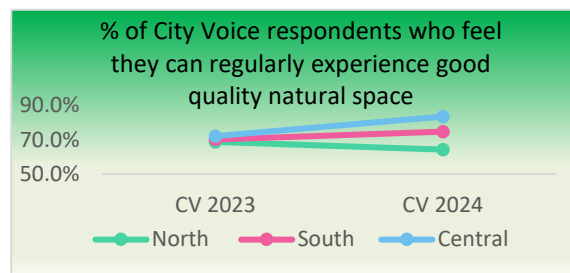


The project is also supporting groups seeking to adopt available / unused land – in particular working with the Mounthooly Food Forest Project as a pilot to showcase the potential for adopting greenspace that is currently managed by mowing alone, as well as supporting the Nature Awareness Strategy. Through partnership working, trees from Social Juice have been secured and a tree planting session is being planned. Drawing on the expertise of several community-led organisations and exploring different funding options, the project are also planning a bioblitz for summer.

Improving natural space

8.5% INCREASE in people feeling they can regularly experience good quality natural space

Through our **natural space project** we have seen a 8.5% increase in City Voice respondents who feel like they can regularly experience good quality natural space. This increase is also see across our South and Central localities whilst there has been a 7.9% decrease in North.



We have also seen a 4% increase in the % of land that is protected for nature (21% in 2024 from 17% in 2021). Despite this, we recognise that and we need to do more to encourage organisations and individuals protect land for nature as the signs ups to the land for nature pledge has remained static at 7 organisations for 2024. In addition, there has been a 4% reduction in people reporting that they feel that spaces and buildings are well cared for, 49% to 42.2% in 2024. These will continue to be areas of focus over 2025/26.

A range of initiatives are planned for the forthcoming year and have been held. One example, was a highly successful wildflower planting session at Westfield Park (a key site for Aberdeen B-Lines, a vital initiative that aims to create stepping stones of habitat across the city to support pollinators like bees, butterflies, hoverflies, and moths). The event, led by Buglife Scotland and sponsored by Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) Distribution, saw over 3,200 plug plants and native wildflower seeds, supplied by Scotia Seeds, added to the park's growing flower-rich grasslands. Around 40 volunteers turned out, including local residents, members of the Friends of Westfield Park group, Aberdeen City Council, and Southern Electricity Networks distribution staff.

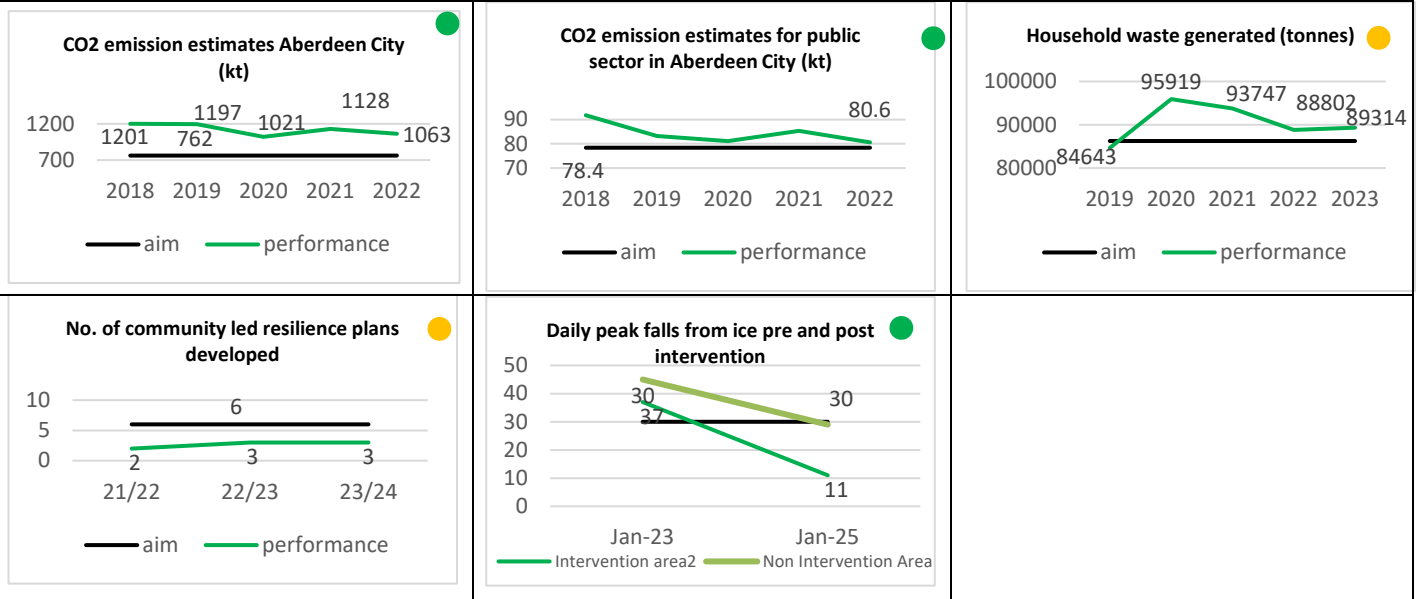


Since March 2023, 11 other sites across the city, have been supported to create flower-rich habitats by planting native wildflowers, installing bee hotels, and engaging local communities.

