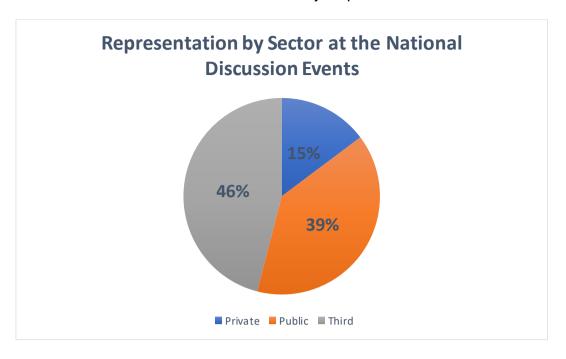
# NO ONE LEFT BEHIND NATIONAL DISCUSSION EVENTS

**Summary Report, National Discussion Events, August – November 2023** 

#### Introduction

- Supporting people towards and into fair, sustainable jobs is central to achieving the Scottish Government's vision for a wellbeing economy and delivering on the ambitions in Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET) and in tackling child poverty as outlined in Best Start, Bright Futures (BSBF).
- 2. No One Left Behind is our shared approach with Local Government to deliver an all-age, place-based, person-centred model of employability support in Scotland. It promotes a strengthened partnership approach where Scottish & Local Government work together with public, private and third sector organisations to identify and respond to local needs and opportunities.
- 3. Following the publication of a joint statement from Neil Gray MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Fair Work and Energy and Councillor Maureen Chalmers, COSLA Spokesperson for Community Wellbeing, in August outlining their commitment to the future of No One Left Behind, Scottish Government, in partnership with Local Authorities, held a number of National Discussion events to consider the progress made to date on our move to a place-based, personcentred model of employability support. These events provided the opportunity for partners to share their thoughts and collective expertise to shape thinking around the future of the employability system in Scotland.
- 4. The Scottish Government held a total of six National Discussion Events between August and November 2023. These events provided approximately 300 stakeholders the opportunity to support the next phase of No One Left Behind and share their feedback and ideas to help inform the Scottish Government's Strategic Plan 2024-27 for the future of employability.
- 5. The breakdown of the attendees reveals keen interest across all sectors, with 43 individuals (15%) from the private sector, 114 (39%) from the public sector, and 132 (46%) from the third sector contributing to a comprehensive and inclusive dialogue.



# Aims, Objectives, and Method

- 6. Partnership and consultation have been at the heart of our approach since work to develop a Scottish approach to employability commenced in 2015. The National Discussion events have continued this consultative approach, creating the opportunity to engage with partners and stakeholders in anticipation of the expansion of No One Left Behind from April 2024.
- 7. The National Discussion events were facilitated by Professor Colin Lindsay of the University of Strathclyde. Professor Lindsay has been researching and teaching employability, employment and skills, public management, and social policy for more than twenty-five years and has published more than 70 peer reviewed articles, books, book chapters, and policy reports.
- 8. At each event, a representative from the public or third sector delivered a presentation providing insight into the work taking place at a local level to implement the No One Left Behind approach. These presentations demonstrated the strength of partnership working across Scotland to enact our vision for the future of employability support.
- 9. Presentations were provided by:
  - Angela Taylor, Aberdeen City Council: ABZ Works
  - Kate Kelman, Capital City Partnership: The Functioning and Role of the Local Employability Partnership in Edinburgh;
  - Ashley Ryan, Enable Works: The "All in Partnership" Model.
  - Laura Neil, North Ayrshire Council: an insight into the employability service being delivered in her Local Authority, structure, delivery and opportunity.

