

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Anti-Poverty and Inequality
DATE	26 November 2025
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Visit to Fountain of Love Church
REPORT NUMBER	CORS/25/256
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	Andy MacDonald
CHIEF OFFICER	Michelle Crombie on behalf of Isla Newcombe
REPORT AUTHOR	Matthew Lee, Anti-Poverty Officer
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.3 and 1.5

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To provide the Committee with a report following the visit to Fountain of Love Church on 10 September 2025.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 Approves the report; and
- 2.2 Thanks all those at Fountain of Love Church who welcomed the Committee and provided an informative and interesting visit.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

3.1 Fountain of Love Church

- 3.1.1 Fountain of Love Church is a faith-based organisation located in Aberdeen, with other churches elsewhere in Scotland. It has been based at its current location on Palmerston Road since 2005. Fountain of Love provides a wide range of services aimed at improving wellbeing. Projects include a befriending service that has helped 400 people since 2019, meals for the people experiencing food insecurity, support for individuals recovering from addiction, job clubs, and health talks tailored to African men and women. It also runs youth programmes and counselling services. Fountain of Love is managed by a leadership team and is supported by volunteers.
- 3.1.2 The Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee visited Fountain of Love on 10 September 2025 to find out about the work the church is doing for and with the local community. This visit is part of a wider programme of engagements the Committee is making to organisations supporting people in poverty across the City.

3.2 Issues Raised and Actions Required

- 3.2.1 During the visit, Committee members received a presentation about Fountain of Love's activities from Olushola Ajide, Christian Social Responsibility Officer/Head of Partnership Development. Fountain of Love's projects focus

on health, employability and social isolation. Fountain of Love works on an ecumenical and multifaith basis. Its projects are open to people of all faiths and none, and Fountain of Love has engaged with the LGBTQ community. After the presentation, members of the Committee had a tour of Fountain of Love's building.

3.2.2 The presentation highlighted various issues that Fountain of Love has encountered when delivering its programmes:

3.2.3 **Volunteer numbers**

Fountain of Love has experienced challenges getting enough volunteers to deliver their projects. It has been more challenging to find volunteers after the Covid lockdowns. Additionally, there is a specific need to attract additional male volunteers.

Actions

- Completed – Through Community Planning Aberdeen and the Anti-Poverty Group, continue to work with ACVO Third Sector Interface to promote volunteering opportunities through <https://www.volunteeraberdeens.org.uk/>
- Planned – Support Fountain of Love Church to advertise volunteering opportunities for projects on the Volunteer Aberdeen website and through Community Planning Aberdeen networks.

3.2.4 **Low Emission Zone**

Fountain of Love's vehicles are not LEZ compliant, which has led to longer journey times when volunteers are driving to deliver services. The church hopes to secure funding for an LEZ-compliant electric vehicle.

Actions

- Completed – Guidance on LEZ exemptions is available from the Council's website <https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/roads-transport-and-parking/low-emission-zone/low-emission-zone-exemptions>. Whilst there is no specific exemption for charities, the Council grants time-limited exemptions for non-compliant vehicles in specific, limited circumstances where the LEZ air quality impact will be minimal and the applicant is making efforts to comply.
- Planned – Explore how the Council can support the Fountain of Love Church with its compliance efforts. For example, by raising awareness of external funding opportunities available.

3.2.5 **Funding and Grant applications**

Fountain of Love has a good track record of obtaining funding and strong understanding of writing successful grant applications. Having the capacity and expertise to produce high-quality grant applications is something that other third sector organisations can struggle to develop.