What impact have we had?



Climate Change

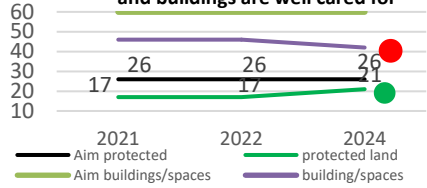


Walking, Cycling and Car Miles

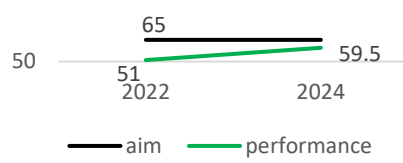


Natural and Built Environment

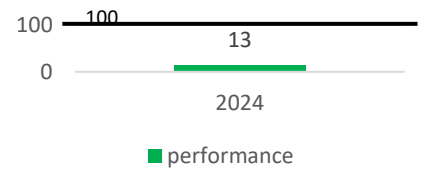
Amount of protected land and % of people reporting that they feel spaces and buildings are well cared for



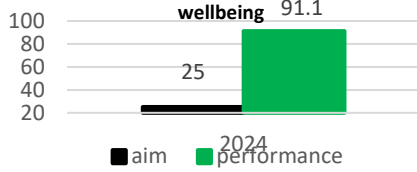
% of City Voice respondents who feel they can access good quality natural spaces



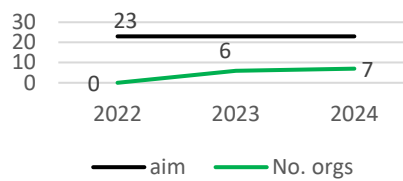
No. of people socially prescribed nature



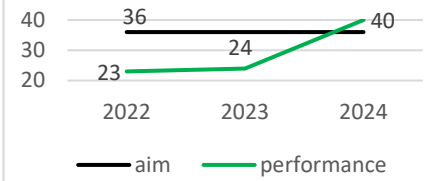
% of City Voice respondents report they understand the importance of nature on neighbourhood and wellbeing



No. of organisations pledging 10% of their land for nature



No. of community groups delivering local environmental improvements



Improvement priorities 2025/26



- Continue to support communities to develop community resilience plans, with plans in place for all communities at risk of flooding.
- Pilot a school food waste and allotment growing initiative
- Co-locate services within the community in a library in each of the North, Central, and South localities, to increase access to services in the community and reducing the need to travel by car.
- Pilot School Streets to improve the safety of children and their caregivers on the journey to and from school, thus encouraging more walking, wheeling and cycling for the school journey
- Work with communities to develop a community led action plan that set out clearly how both infrastructure and behaviour change can be delivered in their community that addresses the highlighted barriers and gets more people walking and less use of cars.
- Create with community members and local children a range of materials to promote and encourage use of natural spaces to meet people's interests.
- Create and pilot bat walks and other nature walks in local areas.
- Create wildlife corridors and B lines.
- Test travel tour fairs by the Countryside Rangers Service focusing on a minibeast safari looking at insects and woodland areas, and a night-time moth-spotting trail.
- Continue with the pilot social prescribing for nature
- Hold a Ranger/Volunteer Network Event to host volunteers involved with nature-based activities and offer support to groups e.g. funding, training if they are interested in offering nature-based social prescriptions.
- Continue to promote and increase number of organisations pledging to manage at least 10% of their land for nature.



Community Empowerment

Our Stretch Outcome

What we are working towards	How we are doing
<p>SO16 100% increase in the proportion of citizens who feel able to participate in decisions that help change things for the better by 2026</p>	<p>5.6% increase in % of City Voice respondents in 2024 scoring 5 and above (out of 1-7) feel able to participate in decisions that help change things for the better, 22.3% up from 16.7% in 2023, however lower than the baseline of 24.3% in 2021.</p>



Ensuring Children's Rights/UN Convention on Rights

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (Scotland) Act 2024 was enacted on 16 July 2024, ensuring that children's rights are respected and protected in Scotland. Our **Children and Young People's Rights** project, with children and young people, have been developing and expanding the ways in which we communicate with and involve children and young people in the planning and development of our work across the city.

100% of Community Planning Aberdeen Board decisions which impact on children and young people informed by them.



100% of Community Planning Aberdeen Board decisions which impact on children and young people have been informed by them. Of the 98 Local Outcome Improvement Plan projects, 60 (60.2%) have identified that they should and are involving children and young people, 26 (26.5%) have identified that involvement of Children and Young People is not applicable to their project, with 13 (13.3%) still to confirm. To support this, members of the Young Ambassadors who are supported via Create Learning and Aberdeen Youth Movement (AYM) who are supported via the youth work team have been meeting regularly to focus on the impact of United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child across the Partnership. They have developed and tested a range of approaches and these are reflected within the children and young people section of the toolkit. Some examples are:

The project has also compiled a comprehensive directory of youth engagement groups across the city, including key interest and target groups. We also work closely with youth participation colleges throughout the partnership to better establish opportunities to engage with our more vulnerable or hard to reach groups.