- Amy Cruickshank, Moray Council: Moray Pathways
- 10. The table discussions were conducted using the <a href="H-Participatory Method">H-Participatory Method</a>, which sees participants discuss and score agreement with statements. These statements were designed to drive a strong response and reduce the tendency for people to navigate towards a middle ground in terms of scoring. A graph showing the combined table scores for each statement is included at <a href="Appendix B">Appendix B</a>.
- 11. Positive and negative reflections on the statements were then explored and discussed. Ultimately, the process resulted in a number of suggested actions that could be taken forward to improve the overall score of the statement. These have formed the basis of our high-level outcomes below. All of the "Top Actions" included are taken directly from the post-it notes completed by participants during the events.
- 12. Each table was given a different statement to discuss, with broad room feedback to allow others to input their thoughts.

Theme	Statement
System	No One Left Behind has significantly simplified the employability landscape, leading to easier access to support and better outcomes for service users.
Partnership	All partners are fully contributing their expertise, knowledge, and collective resources to the delivery of No One Left Behind to provide better outcomes for the service user.
Person-Centred Support (Reach)	No One Left Behind has been successful in identifying and reaching those further from the labour market.
Person-Centred Support (Integrated Support)	Employability services are fully aligned with other services such as health, housing, and justice, and provide a no-wrong door approach to those needing support.
Evaluation & Reporting	No One Left Behind monitoring and reporting provides a better understanding of what is being delivered under No One Left Behind and a full picture of employability activity across Scotland.
Comms	The No One Left Behind approach is understood by both those accessing and delivering employability support.

# **Overall High-Level Outcomes**

- 13. This section of the report will detail some of the most common themes to emerge across all of the events and the top actions identified. All of the comments are drawn from the post-it notes completed by participants during the events. This section will also include a chart showing the top voted actions at each table.
- 14. Further detail on the additional top actions suggested during the events is included in **Appendix A.** It should be noted that these are presented as they were on the day, with no editing from Scottish Government in preparing this report. They represent a broad mix of specific asks, and broader themes that may be open to interpretation. How Scottish and Local Government intend to respond to the outputs of these events will form the basis of our Strategic plan in the interest of transparency.
- 15. During the national events, participants noted that the gradual implementation of No One Left Behind has given partners across Scotland the opportunity to begin to develop the relationships and infrastructure necessary for the future delivery model. There is broad consensus that the move to a place based, person centred system of support is the correct direction of travel, even if this will require time and further culture change.
- 16. More specifically, a number of participants noted that many Local Employability Partnerships have had the chance to hear strategic input from a wide range of partners, increasing collaborative working and opportunities for innovation.
- 17. Similarly, participants also noted that many organisations are working hard to drive closer alignment and integration of services across Local Authority areas, and that there remains a strong aspiration across sectors to achieve this outcome. In addition, a number commented that the use of lived experience panels showed promise as a method of ensuring that partnerships are able to meet the needs of those furthest from the labour market.
- 18. While there has been much positive progress, participants also reflected on some of the difficulties faced during the implementation of the No One Left Behind model. While, as noted above, some LEPs are functioning at a high level, there is uneven development across the country, with some areas still in need of a wider range of engagement across the public, private, and third sectors to take advantage of the opportunities offered by No One Left Behind. Others felt that despite the strong ambition to simplify services, the employability landscape remains somewhat cluttered.

No One Left Behind National Discussion Events Summary Report

- 19. While some effort has been made to reach those who are furthest from the labour market, some suggested that more clarity is required around the approach to deliver specialist support services including Supported Employment and Individual Placement Support.
- 20. Finally, concerns continue to be raised about the financial challenge posed when delivering employability services under an annual funding arrangement, which some participants feel has erected barriers to effective planning, capacity building, and the retention of skilled staff.
- 21. The top voted action as voted by the participants of each table discussion are set out below, with the wording taken directly from the post-it notes submitted during the events. It should be noted that some represent specific actions or requests, whereas others represent broader themes with detail open to interpretation

## **Partnership**

**Transparency** of Scottish Government and Local Authorities on budget spend and more promotion on what No One Left Behind funding is being spent

**Better** mechanisms for information sharing at national, local and operational levels

Visibility of summary reporting. **Local Employability** Partnership, Scottish Government, all levels of reporting should filter up and down

Sharing of best practice

More consultations to take place to identify what the needs and challenges are at an operational level

**National** campaign to make people aware of No One Left Behind and how to access local provision

# **System**

Create the parameters for sustainable service delivery to meet the No One Left Behind aspirations i.e. whole system, person-centred, integrated etc.