Actions

- Completed – Fountain of Love Church has been invited to sign up to the Council's monthly External Funding Newsletter that provides updates on opportunities for organisations and businesses in Aberdeen. It includes information on current grant programs, application deadlines, upcoming workshops, and tips for writing successful grant applications. The

newsletter aims to help organisations find and apply for funding to support their projects and objectives. [Organisations can sign up here.](#)

3.2.6 See Appendix 1 for full overview of the visit.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	None	None	L	Yes
Compliance	None	None	L	Yes
Operational	None	None	L	Yes
Financial	None	None	L	Yes
Reputational	None	None	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	None	None	L	Yes

8. OUTCOMES

Council Delivery Plan 2024	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement Working in Partnership for Aberdeen	There is no proposal in this report
Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	There is no proposal in this report
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	There is no proposal in this report

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	No assessment required. I confirm this has been discussed and agreed with Michelle Crombie, Strategic Lead, Prevention and Community Empowerment on 24 October 2025.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required.
Other	N/A

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 N/A

11. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Overview of Visit to Fountain of Love Church

Appendix 2 Fountain of Love Presentation Slides

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Matthew Lee
Title	Anti-Poverty Officer
Email Address	matlee@aberdeencity.gov.uk



Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee

Visit to Fountain of Love Church


29-31 Palmerston Rd, Aberdeen AB11 5QP

Date: 10 September 2025

Attending:

Councillor Allard
 Councillor Blake
 Councillor Brooks
 Councillor Buchanan
 Councillor Davidson
 Councillor Hutchison
 Councillor Macdonald
 Councillor Mennie
 Kerry Gavin, External Adviser
 Michelle Crombie, Aberdeen City Council
 Susan Thoms, Aberdeen City Council
 Matthew Lee, Aberdeen City Council



Time	Description
10.00 am	<p>Presentation and Discussion</p> <p>Committee members received a presentation from Olushola Ajide, Christian Social Responsibility Officer/Head of Partnership Development, at Fountain of Love Church.</p>  <p><u>About Fountain of Love Church</u></p> <p>Fountain of Love Church started in 1999 and moved into its current building on Palmerston Road in 2005. It's mission statement includes a commitment to 'care for one another and for those around us'.</p>

Services Provided

Aberdeen Linking Lives and Aberdeen Scrabble Project

- Fountain of Love delivers multiple projects aimed at tackling loneliness and social isolation.
- Aberdeen Linking Lives connects volunteers with people experiencing social isolation. Since it started in 2019, Aberdeen Linking Lives has recruited 350 volunteers and helped 400 people. The project has expanded to cover Aberdeenshire and Moray. Fountain of Love hosts a quarterly café drop-in session where people can have a meal and interact with others.
- The Aberdeen Scrabble Project, which is delivered in Seaton Community Centre, encourages older people to build social connections while maintaining their cognitive abilities.

Job Club and employability work

- Fountain of Love delivers a job club for people who are unemployed. It has delivered sessions online and in person. In 2024, these in-person sessions took place in Torry and Tillydrone Community Campus.
- Across 2024, 154 people registered for the Job Club. 14 found a job, 10 received job coaching, 14 received CV advice and 20 participated in a mock interview.
- Fountain of Love, in partnership with The Bridge, secured £4363.20 from ABZ Works in 2024 and £10,000 in 2025 to support employability projects.

Restorative Interface and Care (RIC)

- Through the RIC programme, Fountain of Love supports individuals involved in the criminal justice system, aiming to reduce reoffending and associated public costs.
- This project provides transport for family visits to HMP Grampian and supported one individual's participation in a charity boxing event.

African Community Health Talks

- Fountain of Love delivered a series of health talks aimed at African men. Topics discussed included healthy lifestyles and exercise.
- The Church also provided health talks to African women, offering advice on breast and cervical cancer, menopause, and mental health.
- Feedback from participants has been overwhelmingly positive.

Christmas activities

- Fountain of Love, working in partnership with CFINE, distributes food hampers in Aberdeen, including to people who use Aberdeen

	<p>Drug Action's services and others who are living in Aberdeen City Council temporary accommodation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Church holds an annual Christmas concert, hosting almost 1000 guests at some of the concerts. <p><u>Funding sources</u></p> <p>Following the visit, the Fountain of Love Church shared that it has secured £115,008 in funding from a range of sources since 2018, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen City Council • Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership • Scottish Government • Albert Hunt Trust • Bank of Scotland Foundation • Corra Foundation • Hunting Energy Services
11 am	<p>Tour of the Fountain of Love Building</p> <p>The Committee toured the Fountain of Love building. Members were able to see the areas where Fountain of Love undertakes food insecurity and youth work projects. The Church also lets its space to organisations that help people experiencing substance misuse issues.</p>
<p>Issues Raised</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer recruitment remains a challenge for Fountain of Love, particularly in the period following the Covid-19 lockdowns. Recruiting people is a challenge for many volunteer-led organisations. An increased number of male volunteers would help support the delivery of services. • Fountain of Love's vehicles are not compliant with Aberdeen's Low Emission Zone (LEZ), resulting in longer travel times for volunteers. The Church is seeking funding to purchase a vehicle that complies with LEZ rules. • While Fountain of Love has a strong track record in securing grant funding, writing successful grant applications is a challenge for other third sector organisations. 	





FOUNTAIN of LOVE

Aberdeen City Council
Anti Poverty & Inequality Committee Visit
10 September 2025.

Sponsors, Supporters and Brands We Worked With



Aberdeen City
Health & Social Care
Partnership
A caring partnership



Baker Hughes 



CORRA
FOUNDATION
voice • power • change

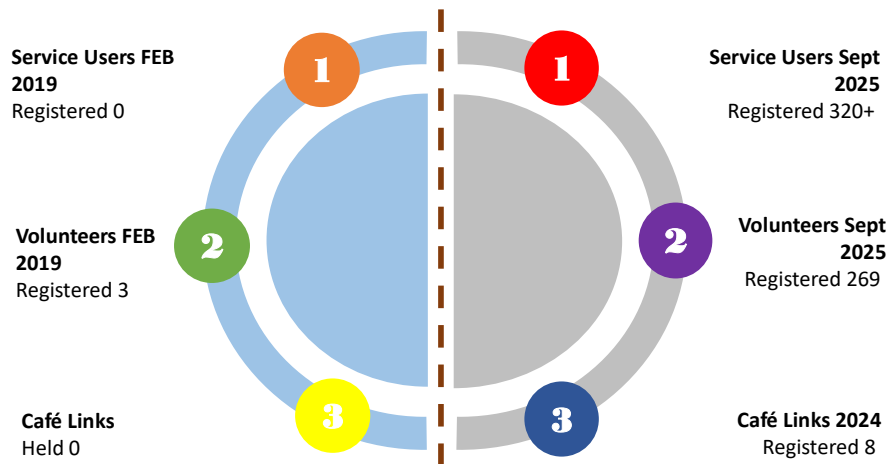


Morgan Stanley

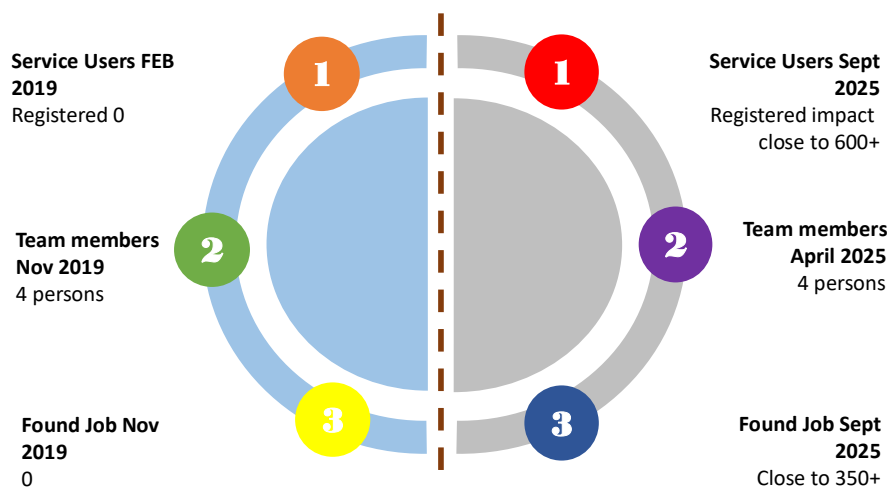


THE
ALBERT HUNT
TRUST

Aberdeen Linking Lives (Journey So Far)

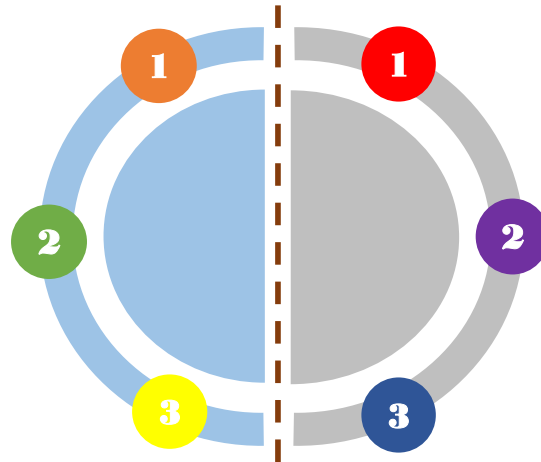


CAP JOB CLUB (Journey So Far)



Funding/Grants (Journey So Far)

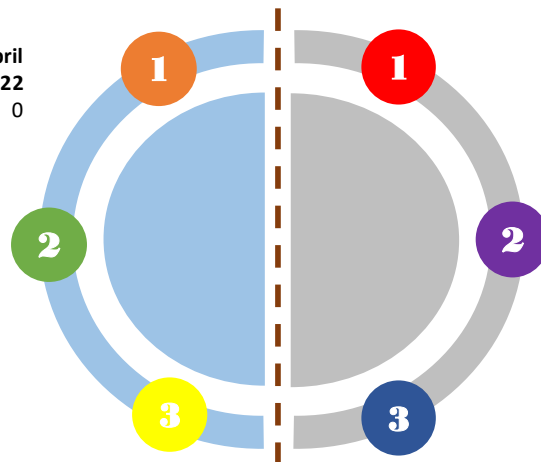
Funding/Grant
April 2018
£ 0



Funding/Grant
September 2025
£115,008.0

African Men Health Talk (Journey So Far)

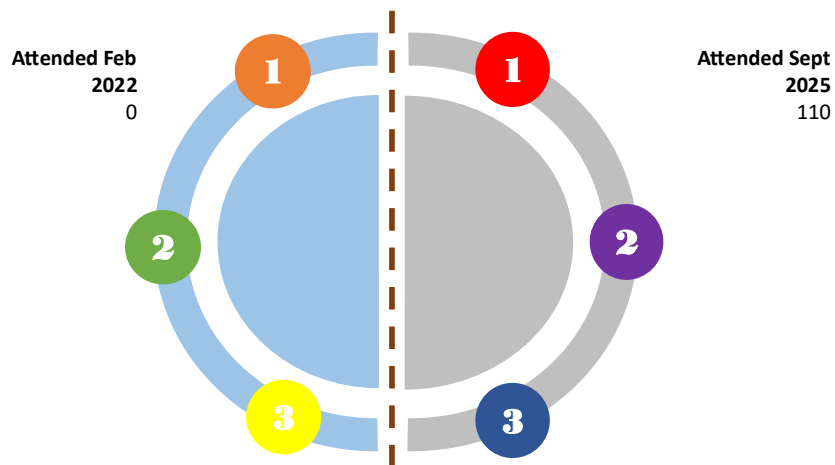
Attended April
2022
0



Attended Sept
2025
150



African Women Health Talk (Journey So Far)



Other Projects



Challenges/Opportunities



Volunteers for befriending service



Staffing



Funding



VOLUNTEERING IN NUMBERS

VOLUNTEERS RECRUITED
FOR THIS PERIOD

43

NUMBER OF ACTIVE
VOLUNTEERS

69

HOURLY RATE OF
VOLUNTEERING

£ 15.00

VOLUNTEERS HOURS FOR
THE PERIOD

2,070

VOLUNTEERS TOTAL HOURS
SINCE INCEPTION

19,000

VALUE PER MONTH OF
VOLUNTEERING **

£ 4050

VOLUNTEERS HOURS PER
MONTH

67.5

VALUE OF VOLUNTEERING AT ABERDEEN LINKING LIVES

£ 285,000