ACC Budget Phase 2

Aberdeen Youth Movement supported Aberdeen City Council with engaging with School pupils in the budget and capturing their views on the proposed items that would be affected and how this would affect their lives. A dedicated week long, lunch time takeovers was held from 4th November. 390 pupils participated in the consultation sessions from the following schools: Dyce, Bridge of Don, Lochside, Aberdeen Grammar School and Oldmachar Academies.

This was complemented by a Aberdeen Youth Movement social media campaign on the Budget, with 10,156 views.

Your Place; Your Plans; Your Future engagement –They have tried and tested different methods to come up with a universal youth friendly Your Place; Your Plans; Your Future engagement tool that is being used across the city with young people and within 5 local academies.

Creating the Conditions for Community Participation

There are many ways people can get involved in the work of Community Planning Aberdeen to make things better for their local community and influence how public services are delivered in their area to meet their needs. We are committed to enabling all citizens to participate should they wish to.

Improvement Project Aim Exceeded

956% increase in number of community members participating in community planning.

856% over the original aim.

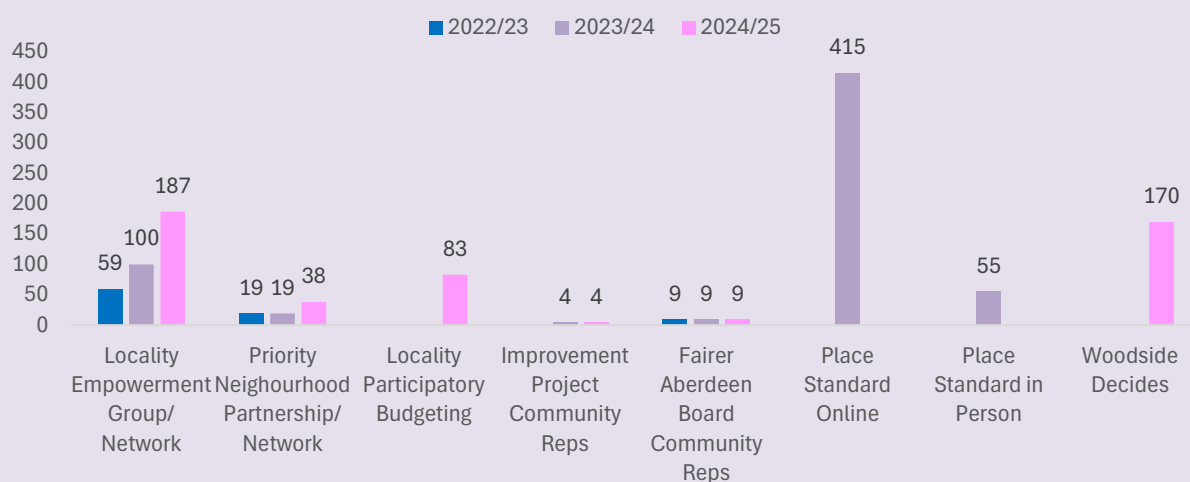
We are delighted that there are 961 community members currently participating in community planning at a meaningful level (From engaging to co-production) through a range of methods:

- Locality Empowerment Groups
- Priority Neighbourhood Partnerships
- Woodside Decides
- UDecide Participatory Budgeting
- Fairer Aberdeen Board
- Place Standard Community Engagement

This is a 60% increase from 2023/24 (602) and a 956% increase from 2022/23 (91), as well as 41 community groups and organisations, a 58% increase since 2022/23 (26).



No. of community members participating in community planning



Deep Engagement with Community Groups

Two ways of getting involved in community planning at a local level are through our [Locality Empowerment Groups](#) and [Priority Neighbourhood Partnerships](#). Our three Locality Empowerment Groups (LEGs) cover the North, South and Central localities. We also have three Priority Neighbourhood Partnerships (PNPs) which focus on some areas of the City which are less affluent. The groups are made up of local people interested in improving the quality of life for people living in their community. Members use their own knowledge and experiences to influence priorities, help determine solutions and drive the development and delivery of the Locality Plans. The Locality Empowerment Groups and Priority Neighbourhood Partnerships work together to take shared priority issues forward. [See table 1 below for our localities, neighbourhoods, and priority neighbourhoods.](#)

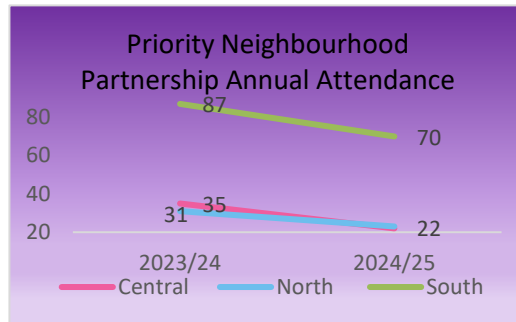
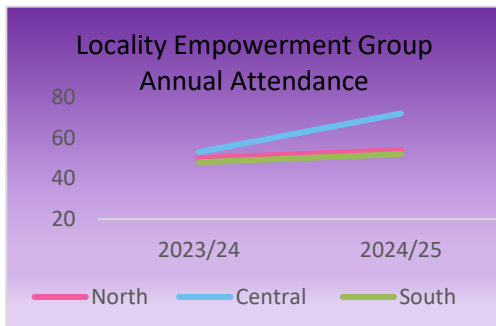
Table 1. Localities, neighbourhoods and priority neighbourhoods

