



FUTURE  
PATHWAYS



# Journey of Connection

Full report

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## Background to the report

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## Key terms

### Adverse Childhood experiences (ACEs)

Adverse Childhood experiences (ACEs) are stressful events occurring in childhood such as domestic violence, parental abandonment, and abuse.

### Delivery Partners

Delivery Partners are professionals or services from whom we commission support on behalf of someone accessing Future Pathways.

### Demographics

Demographics, in the context of this report, refers to information about people's characteristics, such as age, gender identity, and where they live.

### Discretionary Fund

The Discretionary Fund is a fund that can be accessed by people supported by Future Pathways. It is used to purchase material and/or digital products (including purchases to support people to manage hardship); and non-contracted professional support or services (such as services delivered by tradespeople) which are related to their personal outcomes.

### Existing services

Existing services are organisations with whom we collaborate, such as third sector and statutory services. We do not commission support from existing services because they provide free support.

### People registered with us

People registered with us refers to everyone who has registered with Future Pathways. This includes people who are currently waiting for our support; people who are currently accessing support coordination; people who have previously accessed our support; and people who are no longer accessing support coordination but are accessing our other channels of support (such as the Voices for a Better Future group).

### People waiting for our support

People waiting for our support refers to people who have registered with the service who are currently on our waitlist.

### People we support

People we support refers to people who are registered with us who are accessing support coordination.



## Key terms (cont.)

### People with lived experience

People with lived experience, in the context this report, refers to people who have experienced abuse or neglect while in care in Scotland. We sometimes use the word “survivor” in this report to denote a person with lived experience. We understand that not everyone who has experience of abuse and/or neglect would use this term to describe themselves, and so where possible, we have not used this term in this report. When we work directly with an individual, we will always use the words they find preferable.

### Personal outcomes

Personal outcomes (or outcomes) relate to what matters most to the person and the changes they would like to make. Everyone’s outcomes are unique to them. For example, someone’s outcome may be to experience more independence in their lives.

### Relational approach

A relational approach is a way of supporting people that focuses on the interactions we have with people, rather than seeing support in a transactional way. A relational approach involves acknowledging that relationships are complex; that they fluctuate; and they are influenced by many factors.

### Theory of change

A theory of change is a framework for understanding how and why a change happens within a particular context.

### Trauma informed approach

A trauma informed approach is a way of supporting people that takes into account the signs, symptoms and impacts of trauma. This involves embodying the principles of cultural consideration, safety, trustworthiness, choice, collaboration, and empowerment. You can [read examples of trauma informed practice in our short guide to Trauma Informed Practice.](#)

## Executive summary

Future Pathways provides support to people who experienced abuse or neglect when they were a child in the Scottish care system. Future Pathways is delivered by the In Care Survivors Alliance. The vision of the Alliance is that people with lived experience lead full, healthy and independent lives.

The findings of this report reinforce our understanding of our relational approach and the impact that our support can have for individuals and for services

This evaluation shows that, from the very beginning of a person's experience with Future Pathways, our communications raise awareness of our support and centre lived experience. It is also clear that our relational approach is woven throughout the different areas of the service from the point of registration and throughout the different types of support we facilitate access to.

Part one of this evaluation shows that, when accessing support coordination, many people discuss their personal outcomes with us. These are related to many different areas of their lives such as their mental health, safety and comfort at home environment, relationships with others, and hope for the future. Each person's outcomes are unique to them.

We understand that people's outcomes can be affected by people's life circumstances, and we know that this is likely to be the case for many people registered with us. We continue to find people who register with us are disproportionately likely to live in areas of multiple deprivation in Scotland. And many people accessing our support have a disability that affects their everyday life and their access to services. In addition, many people accessing our support have faced, or are now facing, challenging life experiences such as homelessness, addiction, and criminal convictions.

This report shows that, through building a trusting relationship with Future Pathways, people access a mixture of supports tailored to what matters most to them. For most people this involves accessing the Discretionary Fund. For some this involves accessing support from one or more of our 52 Delivery Partners which operate across a wide range of sectors. If relevant to their outcomes, people can also access psychological assessment at the Glasgow Psychological Trauma Service (also known as The Anchor), one of our Alliance Partners. And many people are supported to connect with existing services such as third sector organisations and statutory services offering various supports such as housing, mental health and other healthcare services.

A core theme throughout this report is that meaningful relationships with Support Coordinators are crucial to people accessing the right support for them. In most instances, people accessing our support tell us they feel understood, cared about and valued by Future Pathways, and that they feel able to trust the service. Given that people with lived experience can understandably find it difficult to build relationships with services due to their past experiences of abuse or neglect in care, an effective relationship with a service can be unexpected, and profoundly impactful.

## Executive summary (cont.)

The relationships people develop with their Support Coordinator can act as a catalyst for further positive change in people's lives. Most people accessing our support experience a positive impact in different areas of their life. Some people learn more about themselves, their strengths and the steps they want to take towards their outcomes. This can lead to people taking steps towards their outcomes, contributing to feelings of self-efficacy, independence, confidence and hope for the future. Many people describe changes they have made in their relationships with others in their lives, their communities, and other services. It is clear that the impact people experience is as unique as their outcomes, but we notice that support is often associated with improved wellbeing or self-esteem; feelings of safety and comfort at home, and, for some people, our support is lifechanging and deeply needed.

It is therefore understandable that people we support often sustain their relationship with Future Pathways over the longer term and that when support comes to an end, often people re-engage with support after a period. In some instances, if support has been paused or there has been difficulty keeping in contact, reconnection with support might be part of a longer journey of progressing outcomes. In others, if support ends because the person feels that they have made progress towards their outcomes, people are less likely to re-engage with support, indicating that supporting people to progress their outcomes may support people to move on from our support.

On the other hand, this evaluation shows that people's journeys towards their outcomes are rarely linear. For example, difficulties accessing the Discretionary Fund and waiting for support can detrimentally impact people's trust in the Future Pathways. And when support is inconsistent this can leave people feeling as though the service does not care about them. In some instances, this can mean people feel unable to access the right support or take steps towards what matters to them. This can be compounded by the person's circumstances such as health issues, or delays in accessing other services. These barriers to positive impact are therefore important opportunities to listen to and empathise with people registered with us, many of whom who tell us that flexibility and finding the right 'fit' between the person, their Support Coordinator and other services is very important.

This part of the report demonstrates effectiveness in Future Pathways' relationships with individuals, enabling people to improve their lives and achieve their personal goals by accessing a broad range of resources to address their needs. There is evidence that whilst support needs time and is not linear, progress is made towards helping people have fuller, healthier and more independent lives.

Part two of this report shows that by continuously learning about what works and doesn't work about our approach, supporting people with lived experience to influence change, and sharing what we have learned, we contribute to wider impacts. Future Pathways aims to drive improvement both within and beyond the individual support we do, improving standards in in the wider system.

## Executive summary (cont.)

Again, cultivating trusting, collaborative and solution focused relationships is core to the difference we make. These relationships have supported us to learn and share our learning about trauma informed practice and the impacts it can have. And they have led to us and our Delivery Partners making changes based on what we have learned so that support for people with lived experience becomes more effective.

There are gaps in our understanding of our impact for existing services, providers, and professionals and services that access our learning resources. But it is clear that by proactively learning about our own approach, we can make meaningful changes to our support, such as developing peer support opportunities, which respond to the needs of people registered with us.

While we cannot know the extent to which Future Pathways affects the support people with lived experience access at other services, we hope that through our support and our work with our partners, people can, over time, gradually lessen the impact of their trauma and access the right support for them.

# Introduction to Future Pathways

Future Pathways provides support to people who experienced abuse or neglect when they were a child in the Scottish care system.

The service is delivered by the In Care Survivors Alliance, which consists of four partners: the Glasgow Psychological Trauma Service (also known as The Anchor), Health in Mind, Penumbra Mental Health, and Scottish Government. The Alliance was set up in 2016 as part of the Scottish Government's wider strategy to address the legacy of historic abuse in Scotland.

Future Pathways is fully funded by the Scottish Government. It is overseen by the Alliance Leadership Team which is made up of representatives from each of the Alliance Partners as well as two people with lived experience of in-care abuse who have accessed Future Pathways' support.

The vision of the Alliance is that people with lived experience are supported to lead full, healthy and independent lives. At Future Pathways, we aim to:

- Raise awareness of the support available so that people with lived experience can access this.
- Support people to identify what matters to them now and in the future.
- Enable people to have ready access to a broad range of support, care and treatment to address their needs.
- Ensure people are able to improve their lives and achieve their personal goals.
- Drive continuous improvement through consistency and quality standards across our service.
- Optimise the support resources that people registered with us access at our service and at others.

## Our journey so far

Future Pathways[1] was launched by the In Care Survivors Alliance in 2016 following many years of activism by people with lived experience. The service benefitted from what was learned through the National Confidential Forum (NCF) which launched in 2014, and the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry (SCAI) which began in 2015.[2]

The NCF and the SCAI indicated a clear need for support for people with lived experience. However, the volume of people with lived experience and the intensity and nature of people's support needs was unknown. After two years, in 2018, Future Pathways carried out a scoping study which highlighted that, in part due to the lack of available research about the population of people with lived experience, the level of demand for Future Pathways' support had greatly surpassed what was expected. In response to the volume of registrations, Scottish Government has periodically uplifted Future Pathways' budget, enabling us to expand our support coordination team over time from a team of three to a growing team of thirty-six Support Coordinators.

In October 2018, the Scottish Government confirmed that a Redress Scheme would be established for people who experienced abuse or neglect while in care in Scotland and the Scheme was launched in December 2021. In response, the In Care Survivors Alliance started a new service, the Redress Support Service to support people applying for financial or non-financial redress through the Redress Scheme or who are thinking about applying.

In 2021, we published our first impact report, which looked our impact from 2016 to 2019. Since then, we have undertaken several independently run consultations with people supported by the service, including the Making Pathways Together project, which created opportunities for people accessing Future Pathways to share their feedback and experiences with the service. We also invited input from our network of Delivery Partners and providers through our Action Learning Programme in 2022/2023. These consultations helped us learn more about what works well about our approach and how we could improve.

The feedback we received through consultations with people accessing support and Delivery Partners helped shape Stepping Stones, our 2023 impact report. The report was written in collaboration with Matter of Focus, a b-corp organisation that supports us to evaluate the impact of our work. In Stepping Stones, we shared the journey of the service so far and how the context of our work – including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the increased

[1] When the service launched, Future Pathways was then called the 'In Care Survivors Support Fund'. This change to the service's name reflects how our understanding of the remit of the service has evolved over time.

[2] The NCF offered the opportunity for people who had spent time in residential care as children to describe their experiences. It aimed to learn lessons from the past in order to prevent abuse in the future; inform improvements for the health and wellbeing of children in residential care today; and protect their rights more effectively in the future. The SCAI is an ongoing inquiry which investigates the abuse of children in care in Scotland. When concluded, it will report the outcome to Scottish Ministers and make recommendations about changes to practices, policies, and legislation to support child protection in the future.

## Our journey so far (cont.)

cost of living – had affected the impact people experienced. The report prompted us to learn more, particularly about the groups of people we might not be reaching, how we supported people to access other services, and how we influence other services to embed trauma informed support.

Following Stepping Stones, we took several steps to enhance the impact of our service and to learn more about our impact. For example, we undertook a co-design project to explore developing peer support at Future Pathways, and we launched new ways for people to give us anonymous feedback. These changes helped us present a fuller picture of our impact in our last impact report, Pathways to Change, which was published in 2024. In this impact report, A Journey of Connection, we continue to build on the foundations that our previous evaluations provide.

## Our evaluation approach

We use the Matter of Focus approach to evaluation. This is an iterative approach to defining and refining a theory of change. We use six simple questions to structure our theory of change in two outcome pathways. These questions are:

- what does Future Pathways do?
- who do we work with?
- how do people feel when they engage with us?
- what do they learn and gain when they engage with us?
- what do they do differently?
- what difference does this make?

Using these questions as a structure, we:

- define our theory of change - the difference we believe we make and how we do so.
- consider how our context may affect the impact we aim to have – we do this by identifying 'risks' and 'assumptions' which you can read about in the section below.
- test our theory of change by analysing data from across the service – you can read more about the data we looked at for this report in the Our data sources section of this report.
- reflect on the progress we have made towards our outcomes and our confidence in what we have learned – we use a set of evidence standards to do this, and you can see these in the appendix of this report.
- refine our outcome pathways in response to what we learn and how our context evolves.

This approach helps us to gradually learn more about the difference we make and how we make it. For example, over time, we have streamlined our outcome pathways from four to two and we continue to refine our outcome pathways to reflect what we have learned about our context and our impact.

In A Journey of Connection, we measure our progress towards our service outcomes using two outcome pathways, which you can see on pages 17 and 75 of this report. Our first outcome pathway focuses on the impact of our direct support for people registered with us. Our second outcome pathway looks at how we influence positive change within Future Pathways and at other services.



## Our evaluation approach (cont.)

Each outcome pathway is colour-coded to reflect the progress we have made towards our outcome, and our confidence in our findings. The image below shows how the colour of each steppingstone corresponds to our perceived progress and confidence.

	Great Progress	Some Progress	Low Progress
High Confidence			
Some Confidence			
Low Confidence			

We assess our confidence and progress in two stages. An initial assessment was completed by the Impact and Evaluation Lead and Quality and Improvement Manager in June 2025. This was then discussed and agreed with representatives from each of the Alliance Partners in July 2025.

## Our Risks and Assumptions

Our impact analysis is informed by a set of risks and assumptions. By 'risks' we mean anything that could get in the way of the change we hope to see. And by 'assumptions' we mean anything that we feel needs to be in place for us to have the impact we hope to. By defining the risks and assumptions that could affect our impact, we give context for the impact we make, and this can help us identify how we can progress our service outcomes.

In our last impact report, Pathways to Change, we found that some risks and assumptions were currently impacting our approach and the impact we were making. For other risks and assumptions, we had no evidence that these were affecting our impact, or we knew that we were already addressing these. We also identified two risks that we had not previously acknowledged. This prompted us to review and update our risks and assumptions so that they reflect what we have learned about what supports and hinders the service makes.

### Risks: what may hinder our impact

- If Future Pathways does not have the resources needed to support the numbers of people registering with the service, this could mean people experience a long wait time before accessing support.
- If people are not able to access the support they need – including crisis support – from other services, this could increase the number of people registering with Future Pathways and the intensity of the needs Future Pathways must respond to.
- If it is hard for some people to access Future Pathways, for example, people who are experiencing challenges like homelessness, and people who do not identify as 'survivors', then some people may not access the support they need.
- If people we support are facing difficult life circumstances, this may hinder their progress towards their outcomes.
- If some groups of people do not engage with opportunities to give feedback, this could limit our understanding of our impact and how we should improve our support.
- If people accessing support find it difficult to move on from support, this could mean we are not able to work with people who are registering with us as quickly as we would prefer.

## Our Risks and Assumptions (cont.)

### Assumptions: what may support our impact

- If we use appropriate and inclusive language to communicate clearly about our work, people will understand the remit of Future Pathways, have realistic expectations of support and be supported to register.
- If other services have the capacity to partner with Future Pathways and embed trauma informed practices, people will be able to experience the impact of support.
- If other services see Future Pathways as trustworthy, we will be able to work well with other services which will enhance the impact of support.

A Journey of Connection shows that many of the risks we have identified appear to be impacting the support we provide, and the impact people experience. For example, people continue to report facing challenges having their needs met at existing services and our evaluation shows that challenging personal circumstances can also hinder progress towards outcomes. We also continue to see that people prefer to work with Future Pathways over the long term and that people often return to access support after support comes to an end. This may reflect the challenges people may face when seeking crisis support or other kinds of support at other services. This is reflected in our waitlist for support, which has grown this year, despite expanding our staff team.

The report also upholds some of our assumptions about what enhances our support. In our evaluation of our second pathway, it is clear that Future Pathways is perceived as trustworthy and that we support some partners to explore trauma informed approaches. However, we know that not all partners, particularly existing services such as statutory services, have the capacity to partner with us. While we have learned more about our interactions with existing services this year, we would benefit from continuing to develop our understanding of what could improve these relationships and the impacts of these relationships.

## Our data sources

This report draws together a wide range of different types of evidence from across the service, looking at the last financial year (April 2024 and March 2025[3]).

Some of the data we analysed for this report is systematically gathered on an ongoing basis, including:

Information about the flow of people who register with the service such as:

- Where people heard about Future Pathways
- The number of people who register with us
- The number of people on our waitlist
- The number of people accessing support while on our waitlist
- The number of people accessing support coordination
- The number of people who move on from our support
- The number of people who return to access further support

Information about the people registered with the service such as:

- The ages of people registered with us
- The addresses of people registered with us. We used the SIMD tool to analyse this data.[4]
- The number of people registering with us with who are aged over 65 and/or living with a terminal illness[5]
- 61 responses to our 'About You' form received over the last two years. Once someone has accessed support coordination for around six months, we ask them to fill in this optional, anonymous form. The form asks questions about the person's identity and life experiences, such as their experiences of homelessness, addiction challenges and/or criminal convictions. Our response This response rate is equivalent to 8% of people currently accessing support.

[3] The figures presented in this report are accurate as of the 31st of March 2025, but they may not accurately represent the service's data at the point of publication.

[4] The SIMD looks at the extent to which an area is 'deprived' across seven domains: income, employment, education, health, access to services, crime, and housing. If an area is identified as 'deprived' in the SIMD, this is an indicator that people living in this area may be more likely to have a low income and less access to resources, services, and opportunities such as healthcare services, and education or employment opportunities. This tool is only for postcodes in Scotland, and it is updated twice a year.

[5] These two categories are Future Pathways' "priority groups" meaning that priority is assigned to people in these groups when starting support coordination or returning to access support after a period of inactivity.

## Our data sources (cont.)

Information about the support conversations people have at Future Pathways such as:

- The number and quality of support planning and review conversations that took place this year
- Analysis of a sample of 100 support plans and 100 review conversations which took place this year[6]

Information about the supports we facilitate access to such as:

- Support to access services we commission from Delivery Partners
- Support to access material support through the Discretionary Fund
- Support to access existing services, such as statutory and third sector services

Feedback about people's experience with Future Pathways such as:

- The feedback we receive from people registered with us, Delivery Partners, and existing services. We cannot determine exactly how many people gave us feedback this year because people can choose to give us anonymous feedback on more than one occasion. You can see the different ways people gave us feedback and read more about the limitations to this collection of data sources in the section below.
- Qualitative data from four quarterly reflective discussions, facilitated by the Impact and Evaluation Lead this year. These discussions include representatives from all five of our support coordination teams, Practice Learning Managers, the Quality and Improvement Manager and the Partner Relationship Lead.

A wide range of internal and external evaluations we have undertaken this year, including Quarterly Future Pathways reports,[7] Quality framework reports,[8] and our standalone reports on specific topics. This year we published four standalone reports. These were:

- Being there – a report which looks at the prevalence of unmet basic needs among people supported by Future Pathways, the barriers people face when accessing support and how we can help people to navigate these barriers to access the support they need.
- Meanings of Funded Support – a report which looks at key aspects around our Discretionary Fund including the impact our approach and this aspect of our support can have.
- Accessing Records in Scotland – a report we contributed to which brings together findings about what it is like for people with care experience to access their records.
- Identity, Equality and Access – a report about the demographics and life experiences of people supported by Future Pathways.

[6] These were sampled over the course of the year and were drawn from a wide range of Support Coordinators across all five support coordination teams.

[7] [Quarterly reports summarise our work and our impact in each quarter and these can be accessed on our website.](#)

[8] You can read more about our Quality Framework in the Outcome Pathway Two section of this report.

## Our data sources (cont.)

Some of the data we analysed for this report was gathered specifically for this report, including:

- A thematic review of a wide range of internal and external communications including our communications and creative strategy, our complaints policy, our Delivery Partner communications and our Quality Framework guidance.
- Some existing literature about the experiences of people with lived experience of childhood abuse and/or of in-care abuse or neglect.[9]

In addition, throughout part one of this report, we tell the story of our impact through the experiences of three people who have accessed our support over the last year. You will hear from Anne, Alan and Vicky about the support they have accessed and the difference it has made for them. We are sincerely grateful to Anne, Alan and Vicky, and to everyone else who shared their experiences of support with us, so that we can tell the story of our impact in this report.

[9] These are included in the bibliography of this report.

## Discussion of data analysis

There are some limitations to our data analysis which affect our confidence in the evaluation we present in this report. For example, some of our data sources only represent some of people accessing Future Pathways. While feedback rates are high for people accessing support and for Delivery Partners, we receive very little feedback from people waiting for support and from existing services. We also had difficulty drawing conclusions from analysing information gathered through review conversations this year. We explain why this is in part one of this report. Therefore, the sources of impact information that we looked at for this report, are unlikely to reflect the experiences of some groups of people, most notably existing services we work alongside and people waiting for our support.

There are also some instances in which we receive feedback, but we do not include it in our impact analysis. For example, some people prefer that their feedback is confidential, and when this is the case, we do not include the feedback in our impact analysis. As such the feedback we have drawn on for this report is an under-representation of the total volume of feedback we receive. And sometimes people share feedback which we record in a way that it is not possible to aggregate. For example, when feedback is shared as part of a wider discussion about another aspect of support, often it is difficult to identify at scale the parts of the conversation that are feedback. This year, we will make some changes to how we record conversations at Future Pathways to help us learn more from the feedback people share, and we will create opportunities for people to give feedback in more creative ways this year.

In addition, some people choose not to share feedback or some information about themselves and there may be many reasons for this. For example, in our About You form, some of the experiences we ask about, such as homelessness and addiction, may be associated with stigma. We acknowledge this in the form and explain that people will not be identifiable or treated differently because of their answers. However, it is possible that some respondents choose not to answer some questions, because of the stigma associated, and it is therefore likely that our analysis under-represents the prevalence of some experiences.

To mitigate the risks that these limitations pose, we have taken a mixed methods approach to this evaluation. This means that we have drawn on a wide range of data sources – some qualitative and some quantitative – from across the service, and we have used a range of methods to interpret the data. This process gives us confidence that the findings in this report accurately represent the data we looked at for this report.

## Part 1: Outcome Pathway One

### Supporting people registered with us

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## Part 1: Outcome Pathway One: Supporting people registered with us [10]



[10] Note that one steppingstone – Alliance staff team – has not been analysed in this report. You can read more information about our Alliance Partners in the Our Journey So Far section above. We plan to learn more about the collaborative relationships between Alliance Partners this year.

# Supporting people registered with us

## What we do

- We raise awareness about Future Pathways and support people who could benefit to register
- We take a relational approach in all we do
- Over time and in collaboration with people we support, we surface and plan for their personal outcomes
- We facilitate access to a range of resources tailored to the person

## How they feel

- Safe and that Future Pathways is trustworthy
- Understood, heard and valued

## What they do differently

- Take steps towards their evolving personal outcomes
- Exercise greater choice and ownership in their lives and support

## Who with

- People registered with Future Pathways
- People accessing support
- Delivery Partners
- Existing services

## What they learn and gain

- A consistent relationship with the service for as long as the person feels support is needed
- Supported access to wide-ranging resources fitted to where they are now and where they want to go
- Awareness of their own strengths, abilities and the changes they want to make
- Opportunities to collaborate through difficulty

## What difference does this make

- Life is better for people we support
- People we support feel a sense of freedom and purpose
- People feel confident and able to move beyond the service independently

# What we do: We raise awareness about Future Pathways and support people who could benefit to register

(Progress: Great; Confidence: High)

## Hearing about Future Pathways

When people register with the service, we ask them where they heard about us. In 2024, we made some changes to how we record where people hear about the service which helped us learn more about specifically where people hear about Future Pathways. From these changes, we can see that, as in previous years, the most common way that people hear about Future Pathways is from someone that they know such as a friend or family member.



In most instances this year, people heard about the service from a friend or acquaintance, which suggests that people who have accessed our support regard Future Pathways positively and feel comfortable recommending us to people they know. The significance of this is notable, given that many people with lived experience can find it difficult to trust services due to previous experiences of abuse or neglect, or of being let down by services. However, this may also mean that it is harder for people who are less connected with others with lived experience or who do not know someone who has accessed Future Pathways, to access our support.

