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# Reflect, Refocus, Reset





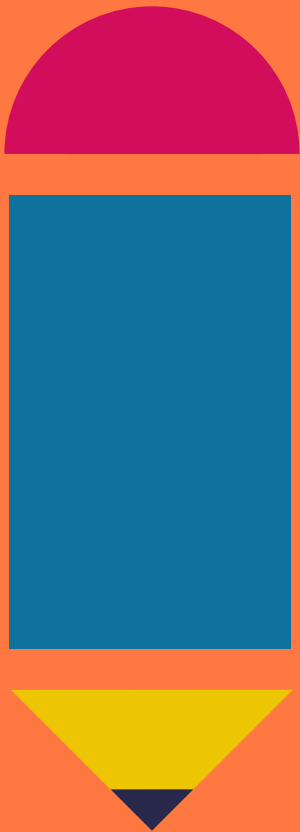
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# Note from the Independent Strategic Advisor – the promise



Hello and thank you.

This note does not attempt to narrate Plan 24-30 - reading through the rest of this document will provide more detail and understanding about the work done to devise Plan 24-30 and rationale, as well as what it is and how it will work.

Please do take the time to read on.



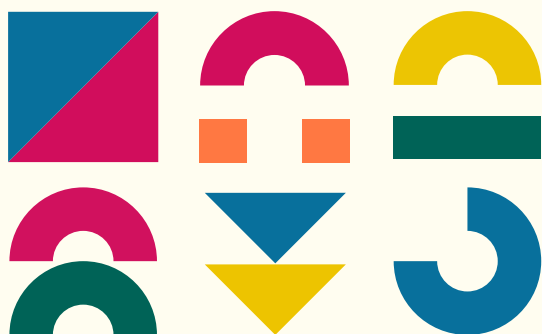
**Thank you for responding to this rallying call to #KeepThePromise.**

Thanks too if you are one of the many thousands of people who have been working incredibly hard to #KeepThePromise, and who continue to do so. We know that the circumstances you have been working in have been incredibly challenging. And thank you for your determination to create a better Scotland for the care community

The Independent Care Review was designed to shift how reviews were conducted: away from considering professionals and the workforce as the only experts whose voices mattered and towards the voices of those who'd experienced the 'care system'. In doing so, it respected and valued the unique perspective and expertise of the care community, acknowledging their views and aspirations were of the utmost importance.

**This has paved the way for Plan 24-30.**

The care community's work in relation to the promise began with activism – it was their voices that resulted in the independent, root and branch review of the 'care system'. Then it was their incredible hard work that delivered it.



Over 3,000 of the 5,500+ voices the Review heard were those of children, young people, families, and adults with experience of Scotland's 'care system'. And over 50% of the people on all the Independent Care Review's governance groups were care experienced.

On 5th February 2020 when the Independent Care Review's work concluded, the care community's role changed. Responsibility to #KeepThePromise was handed to the many, varied custodians of the 'care system' and other systems that children, young people, families and care experienced adults experience.

The care community has been waiting since 2020 for the promise that was made to them to be kept. This is something that's been at the forefront of my mind, as I've worked with the care community and organisations who make up the 'care system' to devise Plan 24-30 together.

**Keeping the promise will never not be urgent. Childhood is short, and precious.**

Scotland must do what it can, without delay. It must prioritise keeping families together wherever it is safe to do so; prevent children entering the 'care system'; make sure those children who do grow up in care are loved, safe and respected and go on to fulfil their potential as adults, and that those adults are supported throughout their life to thrive.

Over 100 organisations responded to my ask about their work to #KeepThePromise. The quantity and honesty of responses demonstrated sustained dedication and commitment, and a willingness to take the responsibility passed to them to work on the things they need to change.

## Note from the Independent Strategic Advisor – the promise

### **This gives hope.**

Alongside this, there's exasperation that systemic barriers have not been broken down, that changes aren't going far or fast enough, and are not yet being felt by those in and on the edge of the 'care system'. That children, young people, families and care experienced adults are not being listened to and included in decisions about their care and what changes are needed.

### **Yet listening is the only sure way to know the changes are the right ones.**

Everyone wants the promise to be kept, but underneath shared intent and exasperation, there is fear - what if the promise is not kept? What if all the work and effort to date is wasted because the barriers that get in the way of whole system change are too difficult to overcome?