Our ideal is to move as close to a selfdirected buffet of employability support which is appropriate to place and person

# **Funding**

Multi year funding: To enable further reach To improve planning and staff retention Provide more security to the third sector

Review eligible spend criteria with the aim of delivering as much flexibility as possible

Funding should be utilised locally based on need rather than from different strands.

**Explore** enhancing the role of the Local **Employability Partnerships** 

#### Communication

More entry points for health to support in work employability support to mitigate poverty

**Encourage UK** government to make benefits system supportive of work rather than penalise people

Consider how to provide support to areas to implement a no wrong door approach. A national framework may be required but will have to consider how we balance the need for intense local support

## **Reporting and Monitoring**

**Explore** routes to improve ease of data sharing and managing information

Review of monitoring framework

Consider approaches to better understand variation in approaches across LAs

**Improve** customer journeys by simplifying process

Make application and participation as simple as possible for the clients. No evidence/copies of document unless needed

Investment in key worker support and welfare rights advisors importance of warm handovers

Better clarify the role employability plays across wider strategies and policies

# **Next Steps**

- 22. The events have given partners from across Scotland the opportunity to share insights into the progress of No One Left Behind so far, identifying enablers and barriers to implementation.
- 23. The actions and feedback received will form the basis of discussions between Scottish and Local Government, recognising that some of them sit in the national policy space, and others sit in the local delivery space. The outputs of the National Discussion events will also influence the Employability Strategic Plan 2024-27, due to be published in Summer 2024.

#### **Appendix A**

**High-Level Outcomes by Statement** 

#### Statement A

No One Left Behind has significantly simplified the employability landscape, leading to easier access to support and better outcomes for service users.

- 1. There was broad agreement across the events that No One Left Behind is the correct approach to transform employability support in Scotland. Further, many felt that the shift towards local decision-making has led to improved partnership working, which has enabled many areas to deliver support that is more personcentred, and that is more effectively targeted at local labour market conditions.
- 2. Some queries were raised about the effectiveness and reach of localised funding given the complexity of planning services within the employability landscape. Participants highlighted the difficulties stemming from the intricate nature of the current system and the need to work across multiple sectors and policy areas and respond to larger economic challenges such as Covid-19. Participants discussed potential challenges associated with the impact of additional short-term funding pots on the delivery of services and support.
- 3. Participants also expressed concern that the current annualised funding model tends to create challenges for organisations around planning and delivery of services, as well as leading to recruitment difficulties. There were suggestions for a more sustainable approach, advocating for guaranteed 3-5 year funding periods to ensure stability.
- 4. Concerns were voiced about inconsistent delivery models across the Local Authorities, with this potentially leading to different levels of provision being available depending on where a service user lives. Issues were also raised around a potential lack of data explaining service access issues, and the need for improved interpretation of available data and widened access to this information.
- 5. Participants questioned the impact of the Shared Measurement Framework and Customer Charter, expressing concerns that funding constraints might impede their effectiveness in ensuring a quality service.
- 6. Challenges in raising awareness about No One Left Behind amongst priority groups were acknowledged. A number of participants felts that capacity building was needed to ensure that Local Authorities and other partners have a more robust approach to working with minority ethnic participants. The

- importance of collaboration across sectors and policy areas, particularly for care-experienced young people, was also emphasised.
- 7. The remaining actions (as voted by the participants) for this statement are in the table below. This should be viewed in conjunction with top voted actions set out on page 6.
- 8. The wording is taken directly from the post-it notes submitted during the events and it should be noted that some of them represent specific actions or requests, whereas others represent broader themes with detail open to interpretation. They are included for transparency and as a true reflection of the discussion on the day. Scottish Government have not edited these, and have only removed duplicates in preparing this report.