Localities	North	South	Central
Neighbourhoods	1.Dyce 2.Danestone 3.Oldmachar 4.Denmore 5.Balgownie & Donmouth 6.Bucksburn 7.Heathryfold 8.Middlefield 9.Kingswells 10.Northfield 11.Cummings Park 12.Sheddocksley 13.Mastrick 14.Summerhill	1.Culter 2.Cults, Bielside, Milltimber & Countesswells 3.Hazlehead 4.Braeside, Mannofield, Broomhill & Seafeld 5.Garthdee 6.Ferryhill 7.Kincorth, Leggart & Nigg 8.Torry 9.Cove	1.Tillydrone 2.Old Aberdeen 3.Seaton 4.Woodside 5.Hilton 6.Stockethill 7.Ashgrove 8.George Street 9.Froghall, Powis & Sunnybank 10.Midstocket 11.Rosemount 12.City Centre 13.Hanover 14.West End
Priority neighbourhoods (Based SIMD analysis)	7.Heathryfold 8.Middlefield 10.Northfield 11.Cummings Park 13.Mastrick	7.Kincorth 8.Torry	1.Tillydrone 3.Seaton 4.Woodside 6.Stockethill 7.Ashgrove 8.George Street
Locality Empowerment Group	North	South	Central
Priority Neighbourhood Partnership	<u>Wider Northfield</u>	<u>Torry</u>	<u>Seaton, Woodside & Tillydrone</u>
Locality Plans	<u>North Locality Plan</u>	<u>South Locality Plan</u>	<u>Central Locality Plan</u>

Through our [community involvement project](#), our integrated Locality Planning Team, with community members, have been testing different approaches with the Locality Empowerment Group and Priority Neighbourhood Partnership meetings to support increasing the number and diversity of community members. This has included the development of a Communication and Engagement Plan led by a community member and co-designed with another three community members; thematic meetings, rotating venues and a citywide meeting for all members. We have seen an increase in annual attendance at each of the Locality Empowerment Groups, with an 8% increase in North, 35.8% increase in Central and 29.2% in South.

Participation in Priority Neighbourhood Partnerships has declined, particularly in the North and Central Localities. To address this, we are exploring new methods to boost engagement, acknowledging that each neighbourhood has unique needs. Our focus has been on hyper-local engagement. A recent test of change in Seaton tested the idea that holding area focused meetings within neighbourhoods could increase attendance. Additionally, by concentrating on area specific priorities from the Locality Plan, we aimed to encourage those with a particular interest in those issues to participate. You can read more about the test [here](#).

The Locality Planning team, together with community representatives, continue to look at enhancing the accessibility and appeal of participation through improved structures around Locality Planning. You can read the Locality Planning Annual Reports for [North](#), [South](#) and [Central](#).



Engaging communities in shaping our plans and strategies



Participation of communities and people's rights lie at the heart of community planning and our communities are key to informing and shaping our plans and strategies. Using the steps within the community empowerment toolkit, and the Participation, Accountability, Non-discrimination and equality, Empowerment and Legality (PANEL) principles, Community Planning Aberdeen launched its "Your Place, Your Plans, Your Future" engagement in March 2025.

This builds on the community engagement which took place in 2023 using the Place Standard tool to inform the refresh of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan in 2024, engaging 470 people. This year the approach has been enhanced and adapted to enable the single engagement to help inform a number of plans and strategies being developed by the Partnership.

The approach enables us to:

- Put people at the heart of the process.
- Look at people's physical and social environments and assess and identify where improvement is required to support people to live healthy, happy lives.
- Align priorities across all Strategies/Plans resulting in greater cohesion.
- Empower communities to engage through consistent use of a single tool
- Provide outreach and adaptive sessions to make the process more accessible to all groups
- Respond to community insights in a more joined up way
- Inform our knowledge of where to dig a bit deeper and provide targeted, deep dive, sessions responding to the initial results
- Confirm if our strategies are focused on right areas.

Your Place, Your Plans, Your Future
It's time to have your say Aberdeen

We would like all Aberdeen residents to share your views!
Tell us what you think is good now and what could be better. Your views will help shape Aberdeen's plans for improvement.
The engagement is open between **24 March** and **18 May 2025**

How to participate:
Share your views by scanning the QR code, or visiting:
<http://yourplaceyourplans.commonplace.is>

or attend a drop in event in your locality:

Engagement Events	When	Where
ABERDEEN NORTH		
North Priority Neighbourhood Partnership	Saturday 10th May 2025 2pm – 4pm	Get Active @ Northfield Kettlemills Crescent, AB15 5TL
North Locality Empowerment Group	Saturday 10th May 2025 10am – 12pm	King's Church, King's Way Bridge of Don AB23 8SL
ABERDEEN CENTRAL		
Central Priority Neighbourhood Partnership	Saturday 26th April 2025 10am – 12pm	Aberdeen Sports Village Lonsfield Road, AB24 5RU
Central Locality Empowerment Group	Thursday 27th March 2025 2pm – 4pm	Rosemount Community Centre, Belgrave Terrace, AB25 2NS
ABERDEEN SOUTH		
Tony Partnership	Thursday 27th March 2025 10am – 12pm	Wynhope Community Hall Tulloch Circle, Tony, AB11 8DL
South Locality Empowerment Group	Saturday 26th April 2025 2pm – 4pm	Airymhull Library, Springfield Road AB15 7HF

We know that different people will have different needs. We wanted to make sure that everyone has the opportunity to share their views, including those that are seldom heard, and those who may be experiencing any form of inequality or disadvantage. As well as an online version, we held 6 locality events, a children and young people's version, and took the conversation into schools and communities across Aberdeen, capturing thoughts and feelings about life in Aberdeen. Our [outreach programme](#) details all the groups and locations we attended to help support people have their say. Working with the North East Culture Collective, there have also been a series of creative engagement sessions undertaken, as part of testing how creativity and culture can help empower communities.



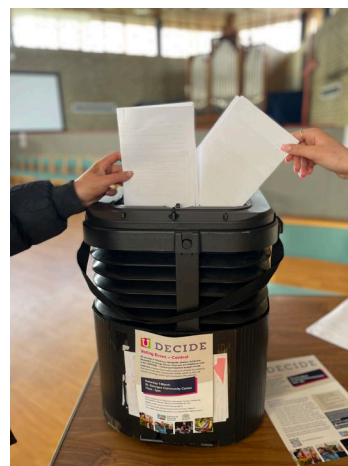
The engagement closed on 18 May 2025 and analysis of participation and results is underway. The data will be used to inform the multiple plans and strategies, including the Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2026-36 and locality Plans for North, South and Central. Using the results, we will work with communities to co-create

solutions through the development of the next Plans, ensuring that local people are at the heart of community planning.

Community Funding

The Fairer Aberdeen Board allocated £25,000 to undertake a Participatory Budgeting event in the Rosehill, Stockethill and Cornhill area during October 2024. A steering group made up of partners and community representatives prioritised the funding for initiatives to improve the community, support social inclusion, and tackle isolation and loneliness. Funding was awarded to six initiatives supporting parents and toddlers, youth work, and community activities.

The Locality Planning team led the delivery of a UDECIDE Participatory Budgeting process. There was £60,000 of funding available to community groups, £40,000 from Community Planning Aberdeen and a further £20,000 from the Fairer Aberdeen Fund. This provided a total of £20,000 available for each of the three localities. Applications were open to community groups who were able to demonstrate how their projects and activities related to one or more of the community ideas detailed within the Locality Plans. Proposals needed to be in one of the 13 identified Priority Neighbourhoods. Funding was awarded to 23 projects across the three localities and 3 projects were partially funded. You can read more about the projects and the process here: [UDECODE Report 2025](#).



In the Woodside Decides initiative, Station House Media Unit and the Woodside Network have been testing how small funding pots can be utilised to encourage local residents to have a greater sense of control and influence within their community, and therefore to become more actively involved in Community Planning activity in their local area. Funding for this test of change was sourced from Community Planning Aberdeen, ACVO, North East Culture Collective and NESCAN

Hub. £18,000 of funds across 4 themes, and a range of community engagement events and activity has taken place over the past year. This has included open events, advertised widely, bringing together people from across the community, as well as more targeted events for women and older people. There have also been outreach activities within sheltered housing complexes, and a youth project at Printfield Community Project. So far around £8000 has been allocated, whilst other initiatives are under way to allocate the remaining funds.

Celebrating Communities

We are extremely fortunate in Aberdeen to have so many community groups being led by local people, serving those on their doorsteps and making a vital contribution to their city. The work they do is invaluable and complements the work of Community Planning partners. Increasing awareness, celebrating and promoting community led projects and activity has benefits for partner organisations and communities alike.

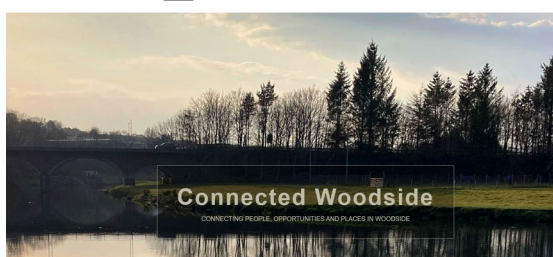
Our [celebrating communities project](#) has focused on increasing awareness of community led projects, both across communities as well as policy and decision makers. 66% of decision makers in 2024 reported that they felt they have a good awareness of community-led initiatives in the City.

Different communication methods are being tested, such as showcasing some community-led work as part of a Challenge Poverty Week screening and then promoting the screening through a [digital magazine](#) of the event was shared with policy and decision makers.



Staton House Media Unit have also worked with community members in both Woodside and Torry to develop a community website for the two areas, and this was launched in February.

