



# SPARKS OF CHANGE

TACKLING POVERTY TOGETHER

THURSDAY 20 MARCH 2025

## Programme Schedule

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| 2.00 | <b>Welcome</b><br>Lindsay Graham   |
| 2.05 | <b>Poverty in Moray: an overview</b><br>Iain Sneddon, The Moray Council          |
| 2.20 | <b>Experts by experience</b><br>Annie McCormack, Poverty Alliance                |
| 2.35 | <b>Tackling health inequalities</b><br>Amanda Moulson, Active Communities        |
| 2.50 | <b>Cash first for young men</b><br>Maggie Hepburn, ACVO                          |
| 3.05 | <b>Ensuring lived experience shapes policy &amp; practice: David Kidd, SACRO</b> |
| 3.20 | <b>Financial advice in an education setting</b><br>Caroline Doyle, Advice Shop   |
| 3.35 | <b>Q&amp;A session</b><br>Facilitator: Lindsay Graham                            |
| 3.55 | <b>Final thoughts</b><br>Lindsay Graham  |



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### **Poverty in Moray: an overview—Iain Sneddon, The Moray Council**

Moray, although one of the smallest Local Authorities in Scotland, is diverse with 40% living Rurally. In 2023/24 it was estimated that 23.9% (1 in 4) of children in Moray were living in Relative Poverty. By compiling and analysing over 20, both National & Local, datasets, Iain was able to identify areas within Moray where financial vulnerability and poverty levels were high and low. By doing so it has allowed service providers, working to mitigate poverty, more effectively direct their services.

### **Experts by experience—Annie McCormack, Poverty Alliance, Aberdeenshire**

Over the past 18 months Poverty Alliance have been working on a project called “Taking Action on Rural Poverty”. Annie will share some of the learning, processes and practise when working with people with a lived experience to co-design ways of amplifying the needs of people living rurally and on a low income.

### **Tackling health inequalities—Amanda Moulson, Active Communities, Renfrewshire**

Active Communities take a community-led approach to health and wellbeing that put people’s needs first. They have recently opened Station 7 in Johnstone as a base to deliver a range of health and wellbeing programmes, and host a community pantry, meeting and event spaces, and Johnstone’s first start-up business incubator. They also deliver a range of activities across Renfrewshire working collaboratively with a range of partners and community groups.

### **Cash first for young men—Maggie Hepburn, ACVO, Aberdeen**

In Aberdeen, Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations (ACVO) have co-designed the Cash First Flexible Crisis Fund alongside partner organisations to support single males from the age of 18 to 45 who are in receipt of Universal Credit who are presenting at food banks in crisis by providing them with money and improving access to wrap-around support. Find out how Cash First is a dignified approach to supporting people in crisis whilst offering flexibility and choice to improve individual outcomes long-term.

### **Ensuring lived experience shapes policy and practice—David Kidd, SACRO**

People with lived experience of social issues have a vital role to play at all levels of our sector. With the right platforms and support, they can, and should, be actively involved in shaping policy, practice, and decision-making. This session will explore how co-design and co-production approaches drive continuous improvement both within and beyond the organisation. It will highlight the benefits of meaningful involvement, challenge common fears about participation, and encourage organisations to take further steps in embedding lived experience into their work.

### **Financial advice in an education setting—Caroline Doyle, Advice Shop, Midlothian Council**

Midlothian Council has taken an innovative approach to tackling poverty in their region through the development of an Advice in Schools pilot project. Caroline will give an overview of the background and rationale for the project, the initial approach and outcomes, how the project was then upscaled, the outcomes to date, and the plans for the future.

### **Guest facilitator—Lindsay Graham**

A former community nurse, civil servant Lindsay has worked in national government roles in Scotland and England. A former key adviser to the All-Party Parliamentary Group on School Food and advised a Westminster cross party group on the ‘Children’s Future Food Inquiry’ into childhood food insecurity in the UK. A Churchill Fellow and a committee member for the National Lottery Community Fund Scotland, former Vice Chair with Scotland’s Poverty and Inequality Commission and a member of the Scottish Government’s Social Renewal Advisory Board on COVID recovery Lindsay was awarded the OBE in 2022 for her work in tackling children’s food insecurity in the UK and received an Honorary Doctorate from Glasgow Caledonian University in 2023 in recognition for commitment to social justice and promoting food security in Scotland and beyond.