#### Statement B

All partners are fully contributing their expertise, knowledge and collective resources to the delivery of No One Left Behind to support delivery of better outcomes for the service user.

- 1. Stakeholders recognised that No One Left Behind has spurred some innovation in addressing gaps in services and developing positive relationships within Local Employability Partnerships, leading to improvement for service users. The planning process for LEPs has in some cases also led to better defined goals for employability locally. Finally, the introduction of a client passport being trialled in Argyll and Bute for recording journeys received positive feedback for its potential to enhance transparency.
- 2. Concerns were raised regarding the significant allocation of time required for funding applications, particularly within the third sector. In some cases, the short-term nature of the funding has led to other issues around staff stability and challenges aligning with fair work principles. Furthermore, groups expressed a collective hope for multi-year funding and clearer funding criteria.
- 3. Some participants noted a lack of transparency in Local Employability Partnerships and challenges in understanding roles within partnerships. Stakeholders emphasised the need to establish better frameworks for participation in LEPs.
- 4. Concerns were also expressed that some LEPs operate with a "top-down" approach from Local Authorities, and that in some cases there are challenges in obtaining contributions from key stakeholders. Recommendations centred around the development of regional operational delivery groups, improved communication within the LEP and other local authorities, further alignment of employability and health initiatives, clarification of roles, and the sharing of best practices among LEPs and service providers.
- 5. Some participants mentioned challenges around fully engaging employers. Stakeholders suggested working with employers, involving them in LEPs, and addressing barriers to hiring individuals requiring additional support. Particular note was made of the challenge of increasing understanding around Learning Disabilities and Neurodiversity and employment.
- 6. Improved communication and marketing for No One Left Behind was also identified as a critical aspect requiring attention.

- 7. The remaining actions (as voted by the participants) for this statement are in the table below. This should be viewed in conjunction with top voted actions set out on page 6.
- 8. The wording is taken directly from the post-it notes submitted during the events and it should be noted that some of them represent specific actions or requests, whereas others represent broader themes with detail open to interpretation. They are included for transparency and as a true reflection of the discussion on the day. Scottish Government have not edited these, and have only removed duplicates in preparing this report.



#### Statement C

# No One Left Behind has been successful in identifying and reaching those further from the labour market.

- 1. Participants remarked on the improved accessibility of some services, particularly those being offered online, which has helped ensure support is being tailored to individual needs.
- 2. Some noted that increased collaboration between different partners and the use of lived experience in service design has helped LEPs to begin to target those further removed from the labour market.
- 3. Furthermore, the positive impact of paid work placements, especially for those struggling after Covid, was noted as an example of supporting those furthest from the labour market back into the workplace.
- 4. Funding delays were identified as a risk to the successful delivery of No One Left Behind, and there is real concern amongst providers that the security of service delivery cannot be guaranteed for those accessing support. It was also felt that reporting requirements place additional strain on resources.
- 5. Some participants noted that the relationship with the Department of Work and Pensions needs further development to enable enhanced reach of employability services. It was also suggested that there is a need to push for more recognition for No One Left Behind provision as an avenue of progression for individuals, as opposed to people being pushed into a job when they are not ready and it is not the right time for them to enter employment. Some participants also felt that more work was necessary help parents engage with employability service providers.
- 6. Additional areas for improvement highlighted in discussions included: the risk of postcode lotteries in various kinds of support; challenges in engaging with individuals from rural areas; issues with the procurement model due to lack of transparency, especially for smaller organisations; and the impact of short-term contracts and staff turnover on the mental health of employability staff.
- 7. There is a strong appetite for more events both nationally, regionally, and within Local Authorities to strengthen networks and provide opportunities to share best practice and promote innovation.
- 8. The remaining actions (as voted by the participants) for this statement are in the table below. This should be viewed in conjunction with top voted actions set out on page 6.