Connected Communities [HOME](#) [NEWS](#) [MEDIA](#) [WHAT'S ON](#) [DIRECTORY](#) [HISTORY](#) [GET INVOLVED](#)



Community Empowerment Toolkit

Collaboration between Community Planning partners and communities can lead to new solutions. However, negative experiences in the past as well as a lack of experience and confidence in how to work together can be a major barrier to collaboration for staff and communities. Through our capacity building project, with engagement from both communities and children and young people, we have co-produced an online community empowerment toolkit.



Community Empowerment Toolkit

The toolkit provides a single platform that staff and communities can go to for help and support to select the most appropriate and meaningful collaboration methods and processes to use; or to access advice on overcoming the obstacles.

Community members can find out a wide range of information, including getting in touch with their local Community Council, where to get help with funding, useful data to support projects, and how to connect into existing groups and organisations.

For organisations looking to undertake community engagement, the toolkit provides a step-by-step guide, with lots of useful resources to help support good community engagement. While the toolkit has been developed by Community Planning Aberdeen, the community engagement section can be used for any location.



As well as the toolkit, a new introductory training course 'Foundations of community engagement' has been developed and launched for community engagement practitioners across Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire and Moray. This course is for staff who want to learn the basics of community engagement and apply these skills as part of their job role. Since it launched in March, 51 people have booked on.

Community Learning & Development

During 2024 there has been a strong focus on Community Learning and Development (CLD) at a national level with the [Independent review and subsequent report of CLD](#) commissioned by Scottish Government and [Education Scotland HMIE progress visits and evaluation reports](#) published. Both of these highlight the vital role CLD providers across councils and the third sector provide in enabling life changing and often lifesaving interventions through learning and community empowerment. These reports also come with recommendations to be implemented both nationally and locally with these findings from these informing our future CLD plan for 2025-27. Across the city progress against the CLD plan, aligned LOIP outcomes has recorded positive impact on learners and the community, these include:

Establishing a kinship worker: This worker has successfully bridged the gap between the kinship team and supports available across the city.

Increasing learner confidence: 96% of learners reported increased confidence following engagement with family learning.

Securing paid placements for ESOL learners: Most learners on the ESOL for care courses run in partnership with Bon Accord Care secured paid placements.

Supporting adults facing personal challenges: Working in partnership with Shmu (Station House Media Unit), 62 adults facing personal challenges were supported, with 23 going on to secure positive destinations in education or employment.

Healthy minds team: This team has successfully supported learners facing social isolation through activities within the community and Cornhill Hospital, with almost all reporting increased confidence.

Expanding support for English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL): Over 200 learners are currently being supported, with learners setting up learner-managed support groups to improve mental health and reduce social isolation.

Funded projects: These projects supported 686 volunteers who contributed 103,711 hours of volunteering time

Community resilience groups: Three community resilience groups have been established across the city in Cults, Culter, and Bridge of Don to support the community in the face of adverse weather and other civil contingency events.

For more examples of the impact of Community Learning and Development delivered across the city, please see:

[Learning changes lives for the better – CLD Plan 2024-2025 report](#)

[Community Learning and Development Case Studies 2024](#)

What impact have we had?

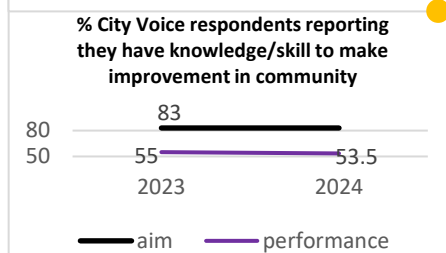
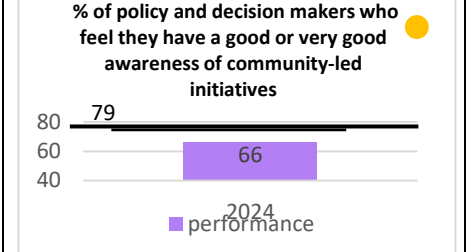
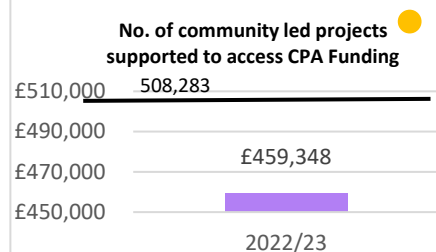
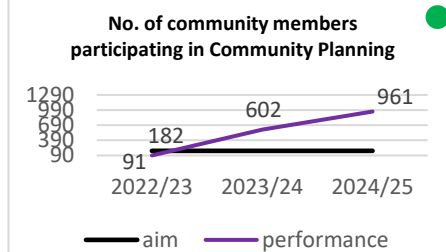
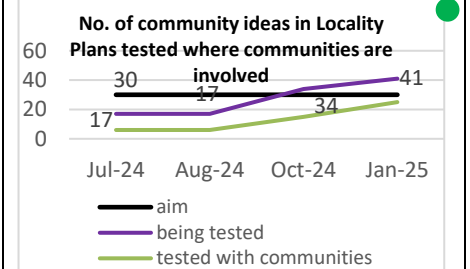
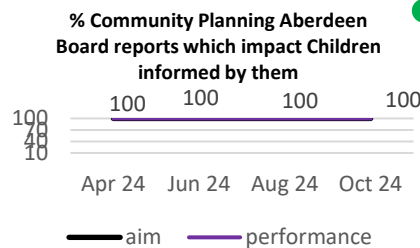
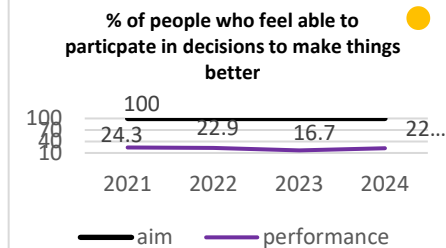