If people do not hear about us from someone they know, they are most likely to hear about us from a service or professional related to the Redress Scheme such as a Scottish Government caseworker, a Link Worker at Redress Support Scotland or a Redress Scotland panel member. This year, some people heard about us through the Redress Support Service[11] - which is also delivered by the In Care Survivors Alliance - and a smaller proportion heard about us from their Redress caseworker[12] or Redress Scotland[13].

We also continue to see that many people hear about us from third sector or statutory services, although the proportion of people who heard about us in this way is slightly lower than it was last year. That a relatively consistent proportion of people registering with us hear about Future Pathways from other services indicates that some other services are aware of our service and feel confident recommending our support to people. However, it may also mean that it is harder for people who are not accessing other services to access our support.

Notably, this year more people heard about us through our communications, such as our leaflets and website, than ever before, indicating that the changes we have made this year to make our information more accessible are supporting people to register with us.

## Communicating about Future Pathways

An important way that we raise awareness about Future Pathways and support people to register with us is through our communications and creative work. This aspect of our work focuses on three key strands:

- Inclusion - ensuring our information is accessible, widely distributed, reflective of the needs and interests of people we support, and that it highlights lived experience.
- Connection - creating opportunities for people registered with us to create content, sustain a connection with us and be informed about topics of interest, as well as enhancing our connection with other services such as our Delivery Partners.
- Representation - raising the profile of our work and clarifying understandings about the In Care Survivors Alliance and Future Pathways.

We work towards these aims in a wide range of ways. Here, we outline some of the main ways we have raised awareness about our support with different audiences, and supported people to register this year.

[11] The Redress Support Service offers support to people who are applying for the Redress Scheme or who are thinking about applying. It is delivered by the In Care Survivors Alliance. Find out more here: [Redress Support Service | Support for people in their journey towards redress](#)

[12] Redress caseworkers work for the Scottish Government and they can help people with questions about completing the redress application process, what documents to provide and where to get support. Find out more here: [How it works - mygov.scot](#)

[13] Redress Scotland is an independent body which makes decisions about the outcomes of applications for redress. Find out more here: [Redress Scotland – Survivors are at the heart of the Redress Scotland process](#)

## Information about who Future Pathways is

We have continued to diversify the ways in which we share information about Future Pathways this year. We continued to distribute our leaflets and our poster in GP surgeries, custody suites and homelessness networks across Scotland, and we notice that there is a high rate of people picking up our leaflet. For example, on average, 76% of the leaflets we delivered to GP surgeries in Scotland this year were picked up by people.

We also continued to make sure that our information is accessible and supports a range of literacy levels. For example, we created our leaflet as a downloadable version, BSL version, and Easy Read interpretation all of which are available on our website. We also created an animation in collaboration with Electrify and members of Voices for a Better Future. In the animation, we show how our support is tailored to each individual, how we support people to find their own pathway to a positive future, and we encourage anyone who has experienced abuse and neglect in the Scottish care system to register with Future Pathways.

## Our website

Our website is an important way that we communicate information about our work. This year 9,716 people accessed our website. The pages that were accessed the most frequently included 'About our support', 'How we help', 'Who can get support', 'Contact us', 'News and Events', 'Features' and 'Experiences'. We cannot directly compare with the previous year because we made significant changes to our website in 2023. However, we know that, overall, more people are visiting our website more frequently, and we can see that people are spending longer on our website than they were before.

We have made several improvements to our website this year. For example, we refreshed, and updated information about what Future Pathways does, who can get support, how to register, and what support looks like (among other information) in the Frequently Asked Questions section of our website. And we created a dedicated space in our website about our work with Delivery Partners. As part of this, we developed new information resources for existing and prospective Delivery Partners to explain who we are and what we do. We also continued to share Meet the Partner interviews featuring a wide range of our Delivery Partners. For example, here, Marie, Managing Director and Founder of MD Cleaning, describes how she works with people accessing Future Pathways' support and the importance of empathy and understanding in her work. These interviews shine a light on the diverse Delivery Partners we work with, and the wide range of support people can access through Future Pathways.

## Our social media

We also share the Experiences of people registered with us and other features through our social media. On facebook, we find that the posts that reach the most people are posts about our learning (such as our evaluation reports), role vacancies at Future Pathways, updates about the service (such as the dates when our registration line is closed) and information about looking after your wellbeing.

The post that reached the most people on facebook this year was about a resource created by the Voices for a Better Future group providing guidance and information for people with lived experience who are accessing their records. And engagement (for example, liking, sharing and commenting on a post) was highest for posts about people's experience of accessing our support.[14]

Similarly on X, the posts that reached the most people were about our collaborative learning projects, the Experiences of people who have accessed support, updates from the service, and our involvement in events such as The Gathering. And engagement was highest for posts about the events we were involved with, people's Experiences and features about their interests, and information about what we are learning, such as our evaluation reports.

## Our newsletter

Our newsletter is an important way that we connect with people registered with us. The primary newsletter is aimed at people registered with us. Currently, around 2118 people are subscribed to our newsletter – this represents around 77% of the total number of people registered with us.[15]

The newsletter includes a wide range of content. Over the past year, our main newsletters featured creative projects from people we support, such as [Selina's knitting projects](#) and [Donnie's poetry](#). We also shared people's experiences of accessing Future Pathways' support. For example, you can read about [what it was like for Mary to take the first steps to access Future Pathways](#).

We also shared information about our latest Delivery Partners, such as [financial coach Graham Wells](#), and people's experiences of accessing support through other services. For example, here [Rikki tells us about the impact that connecting with Andy's Man Club made to him during a difficult time](#). In our newsletters, we also shared summaries of our findings from quarterly reports, and our other impact reports and research projects. For example, in December, [we shared a summary of what we learned about our support and impact in 2024](#).

This year, we asked people to give us feedback about our newsletter through a questionnaire. From this, we learned that most respondents find the newsletter easy to read and understand. Most people fed back positively about the length and layout of the newsletter, and we saw that people enjoyed reading a wide range of article topics. The most popular articles are about the types of support people have accessed at Future Pathways and for many people, the newsletter feels like a positive and uplifting resource. We also learned about some changes we could make to make it more accessible and engaging. For example, making larger copies available for people who need it. The results of the survey indicated that the newsletter was an important and valued way for people to stay connected with Future Pathways.

[14] We also noticed that followers engaged well with posts about our features about a wide range of topics such as the launch of the new In Care Survivors Alliance website, our impact report and people's individual features about their experiences of exploring new interests and creative pursuits.

[15] However, we know that some people who are subscribed to receive the newsletter are not people registered (for example, Future Pathways staff members) and so this figure should be understood as indicative only.

We create a monthly newsletter for our Delivery Partners called Connect, which you can read more about in part two of this report.

## Engagement opportunities

We also facilitate periodic engagement opportunities. These focus on connecting and developing relationships with our audiences including people registered with us. Engagement opportunities can be led or facilitated by people registered with us, Future Pathways team members, and/or other services. This year, for example, we hosted an exhibition stand at The Gathering, the UK's largest conference for third sector services and at the Trauma Summit, a conference hosted by Action Trauma, a leading network for professionals and organisations working with trauma. Going forward we will be expanding opportunities to engage with the service and with peers. You can read more about this in the Our next steps section of this report.

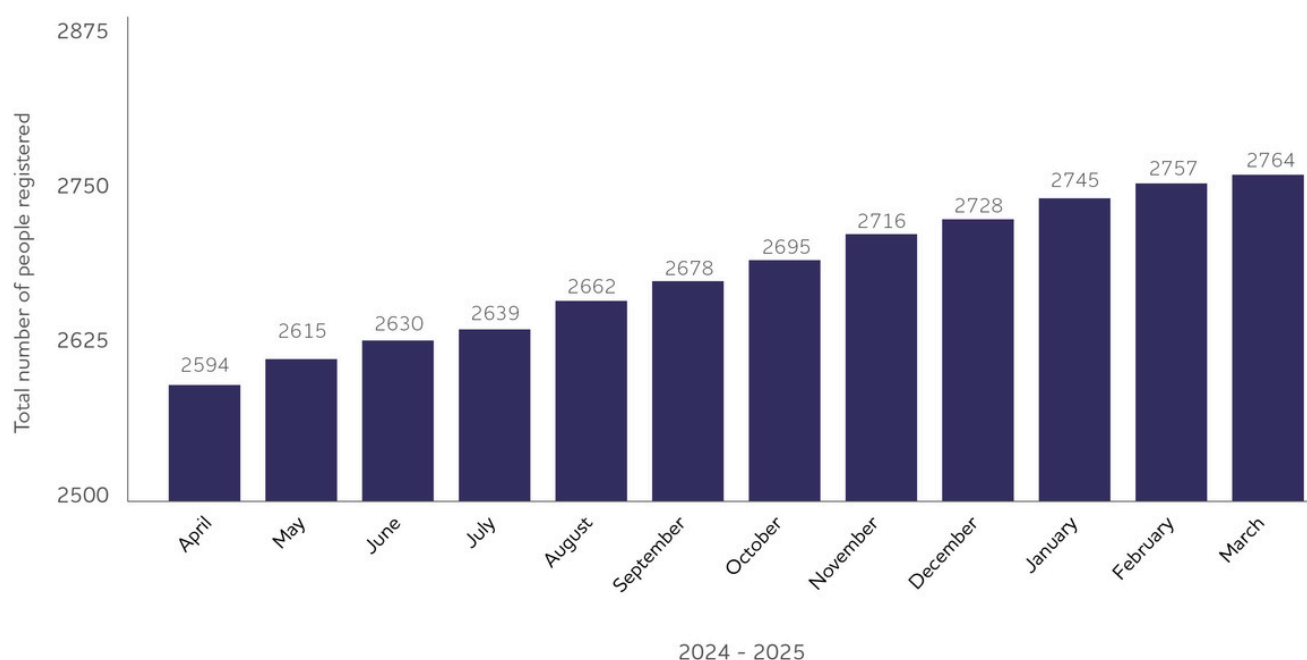
Another example of an engagement opportunity is Voices for a Better Future, our lived experience voice group. The group comprises 14 people who have accessed Future Pathways' support, two representatives from the Scottish Government and one person from Future Pathways, who provides administrative and safeguarding support. It provides a safe space where members can offer guidance and advice to the Alliance Leadership Team. The group also influences and takes the lead on aspects of the design and delivery of Future Pathways. Members of the group also attend Alliance Leadership Team meetings to ensure the views of people registered with the service are heard and considered in all decisions. The group advocates for positive change beyond Future Pathways by helping services that may be beneficial to people with lived experience to improve. For example, the group is collaborating with the Procurator Fiscal's office to help develop a process to provide support to people who are participating in the SCAI and going through court proceedings to prosecute their perpetrator.

## Registering for support

People register for Future Pathways' support through a phone call with a Support Coordinator. During this conversation, we explain more about Future Pathways, and we make sure the person is eligible for our support. Then, we send the person an Information Pack which explains how Future Pathways can help and what people can expect from support.

A total of 2764 people are currently registered with Future Pathways, and over time the number of people registered with the service continues to increase. This year, 193 people registered with us.

### Number of people who registered with Future Pathways



However, over time the rate at which new people are registering with us is slowing. In 2021/22, on average, 27 people per month registered for Future Pathways' support. In 2022/23, the average dropped to 19 people per month. In 2023/4 this rose slightly to 21 people registering on average each month. This year, the average number of people registering per month was 16.

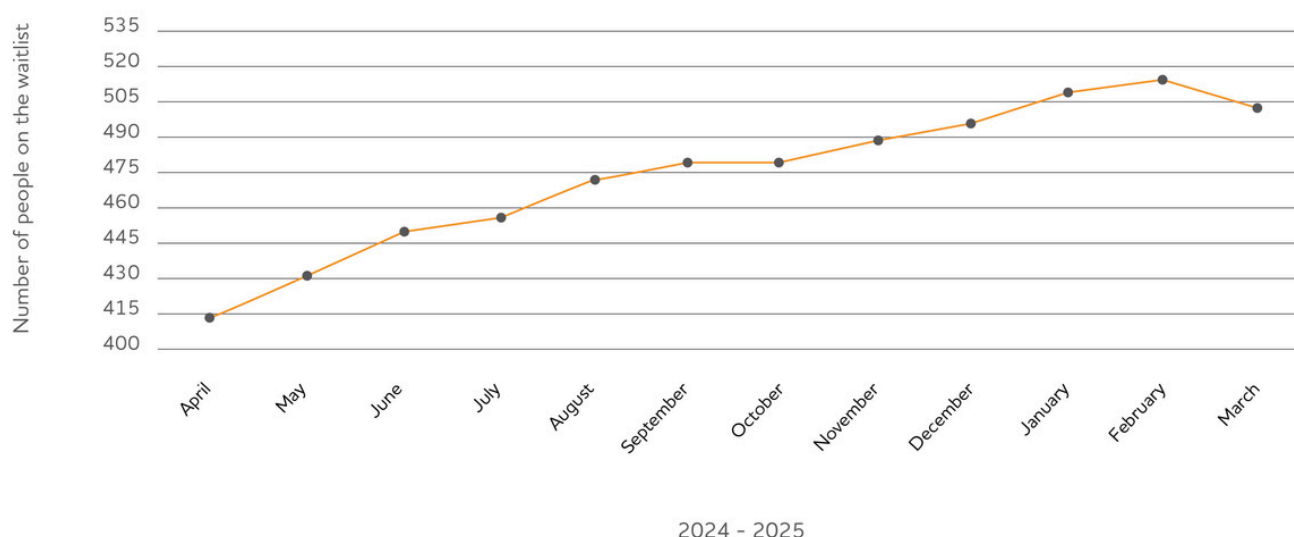
It is not possible to determine why we are experiencing this gradual reduction in people registering with Future Pathways, partly because volumes of registrations have fluctuated since Future Pathways launched. However, it is possible that some people are deterred from registering for support by the length of our waitlist for support coordination. We know that after learning about our waitlist when calling our registration line, some individuals have decided not to register with us. It is not possible to determine how many people have heard about our waitlist and decided not to register as a result.

Because high numbers of people register for our support and people often access support for extended periods[16], an extensive waitlist for support coordination has developed over time. Despite expanding our team to respond to the numbers of people registering with the service, over the last year, the number of people waiting for support has increased by 28% from 394 people to 503 people over the course of this year. A total of 18% of people who are registered with the service are currently on our waitlist.

[16] You can read more about this in the What Difference does this Make section of part one of this report.



### Number of people waiting for support 2024/5



We cannot say how long people will have to wait before accessing support because timeframes can change based on staff capacity to work with newly registered people, and because people wait for support for different lengths of time. For example, if people are aged over 65 years old or have a terminal illness, we put them in contact with a Support Coordinator as a matter of priority.<sup>[17]</sup> At the time of writing this report, the longest time a person on our waitlist had been waiting for support coordination was up to 27 months.

However, the rate at which the number of people on our waitlist is increasing has slowed considerably this year. In 2023/24, the number of people on the waitlist more than doubled over the course of the year whereas this year it grew by just over a quarter. And, for the first time in over two years, the waitlist decreased in March 2025. This may in part be because numbers of registrations are lower than in previous years, and it may also indicate that the expansion of the support coordination team this year is beginning to have a positive impact on our ability to start working with more people waiting for support.

Another contributing factor for the gradual reduction in volumes of registrations may be that Redress Support Service (also delivered by In Care Survivors Alliance) has now been established for over three years.

[17] In this way, Future Pathways aligns its practice with the Redress Scheme in which people aged over 65 and people with terminal illnesses can apply for advance Redress payments. Over the last year, 19 people in priority groups registered with the service and all have been connected with a Support Coordinator. In all other instances, we offer support in the order that people register with us.

This service also supports people who experienced abuse or neglect in Scottish care settings. Although the two services have different remits – the Redress Support Service focuses on supporting people in the process of making an application to the Redress Scheme whereas Future Pathways provides wider outcome focused support – it is possible that some people have been able to access the support they need at the Redress Support Service and have therefore not registered at Future Pathways. For example, the Redress Support Service can help facilitate access to support with seeking records from people’s past, as records can be an important part of the redress application process. For some people, this may be the primary focus of seeking support, and if this need is met through accessing the Redress Support Service, some people may feel that accessing Future Pathways is not necessary.

People may also choose to access only one Alliance service in order to feel more able to manage multiple relationships with different services involved in their lives. Anecdotal feedback indicates that sometimes people accessing Future Pathways can experience overwhelm in relation to accessing multiple services. It may therefore be that some people choose to access one of the Alliance services, if it best meets their needs, rather than both. We do not currently have a means of determining how many people are accessing both Future Pathways and Redress Support Service. Because we lack this overall picture of the reach of the Alliance services combined, we do not know how many people access Redress Support Scotland but do not access Future Pathways. Learning more about this would help us determine whether this factor is contributing to the reduction in Future Pathways registrations over time.

# What we do: We take a relational approach in all we do

(Progress: Some; Confidence: High)

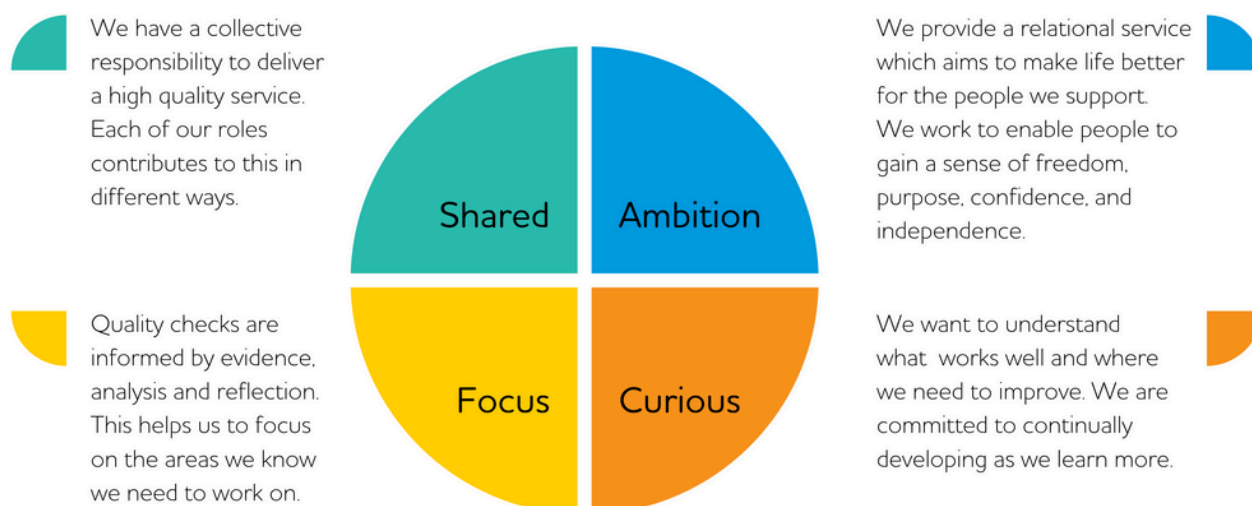
Our previous evaluations have shown that focusing on our relationships with people, rather than seeing support as transactional, enhances the difference that we make. You can read more about how people experience the service in the How they Feel section of this report.

Rather, this section of the report analyses the evidence available that we take steps to prioritise the relationships we have with people.

## A relational culture

We continue to see strong evidence that we take a relational approach to working together at Future Pathways and that this approach is woven through different areas of the service. Policies, guidance, and reports from different functions across the service incorporate the service's relational approach. For example, we focus our impact reporting on evaluating questions such as how people accessing support feel and what support means to them. In our Communications and Creative work, a core focus of our work is creating connections with different audiences. And, as can be seen in the image below, building and sustaining relationships with people registered with us is also embedded in our approach to monitoring the quality and consistency of our work.

The Foundation of our Quality Framework



Likewise, our Quality Framework reports this year found that we consistently create opportunities to learn, reflect, and contribute to practice and service development at Future Pathways. For example, in November 2024, the full Future Pathways team came together for a day of reflection and connection. The topics explored during this event were trauma informed leadership, the importance of hope, and connection. Themes of relationships and relational support also flowed through the Professional Development Days (PDDs) delivered to the support coordination team this year. Each year, we deliver around four PDDs to all Support Coordinators. These are opportunities for the team to connect, discuss challenges, reflect on progress, and share good practice with colleagues. This year, we delivered PDDs on the themes of selfcare and psychological first aid, the wellbeing benefits of writing, and sustaining relationships with supported people when there are difficulties in the relationship.

We can also see that the relational approach is embedded within the structure of Future Pathways, which is delivered by an Alliance of four partner organisations working together to achieve our service outcomes. Alliance Partners commit to relational values such as respecting and supporting each other; actively participating in the delivery of the service; and pooling ideas and resources. You can [read more about the vision, purpose and values of the In Care Survivors Alliance on the Alliance's webpage](#). Alliancing is one type of collaborative commissioning that seeks to develop services that meet the needs of people and communities. It may be beneficial to explore how alliancing has contributed to Future Pathways' development and performance.

### Our relationships with people registered with us

We also have strong evidence that we take a relational approach with people registered with us throughout the person's experience at Future Pathways. For example, before support coordination begins, we send each person a Support Agreement, which explains what people can expect from their relationship with Future Pathways and what we expect from people we support, indicating that the concept of support is introduced from the very beginning of support.



“We will listen to you, respect your views and work with you in line with your own needs. We will be honest, supportive and welcoming. We will do our best to make sure you feel valued, safe and believed.”

**Future Pathways Support Agreement**

We also have evidence that Support Coordinators take a relational approach when supporting people accessing the service, for example by taking the time at the start of support to have discussions about where the person is now, and what matters most to them before support is put in place. Analysis of a sample of initial conversations Support Coordinators had with people accessing support this year indicated that conversations explore different areas of the person's life and invite the person to reflect on where they are in their lives at the point of accessing support.

It is also clear from people's feedback that Support Coordinators prioritise building trust and mutual understanding with people we support. You can read more about the importance of this relational approach for people we support in the "How they feel" section of this report.

We can also see that our relational approach persists through difficulty. In the complaints records we analysed this year, we can see that when a breakdown in the relationship between the person and their Support Coordinator occurs, where possible we work towards overcoming this difficulty together and in many instances the person feels comfortable to continue engaging with support. Indeed, creating opportunities for people we support to give feedback and contribute to improving the service is one of the ways in which we enact our relational approach.

### Our relationships with partners

We also take a relational approach to our interactions with our Delivery Partners. In internal and external communications, we explain how we cultivate positive relationships with Delivery Partners, by building trust, being transparent and taking the time to get to know and value our partners. Our most recent Quality Framework report showed that we have strong evidence that we consistently demonstrate a relational approach to working with existing and purchased services.



**"We take the time to build trusting relationships with people we support and our Delivery Partners so we can work collaboratively to help people identify personal outcome/s and progress towards achieving them."**

**Future Pathways website**

We found that the relational approach we take to support is reflected in how Delivery Partners experience our work together. You can read more about this in the How they Feel section of Outcome Pathway 2 (Part 2 of this report).

On the other hand, we continue to find it challenging to evaluate our approach to partnership working with existing services, such as statutory and third sector services, due to issues with gathering data about this aspect of our work. This year, we sent existing partners a feedback questionnaire. However, the response rate was too low to draw conclusions from our results about how existing services experience our approach. You can read about how we plan to learn more about this part of our work in the Our next steps section.

We have begun to explore when it is important to take a relational approach with Providers – services which provide short term or ad hoc services such as trades including plumbing and building as part of the support we facilitate. This year, we started working on developing a new approach to our work with providers. As part of this, we are considering when to apply a relational approach to our work with Providers and evaluate this aspect of our work. You can read more about this in the Our next steps section of this report.

## What we do: Over time and in collaboration with people we support, we surface and plan for their personal outcomes

(Progress: Some; Confidence: Low)

Future Pathways aims to focus our support on people's personal outcomes. To ensure that support is tailored to each individual, we aim to have holistic conversations with people we support about their personal outcomes, when they start support. During these conversations, we aim to help people identify their outcomes and create a support plan where we agree the support that will be put in place to help the person to progress their outcomes.

However, evidence shows that our approach to having outcomes conversations with people is variable. A few Support Coordinators used an approach called I.ROC which helps people to look at and reflect holistically about different aspects of their wellbeing: their home, access to opportunities, the people in their life, and their experience of empowerment. [18] Others use a framework called SHEER to start conversations about where people are in their lives now. SHEER conversations [19] But most of the time, our evidence indicates that Support Coordinators do not use a structured approach to having conversations about people's outcomes before progressing to creating a support plan.

We also find that support planning conversations do not take place as regularly as we aim for and our evidence shows that, while many people have these conversations, a significant minority of people we support do not. Last year most people (80%, n=652) who were currently accessing Future Pathways' support had at least one support planning conversation with their Support Coordinators over the course of the year. This year, 74% (n=592) of the people who are accessing support had a support planning conversation over the course of the year, meaning over a quarter of people who are accessing our support have not had a support planning conversation this year.

We also analysed a sample of 30 records of people are currently accessing our support and who have been working with their Support Coordinator for at least one year. Most (n=16) of the records we sampled included an active support plan which had been created in the last 6 months. However, in many records (n=13) the support plan was out of date for various reasons. For example, it had not been possible to make contact with the person or there had been an absence of change in Support Coordinator which contributed to the delay.

[18] It is not possible to determine exactly how many Support Coordinators regularly use I.ROC to have outcomes conversations. This is because Support Coordinators may use I.ROC in some conversations and not in others. We also know that some Support Coordinators use the I.ROC approach to guide their conversations, but that they record conversations using our standard support plan and review template, My Outcomes. Our most recent scoping study found that most Support Coordinators do not use I.ROC regularly in their practice, though they may refer to the I.ROC model in conversations.

[19] This year, a total of 22 Support Coordinators used the SHEER structure to have a conversation about where the person is at the moment in their life.

Furthermore, when support planning conversations take place, often there is confusion between the person's outcomes, goals, and the support planned. Our Quality Framework reports have consistently highlighted that this is an area of improvement for the service. In response to these issues, we have been reviewing our service wide approach to outcomes conversations over the last year. We will roll out our new approach to outcomes conversation next year. You can read more about this in the Our next steps section of this report.

On the other hand, most people we support have a support planning conversation with their Support Coordinator and, in many of these, people talk about their outcomes and plan the support that will help them make the changes they want to make in their life. On average people identified two outcomes in their support plan. We analysed a sample of 100 support plans created over the last year to identify themes in people's outcomes. We used the I.ROC model to categorise the support plans we sampled.[20] As you can see in the summaries below, people accessing support identified a wide range of outcomes in support planning conversations this year, reflecting the tailored approach to support at Future Pathways, but we were able to identify some themes in the areas of life people wanted to focus on with their Support Coordinator. It was notable that many of the themes we noticed this year were consistent from last year's impact report.



[20] We applied this model whether people used HOPE to identify their outcomes or did so through unstructured conversation. I.ROC is intended for self-evaluation, so using it to categorise outcomes which have not been identified using I.ROC introduces a margin of error. Indeed, in our sample of support plans, less than one in ten (n=9) of the support plans we sampled referred specifically to the HOPE model. This analysis should therefore only be considered indicative of the themes in the outcomes of the people we support.

## Mental health

In many of the support plans we analysed (n=35), people identified that they wanted to experience improvements in their mental health. In some support planning conversations, people discussed with their Support Coordinator what this meant for them specifically. For some people, this was about feeling more resilient. For others their outcomes were about managing specific emotions – such as stress, anxiety, anger and frustration – more effectively. And for others this was about addressing and mitigating their trauma symptoms. The word cloud below visualises the outcomes people identified related to their mental health in support plans last year.[21]



Support plans reflected the tailored approach that Support Coordinators take to supporting people to find their own pathways to improving their mental health. Some people agreed goals such as accessing counselling. For others, their support plan focused on discovering creative outlets to benefit their mental health.

[21] The phrases included in the word cloud in this report have been paraphrased for anonymity.



## Safety and comfort

Feeling better in and about their home was another theme in the outcomes people identified in the support plans we sampled, with 35 people identifying this as a focus of their work with Future Pathways. From people's narratives, we could see that 'safety and comfort' meant different things for different people. For example, for some it meant feeling safe in their area. For others this was about being able to get around their home or garden space safely. Many people with outcomes related to feeling safer and more comfortable at home also had outcomes around feeling more independent and able to move around their home with ease and agency.

Support Coordinators have conversations about what the best approach to this outcome is for the person. In support plans people agreed a wide range of steps towards feeling safer and more comfortable. Often goals centred on improving the look and feel of their home, for example by making the space more accessible or by refurnishing or decorating their home or moving home.

## Relationships

Many people (n=25) identified that developing the relationships with people, services and communities in their lives was important to them. For some people (n=7) this was about deepening their existing relationships with family members and friends whereas for most (n=18) this was about accessing support from or engaging with wider circles of support such as community groups.



Again, we can see that Support Coordinators support people to explore the best steps for them. Many people agreed goals focused on creating more opportunities to spend quality time with loved ones and linking with community groups relevant to their own geographical area or interests

## Independence and self-efficacy

We also learned that being independent and making choices about their life is very important to people we support. When we asked people about the impact they wished to experience from support, 24 people identified outcomes around feeling more independence, free and able to make their own decisions about their life.

I will...

Have a say in my life and my support

**Feel free, independent  
or able to maintain  
my independence**

Feel in control of  
my environment

**Feel better in my  
financial situation**

Feel I have more agency in my life

**Be able to do  
important tasks**

**Be able to access information  
and support when I need it**

People were supported to set goals which focused on engaging meaningfully with other services in a supported way and gaining a sense of autonomy in their daily lives in the ways that mattered to them. For some this was about navigating their home with more ease, and for others it was about completing tasks independently. For others it was about finding out about the supports available to them.

## Purpose and direction

Many people identified that feeling a greater sense of purpose and direction was important to them. In the support plans we looked at many people (n=14) shared that this was something they wanted to focus on.

Often purpose and direction was about making a difference to the people in their lives or people the person did not know. For example, some people told us that exploring volunteering opportunities was important for them. Others told us that sharing their creative pursuits with a view to raise awareness of the experience of in-care abuse and neglect in Scotland mattered greatly to them. For others, their purpose and direction were linked to their personal goals around starting a business, studying or developing a career in an area they felt passionate about. You can see the outcomes people identified related to purpose and direction in the word cloud below.



Again, we saw evidence that Support Coordinators supported people to identify the right pathway to these outcomes, according to their personal circumstances. For example, for some this was about setting goals such as pursuing education and voluntary opportunities, and for others it was about linking up with the supports available to start a business or write a book.

## Physical Health

Physical health is another area of focus for some people we support. In sampled support plans, 11 people identified an outcome about improving their physical health and wellbeing or their level of exercise and activity.[22]

In support plans, people were supported to explore what this meant for them and what factors influence this area of their life. Several themes emerged including struggles with managing pain, sleep difficulty, challenges with healthy eating, and sustaining healthy habits such as exercise. In support plans, we saw evidence that Support Coordinators tailor their approach, and help people identify various goals from linking with a GP, to attending their local gym, to exploring complimentary therapies.

## Hope for the future

Finally, in the support plans we sampled some people (n=10) expressed outcomes about their hopes for the future. For many people, this was about achieving a goal or ambition that was personal to them, for example related to a career they wanted to pursue.

We also noticed that people often reflected on how important it was for them to connect with or move on from their past. For some people, this was an important balance between acknowledging the past while working towards their hopes for the future. For some people this was about gaining a sense of closure, and for others this was about feeling connected with positive experiences from their past or with a feeling of “rootedness”.

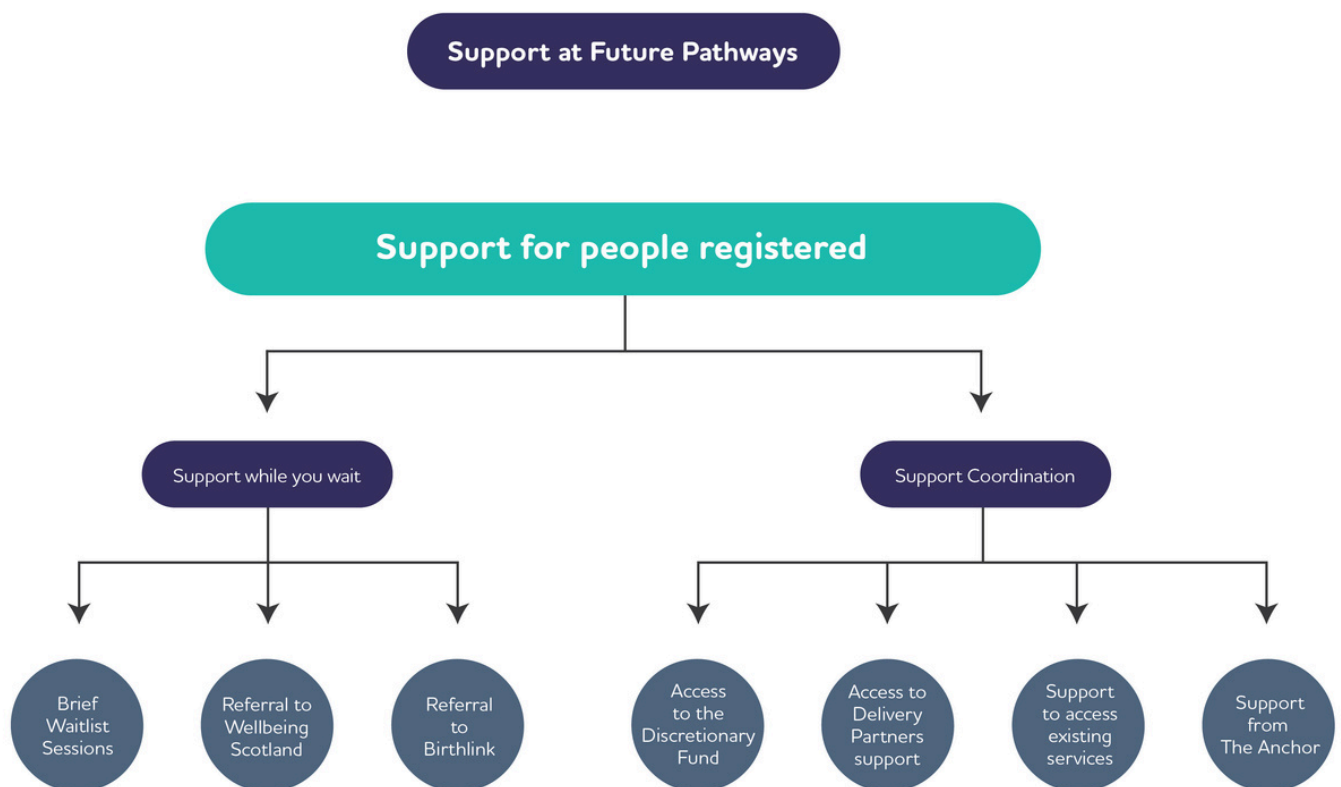
It was also notable that in many support plans, the outcomes people identified were related to multiple areas of their life. For example, a person may have an outcome around improving their mental health and their physical wellbeing. Or an outcome may be intended to promote a sense of independence, but the person may also acknowledge that this would also positively impact their relationships with the important people in their lives, for example, because they might be able to spend time doing different activities with them.

[22] This finding relates strongly with what we learned about people we support, and you can read more about this in the Who With section of this chapter.

## What we do: We facilitate access to a range of resources tailored to the person.

(Progress: Great; Confidence: Some)

There are two forms of support available to people registered with Future Pathways. These are support for people on the waitlist and support coordination.



### Support while you wait

We introduced new forms of support for people on our waitlist in November 2024.

Firstly, people can access standalone support through up to four sessions with a Support Coordinator. We call this type of support 'Brief Waitlist Sessions'. These sessions can help the person to:

- Cover the costs of a funeral or memorial if they are not able to access this funding elsewhere
- Visit a relative or close friend who is terminally ill or receiving end-of-life care.
- Move accommodation to keep themselves safe. In this instance we can share information about services that can offer support and help the person connect with them.
- Move accommodation quickly, for example, if they have been on a housing waitlist and have been offered a tenancy. In this instance we can help to cover removal costs if they are not able to access this funding elsewhere.
- access education if the request is time-sensitive and they cannot access the funding elsewhere.

This year, six people accessed Brief Waitlist Sessions. In most instances, the support accessed was related to moving accommodation quickly, such as removal costs. Most people who accessed Brief Waitlist Sessions accessed the Discretionary Fund as part of the support, and some people were also referred to other services to help address their needs while they continue to wait for Future Pathways' support. At the time of writing this report, most people who accessing Brief Waitlist Sessions had not yet completed this support. But so far, on average, people had accessed two Brief Waitlist Sessions to access the support they need during the waitlist.

While on the waitlist, people can also be referred to Birthlink, a service that helps people to search for and access their records. Many people who have been in care want to access their records for many different reasons, for example to learn more about their past. After we refer someone to Birthlink, the service contacts the person to explain the process of record searching and they keep the person updated about how the search for records is going. If they find the person's records, the person has choices about how and when they receive their records. Since we launched this referral pathway, we have referred eight people to Birthlink while they wait for support coordination.

Another type of support people can access while on our waitlist is a referral to Wellbeing Scotland, a support service for people who have been impacted by any form of abuse as a child. [23] Wellbeing Scotland offers emotional support, advocacy, group work, record search support and counselling according to the person's unique needs. Since we launched this referral pathway, we have referred 24 people to Wellbeing Scotland while they wait for support coordination to start.

## Support coordination

The primary support Future Pathways offers is support coordination. According to our model, when support begins, each person works with a dedicated Support Coordinator who develops a relationship with the person in part by having conversations about their personal outcomes. The Support Coordinator then works alongside the person to create a support plan and to facilitate access to a wide range of resources which are tailored to the person's outcomes.

After discussing their outcomes and making a support plan with their Support Coordinator, people are supported to access support that is tailored to them. Everyone's support is tailored to their outcomes, and so the support people access at Future Pathways is unique to them.

[23] People can also refer themselves to Wellbeing Scotland separately to Future Pathways.

You can learn more about the different kinds of support people can access at Future Pathways on our website. Broadly speaking, Support Coordinators facilitate access to four different types of tailored support[24]:

- services provided by our network of Delivery Partners.
- services provided by the The Anchor
- material support through the Discretionary Fund.
- support to link up with and access existing services.

To ensure the support is right for people we support, we aim to review support with the person within six months of a support plan being agreed.

Since Future Pathways launched, 1865 people - 67% of people registered with the service - have accessed support coordination. At the time of writing this report, 798 people were accessing support coordination at Future Pathways and it is clear that many people continue to access a mixture of different types of tailored support. At least 20% of the reviews that we sampled this year referred to the person accessing a mix of different types of support. Here, we summarise the different types of tailored support people can access through support coordination.

## Material support

The Discretionary Fund can be accessed to purchase an item or short-term service which would support the person to progress their outcome. We consistently find that over half of people accessing our support make use of the Discretionary Fund to further their outcomes. . This year, at least 571 people accessed the Discretionary Fund.[25] This is around 72% of people who are currently accessing support coordination at Future Pathways. This is significantly higher than last year when we estimated that at least half of people accessing support had accessed the Discretionary Fund. This is likely because our calculations in our previous evaluation were based on only 6 months of transactions, whereas changes to how we record these transactions now give us a fuller picture of the total number of people accessing the Fund. Most people who accessed the Discretionary Fund this year (67%, n=383) accessed it more than once.[25]

People we support access the Discretionary Fund to make purchases which align with what we know about people's priorities and outcomes when they start support. A recent evaluation looked at 20 records of people who accessed the Discretionary Fund between April 2024 and September 2024.

[24] We know from the feedback we receive that many people consider their relationship with their Support Coordinator to be an important form of support in itself. Although we recognise that this relationship is very important to people accessing Future Pathways, we consider this relationship to be part of our service's approach rather than a type of support we facilitate access to.

[25] We know that the number of people who accessed the Discretionary Fund is higher than this because sometimes individual payments relate to multiple people or we experience gaps in our recording. This year, this was the case for a total of 36 Discretionary Fund payments.

All the records sampled recorded at least one outcome in relation to at least one of the Discretionary Fund purchases the person accessed. Some of the most common themes in the outcomes related to a Discretionary Fund purchase were:

- Feeling better in the home environment (n=7) – these included outcomes around feeling more settled, safe and comfortable at home.
- Feeling better in the person's mental wellbeing (n=6) – these included outcomes around feeling more confident, improving self-image, and mental health generally.
- Improving physical health (n=5) – these included working on improving sleep quality and recovering from medical problems. Often these outcomes also included reflections about how this could contribute to increased independence, self-efficacy and hope for the future.
- Relationships with others (n=4) – these included feeling more connected with family members and friends.

That these themes were also prominent in the previous evaluation of this data set and in the support plans we analysed indicates that people are supported to access the Discretionary Fund in a way that aligns with their personal outcomes.

That said, there was no significant correlation between people's outcomes and the item or service purchased. For example, for one person, a purchase related to home improvement may be about feeling safe to navigate their home independently. For another person, it may be about feeling a sense of control or belonging. This analysis suggests that material support has different meanings for different people.

Because everyone's personal outcomes are different, people access the Discretionary Fund for a wide range of purchases and people access material support a variable number of times. However, we can see some trends in how people use the Discretionary Fund, despite some fluctuations over the course of years. For example, we continue to see that more people access the Fund for purchases related to their safety and comfort at home than for anything else. Home related purchases constituted 43% (n=942) of the total number of Discretionary Fund payments this year. This remained relatively consistent over the course of the year, and we have found this to be a consistent pattern over time. Within this category, people may access the Fund to make different kinds of purchases. For example, this year, 22% (n=211) of home related purchases were for furniture such as beds or sofas. And 19% (n=178) were to purchase electrical and white goods such as cookers and freezers.

Another category where we see a high number of transactions, is hardship payments which are to address immediate needs such as bills and food. This year, hardship payments constituted 10% (n=221) of transactions made. Again, we find that this pattern is consistent over time.



## Delivery Partner support

Many people accessing Future Pathways are supported to access Delivery Partner services to progress their outcomes. Over the last year, 79 people started accessing new support with a Delivery Partner, and 115 people accessed support with a Delivery Partner at some point in this period. This represents 14% of the people accessing Future Pathways' support, which is significantly lower (around half the number of people who accessed Delivery Partner support last year). We also continue to see that some people access support from more than one Delivery Partner. For example, this year, 12 people were accessing more than one Delivery Partner as part of their support. This is mirrored by what we saw in our sample of review conversations in which at least 29% people reflected on accessing support provided by Delivery Partners.

Over the last year, we made approximately 98 referrals to 26 Delivery Partners working across a wide range of sectors and offering different types of support. As the graphic below shows, the support provided by the Delivery Partners we work alongside aligns with the outcomes identified by people we support.



Almost a third (32%, n=64) of the referrals we made to Delivery Partners this year were for support at Wellbeing Scotland, which provides a range of different types of support. You can read more about the support that Wellbeing Scotland offers in the Support While You Wait section above.

We saw an increase in the number of referrals we made for record searches this year, from 20% of referrals to Delivery Partners last year to almost a quarter of the referrals we made this year. Since Future Pathways started, we have supported over 800 people to seek their records with Delivery Partner support.

We have also noticed a slight increase in the number of referrals to Delivery Partners providing creative therapies. This year 11% (n=21) of the referrals we made were for creative therapies, such as support with creative writing, compared with 8% of referrals last year.

Another type of support that we commonly refer to is support work. This year, 8% (n=15) of our referrals were for support work, and 5% (n=9) were for trauma support work.[26] These are consistently among the most common referrals to Delivery Partners that we make. We work with a range of Providers who provide this type of important support, which can include support with daily tasks and support to connect more with the local community.

In addition, we saw a drop in the number of referrals made for counselling and psychological support this year. This is because last year we combined the number of referrals to counselling and psychological support Delivery Partners with referrals to The Anchor (one of our Alliance Partners), whereas this year we have separated these. With this in mind, the volume of referrals we made to counselling and psychological Delivery Partners has remained relatively stable over the last two years, constituting 15% of our referrals.

## **Support from The Anchor**

Our Alliance Partner, The Anchor is a clinical psychology-led, specialist NHS mental health service. When someone describes psychological issues or symptoms of a mental health difficulty such as depression or PTSD, and/or the person wishes to have a conversation with a psychologist about their mental health or psychological wellbeing, we make a referral to the Anchor.

The Anchor works with people to formulate how they may be currently impacted by their past experiences of in-care abuse or neglect. This is an opportunity for the person to understand more about their symptoms and behaviours. It is also a space for them to talk with a psychologist about why they might have faced difficulties accessing services previously, and how these could be managed going forward. The service also recommends evidence-based treatments and directs people to appropriate services that may deliver the right support.

[26] Both support work and trauma support work services focus on helping the person address their needs and goals, for example support with arranging and attending appointments and with accessing local community groups. Trauma support work involves an explicit awareness that the person accessing support has experienced trauma and an awareness of the signs, symptoms and ongoing impacts that trauma can have for people.

Over the last year, Future Pathways has referred an average of three people per month to the Anchor which is around half the number of referrals made in the previous year. The volume of referrals to the Anchor has reduced by 41% from 66 last year to 39 referrals this year. The reduction in referrals to the Anchor may be related to our extensive waitlist as this means that we are not working with high numbers of people newly accessing our support, at which point a referral to the Anchor may be most suitable.

Of those we referred to The Anchor, most people accessed at least one appointment with the service, and they were referred to other services following this support. In some cases, people were recommended to access counselling. In others the person was referred to another service within NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde. And some were referred to other Scottish Health boards.

### Linking with existing services

Another aspect of our support is helping people to access the existing services that are best placed to meet their needs. Focus groups that we hosted with support coordination teams previously indicated that we do this in four main ways:

- Signposting people to support
- Referring people to support
- Supporting people to engage with services
- Supporting services to engage with people we support

Evidence suggests that we signpost people to appropriate supports throughout their experience with Future Pathways. By signposting, we mean telling people about services that they can access independently and giving them information about how they can be contacted. We started recording signposting to other services in a new way in February 2025, and this has helped indicate the breadth of this aspect of our work. In only two months (February and March 2025), Support Coordinators noted signposting 119 people to existing services at various points in their support. While this gives an initial sense of the scale and scope of signposting that happens during support, this data set spans only two months. Looking at this data over time will help us understand the prevalence of signposting more fully. You can read more about the services we signpost people to in the Who With section of this report.

Another way that we support people to access existing services that they may benefit from engaging with is through making referrals to services. By making a referral, we mean making an application for the person to access a service on the person's behalf with their informed consent. Where possible, Support Coordinators encourage the person to refer themselves to the relevant service, with their Support Coordinators support if needed. This promotes a sense of agency and self-efficacy in the process of accessing support.

However, in some instances, people registered with us can experience barriers to accessing existing services, such as literacy challenges, feelings of overwhelm or anxiety in relation to referral processes, or concern about repeating their past experiences to multiple professionals. In these instances, the Support Coordinator makes the referral process on the person's behalf or works alongside the person to make the referral jointly. Similarly, if the service does not allow people to self-refer for support, the Support Coordinator completes the process on the person's behalf. Making a referral can involve multiple steps including contacting the service for information, completing forms and following up with the service to establish direct contact with the person accessing support and planning next steps. Support Coordinators report that they make referrals or support people to refer themselves to a wide range of services across sectors such as mentoring, digital inclusion, education/health, community education, social clubs, debt management and a variety of statutory services.

Thirdly, during Support Coordination, people can access support to engage effectively with services. This might involve the Support Coordinator helping the person to prepare for meetings with services. Or it might be supporting the person to communicate directly with the service; attending meetings with services alongside the person; or helping the person learn more about what kinds of support they can access. In the review conversations we sampled this year, at least 23% of people reflected on how Future Pathways had supported them to access existing services, a slightly higher proportion than in our last impact evaluation. However, a previous Support Coordinator focus group indicated that this aspect of support is significantly more prevalent, and that support plans and reviews do not always capture the extent of this support, because this support is facilitated on an ad hoc basis as needs arise.

Finally, in a previous focus group, members of the support coordination team reflected that supporting existing services to work effectively with the person seeking support is an important part of the work we do. This might involve advocating for the person's right to access the service by writing letters for example. It might involve modelling trauma informed practice or discussing how to take a trauma informed approach in our joint work with existing services. In some cases, we might make a complaint about a service the person is or isn't receiving. Sometimes, this aspect of our work involves clearly expressing the boundaries of Future Pathways' support to existing services. However, this is something that we find hard to measure and we would benefit from recording this aspect of our work more clearly so that we can fully reflect this in our evaluations going forward.

While we can see that supporting people to access existing services is a significant aspect of our work, it is also clear that people we support can face barriers when accessing existing services even with our support. One of the assumptions we identified was that people registered with us who need crisis support would be able to access this support from the appropriate services. However, we have noticed that often when people reflect on the support that they seek from existing services during review conversations with Support Coordinators, many people described difficulties, most often in relation to accessing statutory services such as delays, gaps in support, or dissatisfaction with the support offered. In the Who With section of this chapter, you can read more about the inequalities that people registered with us experience, which can impact their access to services. This indicates that, even with Future Pathways' support, many people face barriers when engaging with existing services.

## Who with: People registered with Future Pathways

Progress: Some; Confidence: Some)

Future Pathways supports people who experienced childhood abuse and neglect while in care settings in Scotland. However, as we shared in our last impact report, it is not possible to determine if we are reaching as many people as we could, or if the people registered with us are representative of the population of people with lived experience. This is because it is not possible to determine how many people have experienced abuse or neglect while in care in Scotland. This is a known challenge which we have been aware of since carrying out a scoping study of Future Pathways, in collaboration with Matter of Focus in 2018. This project highlighted that there were several important gaps in our collective understanding. For example, we did not know how many people were eligible for our support; where people with lived experience lived; and we also did not know a lot about the challenges that people with lived experience faced. Because of these gaps in knowledge, it was not possible to predict the volume of people who would register with Future Pathways.

We continue to seek to learn more through our work to address these gaps in knowledge so we can provide effective support to people with lived experience. For example, we wrote about the historical context of some of the challenges when accessing records of time spent in care in a recent report which we wrote in collaboration with Aberdeen City Council, the Champions Board of West Dunbartonshire Council, The City of Edinburgh Council, Future Pathways, Social Work Scotland and Who Cares? Scotland. [You can read the Accessing Records in Scotland report here.](#) In this report, we outline the various reasons for the gaps in data about abuse and neglect in Scottish care settings, which are summarised below.

Firstly, the information included in records is generally reflective of the cultural and legal context in which they were written. Over time, legislation about care settings and data protection, societal and legal understandings about abuse and neglect and the culture, guidance, and support around professional recording practice in care settings have evolved greatly. For example, written records about children in care were first required in the late 1940s. While some records were required to be kept before then, there was no requirement for maintaining records until the 1990s onwards, when key legislation changed how records must be preserved and managed.[27] As such, available records are an unreliable and insufficient source of information about abuse and neglect that occurred in Scottish care settings.

[27]Key pieces of legislation include the Local Government etc (Scotland) Act 1994, the Arrangements to Look After Children (Scotland) Regulations and the Residential Establishments – Child Care (Scotland) Regulations 1996, and the Looked After Children (Scotland) Regulations 2009. Since 2009, adoption records must be kept for 100 years under the Adoption (Scotland) Regulations.

In addition, historically, care records were written by professionals involved in the provision of children's care with little or no input from children themselves. In contrast, contemporary practice encourages practitioners to reflect the views of people with care experience in their records. Best practice recognises records as "a biography...for a looked after child to read at a later date to provide them with their history" (Social Work Inspection Agency, 2010: 1.2). As such, the information available in records reflects the inherent power dynamic between the person writing the record, and the person about whom the record is written. Records available often reflect the perspective of the care professional, and they are therefore less likely to detail the experience of abuse or neglect. In addition, many records have been destroyed or lost.

While many records were handled in compliance with the data legislation and practice guidance in place at the time, it is also possible that some institutions chose not to record instances of abuse, or to destroy care records with the intention to evade repercussions. Another reason it is not possible to estimate the prevalence of in-care abuse is because, for many people, it can take a long time to feel ready to disclose their experiences and/or to access related support. We know from existing research that abuse experienced during childhood is more likely to be reported by older people than younger people (ONS, 2016). We also know that societal perceptions about abuse and neglect have changed over time, as we now have a fuller understanding of what abuse and neglect can constitute. Despite this, some people may not identify themselves as having experienced abuse in care. Others may choose not to access support for other reasons. It is likely that many people have died without disclosing the abuse they experienced, and it is therefore not possible to determine the true scope and scale of in-care abuse in Scotland.

In this context, it is important that Future Pathways shares what we are learning about the population of people who have experienced in care abuse and neglect. While people with lived experience may access support from a wide range of services, Future Pathways is one of only two services in Scotland which specifically support people who experienced in-care abuse and neglect in Scotland. Since Future Pathways launched, 2764 people have registered for support. Many people have accessed support from the Redress Support Service. In total, 2314 people had been referred to the service between 2021 (when the service was launched) and December 2024. And over 3905 people have applied for Redress since the Scheme launched in 2021.[28] Our understanding of the prevalence of in-care abuse and neglect in Scotland is therefore continuing to unfold.

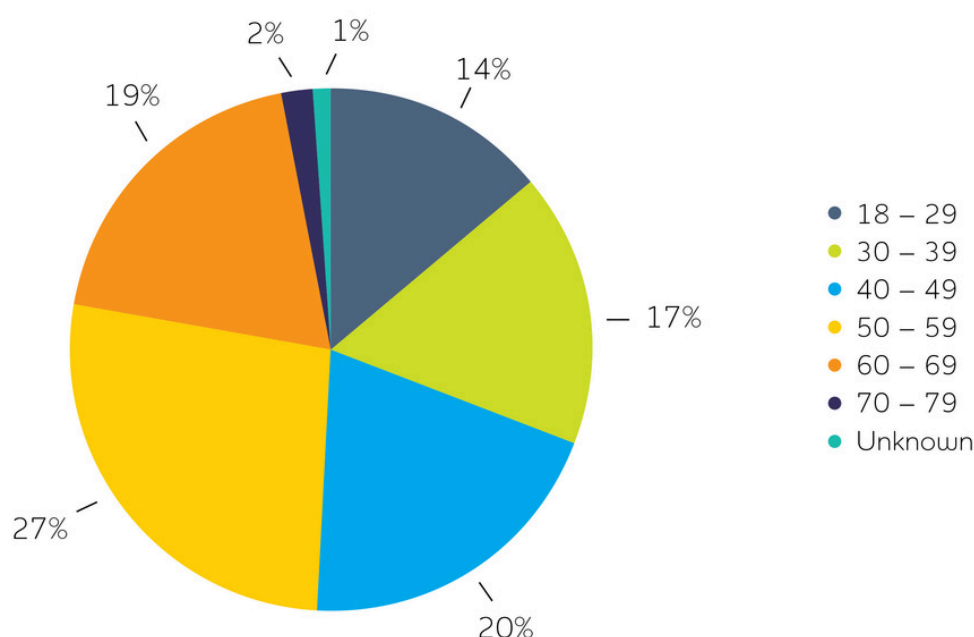
We ask people for information about themselves at different points in their journey with Future Pathways because we know it is important that people can build trust with the service before they share sensitive information with us. The information people share helps us make sure they are eligible for support and enables us to register them with the service. It also helps us learn more about people who register with us, and if there are groups we are not reaching. In this section of the report, we share what we have learned about people registered with Future Pathways with the aim of promoting a fuller understanding of this population.

[28] Scotland's Redress Scheme Statistics December 2021 – June 2024, [Supporting documents - Scotland's Redress Scheme Statistics December 2021 - June 2024 - gov.scot](#) (June 2024)

## Age

When someone registers with Future Pathways, we ask them for some basic information about themselves, like their age and address. This year, we continued to see that people in a wide range of age groups registered with the service, from 19 years old to 79 years old.

Age groups of people who registered with us 2024/5



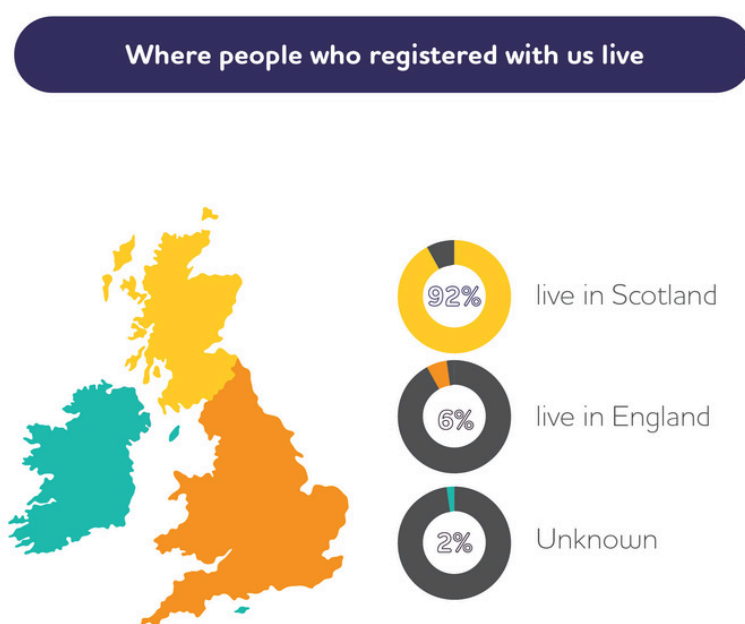
Over time the average age of people registering with us fluctuates, but overall, we find that it is generally lower than it has been in previous years. The average age of people who registered with us this year was 48 years old and over the course of this year it has remained around this age, with the highest average age rising to 49 in Q2 and the lowest average age dropping to 46 in Q4.

This is because overall we are seeing a pattern of an increased number of younger people and fewer older people registering for support over time. As was the case last year, the proportion of people registering with us who were aged 70 or older reduced, while younger age groups remained relatively consistent. We also continue to see that more people aged between 50 and 59 years old registered with us than any other age group. This may be because, as we referred to in the previous section, older people are more likely to disclose experiences of abuse, and it may be that Future Pathways has successfully reached more older adults with lived experience who require support.



## Where people live

Anyone who has experienced abuse or neglect in Scottish care settings can register for support, irrespective of where they currently live. However, we consistently find that the vast majority of people who register with Future Pathways live in Scotland. This year, 92% of those who registered with us lived in Scotland and 5.5% lived in England. While in previous years, some individuals who registered with us were living in other countries (most often Australia and Canada), this year everyone who registered with us lived in the UK. This pattern was consistent over the course of the year, and it mirrors what we saw last year.



We also continue to find that most people who register with us live in highly populated areas. This year, 78% (n=181) people who registered with us live in one of the 15 most populated council areas in Scotland. More people who registered with us this year lived in Glasgow and the surrounding areas than any other area of Scotland. This reflects our previous evaluation findings that most people who register with us live in urban areas of Scotland, such as Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Aberdeen.

We also continue to find that people who register with Future Pathways are more likely than the general population to live in areas of multiple deprivation where they may find it more difficult to access services. We used the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) to evaluate how likely it is that people who are registered with Future Pathways face barriers when they seek to access support from services.

We analysed 180 postcodes of people who registered with us this year who lived in Scotland. Many of the people who registered with us this year living in Scotland (45%, n=81) live in an area which was among the 20% most deprived areas of Scotland. Almost a quarter of people registered with us who live in Scotland (24%, n=43) live in an area which is among the 10% most deprived areas of Scotland. In comparison, in the general population of Scotland, around one in five people live in the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland, as defined by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD).[29] Moreover, 16% (n=28) of those who registered with us who live in Scotland are living in an area among the 5% most deprived areas. That many people registered with us live in areas of multiple deprivation aligns with what we know from existing research about the impacts of adverse childhood experiences such as childhood abuse. This gives us confidence we are reaching people who are likely to be affected by multiple inequalities, and who therefore may benefit from Future Pathways' support.

[29] [Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation – Scottish Welfare Fund Statistics: update to 30 June 2023 – gov.scot](#)

## Who with: People accessing support

(Progress: Great; Confidence: Some)

Once someone has accessed support coordination for around six months, we ask them to fill in an optional, anonymous form called 'About You'. People's responses may point towards some patterns in the identities of people we support; and the inequalities that they can face. Since we updated the About You form in 2023, we have received a total of 61 responses and this year we received 21 responses. This section outlines what we have learned from the responses we have received over the last two years.

### Identities

We continue to see some patterns in how respondents identify. For example, the number of respondents who identify as men is relatively similar to the number of respondents who identify as women. We continue to find that most respondents (92%, n=56) identified themselves as heterosexual or 'straight'. Very few people who responded to the form identified as having any other sexual identity. Most (95%, n=58) respondents identified as White. Of these 86% (n=50) identified as White Scottish. And almost half (46%, n=28) of respondents shared that they do not have a religion. A quarter (n=15) of respondents identified as Roman Catholic, and 11% (n=7) identified their religion as Church of Scotland.

Because of the limited size of this data set, we cannot say if these findings accurately reflect the wider population of people supported by Future Pathways. However, we can see that the trends we have identified in people's reported identities broadly mirror the findings of the most recent Scottish census which took place in 2022. The census findings indicate that 87% of people living in Scotland identify as White, and most identify as White Scottish. In addition, in response to a voluntary question about sexual orientation, a high proportion of census respondents self-reported as heterosexual. And most people who responded to the census had no religion.[30]

While, on the one hand, our findings may be reflective of the wider population of Scotland, we do not know if they are representative of the population of people with lived experience of in-care abuse and neglect. This is because of the lack of available information about this, which is outlined in the above section of this report. It is notable, however, that some groups who are disproportionately likely to have experienced childhood abuse and neglect, such as people who identify as transgender and people with Black/African ethnicity and people with multiple ethnicities, are not well represented in our demographics data. This may indicate that there are some groups of people who are not able to, or who do not wish to, access Future Pathways' support.

[30] [Scotland's Census 2022 - Ethnic group, national identity, language and religion](#) | [Scotland's Census](#)

## Disability

We continue to see that the prevalence of disabilities and health conditions among respondents is disproportionately high in comparison to the wider population of Scotland. Most respondents (77%, n=47) shared that they have a disability or health condition.[31] In comparison, the 2022 Scottish census showed that 21% of the Scottish population reported a long-term illness, disease or condition.[32]

Of those who responded to our About You form who had a disability or health condition, 72% (n=34) told us that this was related to their mental health. For over a third of respondents (34%, n=16) with a disability or health condition, this was related to their physical health or ability. And for 15% (n=7) their disability or health condition was related to their learning abilities. Some people told us they had another type of disability, and an analysis of notes indicates that people who selected this option were experiencing a range of physical and mental health conditions. Notably, for a significant minority of respondents with a disability or health condition (30%, n=14), they were living with more than one type of disability or health condition. On the other hand, we saw a significant decrease in the number of people registering with us who shared that they had a terminal illness, from 19 people last year to none this year.

For 77% (n=36) of respondents with a disability or health condition, this 'often' affected their daily life. A further 19% (n=9) reported that it affected their daily life 'sometimes.' Many people shared more about the impact of their disability on their life, and we noticed several themes in the challenges that people highlighted. Almost half (n=13) people who gave additional detail about the impact on their life noted the impact of challenges with their mental health. Many (n=8) people shared that they managed physical pain in their daily lives, and many (n=8) explained that their mobility or activity levels were impacted by their disability. Other themes we noticed in people's additional notes was the impact of disabilities or health conditions on people's relationships with others or opportunities to interact with others, and the impact on people's ability to complete important daily tasks related to looking after themselves or their environment. Given that respondents to the About You form were also more likely to live alone (47%, n=29) than with others[33], this finding could indicate that people we support could be more likely to experience isolation.

Most respondents who had a disability faced barriers when accessing support from services. 43% (n=20) told us they 'often' face barriers, and a further 40% (n=19) told us they 'sometimes' face barriers. Most often, people reported facing barriers related to communication.

[31] This figure accounts for where the respondent answered no or left this question blank but subsequent answers indicated that they did have a disability.

[32] [Scotland's Census 2022 - Health, disability and unpaid care](#) | [Scotland's Census](#)

[33] [23% \(n=14\) lived with their spouse or partner, and 23% \(n=14\) lived with a family member or friend](#)

## The barriers people face when accessing services



When people shared that they faced other kinds of barriers, some of the additional information they shared was about specifically how their disability impacts their ability to access services. In other responses, people shared how services can contribute to the barriers they experience when seeking support. Almost half (45%, n=21) of respondents told us they experienced more than one kind of barrier.

### Life experiences

Finally, we learned that respondents were likely to experience multiple challenges such as homelessness, addiction issues, and criminal convictions. Most people who responded to the About You form (70%, n=43) had experienced homelessness at some point in their lives. 8% (n=5) were experiencing homelessness at the time they filled in the questionnaire. Almost half (47%, n=29) of respondents had experienced challenges with addictions. 20% (n=12) were experiencing challenges with addiction at the time of filling in the questionnaire. Over a third (34%, n=21) of respondents shared that they had been convicted of a crime in their lives.[34]

[34] We have not noted the number of people who answered the form who are currently being convicted of a crime at the time of completing the form because the framing of the question we ask does not elicit this information.

Notably, over a quarter of respondents (26%, n=16) had experienced all these challenges at points in their lives, indicating that there may be a relationship between these experiences. This finding is supported by existing research about adverse childhood experiences, and by our own previous research, which indicates that the inequalities people experience can interrelate and compound over time. You can read Identify, Equality and Access, [our report about our previous research on this topic, on our website.](#)

As a service, we identified the risk that it would be hard for some people to access Future Pathways, for example, because of their experience of homelessness. That many people accessing our support experience challenges such as homelessness indicates that we are effectively reaching people in these groups. On the other hand, many respondents tell us that they can find it hard to access support. This may indicate that people accessing our support have faced barriers when engaging with Future Pathways.

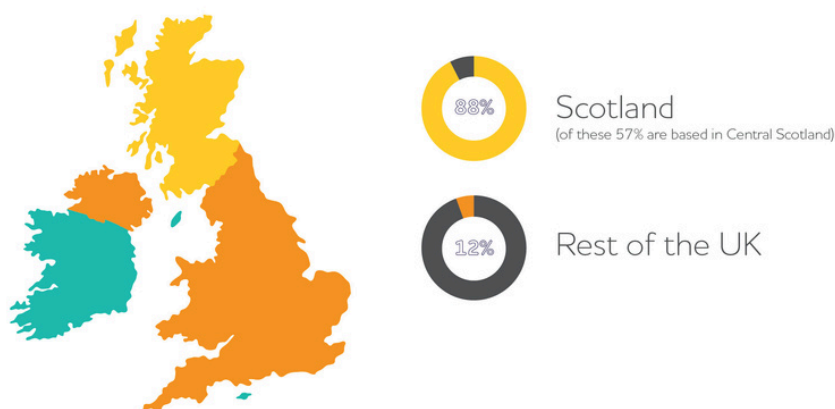
## Who with: Delivery Partners

(Progress: Great; Confidence: High)

We work alongside a diverse network of 52 Delivery Partners who provide services across Scotland, the UK and internationally. We also work with many Providers, non-commissioned services and professionals who provide one-off or short-term support, for example, tradespeople and driving instructors.

Most of our Delivery Partners are based in Scotland. Of these, 57% are based in and around Scotland's largest cities, although many Delivery Partners provide support in person or remotely across wider geographical areas.

### Where Delivery Partners are based



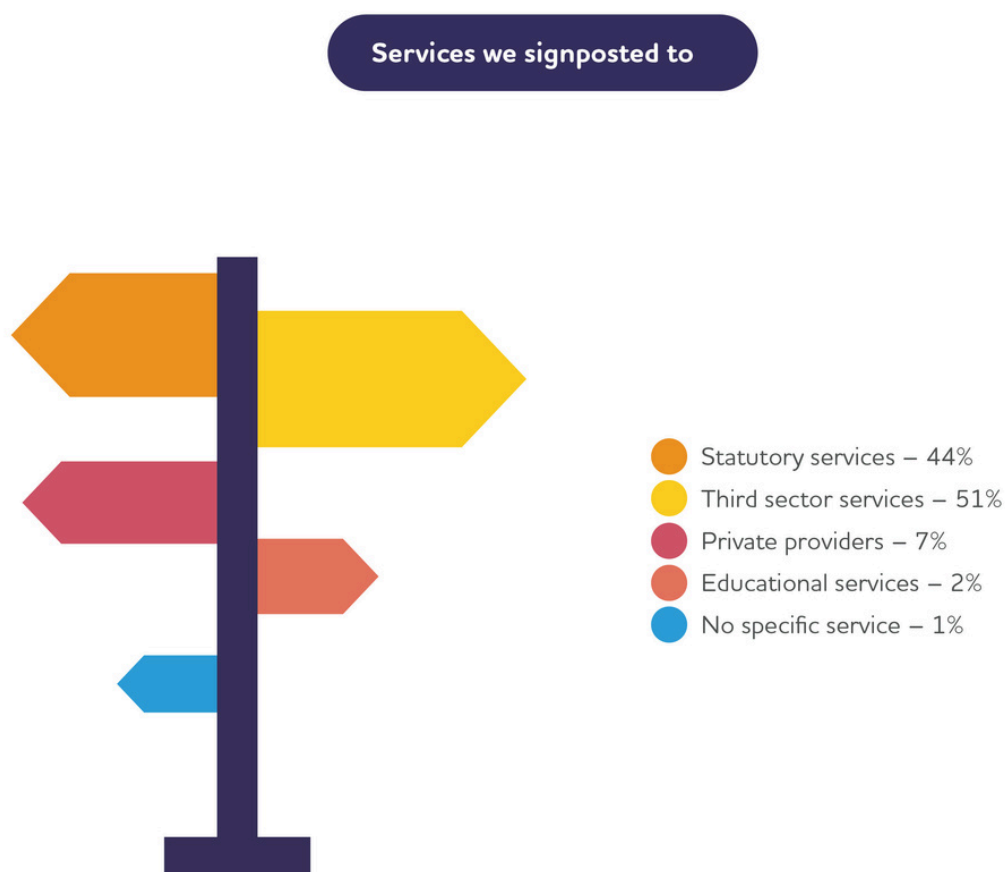
We also work with Delivery Partners which provide a wide range of other services such as creative therapies, support work, record search support and life coaching.

The types of support provided by our network of Delivery Partners reflects what we understand about where people registered with Future Pathways live, and their outcomes. This indicates that we align the Delivery Partners we commission with the outcomes of the people we support.

## Who with: Existing services

(Progress: Some; Confidence: Some)

We work alongside a wide network of existing services, but we do not currently map these in the same way as our Delivery Partners. At the end of this year, we started recording when and where we signpost people to access support at existing services in a new way. Over a two-month period, we were able to learn more about the kinds of services we signpost people to as a service at scale. Even though this was a relatively small data set, emerging results indicate that we signpost the most often to third sector services which offer a wide range of supports including mental health support, peer group support, and local community support. Support Coordinators also often signpost people to statutory services, most notably to housing services, mental health services and other healthcare services. And in some instances, we signpost people to educational services such as colleges and universities when this is where they can access ready support.



These new findings align with what we learned previously when we surveyed the support coordination team about their interactions with existing services. From that survey, we learned that the statutory services that Support Coordinators interact with the most on behalf of people supported by Future Pathways are housing services (n=8), community mental health professionals (n=6), GPs (n=6) and social work services (n=5). Other responses included Police, local crisis team, drug and alcohol services, and local advocacy services indicating that we facilitate relationships with a wide range of different statutory services with various remits.



The third sector services that respondents reported they interact with the most included mental health supports (n=8), community groups (n=7) and advice services, such as Citizen's Advice (n=7). Other responses indicate that we also work alongside homelessness charities, domestic abuse supports and money/debt management charities.

Finally, while this is less prevalent, we also work alongside universities, colleges, and community learning services which provide free educational opportunities to people we support. In most responses (n=7), Support Coordinators described working alongside colleges to facilitate this support.

## How they feel: Safe and that Future Pathways is trustworthy

(Progress: Some; Confidence: Some)

We have learned through our previous impact evaluations that building and maintaining trust with Future Pathways is very important to people registered with us. And we know that this can be particularly challenging for people registered with us, because of their previous experiences of in-care abuse and neglect, and the inequalities that they can face in their lives. We also know that feelings of safety and trust can fluctuate, and how people feel towards Future Pathways can be influenced by many factors both within and beyond the person's relationship with the service. For example, it might be affected by people's previous experiences of being trusted and believed by other services.



### Anne's experience

When she first registered with Future Pathways, Anne was not sure what it would be like. Previously, she had experienced difficult interactions with other services and professionals which left her feeling judged, not believed, misunderstood and unable to access support. For example, when she tried to access support from a psychiatrist, she felt they dismissed her experiences. She had also received her medical records previously, and this was hard because there was a lot of information in them that was not true, and many times when she had not been able to access the right support. This affected Anne's trust in services and professionals.

**"I have always had to advocate for myself and fight to be understood, and I didn't know if I could take it anymore."**

Working with Future Pathways has felt different from Anne's experiences with other services. When she first registered, a Support Coordinator told Anne that she believed her which was a positive start to support.

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Previously, we felt that people's previous experiences with other services could pose a risk to the difference we aimed to make through our support. But one of the key learnings of our previous impact evaluations was that many people we support do build feelings of safety and trust with Future Pathways. We have learned that our approach to support, for example taking the time to get to know people and flexing the support to people's preferences and needs, appears to contribute to people registered with us building trust with us over time. This year, we continued to find that trust and safety were core themes in the feedback we receive. Twenty out of 22 people told us they felt able to trust Future Pathways, and most (n=16) strongly agreed that this was the case.

## Able to trust

20 out of 22 people feel able to trust Future Pathways.



### Vicky's experience

For Vicky, it took time to build up trust with Future Pathways because she had been let down by services in the past.

**“It took about six months for me to start trusting that Future Pathways would do what they said they would do. I was used to feeling dismissed by services, but I started to see that things were actually happening. A social work assessment was put in place. I could see that it wasn't just words.”**

As can be seen in the word cloud in the next section of this report, in feedback forms, some people used words such as “listening”, “reliable” and “discrete” to describe the service, words which also connote trustworthiness and a respect for the person's experience and privacy. The most common words that respondents used to describe Future Pathways in feedback forms this year echoed the feedback we received last year. Words such as “helpful”, “understanding” and “caring” were most often used by respondents, indicating that engaging with Future Pathways continues to feel positive and personal. While people may not use the words “safety” and “trust” to describe their experience with Future Pathways, they use other positive descriptors which may suggest that they may feel able to trust the service, or in the least, have a positive association with the service.

In feedback and in review conversations, some people shared more about what contributed to their feelings of trust and safety, namely that their Support Coordinator did not judge them, included them in decision making, and made them feel comfortable talking to them. In reviews, even though we do not specifically ask about trust, a few people also expressed that they felt trusted by Future Pathways in return, for example to make choices about how they accessed the Discretionary Fund.[35] This indicates that for some people mutuality of trust was an important factor.



### Alan's experience

For Alan, his Support Coordinator was “a listening ear” and he never felt judged by her. This meant that they could keep working together, even when there were challenges.

**“[My Support Coordinator] really actively listened to me, and she heard what I was saying between the lines. She was the most empathetic, non- judgemental person. She always knew what to say and I felt like she got it. She was always professional, she was down to earth, and she was consistently there with me during a very difficult time. We had an amazing working relationship.”**

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We also continue to notice that many people who access our support recommend Future Pathways to people they know. More people who register with us hear about Future Pathways from someone they know than anywhere else, indicating that people who have accessed the service have experienced a positive interaction with the service to the extent that they are willing and confident to recommend it to others.

Another important indicator that people feel safe, and that Future Pathways is trustworthy, is that people engage well with feedback processes, review conversations and our communications. Over the last year engagement in our communications, such as our quarterly newsletter and our website features, have remained very high. This year, six people shared their experiences of our support on our website, and of these, three people also contributed to features on our website. Twenty-two people contributed to our newsletter features, and, of these 19 people also had their feature on our website. We receive consistently complimentary feedback about people's experiences of contributing to our communications. Often this feedback focuses on the person's experience of feeling heard in the process of creating content alongside us and feeling that their experiences are fully reflected in the end result.

[35] We are currently updating how we go about review conversations with people we support. As part of this process, we are making changes so that the review conversations ask people some more specific questions about the impacts they experience. This may strengthen our confidence in our analysis going forward. You can read about this in the Our next steps section of this report.

Furthermore, we continue to receive consistent volumes of feedback from people registered with us. We know that giving feedback to services can be uniquely challenging for people with lived experience, who may have had previous experiences of expressing concerns and this leading to experiences of abuse, intensification of abuse, or fear of potential abuse. Therefore, people's engagement with opportunities to share their experiences may indicate that people feel confident that they will be heard and respected, and that their feedback will shape the service. This is supported by one of the findings of our feedback analysis this year that most people (n=12) who responded to our first and second feedback forms feel able to influence how Future Pathways develops. On the other hand, a significant proportion of respondents did not agree, or did not answer this question. This may indicate that, while some people feel aware of and able to access these opportunities, they may not be accessible or clear to everyone registered with us.

## Influential

12 out of 22 people feel able to influence how Future Pathways develops.



On the other hand, we have observed some changes in how people have given us feedback this year which may indicate that people feel less safe or comfortable to give direct feedback. Compared with last year we have seen a significant increase in the number of people giving us feedback through our feedback forms, from 23 last year to 37 this year. The amount of feedback we received on social media has also doubled this year. On the other hand, we have seen a drop in people giving us feedback in direct discussions with staff members – including the number of review conversations that take place, the ad hoc feedback reported by Support Coordinators and the number of letters and emails we receive. This may indicate that this year people have felt most comfortable giving feedback in less direct ways, including ways which gave them the option to remain anonymous.

We have also seen a decrease in engagement with review conversations this year. Last year most (69%, n=574) of the people accessing our support had reviewed their support at least once in the last year. This year, fewer – 68% (n=546) of people we support – had reviewed their support with their Support Coordinator. We looked at a sample of 30 records of people who were currently accessing support and who had been working with their Support Coordinator for over a year. We looked at the most recent reviews completed in each record. We found that for some people a review conversation had not taken place and that often the review conversation took place less regularly than we would like.

Support Coordinators were unable to hold a review conversation with at least 117 people this year. This happened for various reasons. In most instances, the conversation was cancelled or rearranged due to the person's circumstances, such as ill health, bereavement, or housing situation, or because we were not able to contact the person. We cannot compare this number with previous years. However, this shows that, while it is our intention to have outcomes focused conversations with everyone accessing our support, in fact, many people do not have these conversations with their Support Coordinator. This may indicate discomfort with reflecting on the support that has been accessed. But it may also be linked to other factors. For example, our quality framework has demonstrated that at Future Pathways we do not have a consistent approach to these conversations, and this is something we will be focusing on in our next steps.

It is also possible that if people experience difficulties in their relationship with Future Pathways, they will choose to disengage with support. We do not know if this choice may be related to the person experiencing difficulties in their relationship with Future Pathways, such as a lack of trust, or for other reasons. When someone does not respond to multiple attempts to maintain contact, Support Coordinators reach out to offer support before we record that support has ended. Over the last year, we were not able to sustain contact with 82 people, but many people re-established communication with us after a period. The total number of people who we are not currently able to contact has increased overall by only 32, indicating that most people who fall out of contact, ultimately reconnect with us. There may be many reasons why someone would end contact, and recording this is an area of improvement for the service. This year, we started offering the option for people who we were finding it difficult to contact to give us feedback about their experience, but we have not received any feedback from people in this group. We continue to be committed to learning more about why people end contact and how we could improve.

Finally, our evidence suggests that some experiences with Future Pathways can detrimentally affect people's feelings of safety and trust in Future Pathways. This year, we received 19 complaints about people's experiences with Future Pathways.[36] The most prevalent themes in the complaints we received this year were:

- Challenges in people's relationships with their Support Coordinator (or other team members)
- Negative experiences in relation to the Discretionary Fund
- Waiting for support

In almost all (n=13) of the complaints we received this year, people reflected that their experience had detrimentally affected their feelings of safety and/or trust in the service.

This was particularly prevalent for people who were on our waitlist. Very few people on our waitlist submit complaints about their experience[37] and, while opportunities to give feedback are open to everyone, people on our waitlist rarely engage with other ways of giving us feedback. However, it was notable that, four out of the five complaints we received from people on our waitlist (all of which were on the topic of the waitlist and communications about the waitlist) made reference to a loss or reduction in trust or safety. For two out of the four this was at least in part related to feeling that they had been misled about the length of the waitlist. Other themes we noticed in complaints from people on our waitlist were expressions of feeling that the service did not believe them (n=2) and feeling dismissed or disregarded by the service. While we cannot know if these experiences are representative of the experiences of other people on the waitlist, this analysis suggests that for at least some people the experience of waiting for support can feel like deeply unsafe.

In most instances, after making a complaint, the person continues to wait to access our support, but in some instances this year individuals chose not to register because of the length of our wait for support coordination. That people remain on our waitlist for an extended period may be an indicator people trust that they will receive meaningful support in due course. On the other hand, it may also indicate that people do not feel able to access the support they need elsewhere particularly if there are also waitlists for other services. This experience could exacerbate broader experiences of feeling unsafe and unable to trust services.

Feeling unable to trust Future Pathways or feel safe with the service was also prevalent among people who were accessing support at the time of submitting a complaint. Three quarters (n=9) of people who made a complaint while accessing support this year reflected on the impact of their experience on their trust in Future Pathways.

[36] This is relatively slightly lower (-2) in comparison with the volume of complaints we received last year. Of those who submitted complaints this year, over half (n=12) were accessing our support. We received 5 complaints from people who were on our waitlist. One complaint was received from someone who is no longer registered with Future Pathways, and one complaint was received from someone who was not yet registered with the service.

[37] The complaints we received from people on our waitlist this year represent less than 1% of the total number of people on our waitlist.

In most of these instances (n=7) the complaint was at least in part about issues in the person's relationship with their Support Coordinator, for example about inconsistent contact. In some cases (n=4), the complaint was at least in part around the person's experience of accessing the Discretionary Fund. This suggests that difficulties around these aspects of support can be important opportunities to build trust with people.

We know from evaluating the wider feedback we receive in other sources that facing difficulties when accessing the Discretionary Fund can generate or exacerbate feelings of mistrust. However, we do not specifically evaluate the experience of accessing material support, although it is often referred to in other types of general feedback and in review conversations. Because we do not specifically evaluate this aspect of our support at present, it is challenging to reflect the experience of accessing the Discretionary Fund in a balanced way. In most instances we find that people choose to continue to engage with our support after a complaint is made, which may indicate that our approach to managing complaints about the Discretionary Fund helps us to repair our relationships with people accessing the service. However, it may also indicate that people feel unable to access the support they need elsewhere and so choose to continue accessing support at Future Pathways.



## How they feel: Understood, cared about and valued

(Progress: Some; Confidence: Some)

Overall, we received more feedback that included complimentary comments than feedback that included critical comments and/or suggestions of improvement, although this fluctuated over the year and across different sources of feedback. For example, in responses to our online feedback form, half of the respondents told us that their experience with Future Pathways had been positive, while others did not answer or reported having had an overall negative experience with the service so far.

As was the case last year, many people who gave us feedback this year told us they feel understood, cared about and valued in their relationship with Future Pathways. Everyone who responded to our first and second feedback forms felt that Future Pathways understood them and their needs.

### Understood

22 out of 22 people feel that  
Future Pathways understands  
them and their needs.



And almost all respondents fed back that they felt that Future Pathways cared about them. Indeed, most respondents strongly agreed that this was the case.

It was difficult to determine how people felt towards Future Pathways from their review conversations because, as we explained in the section above, we saw less information about this recorded in review conversations. However, where this information was recorded it reflected the feedback we received through other sources.

## Cared about

20 out of 22 people feel that  
Future Pathways cares about  
them.



Many people accessing our support express feelings of appreciation for the support they have accessed, or for our approach to building a relationship with them. Often, people express a general sense of appreciation, whereas others identified a particular aspect of support that meant a lot to them, such as their relationship with their Support Coordinator, Delivery Partner support, our newsletter, or material support. Expressions of appreciation are particularly notable in discussions with staff members, but also in feedback forms, in which some individuals express that Future Pathways' support has been "lifesaving".



### Vicky's experience

For Vicky, feeling seen and supported has been deeply important. Since accessing support at Future Pathways, Vicky has faced many challenges in her life including problems with her housing and, and she has been seeking justice through the court system which has been a long, difficult process. She has also faced many physical and mental health challenges. Through it all, Vicky feels that Future Pathways and Wellbeing Scotland, one of our Delivery Partners, have encouraged her to keep going.

**"I really mean it. I wouldn't be alive today without Future Pathways and Wellbeing Scotland. They [Future Pathways and Wellbeing Scotland] believed in me and that helped me believe in myself."**

In our first and second feedback forms, we ask people how they would describe Future Pathways. This year, the words that respondents used the most to describe Future Pathways mirrored the descriptors people used last year. For example, words including “helpful”, “supportive”, “understanding”, “empathy”, and “caring” were often used. Here you can see more of the words that people used to describe Future Pathways.

#### How people described Future Pathways



On the other hand, feelings of being understood and valued can be detrimentally affected by negative experiences with Future Pathways. In almost all the complaints we received this year (n=16), people shared feelings of not being understood, cared about or valued. In most instances, people referred to experiencing an unequal power dynamic. This was particularly prevalent for people who were making a complaint while accessing support coordination.[38] For example, challenges in relationships with Support Coordinators could leave people feeling judged. And, where people experienced difficulties accessing the Discretionary Fund, some people fed back that it was challenging to complete the steps required to access support. It was not completely clear from people’s feedback what was meant by this. In some instances, this seemed to be about the person feeling they were expected to justify or explain why the support was needed. In others, it was about engaging with the process of applying for the Discretionary Fund and waiting for the outcome. or as though decisions were being made in an unclear way by people in positions of authority.

[38]Eleven of the 16 complaints which referred to these impacts were made by people accessing support.

While the complaints we received this year represent less than 2% of people who were accessing support, we know from previous evaluations and wider research that negative experiences with services can be uniquely challenging for people with lived experience who have previous experiences of being treated differently from others; not being cared about; and facing significant barriers to support. This analysis indicates that facing challenges in their relationship with Support Coordinators and in accessing material support can mean that some people do not feel understood, cared about and valued by the service in some situations.

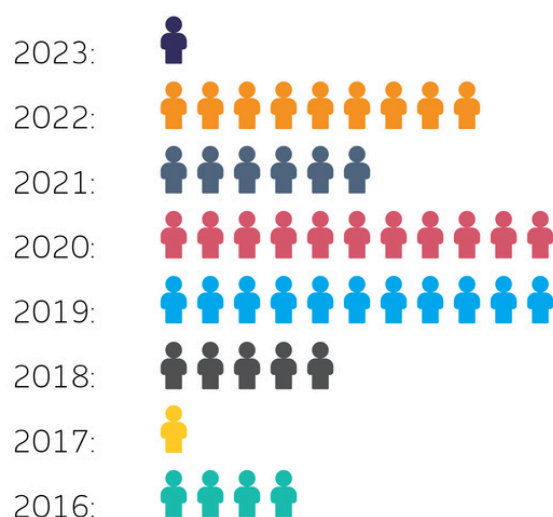
## What they learn and gain: A consistent relationship with the service for as long as the person feels our support is needed

(Progress: Some; Confidence: High)

We find that people we support often sustain their relationship with the service over the longer term. In 88% of the review conversations that we sampled this year, people chose to continue working with Future Pathways. This is a slightly higher rate than last year, and it is likely that this is an under-representation as 7% of the reviews we looked at did not record this information. Similarly to last year, in our sample, only 7% of people chose to end support at the point of the review, with most people wishing to continue accessing support at Future Pathways.

We wanted to understand more about the duration of people's support at Future Pathways, and so we looked at data from over the last two years to find out more.[39] We analysed a random sample of 50 records of people who moved on from support between March 2023 and March 2025.[40] In this sample, we noticed that people had registered with the services at various points spanning from 2016 to 2023. As you can see below, more people had registered in 2019, 2020 and 2022 than any other years, and almost half of the people whose records we sampled registered in 2019 and 2020.[41]

### When people registered with Future Pathways



[30] The data set we drew on for this analysis was from 18/03/2023 to 18/03/2025.

[40] The records sampled were selected at random and we noted that there was an under-representation of records created by Support Coordinators in one of the support coordination teams in this sample. However, it is not felt that this will affect our findings as, due to movements between teams and Support Coordinators, multiple Support Coordinators from different teams often contribute to records.

[41] We were not able to determine the date of registration for two people in our sample as their records were not available to view as they were deceased.

In this sample, we found that people had accessed support coordination for varying lengths of time. Some people did not access support coordination at all because they decided that the support was not right for them or because we were not able to contact them. On the other hand, the longest period that a person accessed support coordination was more than seven years. Across the sample, on average people accessed support coordination for slightly more than three years.[42]

However, we know that people do not always access support consistently over time for several reasons. Many of the people in the sample we analysed experienced periods when their support was paused or when they were not in contact with their Support Coordinator. In some instances, this was because of the person's life circumstances which may have meant that the person did not feel it was the right time to access support, or because the person did not need support at that time. We explore some of the factors that can impact the consistency of contact with people accessing our support in more detail in our latest report, [Being there, which you can read on our website.](#) Since this report, we have been working on improving how we record when we are having difficulty contacting people registered with us so we can understand this more fully.

While support at Future Pathways is not always accessed in a consistent way over time, most people sustain their relationship with Future Pathways over the long term. That most people choose to continue accessing support over the longer term may indicate that people work towards longer term outcomes with our support, or that support evolves as their outcomes evolve.

We generally do not receive feedback from people accessing support about the consistency of support they receive. Although we do not specifically ask about consistency of support, on occasion, when giving feedback, individuals emphasise the importance of their Support Coordinator or Future Pathways being a reassuring and consistent presence during challenging times.

On the other hand, unwanted gaps in contact with the service was a theme in the complaints we received this year. In total, eight complaints (comprising 58% of the complaints we received from people accessing support) focused at least partly on gaps in contact between the Support Coordinator and the person accessing support. Many people who submitted complaints felt that the support they accessed was not as consistent or regular as they would wish, or was not in the way that they would prefer. For example, some individuals fed back that more consistent face to face contact with their Support Coordinator would be valuable. People described a range of negative impacts of inconsistent support. For some people, this left them feeling that Future Pathways did not care about them. For others, this hindered them from accessing support or from building trust with their Support Coordinator. It was clear from this analysis that consistency is an important component in the support people access at Future Pathways and when there are gaps in communication, it can negatively affect their experience and in some cases evoke previous abusive experiences.

[42] The median period of support coordination was just under 3 years and 5 months.

## What they learn and gain: Supported access to wide ranging resources tailored fitted to where the person is now and where they want to go

(Progress: Great; Confidence: High)

Our evidence suggests that people access wide-ranging support through Future Pathways, and that this support is tailored to their outcomes. In reviews, people accessing support coordination reflect on the impact of a wide range of different types of support. Although support to make improvements to people's home environments is consistently the type of support most frequently identified as impactful in reviews, people experience a positive impact from a wide range of supports. This includes support to improve their health and fitness, support to explore their hobbies and interests, and support to access existing services they could benefit from. The wide-ranging supports people identify in reviews indicates that at Future Pathways we tailor the support we provide to the person. We also note that most people who responded to our first and second feedback forms told us that, since accessing Future Pathways, they have been able to access the right support for them.

### The right support

21 out of 22 people feel they could access the support that was right for them through Future Pathways.



Respondents to our feedback forms referred to a wide range of different kinds of support, from support to access counselling, to support in the home and support to access volunteering opportunities. Only one respondent did not agree with the statement; they responded to the prompt neutrally, but their further feedback was complimentary.

We also continue to see that people are able to access support at Future Pathways that is right for them both in the present and as their personal outcomes evolve. In our sample of review conversations this year, 52% (n=46) of people who continued accessing support with Future Pathways chose to continue working on the outcomes they had previously identified with their Support Coordinator. And 60% (n=53) wished to identify new outcomes going forward. Among these, some people chose to explore new outcomes while also continuing to work on existing outcomes. That many people identify new outcomes during review conversations with Support Coordinators indicates that people's support plans and the tailored support they access through Future Pathways flex as their lives and outcomes evolve.

At times we receive feedback from individuals that the flexibility to try support, and to see if it is the right fit, has helped them access the support they need. For example, when people seek to access counselling or psychological support, where possible, we support people to attend introductory sessions with the counsellor to see if the person feels like a good fit for them before progressing. On the other hand, in some feedback we receive, people explain how, when the fit is not right, this can affect the impact of the support accessed.



### Alan's experience

Initially Alan was interested in accessing mental health support through counselling and together he and his Support Coordinator put a contract in place with a counsellor. However, Alan felt that the counsellor wasn't the best fit for him.

**"Sometimes I felt as though the relationship was unbalanced, like I was being there for them rather than them supporting me. In the end, the contract ended suddenly because of the counsellor's personal circumstances, and it made me reflect that it wasn't right for me."**

Alan hadn't felt able to say anything about how he felt about the counselling at the time, but his Support Coordinator encouraged him to say something the next time it didn't feel right.

**"It was difficult to express because I was so grateful for the support. My Support Coordinator explained that we could have made changes, and now I know I can speak up if the match isn't quite right."**

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Similarly, we receive feedback that the relationship between the person and their Support Coordinator is an important contributing factor in the person feeling able to access the right support for them. When this relationship fits well, we see that people feel able to open up about their outcomes and seek the support that is right for them. We also hear that when this relationship feels like a good fit, the Support Coordinator is able to suggest support which might be of benefit to the person.



### Alan's experience

As part of his journey with Future Pathways, Alan's Support Coordinator suggested that, if he felt it would be helpful, they could visit the place where he was in care. It was a difficult decision, but Alan decided to go, with his Support Coordinator there for support.

**"I am glad that I did that. It was very emotional, but it was the right time in my life to go."**

Alan appreciated that his Support Coordinator made suggestions about potential next steps, and that it was always clear to Alan that he could make choices about what was best for him.

**"I really feel that the match between the Support Coordinator and the person is the most important thing. If the match is right, then you can make a lot of progress working together. [...] My Support Coordinator always gave me a choice. She suggested things she thought might help but I wasn't being steered. It was about what was right for me."**

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On the other hand, as we explored in the How they Feel section of this report, when the fit between the Support Coordinator and the person accessing support is not right, or when there are challenges in the relationship, people feedback that this can make it difficult for them to feel comfortable seeking support. We are also aware that being unable to access the right support may be a reason or contributing factor for why some people end contact with the service. However, given that we generally do not receive feedback from people who we are not able to sustain contact with, it is difficult to determine the prevalence of this.

## What they learn and gain: An awareness of their own strengths, abilities and the changes they want to make

(Progress: Some; Confidence: Some)

At Future Pathways, we believe that acknowledging and reflecting on the strengths and resources of people registered with us can help people experience positive impacts from our support. We have some evidence that our support can prompt people to become more aware of their strengths. In our first and second feedback forms, 17 out of 22 people told us that they had learned more about their strengths and what they can do since accessing our support.

### Awareness

17 out of 22 people know more about their strengths and what they can do since accessing Future Pathways support.



Where people did not agree with this statement, they gave a neutral response (selecting “neither agree nor disagree” or leaving their answer blank) which may indicate that they were not sure if this was the case for them. It is however notable, that no respondents disagreed with this prompt.

Over the course of the year, we have analysed a sample of 100 review conversations facilitated by Support Coordinators from across the service. Sometimes, in these conversations, individuals reflected on how their understanding of themselves had developed through accessing support. This was not a prevalent theme this year, but some individuals reflected in their reviews on what they had learned about themselves such as their strengths, boundaries, communication styles, and triggers.

Some people shared that they had gained self-knowledge about their existing ways of coping with difficulties and/or about new ways they could cope in these situations. People who had accessed different types of support reflected on this impact, but we also noticed that it was understandably more likely to be discussed when the person was accessing counselling or other forms of therapeutic support through Future Pathways. Likewise, a theme in reflections from Delivery Partners in progress reports about the impact of their support was observing that people accessing support seemed to demonstrate an increase in confidence or self-esteem, particularly when the person was accessing counselling or mental health support.



### Anne's experience

Before accessing Future Pathways, Anne had experienced periods of dissociation in her past. This was very dangerous and frightening. Previously, medical professionals had doubted and denied these experiences. Future Pathways referred Anne to work with a psychologist at The Anchor, one of our Alliance Partners. Anne's experience with The Anchor was very different from her previous experiences with other services.

**“My psychologist listened to me, believed me, and accepted that I knew what I was talking about. We had total respect for one another and that meant I could be up front with her. I am understandably selective about when and where I open up to people, and she understood that.”**

It was especially helpful for Anne to talk to her psychologist about the fact that, for many reasons, Anne believes she is Autistic. Her psychologist agreed with her, and it was helpful for Anne to be able to talk about this and feel validated.

**“Trauma and Autism look different for different people. By working with [my psychologist], I learned more about what trauma and Autism mean for me.”**

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In reviews, some individuals also reflected on what they had learned about the changes they want to make in their life, indicating that increased awareness about themselves and their strengths may help people feel clearer and perhaps more confident about taking steps towards change. 17 out of 22 people who responded to our first and second feedback forms, told us that, since accessing support at Future Pathways, they know what changes they want to make. This indicates that accessing support which increases people's awareness about their strengths and abilities may support people to identify their personal outcomes.

# Change

17 out of 22 people know what changes they want to make since accessing Future Pathways support.



On the other hand, some respondents (n=5) gave a neutral response to this statement either by not agreeing or disagreeing or by not answering the question. We note that it may be challenging for people to identify what is most important to them due to their previous experiences of abuse and neglect in care. These experiences of not being supported to consider what mattered to them by the adults involved in their care or of being discouraged or punished for prioritising their own wants and needs can understandably pose challenges when being supported to explore outcomes as an adult. That said, it is notable that all the qualitative feedback we received from respondents who gave neutral responses to this prompt was complimentary. This suggests that, rather than disagreeing with the prompt, it may simply not have resonated with them, or they may have been unsure if it reflected their experience for many reasons. For example, this may not have reflected the impact they sought from Future Pathways' support, or people may have come to support with a clear sense of the changes they sought.

On the other hand, our rates of feedback vary considerably and overall do not reflect the majority of people accessing support. For example, this year 16 people completed our second feedback form, which is sent when the person's support is no longer ongoing due to an agreed pause or outcomes having been met. In comparison, a total of 122 people moved on from support for these reasons. The feedback we received through these forms therefore represents only 13% of this population. Similarly, the number of complaints we received from people on our waitlist this year represents a small fraction (less than 1%) of the total number of people on the waitlist for support.

## What they do differently: Take steps towards their evolving personal outcomes

(Progress: Some; Confidence: Some)

We have evidence that for some people, Future Pathways' support helps them to take steps towards their personal outcomes. In our first and second feedback forms, we ask people who have accessed our support about this, and we found that, like last year, the majority of respondents fed back that they agreed that this was the case for them.

### Taking steps

18 out of 22 people have taken steps towards their goals since accessing Future Pathways.



It was particularly noticeable that for most (n=8) of the respondents who completed our first feedback form, (i.e., who had accessed support for around 6 months, this was also the case. This indicates that Future Pathways can support people to take important steps towards their goals relatively early in their experience with the service. Indeed, across both feedback forms, we noticed that respondents were most likely to strongly agree with this prompt, and that those who did not agree responded to the question neutrally, rather than disagreeing with the statement. This was also supported by an analysis of a sample of progress reports completed by our Delivery Partners this year. From analysing these, we found that in the vast majority of reports, Delivery Partners fed back that progress had been made in relation to the goals people had identified for the support.

In the reviews we analysed, people described how Future Pathways has supported them to progress or achieve a wide range of goals, including goals related to their health and fitness and their hopes and aspirations for the future, and people described approaching their goals in many different ways according to their circumstances and needs.

However, we noticed a central theme in the reflections people shared in reviews and feedback this year, namely that people made changes in their relationships and connections with others and with their communities. For some people this was about accessing support to spend quality time with the people in their lives who mattered most. For others this was about being supported to attend community groups or interact positively with existing services. For some people this involved learning new skills around interacting constructively with services or asserting boundaries with people in their life. This was mirrored by reflections from Delivery Partners in progress reports, in which partners observed that people accessing their support were learning new skills to navigate difficulties in their relationships with others or with services, for example, by pausing to consider what they wanted to say, creating effective boundaries, and using breathing techniques to help regulate their emotions.



### Vicky's experience

Vicky feels that the support Future Pathways gave in helping to put a care package in place through her local authority helped her take steps to improve her physical and mental health.

**“Previously I felt like I couldn’t get anywhere when I was struggling with my mental health. I couldn’t get the support I needed from crisis services. I was triggered by a lot of things, and I felt I deserved the hard things that were happening. But now, I am definitely in a better place.”**

Vicky also accessed one-to-one drama tuition to help build confidence and self-esteem. This has helped Vicky to recognise her strengths, grow in confidence, and tap into the support around her when she needs.

**“Now I challenge things myself more. For example, if I have housing issues, I stand up for myself, knowing I have back up from Future Pathways and Wellbeing Scotland. I used to let things get to breaking point. Now I ask for support when I need it because I have built up a lot of trust and support around me.”**

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On the other hand, in some reviews and feedback, some people feel that they have not been able to progress towards their outcomes. In almost a quarter of the review conversations we analysed, people identified no impact in relation to one or more of their outcomes. You can read more about the reasons people do not experience a positive impact of support, and how Support Coordinators support people to move towards their outcomes over time in the “What difference does this make” section of this report.

## What they do differently: Exercise greater choice and ownership over their evolving personal outcomes

(Progress: Some; Confidence: Some)

We have evidence that some people experience an increased general sense of self-efficacy in their lives through accessing Future Pathways' support. In our first and second feedback forms, we asked people about their feelings of independence and most people who responded told us that they feel more independent since accessing Future Pathways.

### Independent

16 out of 22 people feel more independent since accessing Future Pathways.



Generally, we observed a decrease in reflection about this topic from people who have had review conversations with their Support Coordinators this year. However, from analysing reviews, progress reports, and other sources of feedback, we can see evidence that some individuals experience this impact, and it can manifest in different ways for different people. For some this is about exploring new opportunities and having new experiences, such as travelling to different places or trying a new creative pursuit. For others this is about communicating their needs and boundaries more assertively. For others this is about managing important tasks, such as using public transport, cooking and personal care independently.





### Alan's experience

Last year, Alan decided to stop drinking alcohol because he came to the realisation that he had been using alcohol to escape difficult feelings.

**“The work I have done with Future Pathways’ support has made me think a lot about what is really important to me, and what I was using to cope. I realised that, for a lot of my life, I had been masking what was really going on and what happened to me but, in the end, the mask slipped.”**

Last year, Alan’s daughter got married, and although people assumed Alan would drink alcohol on the wedding day, he feels good about the fact that he did not need to.

**“If I hadn’t contacted Future Pathways, none of this would have happened and I would still be drinking. I still have bad days, and the trauma from my past is still there, but I know how to manage now.”**

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A prevalent theme in relation to self-efficacy was people feeling more able to access the support that was right for them, whether at Future Pathways or at other services. Sometimes people fed back that that they now felt more aware of the support available to them. At others, people reflected that they felt more able to advocate for themselves with Future Pathways’ support. From some people’s feedback, we heard that increased feelings of self-efficacy had ripple effects across other parts of the person’s life.

On the other hand, we could learn more about how people are supported to exercise choice in their support at Future Pathways and how this feels for the person. Periodically we receive feedback, for example, that people value the opportunity to make decisions about the best way for them to access the Discretionary Fund or the most suitable Delivery Partner for them. Another way we aim to ensure people have a sense of ownership for their support is by co-creating their support plan together and offering each person a copy of their support plan and review by email or post. The aim of this step is to ensure that people have all the information about where they are in their journey with Future Pathways and what we are working on together. However, as our quality framework showed this year, in most instances, it is not clear if a copy of the support plan and review conversation is sent. We would benefit from improving our approach to recording this information.

## What difference does this make: Life is better for people we support

Please note that there is a reference to suicide in this section of the report. This is not referred to in any other part of this report.

(Progress: Great; Confidence: High)

For most people who access Future Pathways, our support contributes to positive impact in their lives. Over the course of the year, we analysed 100 sampled My Outcomes review conversations. Similarly to last year, this year we found that in 87% of the reviews that we looked at, people reported experiencing a positive impact in relation to at least one outcome they identified with their Support Coordinator. Of these, 60% (n=52) identified at least one outcome which made a big impact on their lives.

Furthermore, in responses to our first and second feedback forms, 19 out of 22 respondents told us they felt their life was better overall since accessing support at Future Pathways. Of these, 7 people had only accessed Future Pathways' support for around six months. That some respondents could already identify such a significant positive impact at this early stage of support is notable. It was also notable that respondents who did not agree with the prompt responded neutrally by selecting "neither agree nor disagree" or not answering the question. No respondents disagreed with the prompt and the qualitative feedback was complimentary.

### Life is better

19 out of 22 people feel their life is better than it was before accessing Future Pathways.



The sense that life is better for people since accessing Future Pathways' support was echoed in the review conversations we analysed and in the other feedback we received in different ways. When people described the difference Future Pathways' support has made to them in their review conversations, this looked different for everyone, indicating that the impacts people experience vary according to what matters most to them and the tailored support they have accessed.

That said, we noticed three themes in this information. Firstly, there was a consistent pattern of some people reporting improvements in how they felt in themselves and about themselves. For example, some people described feeling more confident, grounded or relaxed in themselves, or they framed this as an improvement in their general mental health.

We also observed a theme in people's reflections about how they felt about their home and in their home. It was notable that some people expressed that after accessing Future Pathways' support, they now felt safer, more comfortable and settled at home. Some people described a feeling of pride in their home or a sense of belonging at home. Given their previous experiences in care settings where feelings of safety and comfort were not always present, experiencing feelings of belonging, comfort and safety at home as an adult can be a powerful outcome. Finally, we continue to notice that some individuals describe our support as lifechanging, reflecting a powerful sense that support at Future Pathways is deeply needed.



### Vicky's experience

The support has made a big difference to Vicky's mental health and hope for the future.

**"I have gone from feeling worthless all my life and feeling suicidal every other week to now having the proper support of Future Pathways and Wellbeing Scotland. I now have more positivity."**

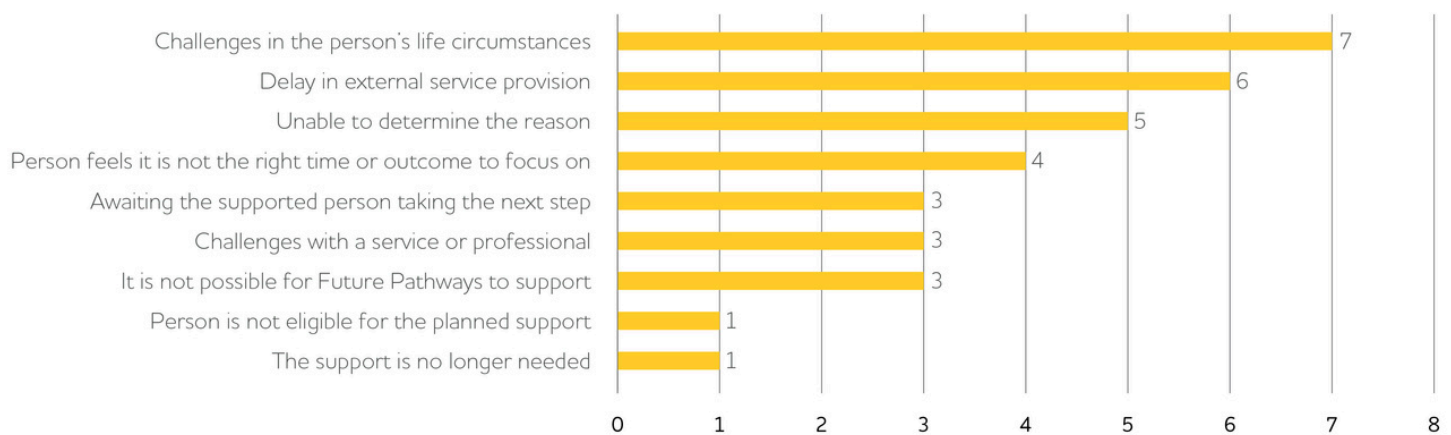
Vicky feels strongly that anyone who experienced in-care abuse in Scotland should be able to access the support that she has had through Future Pathways.

**"Because of support, I have been able to survive. Not only have I survived, having the counselling support from Wellbeing Scotland and support from Future Pathways, and with the organisations and the people delivering these services believing in me, it has given me the strength and feeling of worth that has helped me deal with the biggest battle of my life, fighting cancer. I know I would not have done this if I still had those feelings of worthlessness. I want others to access that support too."**

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On the other hand, we continue to see that some people do not experience a positive impact in relation to one or more of the outcomes they identify. Similarly to last year, in 24% of the records we analysed, people reported that they had experienced some positive impact towards some of their outcomes, but no impact for the other outcomes they had identified over the last months. A very small minority (n=4) of the people whose records we analysed had experienced no positive impact in relation to any outcome over the previous six months. When people express that they are not experiencing an impact in relation to an outcome, often they provide some further information about why this is. You can see a breakdown of the reasons cited in the graph below.

#### Reasons people identified for not experiencing a positive impact



As we can see in the graph, most commonly people indicated that this was related to challenges in the person's life circumstances. Many people shared that they were managing challenges to do with their health, living circumstances and relationships which meant that this was not the right time for them to progress their outcomes. In many other instances, delays in accessing existing services, such as social work assessments and housing services, were impacting their progress towards their outcomes. In some instances, it was difficult to tell from the record why we were not making progress towards the outcomes the person had identified, and this is something we would benefit from learning more about.<sup>[43]</sup> Similarly, in the sample of progress reports we analysed this year, Delivery Partners noted a wide range of contextual factors that affected the progress people make towards achieving their goals for Delivery Partner support, for example, challenging dynamics in people's existing support networks, bereavement, health issues, and previous negative experiences with services.

[43]As you can read about in Our next steps, this is a focus of an ongoing working group with a focus on refreshing our approach to outcomes conversations.

However, like last year, we saw that this changed over time. We looked at later records of the four people who had not identified any impact in their review. In one instance, the review conversation helped the person identify that they did not need Future Pathways' support at this time. Across the other three records, there was strong evidence of ongoing conversations about the person's outcomes and progress towards them. In two records, a further review conversation had taken place since the review analysed in our sample, and these reflected the progress that was being made more recently towards the person's original or refreshed outcomes. In the other, it was clear that the Support Coordinator was having conversations with the person to support them to identify the outcomes that were most relevant to where they are now.

We can therefore clearly see that the impact people experience from support can evolve over the course of their journey with Future Pathways, and that progress towards outcomes is not a linear process. Our evidence indicates that we take a flexible approach when we do not have the impact we hope for, recognising that impact cannot always be achieved in the timeframe hoped for. Over time, Support Coordinators support people to overcome challenges, identify the most impactful support, and find the right approach for them so that they can experience a positive impact from Future Pathways' support.

## What difference does this make: People we support have a sense of freedom and purpose

(Progress: Some; Confidence: Some)

We have some evidence that some people experience an increased sense of freedom and purpose having accessed Future Pathways' support. In reviews and other feedback, small numbers of people related freedom and purpose to a wide range of experiences and support, such as learning new skills, exploring volunteering opportunities, accessing new forms of transport, accessing their records or achieving a goal.



### Anne's experience

Since starting support at Future Pathways, Anne has accessed support to publish a book. Anne has known that she wanted to write a book since she was 17 years old. She wrote the book over 20 years, so when Anne was put in touch with The Book Whisperers, one of Future Pathways Delivery Partners, she already had the manuscript and a clear vision for the book. Anne's book, which is called *They Make You Strong*, is a factual narrative of her life story, written in a creative way. For her, writing the book was a process of putting the things that happened in the right place. Although it brought things up from Anne's past, she also found it cathartic.

**“Before writing the book, it was like I had a carousel going round and round and up and down in my head. Writing was like pinning that carousel onto a page so that I could take a good look from all angles, and I could see it for what it was.”**

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In addition, most people who responded to our first and second feedback forms fed back that they feel more independent since accessing our support. As was the case in our previous impact evaluation, this feedback was more prevalent for people who completed our second feedback form, which is sent to people who have chosen to end or pause their support and who have often accessed support for over a year. While some people can experience an increase in feelings of independence after a shorter period of support, for others this can be a journey of many years.

On the other hand, we found that although many people tell us that freedom and purpose are important outcomes that they aim to gain through accessing Future Pathways, in fact freedom and purpose were not prominent themes in the feedback we received this year.

Previously we found that people who are engaged with our lived experience voice group, Voices for a Better Future, were more likely to feedback that the experience of supporting and advocating for positive change through Future Pathways generates feelings of agency and purpose. We did not carry out an evaluation of the group this year, but we marked the group's two-year anniversary in May 2024. We asked group members to tell us about the experience of being in the group and we noticed that some of their comments reflected feelings of purpose and the drive to contribute to positive change. We plan to evaluate the impacts of this group, as well as our new peer support activities, later in 2025.

## What difference does this make: People we support feel confident and able to move beyond the service independently

(Progress: Some; Confidence: High)

We have some evidence that people gain a sense of confidence and independence through accessing Future Pathways' support. In review conversations and in other feedback we received this year, some individuals told us they now feel more resilient, able to cope or hopeful about their future having accessed our support.

Although this was not a prevalent theme in other sources, such as review conversations, it was notable that, in response to our first and second feedback forms, almost all respondents told us they feel more hopeful about their future since accessing Future Pathways' support. And over half strongly agreed that this was the case.

### Hopeful

20 out of 22 people feel more hopeful about their future since accessing Future Pathways support.



In addition, as we explored earlier in the report, most people who responded to our first and second feedback forms told us that they feel more independent since accessing our support.

In some instances, people who have accessed our support move on from Future Pathways. For this report, we looked at the four main ways in which people's support at Future Pathways comes to an end:

- Some people choose to close their support when they feel they have achieved their outcomes as much as possible.



- Others choose to pause their support when they feel Future Pathways' support is no longer needed or when it is mutually agreed that they do not wish to receive support at this time. This might be because of health issues or other circumstances which may prevent them from engaging in outcomes focused work.
- On rare occasions, people can become de-registered. A person can request to be de-registered from Future Pathways, and in some instances Future Pathways de-registers a person in alignment with our engagement policy.
- In some instances, support comes to an end because we are not able to contact the person.

This year, support came to an end in one of the above ways for 195 people. The most prevalent reason that a person's support came to an end this year is because we were not able to sustain contact with them. This was the case for 42% (n=82) of people whose support was no longer ongoing at some point this year.

Around a third (33%, n=64) of people whose support came to an end at some point in the year, agreed a pause with their Support Coordinator. While the number fluctuated over the course of the year, overall, an average of five people paused their support each month this year.

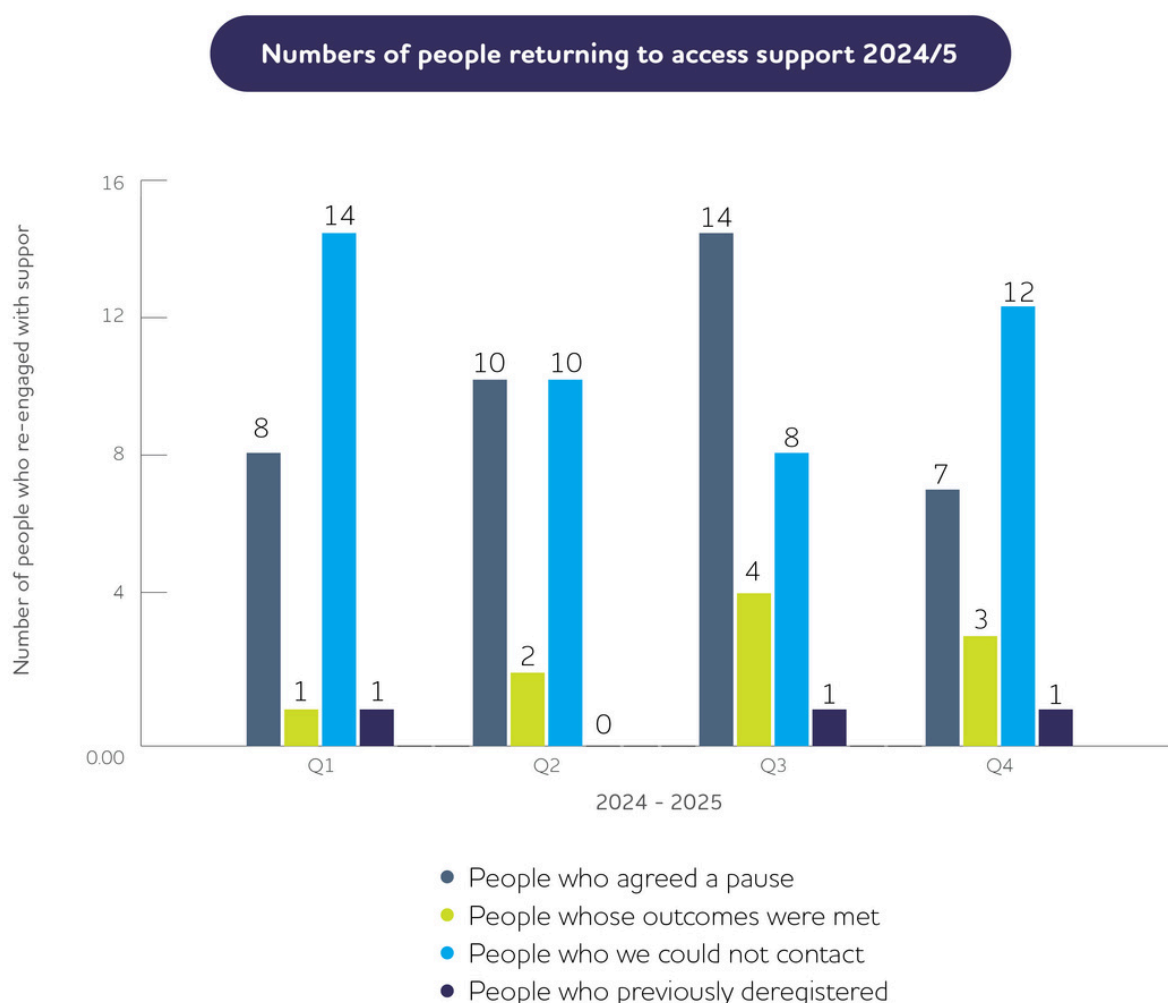
And 25% (n=48) people whose support came to an end this year – on average four people each month – did so support because they felt that their outcomes had been met. No-one was de-registered from Future Pathways this year.

These trends are consistent over time. Between 2023 and 2025, 471 people's support at Future Pathways was no longer ongoing.[44] The most prevalent reason for this was that we were not able to sustain contact with the person. A considerable minority of people (29%, n=138) paused support. And over a quarter of people ended support because they felt their outcomes had been met. This was the case for Anne, whose experience with the service we have heard throughout this part of the report. Anne is no longer accessing Future Pathways' support because she feels she is "in a much better place than before".

It must be noted that many people whose support came to an end due to loss of contact or because they paused support may also have experienced progress in relation to their outcomes, although this may not be their primary reason for support coming to an end. As the 'Life is Better' section of this report demonstrates, most people experience a positive impact in relation to their outcomes even if this is not the primary reason that the support comes to an end.

[44] This data set includes people who moved on from support between the 18<sup>th</sup> March 2023 and 18<sup>th</sup> March 2025

Often people re-engage with the service after support coming to an end. Over the last year, around half (49%, n=96) of the people whose support was not ongoing at one stage returned to access support. When we looked at a larger data set from 2023 to 2025, we found that this pattern is consistent. In this period, 42% (n=198) of people whose support had come to an end at one stage returned to access Future Pathways' support. We noticed that people who had paused their support were, understandably, far more likely to return to access support than others as the graph below shows.



We saw a similar pattern with people who chose to pause their support. Overall, this year, 64 people moved on from support by agreeing a pause in support with their Support Coordinator. But over the course of the year, 61% (n=39) people who had previously agreed a pause sought to reconnect with our support.

This analysis also shows that most of the people who we are not able to sustain contact with do reconnect with the service at a later point. Over the last year, we were not able to sustain contact with 82 people registered with us. But more than half of this number of people (n=44) went on to reconnect with the service.

On the other hand, people whose support came to an end because they felt their outcomes had been met were far less likely to return to seek support. This year, 48 people chose to end support because they felt that their outcomes had been met. Of these, some people (21%, n=10) sought to reconnect with support over the course of the year. This is a much smaller proportion in comparison with people who paused support and people who we were not able to sustain contact with. This may indicate that supporting people to progress their outcomes and/or to reflect on their progress towards their outcomes, can contribute to people feeling able to move on from support on a more long-term basis. It may also indicate that conversations about people's progress towards outcomes present important opportunities to reflect on where a person is in their journey with Future Pathways.

Because of the number of people registered, it is not possible for us to work with everyone at the same time. This means that when people seek to re-engage with support, we may not be able to offer support straight away. There may be a wait before we are able to start support again and people may also have to work with a different Support Coordinator. We found that most people who sought to re-engage with support this year (70%, n=67) got back in contact with us within 6 months of support ending. And this was also the case when we looked at our larger data set – two thirds (n=131) of people whose support had ended sought to re-engage with support within six months.

We wanted to find out more about why people sought to re-engage with our support, so we analysed a random sample of records of people who sought to resume support coordination, after a period without Future Pathways' support. But it was challenging to identify trends in the reasons why people sought to re-engage with support from the information we recorded. In some instances, people sought support to address immediate needs which had emerged suddenly, such as hardship support. In other instances, people had identified new outcomes they sought support with, such as outcomes around their health or their integration in their local community. We would benefit from learning more about the reasons people share for their decision to re-engage with our support after a period. It may be that people wish to retain a connection with a service with whom they have developed a positive relationship. It may also be reflective of the challenges that people can face accessing support at other services which may be more suited to their needs. Regardless, these findings indicate that being able to continue to access Future Pathways after periods of not accessing support is valuable, and may even be needed, for many people registered with us.

## Part 2: Outcome Pathway Two Enabling Wider Impact

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## Part 2: Outcome Pathway Two: Enabling Wider Impact


As well as supporting people registered with us to progress their personal outcomes, we aim to make a wider impact, so that people registered with us can access the right support for them at Future Pathways and beyond.

Our previous evaluations have shown that, to some extent, this outcome is beyond Future Pathways' sphere of influence. We may never be able to fully understand our contribution to change in other services accessed by people with lived experience. So, this outcome pathway focuses on how we go about advocating for wider positive change by learning about what works and doesn't work about our own approach, championing the voices of people with lived experience to advocate for change, and sharing what we have learned with other professionals and services.

Please note that the Who With steppingstones in this outcome pathway have not been assessed, as they have already been evaluated in part one of this impact report.




# Enabling Wider Impact




## What we do

- Learn about what works and what doesn't work about our approach
- Champion and support the voices of people with lived experience to advocate for positive change
- Share our learning with Delivery Partners, existing services and our wider network




## What they learn and gain

- Knowledge and understanding of the trauma informed approach
- Understanding of how we can innovate and improve



## What difference does this make

- People we support are more able to access the right support for them at Future Pathways and other services



## How they feel

- An open, collaborative, trusting relationship
- Able to use their voice to influence and shape services and motivated to change from what we learn together



## What they do differently

- Access and use Future Pathways' learning
- Respond to people's needs flexibly and positively

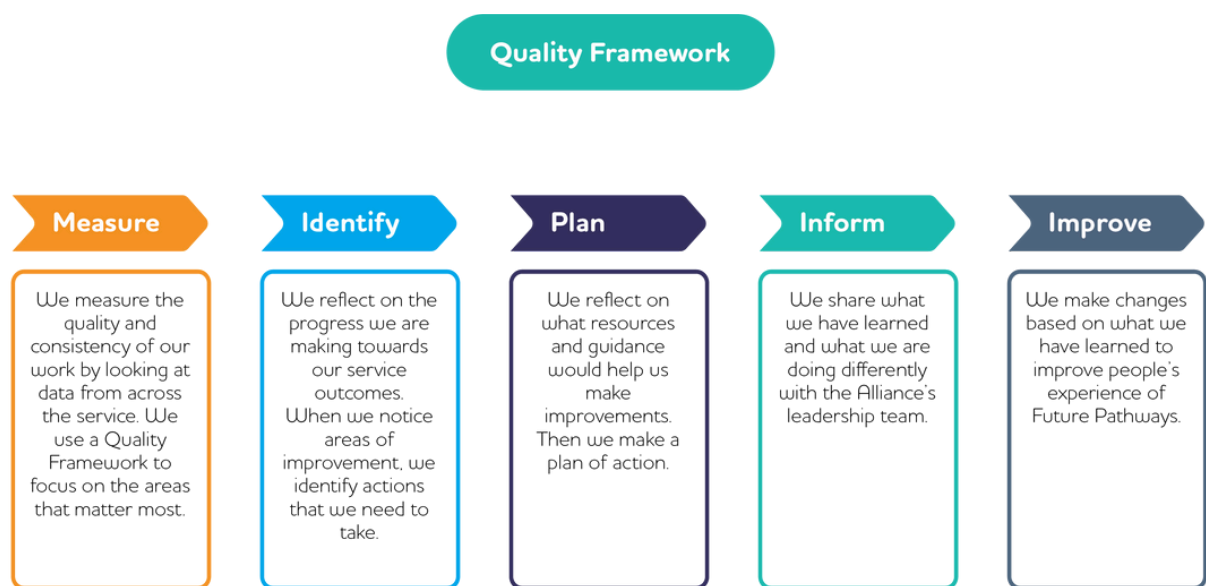
# What we do: We learn about what works and what doesn't work about our approach

(Progress: Great; Confidence: High)

At Future Pathways, we continuously learn about what works and doesn't work about our approach to support. We use a Quality Framework to measure the quality and consistency of our work every three months. The framework helps us take a holistic look at the service. We look at evidence from across all areas of the service to identify:

- what works well
- the progress we are making
- any gaps in our practice and processes
- how this impacts people's experience at Future Pathways
- the steps we can take to improve
- the resources and/or guidance we might need to make changes

This graphic shows the different stages of our how we measure the quality of our work and make changes to improve.



We take a collaborative approach to learning about our approach. The Quality Framework is overseen by our Quality and Improvement Manager, and team members across all teams at Future Pathway – including Support Coordinators, Practice Learning Managers, the Partner Relationship Lead and the Impact and Evaluation Lead – contribute to this process by reflecting on their work, analysing data, and participating in making changes.



“Our robust process gives confidence in our data and helps us see where we have improved and where we need to focus our attention.”

**Quality and Improvement Manager**

In our last impact report, we shared how our Quality Framework helped us identify and make improvements to data system, Carista, as an example of this process. This year, we have continued to make improvements to Carista to enhance our work with people accessing support and Delivery Partners, and to improve our understanding of the work we do. For example, our Quality Framework helped us identify that we would benefit from applying learning about our approach with Delivery Partners to our work with Providers. It helped us recognise that by reviewing how we work alongside Providers, such as Driving Instructors, Personal Trainers and people providing trades services, such as plumbing, we could ensure a more trauma informed approach to this important aspect of our work.

Our Quality Framework has also continued to indicate that there is a need for us to reflect and improve our outcomes focused approach to planning and reviewing support. Through the Quality Framework and our impact evaluations we have learned that we would benefit from having outcomes focused conversations with people accessing support more consistently. This would ensure that people accessing our support are supported to consider what matters the most to them and access support that is aligned with their outcomes.

The Quality Framework also highlighted some of our strengths and where we have improved. For example, over the course of this year we have improved the quality and consistency of our risk and safety planning. And we have strong evidence that our refreshed approach to commissioning Delivery Partner support which we implemented this year, has improved our Delivery Partners' experience of working with us and our ability to track, measure and analyse the impact of our work together. We will share more examples of how our Quality Framework has helped us learn and improve throughout Part two of this report.



## What we do: We champion and support the voices of people with lived experience to advocate for positive change

(Progress: Great; Confidence: High)

Another way that we advocate for positive change at Future Pathways and at other services is by supporting people with lived experience to use their voices to influence change. We do this by facilitating collaborative projects which bring together people registered with us, Future Pathways team members and partner organisations with the shared aim of helping Future Pathways and/or other services to improve so that we can better support people with lived experience.

For example, in our last impact report, we shared what we learned from a collaborative project we hosted in partnership with Voices for a Better Future, Iriss, and Scottish Recovery Network. The aim of this project was to co-design peer support at Future Pathways. As a group, we explored the peer support and engagement opportunities sought by people accessing Future Pathways; identified what these opportunities could look like; and developed some ideas for Future Pathways to explore and test. During the project, participants reflected on the importance of working together to advocate for positive change at Future Pathways.

This year, we welcomed Mary, our Peer Support Lead, to the Future Pathways team and we continued working alongside Voices for a Better Future members and other people registered with us to learn more about what peer support activity people registered with Future Pathways would value to ensure that we plan peer support activity that most aligns with the needs and interests of people registered.



“We have designed peer support at Future Pathways alongside people we support, and we will continue to develop it with them, not just for them. We didn’t start with a fixed idea of what peer support should look like, we allowed it to grow from the voices, needs, and lived experiences of the people Future Pathways supports. Peer Support reflects deep listening, mutual respect, and a willingness to hold uncertainty while we learn what truly matters to people. We will continue to learn over the next 12 months.”

**Peer Support Lead**

We also amplify the voices of people with lived experience through our communications. Our approach to communications prioritises “developing content which reflects the interests and needs of people we support” and “highlighting our learning around people’s lived experience”.  
[45]

[45] These quotations are references to our most recent Communications and Creative Strategy which outlines our planned communications and engagement activity over the next financial year.

This year, for example, we shared updates about the Voices for a Better Future lived experience voice group including information and guidance that was produced by members of the group to help people trying to access their records from when they were in care as a child. We also shared features about members of the group. For example, Joyce shared her artwork and craft projects, such as painting, embroidery, and spinning. And, Pauline told us about her experiences of using her voice to improve services, support herself and help others in her feature 'Keeping the Ball rolling'.

We also continued to highlight people's experiences of Future Pathways' support and raise awareness of what we do through the 'Experiences' section of our website, which features accounts from people supported by Future Pathways. Here Daniel tells us about the difference that accessing a recumbent bicycle through Future Pathways made in his recovery journey following a serious accident. And here Vicky shares how working with Future Pathways and Wellbeing Scotland helped her access the support she needed from existing services. These help to show how support is tailored to each individual and the different ways that people can be supported to progress towards their outcomes. You can read more about how we highlight people's lived experience through our other communications channels in the What we do section of Part One of this report.

Many of our features and Experiences are also included in our Future Pathways newsletter. This year, we surveyed people who receive the newsletter to find out more about what they liked about it, and what we could do to improve. Respondents were most likely to enjoy reading articles about the types of support people are accessing at Future Pathways. Likewise, we noticed that people receiving the online version of the newsletter were most likely to click on articles about books published by people we support, our reports, creative work by people we support, and spotlights on our Delivery Partners. This indicates that hearing the voices and experiences of people registered with us is valued by people subscribed to our newsletter.

Through our communications, we also take part in campaigns and share information about wider services. For example, we share information promoting positive mental health, with initiatives from key organisations and charities working in the sector, because we know that this is an important priority for many people we support. For example, here Rikki, a member of the Voices for a Better Future group, highlights the work of Andy's Man Club, a charity that offers support groups to help men with their mental health through conversations. And in December, we, shared some tips from our Alliance Partner, Health in Mind, about how to help others and yourself during the winter season.

This approach is mirrored by our communications for our Delivery Partners, Providers and the existing services we work alongside. In these communications, we regularly highlight the demonstrable impact of our trauma informed approach. This year, we continued to create Connect, our newsletter for our community of Delivery Partners. 67 Delivery Partners were subscribed to receive Connect. Given we are currently working with only 52 active Delivery Partners, this indicates that our partners often remain subscribed to our newsletter, even when they are not actively working with us.

## What we do: We share our learning with Delivery Partners, existing services and our wider network

(Progress: Great; Confidence: High)

Our communications are also an important way in which we share what we have learned about supporting people with lived experience with services, professionals and our wider audiences. However, the primary way that we share our understanding of trauma informed practice is through our working relationships with other services and professionals who work alongside people with lived experience. These partners include Delivery Partners, Providers and existing services. In our last impact report, we shared the results of a survey in which Support Coordinators reflected on their work with existing services. Respondents gave many examples of supporting existing services to work effectively with people registered with us. Examples included helping existing services to understand more about the signs, symptoms and impacts of trauma, and facilitating effective communication between the service and the person. This year, in quarterly focus groups, individual staff members continued to reflect on the importance of sharing their understanding of trauma and trauma informed practice with other services and professionals.

We also share our learning with our wider network through our regular reports. In our Quarterly Reports, we give an overview of our progress over the past three months including key statistics and stories about our work and its impact. In our annual impact report, we share our progress towards our service outcomes, and what we have learned about the impact of our approach by evaluating our theory of change. We published our last impact report, Pathways to Change, in August 2024 and we promoted the report through targeted newsletter content and website features. We also highlighted the key themes of the impact we observed by creating key word postcards, a summary version of the report and a mini report which provided the key information in a short form document.

In addition to our impact reports, we share briefer annual impact summaries at the end of each calendar year. These provide a snapshot of the support people registered have accessed, and of the work we have done with Delivery Partners over the course of the year.

We also share our learning with our wider network by publishing standalone evaluation reports in various ways. This year, we published four standalone reports on different topics related to our work and the people registered with us. For example, we published Identity, Equality and Access, a report about the demographics and life experiences of people accessing Future Pathways. We also published The Meanings of Funded Support, a report about the challenges and benefits of funded support and how this aspect of our support can help people achieve their goals, work towards their goals and create positive change in their lives. All our evaluation reports include summary of our findings, and a set of recommendations or next steps outlining how we will apply our learning at Future Pathways and/or how they could be applied by other services. For example, our Accessing Records in Scotland report, published this year, included a set of recommendations calling for record holders to improve the support available to people with care experience seeking to access their records.

This year, we have also shared what we learned through our Quality Framework in various ways. In 2024, we published our first Annual Quality Framework Report, which gives an overview of the quality and consistency of our support, as well as an overview of our areas of strength and improvement. We also developed a resource for other services, Trauma informed Quality and Improvement, which was designed to support organisations to consider how to embed the principles of trauma informed practice into their approach to quality and improvement. The resource includes examples of how we apply these principles at Future Pathways and reflection prompts about what this might look like in different contexts. We also shared what we have learned about integrating quality measurement and impact evaluation by co-facilitating a webinar in partnership with Matter of Focus this year. In this online event, we shared practical strategies for effectively integrating impact evaluation, quality measurement and service improvement. Over 50 people attended the webinar and many more were sent a recording of the webinar if they were not able to attend on the day. People who attended the webinar came from a wide range of professional contexts, such as policy, public sector, academia, and third sector indicating that learning about our approach is of interest to services and professionals across various sectors.

Finally, we have shared our learning through in-person engagement opportunities over the course of the year. We hosted exhibition stands at two conferences: the Trauma Summit and The Gathering. The Trauma Summit took place in June 2024 in Belfast and is hosted by the Action Trauma Network, a not-for-profit organisation which aims to promote awareness of psychological trauma and trauma recovery throughout the world. The Gathering was hosted in February 2025 and is organised by SCVO (Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations). Here, we shared our work through printed summary impact reports, booklets for services and professionals, and key word postcards. By attending engagement events, we hope to raise awareness of the work we do and spark conversations and connections with organisations and services which may support people with lived experience.



“It's important we that we highlight how a relational approach can make a real difference in people's lives. We want to encourage services to evolve and adapt so they can better meet the needs of people with lived experience. By sharing our learning in engaging, creative and diverse ways, we hope to create an opportunity for reflection and a catalyst for change. Amplifying the voices of lived experience throughout our communication is a crucial part of this. Together, we can advocate for flexible, trauma informed support which truly meets people's needs.”

**Communications and Creative Lead**

## How they feel: Part of an open, collaborative, trusting relationship

(Progress: Some; Confidence: Some)

Our evidence continues to indicate that we cultivate open, collaborative and trusting relationships with many partner organisations. Most of the evidence for this steppingstone is drawn from feedback from our Delivery Partners, which suggests that, overall, they experience a positive working relationship with Future Pathways.

In responses to our Delivery Partner questionnaire this year, the words most commonly used to describe Future Pathways this year were “collaborative” and “caring”. Other descriptors Delivery Partners used included “supportive”, “approachable” and “partnership”, words which indicate a high level of appreciation for Future Pathways’ approach. This feedback is supported by ad hoc feedback that Delivery Partners have shared verbally with our Partner Relationship Lead over the course of the year. This feedback indicates that, in many ways, our relationships with Delivery Partners mirror the relationships we seek to develop with people accessing our support.

In addition, all the respondents to our Delivery Partner questionnaire this year told us they felt that Future Pathways makes an effort to understand their perspective as a partner. And all respondents felt supported to understand and fulfil their contracts with Future Pathways.

### Understood

18 out of 18 Delivery Partners feel that Future Pathways makes an effort to understand their perspective.



# Supported

18 out of 18 Delivery Partners feel supported to understand and fulfil their contracts with Future Pathways.



We also asked Delivery Partners if working with our service was different from working with other services and half of the respondents said it was. When we asked what makes Future Pathways different, Delivery Partners highlighted different aspects of the relationships we cultivate with people registered and/or with Delivery Partners. Furthermore, feedback from Delivery Partners indicates that Future Pathways demonstrates an understanding of the context that services work within, and that this benefits partnership working. Responses indicated that Delivery Partners feel supported, understood, and aligned with Future Pathways' trauma informed approach to support.



**"It feels genuinely in service to survivors, very personal, empathetic and supportive."**

**Delivery Partner**

Furthermore, many Delivery Partners fed back that they have a consistent and communicative relationship with the service. In previous years, we received some feedback from Delivery Partners that communication could break down at some points in their experience with Future Pathways, such as when a contract for support was being extended. This year, we took steps to address this through our refreshed approach to commissioning which was rolled out in April 2024. We received feedback from Delivery Partners who participated in our pilot project trialling our refreshed approach to commissioning that it was more "straightforward" and "clear".



**"Communication is better with Future Pathways and more accountability with quarterly reporting, meeting with coordinators and more regular contact."**

**Delivery Partner**

At times, we receive critical feedback from Delivery Partners we work alongside, or concerns are raised about an issue with the Delivery Partner's support. However, throughout the year, we can see strong evidence that we discuss concerns with Delivery Partners and take a supportive, collaborative approach to finding solutions. This was echoed by participants in a focus group of Future Pathways team members in January 2025, in which Support Coordinators reflected on the mutually "solution-focused" approach to working alongside our Delivery Partners.

On the other hand, as we referenced in Part One of this report, we continue to find it challenging to evaluate our approach to partnership working with existing services, such as statutory and third sector services, and with Providers, due to issues with gathering data about this aspect of our work. We are currently working on refreshing our approach to working with Providers in part so that we can learn more about this aspect of our support. You can read about this in the Our next steps section of this report.

Furthermore, last year, we received some ad hoc feedback from partner organisations that attended our engagement events that our communications and engagement activity were positively received, but we did not receive feedback about this in 2024/5. This may indicate a need to purposefully evaluate this going forward.

## How they feel: Able to use their voice to influence and shape services and motivated to change from what we learn together

(Progress: Some; Confidence: Some)

We receive feedback from some people we support that they feel able to use their voice to influence and shape services, including Future Pathways. In responses to our first and second feedback forms, most respondents told us that they feel able to influence how Future Pathways develops. On the other hand, a significant proportion of respondents did not agree, or did not answer this question. This may indicate that, while some people feel aware of and able to access these opportunities, they may not be accessible or clear to everyone accessing Future Pathways.

In our last impact evaluation, we shared the findings from a co-design project we carried out in collaboration with members of the Voices for a Better Future group. The project demonstrated that some people accessing our support are highly motivated to contribute to change either at Future Pathways, or at other services, or both. As we explained in Part One of this report, we did not carry out an evaluation of the group this year. But to mark the two year anniversary of the Voices for a Better Future group, we asked members to reflect on their experience of the group so far. We noticed that some individuals expressed the centrality of working together to advocate for changes that would benefit others. We plan to evaluate the impacts of this group, as well as our new peer support activities in 2025/6. You can read more about this in the Our next steps section of this report.

We also have some evidence that our Delivery Partners feel able to use their voice to influence our service, and that they are motivated to make changes themselves from what we have learned together. In our questionnaire, we noticed that some Delivery Partners used words such as “listening”, “adaptable” and “forward thinking” to describe the service, which may imply that they experience Future Pathways as open to feedback and contributions. Most respondents to our Delivery Partner questionnaire this year agreed that there were opportunities for them to help Future Pathways to develop and improve.

We also notice that Delivery Partners consistently participate in opportunities to collaborate with us beyond the support we commission. For example, this year five Delivery Partners participated in a pilot project trialling out our refreshed approach to commissioning. The pilot project involved participants reflecting on and feeding back about our new resources and training for Delivery Partners through a survey and a focus group. Participants were highly engaged in the process, with all members of the pilot project engaging with the training, focus group and feedback survey. This participation builds on previous projects we have delivered in collaboration with our Delivery Partners, such as the Action Learning Programme we undertook in 2023/4. That Delivery Partners choose to participate in collaborative projects with us may be an indicator that they feel able to and/or motivated to contribute to positive change at Future Pathways.



Future Pathways team members are also encouraged to use their voices and experience to influence and shape the work we do in various ways. Support Coordinators and Practice Learning Managers attend quarterly reflective sessions as part of our Quality Framework process. In these sessions, Support Coordinator Mentors[46] facilitate discussions about the evidence we have in relation to our quality framework indicators. These sessions are opportunities for team members to reflect collectively on the quality and consistency of our work, and how this might be enhanced.

In addition, team members across Future Pathways are invited to attend quarterly focus groups which are focused on a specific aspect the service. This year, we facilitated focus groups on various topics including how we use language in a trauma informed way and our relationships with Delivery Partners. The themes from these discussions contribute to our impact evaluation, helping us learn more about what we do well and identify what we could improve or learn more about.

When we know that an aspect of our work could be improved, often we set up working groups - groups of team members from across the service with the collective aim of developing a solution. For example, this year, we established a working group to improve our approach to working alongside Providers. The working group comprises team members across Future Pathways, including a Support Coordinator, Practice Learning Manager, and representative from the Anchor, as well as the Quality and Improvement Manager and Impact and Evaluation Lead. That team members from across the service participate in opportunities to innovate and improve aspects of our work, indicates that we create the conditions for people to have their voice heard and contribute to change.



**“We are a service who values learning and growth. Everyone at Future Pathways is committed to delivering a good quality service to the people we support and that continuously motivates us to change and improve.”**

**Quality and Improvement Manager**

As discussed in the above section, while we evaluate our work with Delivery Partners each year, we do not currently evaluate how other partners we work alongside, such as existing services, Providers, and professionals interacting with our learning outputs, experience Future Pathways. While we receive positive feedback from people registered with us about the experience of contributing to our communications, we lack purposefully gathered feedback about the impact of our wider communications and engagement activities, and this limits our ability to accurately reflect how partner organisations more generally feel when engaging with Future Pathways in different ways.

[46] Support Coordinator Mentors are experienced team members with some additional aspects to their role including offering individual support to new team members, offering input around practice issues identified, helping to support team wide Practice development opportunities, supporting quality and impact measurement, and contributing to service design and consultation opportunities.

## What they learn and gain: Knowledge and understanding of a trauma informed approach

(Progress: Some; Confidence: Some)

We have strong evidence that our Quality Framework and impact evaluation has helped us learn more about trauma informed practice and its impacts. Over time, we have refined our Quality Framework to align with what we have learned and what we identify that we would benefit from learning more about. Taking an iterative approach helps us make sure that we measure what is most meaningful to the service. For example, since 2018, we have reduced the number of indicators that we measure from 23 to six, focusing our indicators and the evidence we analyse on what we know is most crucial to our support.



“Over the years we have reviewed the quality framework at different stages in response to what we have learned and made changes to our indicators to ensure our attention is in the right places and we are measuring what matters most.”

**Quality and Improvement Manager**

Similarly, we have refined our theory of change in response to what we are learning about the impact of our trauma informed approach and to changes in our context over time. Since we started using OutNav to define our theory of change in 2018, we have completed three impact evaluations, and each has resulted in changes to our theory of change according to what we have learned or the gaps in our knowledge which we identified. For example, this year we took a closer look at the risks and assumptions which underpin our theory of change. We updated these to reflect what we have learned about the factors that affect our impact currently, and those which are no longer live, or which we do not have evidence to support. You can read more about this in the Our Risks and Assumptions section of this report.

We also have some evidence that our Delivery Partners gain knowledge and understanding of a trauma informed approach through our work alongside them. In response to our Delivery Partner questionnaire, most respondents told us that, since working with us, they have learned more about people with lived experience of in-care abuse and neglect.



“I have a better understanding of the challenges people can feel in taking action in areas that feel difficult. In particular, I feel that I have more appreciation for how challenging it can be for survivors to work with people who are perceived to be 'in authority'.”

**Delivery Partner**

Of these, ten respondents gave us further detail about what they felt they had learned through our work together. Respondents reported learning more about the challenges and needs experienced by people with lived experience, or about the lasting impacts and symptoms of trauma.

Some individuals fed back that they had learned how to work in more trauma informed ways, for example, taking an outcome focused approach to the work that they do.



**“I have learned that trauma can cause a wide range of physical and emotional symptoms.”**

**Delivery Partner**

We would benefit from seeking this feedback from Providers, who we commission to provide short term services to people accessing Future Pathways. Similarly, prompting feedback from people accessing our reports and other learning resources through our website would give valuable insight into what readers learn and gain from accessing these. And we would benefit from gathering data about the impact of our learning resources and engagement opportunities, for example, by seeking feedback from attendees of our conference talks, or online presentations. This year, we designed a feedback card to help us do this, and, as you can see in the Our next steps section of this report, we plan to use this to gain a better understanding of the impact of our learning inputs.

**Out of 5, how would you rate this session?** ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**4 words to describe the workshop**

**3 things you learned**

**2 things you would do differently**

**1 thing we should do differently**

## What they learn and gain: Understanding about how we can meaningfully innovate our approach to support

(Progress: Some; Confidence: Some)

Learning about what works and what could be improved through measuring the quality and impact of our work helps us identify how we can make changes to our approach to improve people's experience of support. For example, this year, our Quality Framework helped us identify that we were not consistently carrying out our processes when we are finding it difficult to stay in contact with a person. Identifying this led us consider what steps we could take to support teams in taking a consistent approach to this aspect of our work. As a result, we looked more closely at how we communicate with people about this. And we continued to monitor this through our Quality Framework throughout the rest of the year.

We also gain an understanding about how we can meaningfully improve by listening to and acting on the feedback we receive from people registered with us. An example of this is our approach to developing peer support at Future Pathways. Consulting and collaborating with people registered with us has been crucial from the beginning of this process. In our last impact report, we described how our collaborative co-design project with Iriss, Scottish Recovery Network and Voices for a Better Future helped us understand more about how we should approach developing peer support at Future Pathways. Several key themes emerged from our work together in this project. We learned that people with lived experience seek opportunities to share and hear stories of recovery; connect with others; and use their voices to influence positive change within and beyond Future Pathways. We also learned that peer support at Future Pathways must be well supported and must focus on empowering people supported by Future Pathways to continue tapping their potential to evolve peer supports over time. These themes have guided our approach to developing peer support as you will read about in the next sections of this report.



“The co-design process gave us real insight into what people want peer support to feel and look like, not just what it should do. We learned that for many people, coming together to socialise with no agenda, spending time sharing hobbies and interests, and learning together is most important. We were surprised to find that learning and having a 'focus' of the sessions is less important than just 'being' together.”

**Peer Support Lead**

In addition to this initial co-design process, we have continued to listen to the views of people registered with us about what they want from peer support at Future Pathways. In March we shared information in our newsletter and on our website about Mary's role, what peer support is, why we are introducing peer support at Future Pathways, and what it will be like. We also invited ideas, suggestions and questions about peer support. Feedback from people about what they are looking for and where peer support should be made available has informed our plans for rolling out peer support activity in 2025/6.

We infer that Delivery Partners also gain an understanding of the meaningful changes they can make to improve their support. As you can read about in the next section of this report, some Delivery Partners told us about changes they have made to their practice based on what they learned through our work together. And in their feedback two respondents referred to the importance to listening to the perspectives and experiences of people accessing support, indicating that Delivery Partners were aware of opportunities to learn more about the changes that people would most value.

We do not know if this is also experienced by other partner organisations such as Providers, existing services, professionals and services accessing our learning resources.

## What they do differently: Access and use Future Pathways learning

(Progress: Some; Confidence: Some)

Within Future Pathways, we have strong evidence that we apply what we learn about our approach to make positive changes to our support, and that we take a collaborative approach to making evidence-based improvements. For example, this year, we looked more closely at where people registered with us live, and we used this learning to inform our plan for delivering peer support opportunities for people registered with us. This information helped us decide where to run in person groups, so that as many people registered with us could access this form of support.

We also know that when we learn about areas of improvement through our Quality Framework, we use this learning to explore options and find the right way forward. For example, our Quality Framework previously helped us identify that our approach to outcomes conversations was an area of improvement for the service. As a result, we established an Outcomes Planning Working Group, which draws together expertise from team members across the service. The group has accessed and used what we have learned through previous learning, such as the I.ROC project in 2023/24 and our Quality Framework reports, to develop a refreshed approach to outcome focused conversations.

We also have evidence that many of our Delivery Partners access our learning. On average, 45% of the Delivery Partners who are subscribed to our Connect e-newsletter open the newsletter each month. Delivery Partners subscribed to Connect were most likely to engage with updates about changes to our support, features about mental health, vacancies at Future Pathways, and content about our learning outputs such as our reports indicating that this information is of value to Delivery Partners.

While it is clear that many Delivery Partners access our learning, it is difficult to determine the extent to which other organisations apply our learning to make changes to their approach. Feedback from Delivery Partners who responded to our questionnaire indicates that some do make changes based on what they have learned. You can read more about the kinds of changes Delivery Partners told us about in the next section of this report.

We would benefit from learning more about how Providers and existing services access and use our learning as well. Although we recognise that learning about how our partners apply our learning is, to a degree, outside our sphere of influence, we welcome feedback from our partners about ripple effects of our collective work.

## What they do differently: Respond positively and flexibly to people's needs

(Progress: Some; Confidence: Some)

Our evidence shows that our approach to learning helps drive continuous improvement at Future Pathways, enabling the service to continue to respond positively and flexibly to the needs of people with lived experience.



“Our continuous cycle of improvement helps make our approach more consistent and effective for people accessing the service.”

**Quality and Improvement Manager**

This is exemplified by our development of peer support opportunities. After hearing feedback from people registered with us that peer support was needed, co-designing our approach to peer support, and drawing on data to make an effective plan, Future Pathways is now starting to host peer support sessions around Scotland and online. In 2025/6, we plan to host 10 peer support sessions. Three sessions will be hosted online. And seven will take place in person in venues across Scotland including Inverness, Oban, Aberdeen and Glasgow. These sessions are open to anyone registered with the service and they are guided by the needs and preferences of people attending. In addition, in response to feedback received through the co-design project about the value of learning opportunities, we will also co-host workshops about various topics including First Aid, Mindfulness and Stress Management, and Healthy Eating and Nutrition. As such, the development of peer support and engagement opportunities at Future Pathways demonstrates how our learning drives the service to continue responding to people's needs.



“We looked at what was already happening in peer support, locally and in other countries. We also spoke to other peer support practitioners to understand more about what peer support is and can be. And we learned from our codesign project which highlighted that many people were looking for genuine, mutual connection with others who 'just get it', people who have lived through similar experiences and could hold space without judgment or agenda. So, we are working on creating spaces that recognise trauma and its impacts without centring it, so that people's experiences can be acknowledged but not define them..”

**Peer Support Lead**

We also have some evidence that our Delivery Partners apply their learning to respond positively and flexibly to people's needs. In responses to our Delivery Partner questionnaire, 13 out of 18 people shared that they made changes to how they work because of what they have learned from working alongside Future Pathways.

Last year, we identified that we would benefit from learning more about the changes that our Delivery Partners make based on what they learn through our collective work. So, this year we asked Delivery Partners to tell us more about the changes they had made in their practice. This looked different for each respondent. For some individuals, this was about seeking out training opportunities to learn more about trauma. For others this was about making changes to how they work or their administrative processes to make it more accessible or appropriate for people with lived experience. Others referred to the qualities they demonstrated in the support they offered, such as showing more compassion or encouragement towards the people accessing their support.



“I am not sure if it is different, but I notice that I encourage clients to believe in themselves and to analyse what parts of their lives they feel are challenging - and sometimes it would appear that behaviours such as not trusting, or having few connections with people, is connected to their experiences during childhood.”

**Delivery Partner**

It is possible that existing services that we support people to access may also make changes to their approach following input from Future Pathways, but we find it difficult to gather data about this. Support Coordinators continue to share anecdotal feedback that their work with existing services can help individual professionals make changes to how they communicate or offer support to people with lived experience. We also continue to hear feedback from some people accessing Future Pathways that they feel more able to access the support they need at other services with Future Pathways' input.

However, we would benefit from learning more about this from the perspective of existing services.



## What difference does this make: People we support are more able to access the support they need at Future Pathways and other services

(Progress: Some; Confidence: Low)

It is clear from our evidence that by learning about what works and what doesn't work about our own approach we drive forward meaningful changes at Future Pathways that respond to the needs of people registered with us. The cycles of learning and improvement sustained through our Quality Framework and our commitment to listen to and act on the voices of lived experience are demonstrated by our development of our upcoming peer support activities this year. It is also notable that the anecdotal experiences we hear – for example, through our Quality Framework – suggest that working with Future Pathways may also enhance some people's experiences with other services, creating the conditions for them to access the support they need beyond Future Pathways.

However, it is not possible to determine the extent to which Future Pathways contributes to people being more able to access the support they need in the wider system of services they may access. Most data about people's experiences with other services is understandably beyond Future Pathways purview. And Future Pathways cannot embed or measure positive change in other services, in part because this is influenced by many different factors, such as available resourcing and service culture.

It is our hope that, through our direct support of people with lived experience and our work with partner organisations, people can gradually lessen the impact of their trauma and access the right support for them. This is something we aim to progress by facilitating peer support opportunities this year.



“Peer Support offers something deeply human that support coordination and other professional services cannot always provide. It offers community and a place to just ‘be’ without a focus on goals, recovery or moving ‘forward’. It offers a place where people can be both held and helpful. The aim of Peer Support is that people don't feel assessed, analysed, or managed (as can be the case with some more professionalised or clinical services), but rather seen, heard, and accepted, just as they currently are.”

**Peer Support Lead**

We also hope that by amplifying the voices of lived experience, and sharing what we have learned, we can prompt services to reflect on the positive changes they could make so that people with lived experience can fully exercise their right to access support.

## Conclusion

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## Conclusion

The findings of this report reinforce our understanding of our relational approach and the impact this can have. We continue to see that people registered seek to make changes across many different areas of their life and that they access a wide range of supports tailored to their outcomes. Our findings about the impact that this can have built on what we learned in our previous impact evaluations, creating a robust picture of the difference that people can experience from support. It was, again, notable that most people accessing Future Pathways experience a positive impact from our support.

On the other hand, this report highlights how our service has evolved this year and the aspects of our support that we have learned more about. This year, our support model has expanded, as we now offer “support while you wait” to people on our waitlist. And our evaluation benefitted from some changes in how we record the work that we do. For example, we now know more about the existing services that we signpost people to and about people’s experiences when their support at Future Pathways comes to an end.

Throughout the report, woven through both outcome pathways, a core theme is the relationships that we cultivate. Most people who register with us hear about Future Pathways through their relationships with others with lived experience. And it is clear that the relationships we develop with people registered through our communications, support for people on the waitlist and support coordination itself are vitally important. There is some evidence in this report and in our previous report, *Being There*, that building a trusting relationship with Future Pathways can also support people’s relationships with other partners, such as our Delivery Partners, and existing services. For some people, their relationship with Future Pathways facilitates opportunities to develop supportive relationships with peers through the Voices for a Better Future group, or with other people in their lives such as family members.

When the relationship is understanding and feels safe, people share that they experience powerful impacts in their lives. They may learn more about themselves, their strengths and their personal outcomes. They may access the support that is right for them and exercise their right to make choices about their lives. They may take important steps towards their outcomes, whether they be related to their mental health, relationships with others, or safety and comfort at home. And they may experience more purpose, freedom, independence and hope for the future. People’s road to change is not linear – inconsistent support, challenges accessing the Discretionary Fund and waiting for support can be particularly difficult for people registered. But it is clear that over time the relationships we forge with people registered can act as a powerful catalyst for change.

Our second pathway shows that the impact of our relational approach also encompasses Future Pathways team members and our Delivery Partners. In many ways, these relationships mirror the trauma informed principles we seek to embody in our work with people registered: safety, trust and, collaboration.

## Conclusion (cont.)

By working together to learn about what works and doesn't work about our approach, we and our Delivery Partners are motivated to make changes to make support more accessible and impactful for people with lived experience. A core example of this within Future Pathways is our commitment to create opportunities for people registered to develop meaningful relationships with others with lived experience through our new peer support groups. While we can never know the extent of our impact on other services, it is our hope that working relationally with people registered, team members, Delivery Partners, and other partners, will contribute to people with lived experience being able to access trauma informed support.

This evaluation shows that some of the risks we identified are actively hindering our progress towards our service outcomes. For example, due to the long-term nature of our support and the limitations in our resources, people experience a long wait-time before accessing support coordination, and we know that for some individuals this has deterred them from registering. And we present evidence in this report that when people we support face difficult life experiences, this can detrimentally affect the consistency of their interaction with the service and their access to support to progress their outcomes.

On the other hand, this report shows that we mitigate these risks as much as possible. For example, while our waitlist increased this year, it increased at a slower rate, and we communicate more clearly about our waitlist for support. And, we can see that, when support towards some outcomes is not possible, Support Coordinators work with people to adjust their support plan or reconsider the focus of the support to ensure that over time, people do experience positive impacts.

Perhaps most importantly, this report points to where we must improve and what we could learn more about to ensure that we continue to offer trauma informed support to people registered with us. We can see that our approach to outcomes conversations must become more consistent so that everyone accessing our support has regular opportunities to discuss what matters the most to them, plan the support that is right for them, and review the impact of their support. We would also benefit from learning more about the contexts in which people re-engage with our support after a period of not accessing Future Pathways, so that we can learn more about their journey towards their outcomes. This report also highlighted a gap in our knowledge about how Providers, existing services and other professionals and organisations that access our learning resources experience Future Pathways. We have already started taking some steps to address these gaps and you can read more about what we will do next in the next section of this report.

Our next steps

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## Our next steps

Evaluating our support and our impact helps us identify how we could improve and gaps in our knowledge. The conclusions and next steps identified in this report will drive improvement work scheduled from October 2025 with supporting action plans supported by the Future Pathways Delivery Team. We are:

1) Refreshing our approach to discussing personal outcomes, planning support and reviewing the progress we are making together with people accessing Future Pathways. This will help us to learn more about what matters the most to people we support and how the supports people access through Future Pathways contribute to their outcomes. It will also help us look at what is happening when people are not experiencing a positive impact and make changes to their support plan, so it best meets their needs. We also hope that this will help us learn more about how and when people close their support at Future Pathways and the context for re-engaging with support. We plan to roll out our refreshed approach in 2026 and reflect what we learn through this project in our next impact report.

2) Exploring how we can learn more about our relationships with Providers. We plan to be more transparent about how we work with Providers, encourage Providers to work with us over time, and evaluate the impact of our work for Providers. We will share what we learned from this project in our next impact report.

3) Learning more about the impacts of peer support at Future Pathways. Over the course of this year, we will evaluate the impacts of our new peer support groups, so that we can start to tell the story of the difference they make, and so we can learn about how they could be improved. We will also evaluate the work of our Voices for a Better Future group and how it contributes to positive outcomes for members, Future Pathways and other services it works with. We will share what we learn from this project.

4) Learning more about the alliancing approach, and how this informs our work at Future Pathways. This year, we will include spotlight articles about each Alliance Partner in our Quarterly Reports, where representatives from each Alliance Partner will reflect on their experience in the Alliance and the impact we collectively contribute to.

And here are some new actions that we will take in response to what we have learned through this report. We will:

1) Look more closely at our approach to managing complaints and critical feedback so that we can explain this more fully in our next impact report.

2) Ask people who attend our engagement and learning opportunities for their feedback so we can learn more about the impact of this aspect of our work.

3) Explore ways that people can give feedback in a broader range of ways, such as through images or other creative means.

4) Make changes to our outcome pathways so that they continue to reflect what we are learning and our changing context.

## Appendix

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## Appendix: evidence standards

Progress Statement	Criteria
Great progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The majority of people consistently experience this.</li> <li>This is consistently true most of the time.</li> <li>Risks associated with this steppingstone have been addressed AND we have evidence that they have been successfully mitigated.</li> <li>We have evidence that the risks associated with this steppingstone are not occurring.</li> <li>We have evidence that the assumptions we had about this steppingstones are accurate.</li> </ul>
Some progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some people experience this consistently.</li> <li>Most people experience this but not consistently.</li> <li>This is true some of the time but not often or always.</li> <li>Risks associated with this steppingstone may have been addressed but we do not have evidence that they have been successfully mitigated. Or the measures taken have only been partially successful.</li> <li>We have evidence that some of the assumptions we had about this steppingstone are accurate.</li> </ul>
Low progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A minority of people experience this.</li> <li>This is not true most of the time.</li> <li>We have not assessed that the risk is happening.</li> <li>We have evidence that the risk is happening but we have not taken measures to address this.</li> <li>Where a risk has been addressed, measures taken have been mostly unsuccessful.</li> <li>We have evidence that our assumptions related to this steppingstone were inaccurate.</li> </ul>
Confidence assessment	Criteria
High confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More than one source of data has been used to evidence and/or corroborate findings.</li> <li>The data sources that we have used are varied and balanced (where appropriate some are qualitative and some are quantitative)</li> <li>We are confident in the quality of data being analysed.</li> <li>We have data from most of the population.</li> <li>If we have sampled data, sampling methods have prioritised representativeness.</li> <li>The data was purposefully and systematically gathered - we have asked distinct questions for specific reasons.</li> <li>There is no or minimal disagreement within and between the sources.</li> <li>Where there is some disagreement between the sources, the dominant finding (majority) is clear and disagreements can be contextualised.</li> <li>We gather this data formatively (on an ongoing basis).</li> <li>We have confidence that this analysis is replicable.</li> </ul>
Some confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have relied on one data source with little or no corroboration from other data sources.</li> <li>The data is imbalanced (for example, we can provide a lot of quantitative data but no or less qualitative than would be preferable).</li> <li>We have gathered data from some but not most of the population.</li> <li>The data was mostly gathered opportunistically (ad hoc/without a purposeful, systematic process in place).</li> <li>There is some disagreement between and within the data which cannot be contextualised, or which indicates that something other than the dominant finding is going on.</li> <li>The findings are not completely clear. There may be no dominant finding. There may be agreement in the general direction of the analysis but the details of the findings could be inaccurate.</li> <li>Broadly, the analysis is replicable although it may be open to subtly different conclusions.</li> <li>We are relying on data which has mostly been analysed summatively.</li> <li>We have some concerns about the quality of the data.</li> </ul>
Low confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have no or very little data about this steppingstone.</li> <li>The data we have is only of one type.</li> <li>The type of data is inappropriate or unlikely to capture the full picture.</li> <li>We have consistent concerns about the quality of the data.</li> <li>We have data from a minority of the population, or based only on individual inputs.</li> <li>The data was all opportunistically gathered.</li> <li>There is a significant disagreement in the data between and within sources.</li> <li>None of the data was analysed formatively.</li> <li>We have low confidence that the analysis is replicable.</li> </ul>



## Bibliography

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## Bibliography

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Radford, L., Dodd, S., Barter, C., Stanley, N., Akhlaq, A. The abuse of children in care in Scotland: A research review, University of Central Lancashire, Available at: [Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry | The abuse of children in care in Scotland: A research review](#) (accessed: 04 April 2024)

[Scotland's Census 2022 - Health, disability and unpaid care | Scotland's Census](#) (accessed: 30 July 2025)

[Scotland's Census 2022 - Ethnic group, national identity, language and religion | Scotland's Census](#) (accessed: 30 July 2025)

Scotland's Redress Scheme Statistics December 2021 – June 2024, [Supporting documents - Scotland's Redress Scheme Statistics December 2021 - June 2024 - gov.scot](#) (accessed: 30 July 2025)

[Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation - Scottish Welfare Fund Statistics: update to 30 June 2023 - gov.scot](#) (accessed: 30 July 2025)

## Further resources

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## Further resources

Future Pathways Learning and Impact

[Learning and Impact - Future Pathways - Scotland's In Care Support Fund](#)

Pathways to Change: Future Pathways Impact report 2023-2024

[Pathways to Change - Future Pathways - Scotland's In Care Support Fund](#)

Stepping Stones: Future Pathways Impact report 2016 – 2022

[Stepping Stones - Future Pathways - Scotland's In Care Support Fund](#)

The Meanings of Funded Support

[Meanings of Funded Support - Future Pathways - Scotland's In Care Support Fund](#)

Accessing Records in Scotland

[Accessing Records in Scotland - Future Pathways - Scotland's In Care Support Fund](#)

Being there: supporting people accessing Future Pathways to have their needs met

[Being There - Future Pathways - Scotland's In Care Support Fund](#)

### Future Pathways quality and improvement resources

Quality Framework annual report summary

[Quality Framework Annual Report Summary - Future Pathways - Scotland's In Care Support Fund](#)

Trauma informed Quality and Improvement

[Trauma Informed Quality and Improvement - Future Pathways - Scotland's In Care Support Fund](#)

### In Care Survivors Alliance resources

In Care Survivors Alliance

[In Care Survivors Alliance | Working together to support people](#)

Redress Support Service

[Redress Support Service | Support for people in their journey towards redress](#)

## Further resources

### External resources

The Promise

[The Promise](#)

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

[Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry | Investigating the abuse of children in care in Scotland](#)

National Confidential Forum

[What is a National Confidential Forum? - National Confidential Forum - A consultation on the creation of a Forum for Adult Survivors of Childhood Abuse in Residential Care - gov.scot](#)

Redress Scheme

[How it works - mygov.scot](#)

Redress Scotland

[Redress Scotland – Survivors are at the heart of the Redress Scotland process](#)

Further help

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## Further help

### The Samaritans

The Samaritans offer a safe place for you to talk any time you like. You can talk in your own way about whatever is going on. They have a helpline, email service, letter service and a self-help app.

Helpline open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Phone for free on 116123

[www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

### Breathing Space

Breathing Space is a free and confidential phone service for anyone in Scotland over the age of 16 who is feeling low, depressed or anxious.

Open 6pm to 2am Monday to Thursday, and 6pm to 6am Friday to Sunday.

Phone for free on 0800 83 85 87

[www.breathingspace.scot](http://www.breathingspace.scot)

### Shout

Shout is a free, confidential, text messaging support service for anyone who is finding it difficult to cope.

Text SHOUT to 8525

[giveusashout.org](http://giveusashout.org)