9. The wording is taken directly from the post-it notes submitted during the events and it should be noted that some of them represent specific actions or requests, whereas others represent broader themes with detail open to interpretation. They are included for transparency and as a true reflection of the discussion on the day. Scottish Government have not edited these, and have only removed duplicates in preparing this report.



#### Statement D

Employability services are fully aligned with other services such as health, housing, and justice, and provide a no-wrong door approach to those needing support.

- 1. There was considerable agreement that No One Left Behind is the correct approach and that there is strong commitment across the sector to making it a success. Further, participants noted that many organisations are taking it upon themselves to join up services and find opportunities to work in collaboration. Finally, group members emphasised the positive impact of lived experience input on services real-life experiences were deemed valuable in shaping effective support across areas.
- 2. However, significant barriers were identified with the alignment and integration of services, including time constraints, financial limitations, and challenges in securing or developing the required expertise. Communication also emerged as a critical factor, with concerns raised around the lack of collaboration and information sharing between different organisations, hindering the progression towards alignment.
- 3. Various inconsistencies in the functioning of Local Employability Partnerships were highlighted in group discussions, with some observing that information does not always reach all stakeholders. Participants in the group discussions stressed the need for improved communication channels, especially in providing feedback on the efficacy of services.
- 4. Data management proved to be a significant challenge amongst participants the national discussion events. Some raised issues around the systems used for recording data, noting that it can be challenging to use for colleagues processing referrals. For No One Left Behind, some local authorities are using spreadsheets to process referrals, which is time consuming and difficult for colleagues. Suggestions were made to simplify the process and enhance the user-friendliness of data recording systems. A feeling that data protection legislation creates challenges in progressing alignment was raised across multiple groups.
- 5. The remaining actions (as voted by the participants) for this statement are in the table below. This should be viewed in conjunction with top voted actions set out on page 6.
- 6. The wording is taken directly from the post-it notes submitted during the events and it should be noted that some of them represent specific actions or

requests, whereas others represent broader themes with detail open to interpretation. They are included for transparency and as a true reflection of the discussion on the day. Scottish Government have not edited these, and have only removed duplicates in preparing this report.



#### Statement E

No One Left Behind monitoring and reporting provides a better understanding of what is being delivered under No One Left Behind and a full picture of employability activity across Scotland.

- Whilst there have been a number of challenges, participants highlighted some
  of the positive aspects of the Shared Measurement Framework, citing
  improved data quality, accurate reporting, and the ability to track trends over
  time.
- However, discussions revealed a lack of knowledge among participants regarding current data reporting processes. Some group members felt that key workers would benefit from enhanced training programs to ensure that they can better understand how to record and report relevant data for No One Left Behind.
- 3. Relatedly, recommendations were made to simplify and streamline data collection to make processes less burdensome. More transparent funding criteria with clear communication regarding the relationship between data collection and funding decisions was also desired.
- 4. Conversations across the groups focussed on the need to move away from only measuring outcomes and statistics and towards measuring the journey individuals are on towards employment. Discussions asked for a balanced approach that considers both hard and soft outcomes, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation of service impact.
- 5. The lack of alignment between policy intentions and on-the-ground actions was a recurring theme. This challenge was identified as a barrier to the successful implementation of employability services. There was a repeated request for more effective communication between policymakers and service providers to ensure a more coherent implementation of policies, with the addition of regular updates.
- 6. The remaining actions (as voted by the participants) for this statement are in the table below. This should be viewed in conjunction with top voted actions set out on page 6.
- 7. The wording is taken directly from the post-it notes submitted during the events and it should be noted that some of them represent specific actions or requests, whereas others represent broader themes with detail open to interpretation. They are included for transparency and as a true reflection of the

discussion on the day. Scottish Government have not edited these, and have only removed duplicates in preparing this report.