24/25/26 improvement aim

Performance

- Yes
- Getting there
- Not yet

Community Empowerment





- Incorporate tools and techniques on engaging people with lived experience within the online community Empowerment toolkit, including a new 'human library' of stories told by people from Aberdeen with lived experience.
- Work with communities to co-create solutions through the development of the next Local Outcome Improvement Plan and Locality Plans, ensuring that local people are at the heart of community planning.
- Testing with children and young people different methods of engagement on decisions which impact them.
- Support for community led organisations to access funding for community led initiatives.
- Establishment and delivery of the new Community Learning and Development Strategic Partnership to improve collaboration across the City's Community Learning and Development partners and support delivery of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan, Locality Plans, Children's Services Plan and other key strategies.
- Continue to take a rights based approach to engaging people from diverse communities using the Participation, Accountability, Non-discrimination and equality, Empowerment and Legality (PANEL) principles.
- Improve gathering of feedback from community members on whether they feel they are being engaged at a meaningful level.

Ways to get involved



There are many ways people can get involved in the work of the Community Planning Aberdeen to make things better for our citizens and the wider community. Our ambition is for all communities across Aberdeen to be equal community planning partners and we are reaching out to all individuals, community groups and organisations to get involved in our work to make the City a place where all people can prosper, regardless of their background or circumstances.

Find out more about the different ways you can get involved by clicking on the links below.

[Find out more about Community Planning Aberdeen](#)

[Sign up for community updates](#)

[Join a Locality Empowerment Group](#)

[Join a Priority Neighbourhood Partnership](#)

[Become a member of our Citizen Panel](#)

[Find out about other ways of working with communities](#)





[Learn about our Community Empowerment Network](#)

Or simply get in touch by emailing communityplanning@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Who's Who?



CPA Board and Management Group Provides strategic leadership and direction.

Chair CPA Board  Councillor Allard, Aberdeen City Council	Vice-Chair of CPA Board  Susan Webb, Public Health, NHS Grampian	Partners involved <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen City Council • NHS Grampian • Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership • Police Scotland • Robert Gordon University • Scottish Fire and Rescue Service • University of Aberdeen • Skills Development Scotland • North East Scotland College • Nestrans • Scottish Enterprise • Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations
Chair Management Group  Angela Scott, Aberdeen City Council	Vice-Chair of Management Group  Phil Mackie, Public Health, NHS Grampian	

Outcome Improvement Groups

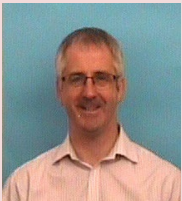

Anti-Poverty Group Preventing suffering due to poverty.

Chair  Michelle Crombie, Aberdeen City Council	Vice Chair  Marj Johnston, NHS Grampian	Lead Contact  Susan Thoms, Aberdeen City Council	Partners involved <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen City Council • Aberdeen Foyer • Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership • Aberdeen Health Determinants Collaboration • ACVO • CFine • Cyrenians • Grampian Racial Equalities Council • Instant Neighbour • The Fountain of Love Church • NHS Grampian • SCARF • Station House Media Unit • University of Aberdeen
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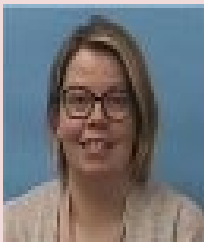
Aberdeen Prospers Responsible for improving our economy.

Chair	Vice Chair	Lead Contact	Partners involved
 <p>Allison Carrington, Skills Development Scotland</p>	 <p>Duncan Abernethy, NESCOL</p>	Vacant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen City Council • Skills Development Scotland • North East Scotland College • Nestrans • Grampian Racial Equalities Council • Robert Gordon University • Scottish Enterprise • Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations • Department for Work and Pensions • Scottish Fire and Rescue Service • Grampian Racial Equalities Council • Federation of Small Businesses • Culture Aberdeen • University of Aberdeen • NESCAN



Children's Services Board Ensuring children are the future.

Chair	Vice Chair	Lead Contact	Partners involved
 <p>Graeme Simpson, Aberdeen City Council</p>	Vacant	 <p>James Simpson, Aberdeen City Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen City Council • Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations • Children's Hearings Scotland • NHS Grampian • Police Scotland • Scottish Children's Reporters Association • Scottish Fire and Rescue • Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership • Sport Aberdeen • Skills Development Scotland


Resilient, Included & Supported Group Helping people live independently.