With a commitment as important as the promise, which requires change at all levels across Scotland, it is unsurprising that some aspects feel unsurmountable, provoke anxiety, and that sometimes people don't know how or where to start.

### **Change is hard.**

Scotland will not get it right all the time but that cannot be a reason not to try, or not to stay the course. Scotland does not need a new vision – the one imagined by the care community was accepted as the one everyone wants.

### **What is needed is a new approach to HOW the promise is kept.**

Just as the Independent Care Review shifted how reviews were conducted, Plan 24-30 must shift how change is made. New solutions won't be found from looking in the same old places.

### **This is the starting point for Plan 24-30.**

There is no singular 'care system' and no one lives in a system or a policy. Children, families and care experienced adults do not experience the 'care system' in isolation. Whole system change - like the promise - demands collective endeavour and truly collaborative work - nationally and locally, within organisations and between sectors and agencies.

Scotland's policies, systems, structures, bureaucracies and services were designed and built by people - so it can be redesigned and rebuilt.

### **Plan 24-30 takes a people approach first, with policy and practice second.**

The Promise Scotland is using the launch of Plan 24-30 to reflect, refocus and reset their workplan, to make sure it remains entirely dedicated to #KeepThePromise. That way, the organisation can then become obsolete.



## Note from the Independent Strategic Advisor – the promise

Hopefully, many organisations will use Plan 24-30 to do the same – to consider what they need to change, what contributions they can make to work to #KeepThePromise, now and on an ongoing basis, and how their organisation may evolve over time.

**This rallying call acknowledges that Scotland will always need a 'care system'.**

But when the promise is kept, not every organisation currently operating in and around the 'care system' will need to exist. For some organisations, their work to #KeepThePromise will take them towards their own obsolescence - those organisations

must not prioritise their existence above the needs and aspirations of the care community.

Working together, the many and varied custodians of the 'care system' and the systems and services that surround it can make sure the singular vision set out by the Independent Care Review, in its entirety, is the reality by 2030.

Surely that cannot be too big an ask.




Fiona Duncan, Independent Strategic Advisor

*Fiona*



# The promise

Keeping the promise requires complex change across multiple systems and sectors. At its heart, though, the vision of a Scotland where every single child grows up loved, safe and respected is a simple one:

-  **Where children are safe in their families and feel loved they must stay. Families must be given the support they need to nurture that love to overcome the difficulties that get in the way.**
-  **Where living with their family is not possible, children must stay with their brothers and sisters where safe to do so and belong to a loving home, staying there for as long as needed.**
-  **Care experienced adults must have access to the services they need to realise their potential and live happy and fulfilled lives.**

Those to whom the promise is kept will know only care and compassion, and not a 'care system'. But they may never know that transformation was powered by the generosity and selflessness of all those who gave their stories in the hope of change for people they may never meet.

***Children will grow up loved, safe and respected.***





# Where it all began

Campaigns led by Who? Cares Scotland and the care community highlighted the failings of the 'care system'.

**2016**

In 2016 the First Minister committed to a root and branch review of Scotland's 'care system'.

**2017**

The Independent Care review lasted for three years from 2017 and heard from over 5,500 voices, including care experienced children, young people, families, care experienced adults and the workforce.

**2020**

On Wednesday 5 February 2020, the Independent Care Review published seven reports. The promise laid out five foundations and over 80 calls to action.

On the same day, in The Scottish Parliament, the First Minister pledged to #KeepThePromise a commitment that got the support of all political parties.

**2021**

The promise Scotland was set up in 2021 and Plan 21-24 was launched.

**24-30**

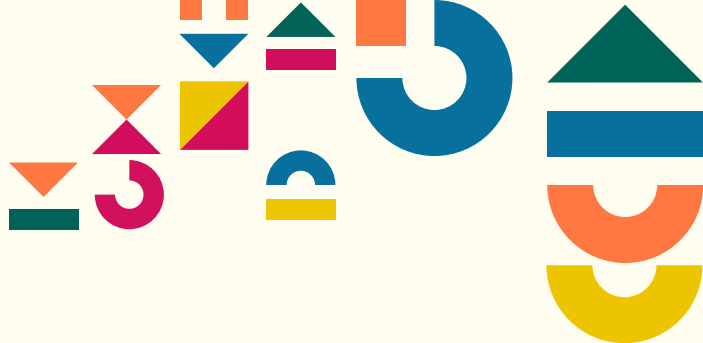
Plan 24-30 launches on June 20 2024.

**2030**

The promise is kept to Scotland's care experienced children, families and adults.



## Where it all began



**Scotland has its vision thanks to the brave voices of the care community, who were clear that the ‘care system’ was failing them. It was their voices that secured the Independent Care Review.**

Young people, families, care experienced adults, and the paid and unpaid workforce were courageous in sharing their experiences. The Independent Care Review had to be bold in response. It set out to go further than previous inquiries and be guided by the stories told of Scotland’s ‘care system’.

On 5th February 2020, guided by the stories, views and experiences of over 5,500 children, young people, families, care experienced adults, and people working in and around the ‘care system’, the Independent Care Review published [seven reports](#).

The Independent Care Review was clear that there was no single ‘care system’, and that patching up fragmented, broken systems would not result in the change needed. A fundamental shift was required to enable families to stay together wherever it is safe to do so, and to create an environment that would nurture stable, loving relationships. [The promise](#) did not simply point to failings: it set out the vision of what a Scotland that cares would look like.

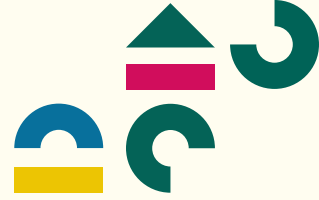
It did this by outlining over 80 calls to action. These actions and changes are necessary for Scotland to meet the needs and uphold the rights of children, families and care experienced adults. [‘The plan’](#) called for a radical new approach to design and implementation to make [the promise](#) a reality, and it described what needed to happen next.

[The promise](#) was built on [five foundations](#), voice, care, family, people and scaffolding, that must be at the heart of how Scotland plans for and supports children, young people, families, and care experienced adults.

The conclusions of the Independent Care Review were accepted in full by all political parties and, in February 2020, Scotland made a promise. There was widespread recognition across sectors and services of the urgent need for change to maintain momentum and [#KeepThePromise](#). However, one-month post- publication of the Independent Care Review, Scotland went into lockdown. The pandemic had a profound effect on the workforce and an even greater impact on the people it supports.

What was already urgent became even more so at a time when the things Scotland was reliant upon to drive change were falling away: relationships and connections, place-based collaborative working, time to plan and reliable data. This was closely followed by a cost-of-living crisis that pushed more families into poverty. The services working to support children, young people, families and care experienced adults were also striving for change and having to operate in increasingly complex and demanding conditions.





During lockdown, the 50 organisations that had to change first or change most took part in virtual workshops to develop Plan 21-24, the first of what - was then considered to be - three, 3-year plans. These were not ideal circumstances for planning work that needed to be delivered collaboratively. Plan 21-24 outlined five cross-cutting fundamental actions and highlighted 25 areas to be prioritised to #KeepThePromise.

Shorter-term targets were covered within Change Programme One, which at this time was expected to be the first of several Change Programmes to help Scotland operationalise the promise. To enable organisations to focus on meeting local needs, Plan 21-24 was explicit about WHAT changes to focus on, but not specific about HOW.

In 2024, Scotland finds itself in a very different place from what was imagined in February 2020. The past four years have tested the limits of the current systems and surfaced the deep-rooted barriers to whole system change.

A lot has been learned and all of it has been applied to Plan 24-30. It has become clear instead of the intended three year plans, a single shared six year plan was needed.

This has resulted in a new approach to planning: one that retains the vision of the promise. Plan 24-30 sets out sequenced actions, across a timeline to 2030, detailing responsibilities. Keeping the promise requires joined-up working and agile delivery to respond to both expected and unexpected changes. The destination is known, but the path to change will evolve as progress is made to 2030. The last few years have shown that there is always a risk that unforeseen events can hinder progress. For these reasons, Plan 24-30 is live, rather than static.

Plan 24-30 is hosted on a website to ensure it is dynamic and its content can iterate as change happens. This makes it easier to track progress against milestones and will be continue to updated.





What is Plan 24-30?



Independent Care Review set out **80+ calls to action**

Which have been organised by the promise **5 foundations**

Then grouped into **25 themes** with actions and milestones

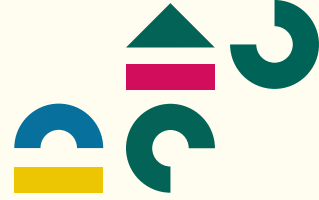
Which need to be acted upon by organisations across all sectors











#KeepThePromise



## What is Plan 24-30?



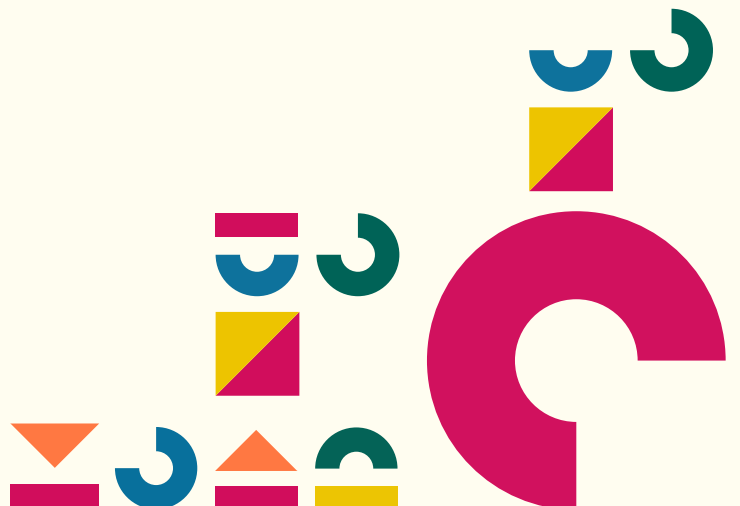
### For each group of themes, Plan 24-30 identifies:

-  Where is Scotland in 2024?
-  Where does Scotland need to be by 2030?
-  The route map to get there
-  What is helping?
-  Who needs to act?
-  Understanding progress
-  Related actions from across Plan 24-30
-  How actions relate to other frameworks

Plan 24-30 belongs to everyone, so everyone's work, and the need for everyone's effort, is reflected in it.

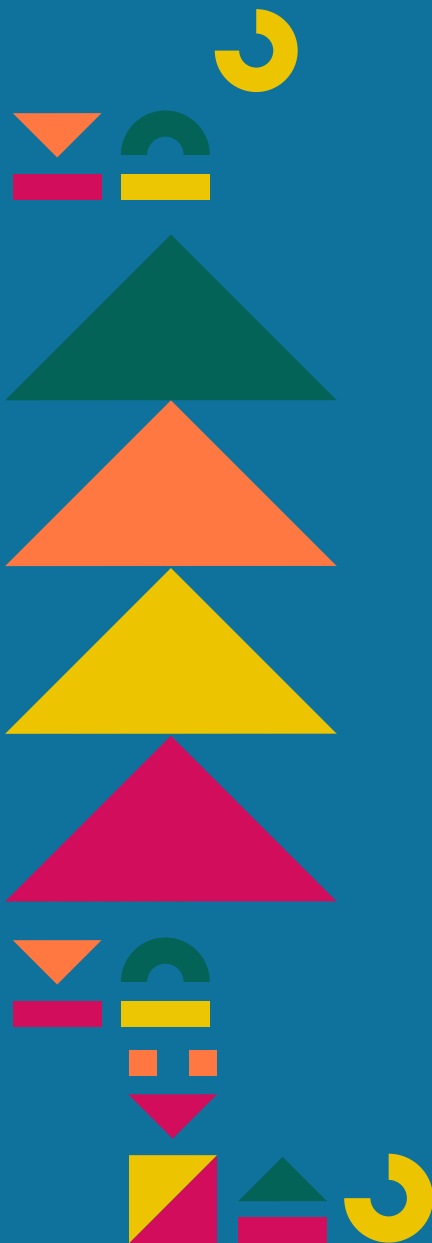
Scotland has a cluttered policy landscape, heavy with bureaucracy, and governance structures that are not always clear. Plan 24-30 has been mapped to Plan 21-24 and aligned 'relevant policy areas and frameworks' including to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) articles and the Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) wellbeing indicators. This is intended to support everyone to work together, make sense of the policy landscape and pull in the same direction over the years to #KeepThePromise.

Both work that prevents crisis, and services that respond to crisis, will always be needed. Scotland has ambitions to have greater focus on prevention, but there are systemic barriers to this happening. Scotland also wants to better support those who do need help, and there are service barriers to this working well. Plan 24-30 provides a framework for working collaboratively to make change and overcome barriers.





# The route map



To support and acknowledge the breadth of people and organisations working to #KeepThePromise, Plan 24-30 exists as a website, allowing its content to be navigated in a way that can be explored and make sense to readers, regardless of their interest or role.

For some aspects, the route to keeping the promise is known and apparent. For others, the route is less certain or more complex, or dependent on progress in another area.

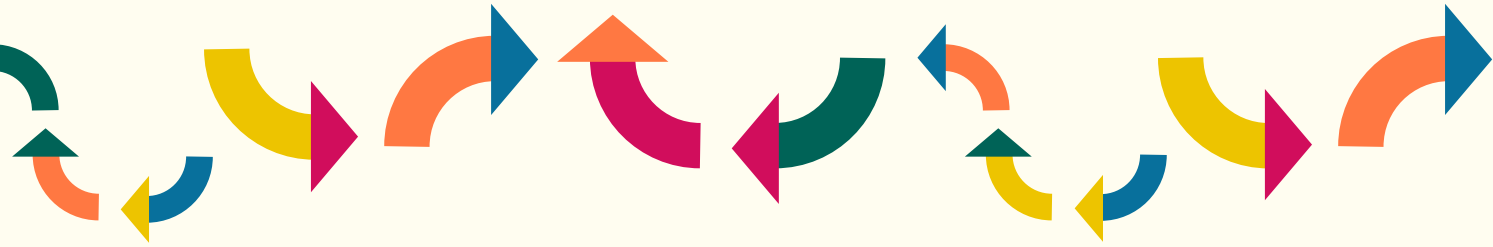
There are also aspects where there is disagreement on the best route forward and collaborative efforts to unravel the challenges to understand what steps can be taken.

Similarly, when unforeseen events happen, in the way the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis did, Plan 24-30 can adapt and reprioritise. As the route map to 2030 progresses, Plan 24-30 will be updated so it tracks progress and is transparent about what still needs to happen, by who and by when.

It is important that organisations dedicate some time to explore Plan 24-30 and feedback on what is working, where the gaps are and any support needed to embed Plan 24-30 into strategic plans.

This way everyone involved in keeping the promise, and the care community, will know how far Scotland has come and how far there is to go. This is a new approach to supporting and enabling agile delivery of wholesale change.

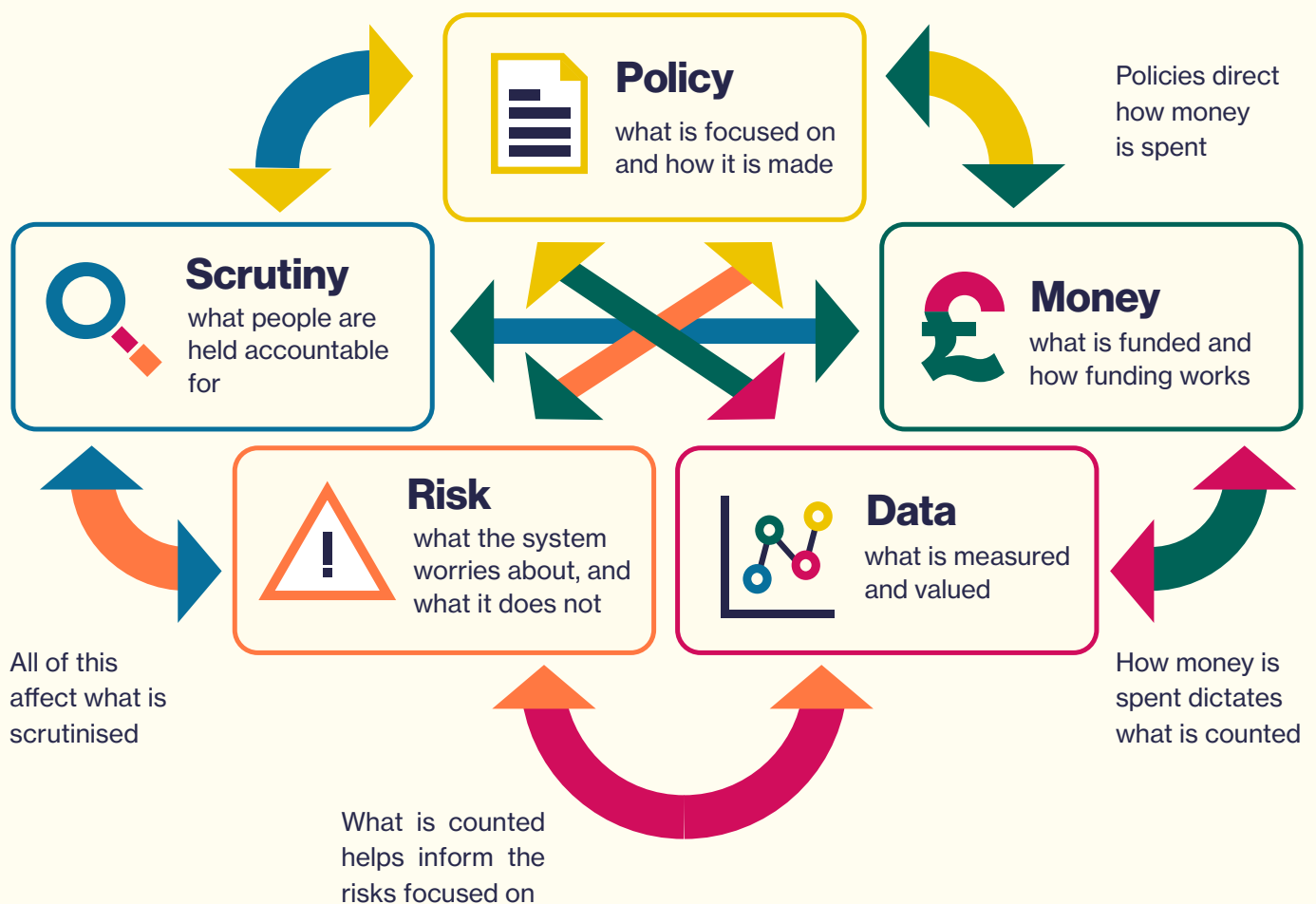




# Meeting in the middle

Keeping the promise is not the responsibility of the 'care system' alone.

Over the last four and a half years, five issues have been repeatedly identified as the major bridges and barriers to keeping the promise. These are: policy, money, data, risk, scrutiny. All are systemic issues that relate more broadly to the wider public sector reform agenda and have a significant impact on local delivery.





# How Plan 24-30 was developed

Plan 24-30 was developed together with stakeholders including the care community and will continue to be shaped in response to feedback from, and the actions of, all those working to #KeepThePromise. The process to develop Plan 24-30 has been, and will continue to be, transparent, open, and collaborative.

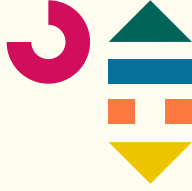
In November 2023, the [approach and timeline to devise Plan 24-30](#) was set out, including the core principles the work would focus on:

- Remaining rooted in the needs and aspirations of children, young people, families and care experienced adults.
- Providing a single shared plan which sets out a route map to #KeepThePromise by 2030.
- Providing a common understanding of how progress will be measured and be able to keep track.



**Plan 24-30 is the product of high levels of engagement, input from the care community and all organisations working for change. All those who will work to it, and are committed to the promise being kept, can see their inputs in Plan 24-30 Organisations must now use this to shape their plans.**





## How Plan 24-30 was created

Three phases to devising Plan 24-30 together were outlined:



# Phase One - Understanding and Creating

Phase One aimed to gather as many views as possible, to carefully assess what had been learned so far and what needed to happen next. It was carried out in parallel with the commissioning and delivery of an independent evaluation of Plan 21-24, to minimise duplication of effort and purpose.

Whilst the independent evaluation of Plan 21-24 focused on providing an objective view on the progress made so far, Phase One analysis focused on understanding the current conditions, barriers, and next steps, looking toward action, the future and what would be needed in Plan 24-30.

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Phase One involved qualitative analysis of, and reporting on, the outputs of four distinct strands of engagement:

1. **Information gathered** throughout engagement with those working to #KeepThePromise, intended to map current understanding of the ways organisations are structuring their decision making around the promise, and the ways they are currently delivering it.
2. **Views gathered via an online form**, which asked about the current contexts, practices that need to be accelerated or phased out, and bridges and barriers to keeping the promise. This strand was intended to give as many people as possible a chance to be heard and contribute to Plan 24-30.
3. **Progress updates requested from organisations (including all corporate parents and public bodies)**, which produced responses from over 100 organisations who provided over 160 documents, reports, links, and evidence summaries. This strand was intended to capture and understand how those organisations assess the status of their progress, what has worked well (or not), any anticipated challenges on the horizon and what is needed to ensure their organisation can make the contributions it needs in order to #KeepThePromise.
4. **Posters submitted to The promise Scotland's 'Stories of Change' conference** in February 2024, which captured ongoing activity in Scotland relating to work that identified changes needed, how change has happened and, for those with experience of the 'care system', how have they been involved and how the work has impacted them.

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Each strand was analysed and reported separately. Since the source material differed significantly between each of the four strands, each had different analytical approaches applied accordingly. Plan 21-24 was used consistently throughout all strands as the primary analytical framework, which allowed for comparison across strands and standardisation across reports.

## Phase Two: Creating and Checking

Phase Two brought the analytical outputs of phase one together and used them to begin to build and shape Plan 24-30. This was done by drawing on the extensive analysis and engagement of phase one.

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Key themes that were heard include:

- Understanding the nuances of different children, young people, families and care experienced adults' lives and their local contexts is only possible through listening to the expertise of those with lived experience, and those closest to them. Doing so is key to ensuring they are systematically listened to and that services respond to what they truly want and need. This has further reinforced that listening to what matters to children and families must be prioritised.
- Planning that embeds long term visions and timelines is important. This approach enables an enhanced understanding of where to join-up planning and resources to support more realistic action plans, to incrementally embed sustainable, long-term change that delivers greater consistency.
- Shorter-term planning is also useful, to be able to respond to immediate and urgent challenges (For example COVID-19 and the cost of living crisis), which impact directly on the operating context, allowing for course correction as circumstances change and understanding improves.

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Together these have informed Plan 24-30 – a static vision and timeline; breaking up longer programmes of work into shorter, smaller parts set over a longer time period to help outline priorities and sustain momentum, keep up pace and morale, and enable regular reflection on what has worked and what could work better.



Plan 24-30 was developed through listening:

## What was heard?

Listening to children, young people, families, and care experienced adults, and prioritising what matters

Longer planning time frames

The need for delivery to be dynamic and flexible

Big picture overview of national level

Too many frameworks and not enough alignment

Lack of clarity about who needs to do what and who is accountable.

## How this has informed the design and development of Plan 24-30

Plan 24-30 has incorporated what the Independent Care Review heard to support a shift in focus that prioritises what matters rather than performance measures.

Plan 24-30 is a six-year plan that will support whole system changes that are needed to make the promise a reality for Scotland and to ensure the work of change can continue to be embedded and become the 'new normal'.

Rather than a static document published at a single moment in time, Plan 24-30 is a website which can evolve and put what has been heard, and continues to be heard, into a framework for action.

Plan 24-30 will make visible areas of overlap or gaps and support collaboration, connection and learning for improvement.

Plan 24-30 will create the conditions to support better coordination, collaboration, and planning across policy and practice areas.

Plan 24-30 specifies what needs to happen, by who and by when, supporting collaborative working across Scotland.

## Phase Three: Checking and Publishing

Phase Three continued the development of Plan 24-30, ensuring it was fit for purpose to meet need, and checking whether the developing plan reflected what had been heard, what was known, and where gaps remained.

In this Phase, the learning and knowledge surfaced in Phases One and Two, alongside conversations and meetings with those who had provided a contribution, or who had a key role to play was brought together.

Everything heard was used to iterate the draft plan with a date for launch set – **20th June 2024**. The aim in this final phase was to check with those who helped devise it that the developing Plan 24-30 was fit for purpose, and continuing conversations with the care community to ensure the ongoing development of Plan 24-30 would meet their needs and aspirations.

### Plan 24-30 was shared to sense check:

- It fully reflects the conclusions of the Independent Care Review.
- It is a collective and informed balance of ambition and feasibility.
- It builds on bridges and tackles barriers, immediately and over time.
- It assesses risks and considers how to predict, manage, and mitigate these.
- The format supports delivery and enables action, learning and iteration.
- Progress can be measured in a way that reflects the care community's needs and aspirations.

At the end of the Phases, what was heard and learned was used to build Plan 24-30.

By using it, together, Scotland can #KeepThePromise.

Thanks to all those who got Scotland this far, to all who contributed to the development of Plan 24-30, to everyone determined to make sure Scotland keeps the promise so will use [www.plan2430.scot](http://www.plan2430.scot) and make sure it is useful. And thanks to the care community for making sure that Scotland has a promise to keep.



# Plan



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