#### Statement F

# The No One Left Behind approach is understood by both those accessing and delivering employability support

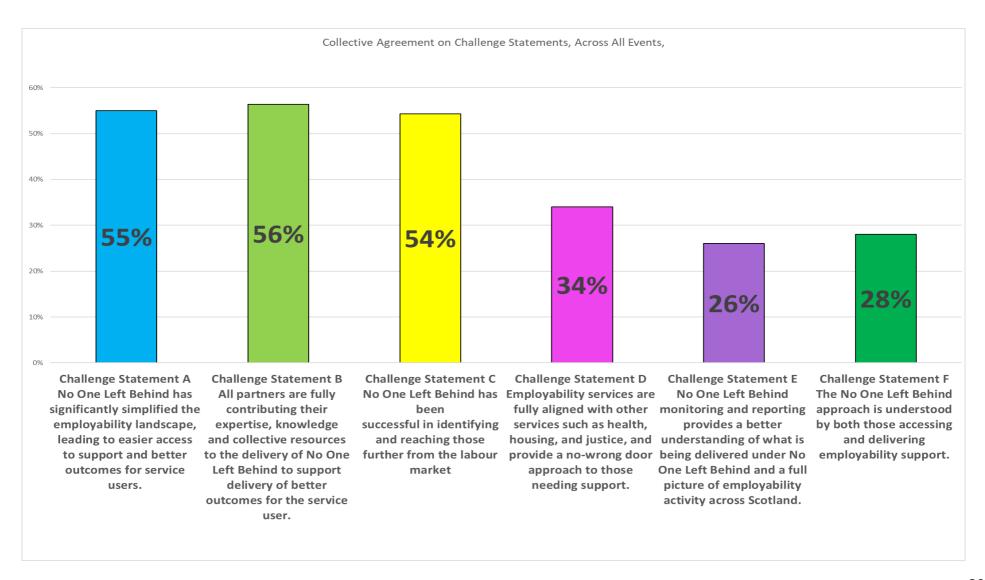
- 1. A number of participants noted that Local Employability Partnerships are working hard to share information about labour market conditions and employability, thereby supporting delivery partners and promoting the No One Left Behind approach. In many cases this has led to a marked improvement in partnership working.
- 2. Some group members also felt that No One Left Behind has placed a strong emphasis on the wellbeing of service users and helped to reduce anxiety and fear by providing people with small, incremental goals without the prospect of a penalty if progress is not swift.
- 3. However, discussions across groups also suggested limited awareness of No One Left Behind policies amongst prospective service users and staff. The desire to raise awareness of the services provided was prominent through all groups and suggestions were made to market the services through social media and TV campaigns, especially towards parents.
- 4. Considerable variation in approach across Local Authorities was taken to indicate that No One Left Behind is not universally understood. Some participants therefore suggested there is a need to develop clear communication strategies to bridge the gap between No One Left Behind policies and delivery organisations. Examples set out by the government showing what the ideal service looks like so that organisations know what to strive towards could be helpful towards attaining this goal.
- 5. Many participants felt that it was not strictly necessary for clients to understand No One Left Behind as a policy or approach. However, it was also noted that many employability service users have had bad experiences on multiple different schemes and can be reluctant to place any trust in employability services as a result.
- 6. The remaining actions (as voted by the participants) for this statement are in the table below. This should be viewed in conjunction with top voted actions set out on page 6.
- 7. The wording is taken directly from the post-it notes submitted during the events and it should be noted that some of them represent specific actions or requests, whereas others represent broader themes with detail open to interpretation. They are included for transparency and as a true reflection of the

discussion on the day. Scottish Government have not edited these, and have only removed duplicates in preparing this report.



## **Appendix B**

#### Combined table scores for each statement.



# **Appendix C**

# Attendees list for all events

AAI EmployAbility	Moving On Employment Project
Aberdeen City Council	Murton Trust for Education and the
	Environment
Aberdeen Foyer	MyBnk
Aberdeenshire Council	Mydex CIC
Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care	NHS Education for Scotland
Partnership	
Aberlour Jobs	NHS Family Nurse Partnership
Ability Borders	NHS Grampian
Access to Industry	NHS Lanarkshire Health and Social Care
-	Partnership
Action For Children	NHS Lothian
ACVO Third Sector Interface	NHS Scotland
Addiewell Prison	North Ayrshire Council
Angus Council	North Lanarkshire Council
Apex Scotland	One Parent Families Scotland
Argyll and Bute Council	One Parent Families Scotland
Auchinleck Community Development	OneRen (Renfrewshire Leisure)
Initiative	
Auticon	Open Door Scotland
Ayrshire Chamber of Commerce	Orkney Health and Care Partnership
Barnardos	Orkney Islands Council
Beaver Economics	People Plus
Bethany Christian Trust	Perth and Kinross Council
Bridges Programmes	QA Apprenticeships
C E M V O Scotland	Qualitas international Itd
Camphill Blair Drummond	Radiant and Brighter Community Interest
	Company
Capital City Partnership	RAMH
CHAP	Reed in Partnership
City of Edinburgh Council	Remploy Scotland
Clackmannanshire Council	Renfrewshire Council
Clackmannanshire Economic Regeneration	Renfrewshire HSCP
Trust SCIO	
Clyde Gateway	Right Options
Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar	RiverSide Academy
Community Enterprise in Scotland Ayrshire	Routes To Work Limited
Community Gift Exchange SCIO	Rural Urban Training Scheme Ltd
COPE Ltd	Scottish Action for Mental Health
COSLA	Scottish Borders Council
CVO East Ayrshire	Scottish Borders Social Enterprise
	Chamber CIC
CVS Falkirk	Scottish Commission for people with
	Learning Difficulties
CVS Inverclyde	Scottish Government

Cyrenians	Scottish Prison Service
Department of Work & Pensions	Scottish Training Federation
Direct Partners Itd	Shaw Trust
Dumfries & Galloway Council	Shetland Island Council
Dundee City Council	Sinclair Wellbeing and Training Solutions
,	Ltd
DYW Ayrshire	Skills Development Scotland
East Ayrshire Carers Centre	Social Enterprise Scotland
East Ayrshire Council	Sodexo
East Dunbartonshire Council	South Ayrshire Council
East Dunbartonshire Voluntary Action	South Lanarkshire Council
East Lothian Works	South of Scotland Enterprise
East Renfrewshire Council	Space & Broomhouse Hub
Edinburgh & Lothians Regional Equality	Spark
Council	
ENABLE Scotland	Spark
Enterprise Screen	Scottish Prison Service
Equate Scotland	Station House Media Unit
ERSA	Stirling Council
Eureka Learning and Development	Stirlingshire Voluntary Enterprise
Falkirk Council	Street League
FARE Scotland	The Ayrshire Community Trust
Fedcap Scotland	The British Association for Supported
	Employment
Fife Gingerbread	The Challenges Group
Fife Voluntary Action	The Larder
Forth Sector	The Lennox Partnership
Forth Valley College	The Prince's Trust
Fyne Futures Ltd	The Salvation Army Employment Plus
GCVS	The Tell Organisation
Glasgow City Council	The Third Sector Employability Forum
Glasgow City HSCP	The Village Centre
Glasgow Clyde College	The Whithorn Trust
Glasgow Life	The Wise Group
Go! Youth Trust	Triage
Govanhill Community Development Trust	Triage Central Ltd
Green Routes	TSI Dumfries and Galloway
Helm	Values into Action Scotland
HorseBack UK	Venture Trust
Inclusion Scotland	Verg LTD
Inspired Community Enterprise Trust	Versus Arthritis
Inspiring Scotland	Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire
Into Work	Voluntary Action South Ayrshire
Inverclyde Council	Voluntary Action South Lanarkshire
Irvine Community Sports Club	Volunteer Edinburgh
Joseph Roundtree Foundation	West College Scotland
Kooth Digital Health	West Dunbartonshire Council

# No One Left Behind National Discussion Events Summary Report

LETS GET SPORTY CIC	West Lothian Council
LinkLiving	WorkingRite
Maximus Remploy	Yipword
Moray College UHI	YoMo young movers
Move On	