Chair	Vice Chair	Lead Contact	Partners involved
 <p>Alison MacLeod, Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership</p>	Kenny Collie, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	 <p>Grace Milne Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership • Aberdeen City Council • Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations • NHS Grampian • Scottish Fire and Rescue Service • Police Scotland • Nestrans • North East Scotland College • University of Aberdeen • Robert Gordon University • Sport Aberdeen • Quarriers




Community Justice Group Improving outcomes for people involved in the justice system.

Chair	Vice Chair	Lead Contact	Partners involved
 <p>Claire Wilson, Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership</p>	<p>George Nixon, Police Scotland</p>	 <p>Chris Parker Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen City Council • Health and Social Care Partnership • Crown Office & Procurator Fiscal • NHS Grampian • Police Scotland • Scottish Courts and Tribunals • Scottish Fire and Rescue • Scottish Prison Service • Skills Development Scotland • Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations • Community Justice Scotland • University of Aberdeen • Grampian Racial Equalities Council • Families Outside




Alcohol and Drugs Partnership Tackling issues arising from substance use.

Chair	Vice Chair	Lead Contact	Partners involved
 <p>Fiona Mitchelhill, Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership</p>	<p>Vacant</p>	 <p>Simon Rayner, Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen City Council • Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership • NHS Grampian • Police Scotland • Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations • Scottish Prison Service • Aberdeen in Recovery • Alcohol and Drugs Action • Scottish Ambulance Service • Scottish Fire and Rescue Service • Advocacy Services Aberdeen • North East Scotland College • University of Aberdeen



Homewards Steering Group Reducing homelessness and youth homelessness

Chair	Vice Chair	Lead Contact	Partners involved
 <p>Dr Isaac Poobalan, Provost St Andrews Cathedral</p>	 <p>Campbell Thomson, Independent Chair Public Protection Committee</p>	 <p>Anu Kasim, Homewards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen City Council • Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership • NHS Grampian • Police Scotland • ACVO • Scottish Fire and Rescue Service • North East Scotland College • University of Aberdeen • Aberdeen Cyrenians • Aberdeen Foyer • Aberdeen Football Community Trust • Burgesses • Department of Work and Pensions • Grampian Regional Equalities Council • Kings Church • Langstane Housing • Public Protection Committee • Salvation Army • Scottish Prison Service • Seven Incorporated Trades • Station House Media Unit • Street Soccer Scotland • Social Bite • The Royal Foundation of the Prince and Princess of Wales





Sustainable City Group Creating a safe, attractive, welcoming environment.

Chair	Vice Chair	Lead Contact	Partners involved
 <p>Jillian Evans, Public Health, NHS Grampian</p>	 <p>Sinclair Laing, Aberdeen City Council</p>	 <p>Jacqui Bell, NHS Grampian</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen City Council • Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations • Civic Forum • NHS Grampian • Police Scotland • Scottish Fire and Rescue Service • Sport Aberdeen • Nestrans • SEPA • Nature Scot • NESCAN • University of Aberdeen • Home Energy Scotland • CFine




Community Empowerment Group Ensuring community perspective.





<p>Chair</p>  <p>Michelle Crombie, Aberdeen City Council</p>	<p>Vice Chair</p>  <p>Maggie Hepburn, Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations</p>	<p>Partners involved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen City Council • Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations • Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership • Civic Forum • Grampian Regional Equality Council (GREC) • Police Scotland • Scottish Fire and Rescue Service • NHS Grampian • University of Aberdeen • Station House Media Unit • Aberdeen Health Determinants Research Collaboration
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Community Planning Team Provides strategic support to Partnership colleagues.

 <p>Michelle Crombie, Strategic Lead, Prevention and Community Empowerment, Aberdeen City Council</p>	 <p>Allison Swanson, Community Planning and Improvement Manager, Aberdeen City Council</p>	 <p>James Simpson, Performance and Strategy Development Officer, Aberdeen City Council</p>
 <p>Anne McAteer, Research Officer, Aberdeen City Council</p>		

Integrated Locality Planning Team Responsible for delivering our three Locality Plans.

<p>City Wide</p>  <p>Iain Robertson, Transformation Programme Manager, ACHSCP</p>	<p>South</p>  <p>Vibha Gaikwad, Public Health Coordinator, ACHSCP</p>	<p>Central</p>  <p>Chris Smillie, Public Health Coordinator, ACHSCP</p>	<p>North</p> <p>Vacant Public Health Coordinator, ACHSCP</p>
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<p>City Wide</p>  <p>Jade Leyden, Community Development Manager, Aberdeen City Council</p>	<p>Torry</p>  <p>Teresa Dufficy, Community Development Officer, Aberdeen City Council</p>	<p>Tillydrone, Seaton, Woodside</p>  <p>Graham Donald, Community Development Officer, Aberdeen City Council</p>	<p>Northfield, Mastrick, Middlefield Heathryfold, Cummings Park</p>  <p>Kev Donald, Community Development Officer, Aberdeen City Council</p>
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Further Information:

If you have any questions about this report or Community Planning Aberdeen please contact:
CommunityPlanning@aberdeencity.gov.uk

To find out more about community planning please visit:
www.communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk