

I'll just wait a couple of minutes to let see if there's anybody else coming in. Beth, would you be able to admit people as well when they come, if there's others? Cool, okay. Just wait a couple of minutes and see. Just to let everybody know that we're being recorded as well. Shall I just make a start? Sorry, I will. Cool. Okay, well, afternoon everybody and thanks so much for joining us today. As you can see, it's not normally me that introduces this, but the lovely Beth, who is the Grassroots Forum fellow, she's actually in Venice. Poor Beth. So the Wi-Fi might not be great there. So we thought we'd keep it based in Edinburgh. So I'm Louise and I'm the Living Good Food Nation Lab Research Coordinator. So yeah, I'm just going to make the introductions today. So yeah, this is the Grassroots Unit's 5th forum. And just as I said at the start, this session is being recorded and the way this session is going to run today is first we'll hear from our two speakers, one after the other, and then we'll go into discussion after that. So if you can leave your questions till the end, that would be great. So to start with, we've picked children and young people as a forum theme for today, as there's a legal mandate around inclusive consultation with this group. In the national plan development, a child's rights and wellbeing impact assessment was conducted and it stated that it is difficult to establish exactly what impact the first iteration of the Good Food Nation plan might have upon children's rights. If the food systems approach to a joint development of policy to achieve the outcomes as achieved, then this would have a positive impact on a number of children's rights, potentially including articles set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. So the national plan consultation received a total of 883 respondents from children and young people aged 13 or older, and there was a further 202 responses were received from teachers who responded on behalf of children aged under 13 because for data protection reasons, younger children were not able to respond individually. So the plan itself intersects with children and young people around initiatives like free school meals, curriculum for excellence and nutritional standards in school. To talk about involving children and young people in things like local food plans, we've got today Together Scotland and Children in Scotland, both of whom have a wealth of experience in children's rights, children's representation, engagement and participation and working across different sectors. So firstly, we have Together Scotland and we'll be hearing from Carly from Together. So Together Scotland is an alliance of Scottish children's charities that works to improve the awareness, understanding and implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. So that's the UNCRC. They do this by promoting the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. helping children's organisations to integrate the UNCRC into their work and monitoring and reporting on the progress made at a Scottish and UK level. And as I said, we'll be hearing from Carly soon, from Together, and then we'll be hearing from Sophia from Children in Scotland. Children in Scotland started as a small network of voluntary organisations and is now a thriving children's sector network. that for over 30 years has been working towards giving all children in Scotland an equal chance to flourish. So I'll hand over to Carly now from Together and she'll give us our first session. Thank you, Louise. I'll just. Try and share my slides. Okay, you can see that okay, yeah? Yeah, everybody can. Great, okay. Okay, so as Louise said, my name is Carly Elliott. I actually normally go by Carly Elliott. I've thrown my third name in just so Sophie it doesn't look like we're coming from the same family to present today. I'm Carly Elliott. I'm the Assistant Director from Together, the Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights. Louise has already hopefully given a bit of an overview. I'll just recap that a little bit. So we are a charity based in Scotland and we're essentially a membership organisation and our current members reach to over 600 and that includes organisations as well as individuals. and that's national organisations across Scotland as well as really small community groups. And the point is really that we support this membership to be able to improve awareness and understanding of how to implement and protect children's human rights in Scotland. It's really a vision that all children grow up in an environment of happiness, love and understanding and we really believe that the core way of achieving this is through implementation and protection of children's human rights. So specifically, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is the international treaty that we support our members and other duty bearers to think about how they uphold in practice. If you are a Scottish child, For a charity, you can sign up to our main membership offer. I'll share some links at the end of this where you can do that. Our main membership offer is for NGOs, for charities, but anybody can sign up to our individual membership. So if you're not a Scottish charity, you can sign up to our individual membership and you'll get updates regularly on children's charity. Rates as they, as they progress. So when I first spoke to Beth about coming along today, we spoke about coming along to talk about what inclusive participation could look like, recognising that there's a bit of a legal duty now for organisations, for certain organisations to consult with children under the Good Food Nation Act. However, I wanted to span out a little bit from this because since the introduction of that legislation, you may or may not know this, but Scotland's actually taken quite a significant step and has incorporated the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child into Scots law. So this essentially means that there's now a legal duty on all public bodies, the Scottish Government and the Scottish Parliament and some charities actually, to uphold all human rights of

children through everything that they do. And this, of course, includes the right to be heard or to participate in decisions that affect them. So this means that the challenge for public bodies now in Scotland is no longer that they just have to consult with children when it comes to what they're working on. They now must legally, they're legally compelled to think about how decisions affect children's human rights more broadly. So hearing children's views absolutely matters to this, but this alone is not going to be enough to uphold human rights, children's human rights in practice. So to help do this, to help take this kind of broader look at children's human rights and how to implement that in practice, including the right to be heard, at Together we are real advocates of organisations adopting a model called a children's human rights approach. This is a tried and tested approach that can help organisations to tangibly take steps that weave children's rights throughout their practice in meaningful ways. So I'm going to give you a bit of an overview of what this approach is and how it might apply to your organisations or to those organisations who have duties under the Good Food Nation Act. And then I'll hand over to Sophie afterwards, and Sophie's going to take a bit more of a kind of applied look at a model you can use when you're actually delivering participation in practice. So hopefully that's kind of helpful. Overall. So the framework that we talk about, the children's human rights approach, is essentially, is a framework that has been developed originally in Wales through research by Dr. Rhianne Croke and Professor Simon Hoffen from the Welsh Observatory for Children's Human Rights. Dr. Croke and Professor Hoffman developed this guide that was all about translating children's rights into practice for public bodies called The Right Way and you can, if you have a Google of that, you'll be able to find it quite easily. So when they were developing this guide, they did extensive research that drew out children's human rights and guidance from the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. and they worked with professionals in Wales to identify how practice does or can support the implementation of these rights in really tangible ways. So the way that they did this was they interviewed a range of professionals and they curated a set of case studies to contextualise children's rights in lots of different settings. So whether that's to do with food provision or education or health or whatever it might be. And at the end of this, this work basically centered down all of this learning into five principles that make up this children's human rights approach. And these principles are essentially the thing that you can use to be able to implement and integrate children's human rights into your working practice. So the five principles as you see on the slide, and I'll talk through in more detail in a second, but they are embedding. equality and non-discrimination, empowerment, participation and accountability. All of these five principles are essentially about placing the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child at the core of planning and service delivery and then therefore integrating children's rights into every aspect of decision making, policy and practice. So while this approach was designed in Wales originally and with Welsh stakeholders and Welsh children, it was then used in Scotland to create something called the Children's Rights Skills and Knowledge Framework. And I'm just gonna... Put a link in the chat for you for this. So the framework was a piece of work that was commissioned by the Scottish Government to support the workforce in Scotland to understand how to implement children's rights and it involved testing the five principles in the Welsh model with a diverse group of Scottish stakeholders. And it's worth noting, I think, at this point that this was a really rigorous project and including lots of debate and discussion about whether or not the Welsh framework would work in a Scottish context and there was absolutely the appetite to create our own principles if that felt like that would be relevant. But at the end of this process, it was agreed that the Welsh model was thorough and would really work well in Scotland across a range of different roles. So whether that's an early years practitioner in a nursery, a community planner in a local authority, or an officer in the Scottish Prison Service, these principles should be able to apply in a meaningful way. So I'm going to take a closer look at the principles and just talk you through how these might apply in your work. But I do want to note that at Together we do deliver in-depth training and consultancy on how to use these principles. So I'm going to pop another link in the chat. If you're interested in exploring in more detail about what this means for your practice or for other duty leaders, then feel free to get in touch with me and we can chat about that. So the first principle of a childhood human rights approach is embedding, as you can see on the slide. And this just means putting children's rights at the heart of everything that you and your organisation does. So everyday systems, processes, decisions, leadership, culture and so on. And this principle is essentially about encouraging organisations to move children's rights from being an add-on to being something through which all decisions are viewed. And so when it comes to delivering participation, the embedding principle encourages us to not only think about consultation with children and young people, but to build the participation of children into organisation policies and processes so that their views are integrated through organisation. decision making rather than just as a kind of a consultation or a session to get children's views for a one-off piece of work. The second principle is equality and non-discrimination. So this is about ensuring that every baby, child and young person has an equal opportunity to have their rights upheld. And this is really just about supporting organisations to do whatever you can to remove any barriers that a child might face when it comes to having their rights realised. So when

you're thinking about this principle, especially when it comes to thinking about how your work can be inclusive and how you can deliver inclusive participation, I think it can quite often be tempting to lean on the protected characteristics that are named within the Equality Act when you're mapping this out. But actually at Together and through the UNCRC itself, it's actually really helpful to think a step beyond this and to think more broadly about the groups of children whose rights are most at risk, especially in the context of your work. So we know that when it comes to the right to food, children's experiences are not equal. and the UNCRC really encourages us to think about how discrimination can be experienced due to a range of characteristics. So yes, absolutely, like the equality act says, age, race, sex, religion and so on. But this also can be, rights can also be at risk due to poverty or disability or any other kind of identity that might be relevant. to your area. So just to give a quick example of this in practice, I'm just going to play a short video that hears from a child from one of our member organisations, families outside. Hopefully this works okay. I hate when I get caught out on the mute issue. So the young woman in that video, I think perfectly expresses why her experience as a child affected by parental imprisonment and care experience means that her rights might be at risk because of both her identity and that of her parents. So when you're thinking about designing inclusive participation practice, I think it's worthwhile keeping this in mind. The UNCRC says that when you're thinking about equality and non-discrimination in your practice, it isn't just about the experiences of the child, it's about how that child is also impacted by the identity and characteristics of the parents and carers around about them as well. So keep that in mind when you're thinking about that equality and non-discrimination. Principle. So a children's human rights approach in the context of good food provision here would encourage us to explore which children are most likely to be affected by food related inequalities and therefore who should we be taking steps to reach. The third principle is empowerment and this principle is really centered around building the agency and the capacity of children to claim their rights while also addressing any power imbalances that might exist between children and adults and this is really key to delivering inclusive participation. The principles Sorry, participation can only really begin when children understand enough about an issue to be able to form and express a view, and then where barriers to them sharing these views have then been removed. And I think this is really helpful to think about if you are considering the new legal duty to consult under the Good Food Nation Act. How will children be meaningfully supported to understand what it is they are participating in and how what they will share might genuinely shape decisions? If you were to focus on just the empowerment principle alone or just the participation principle alone in your practice, there is a risk that consultation with children. and young people can become tokenistic and can limit impact. Whereas when you think about all of these principles in tandem when you're designing your work, all of the principles help each other to make sure that rights are respected across the board and that it helps to drive rights respecting change. The second, sorry, second last, a principle is participation and this is obviously ultimately about ensuring children and young people are listened to and the decisions that affect their lives and that their views are then taken seriously and that's a really core part. It's not just about listening, it's about what you do as a result of that. And interestingly, I personally think that when we talk about children's rights, Participation gets the most attention. It's almost like people think children's rights means participation when actually there are many, many articles in the UNCRC. Participation kind of covers roughly 3 articles within the UNCRC. So participation does get the most attention, but it's actually just one piece of a much bigger system. I'm not going to go into too much detail on this principle because Sophie's going to give you a really helpful overview that I think will help explain this in more detail. The last principle for you to think about is accountability and this is the one that often receives the least attention and yet it's the one that can make the biggest difference when it comes to rights being upheld. So accountability is about making rights real by setting up systems that help keep an eye on children's rights just as a matter of course. course and that allow children to challenge decisions, to raise concerns and to get feedback on these concerns or their views. In the context of delivering inclusive participation, this principle is the element essentially that ensures children understand how their views have been considered, what decisions have been made, what's changed as a result of them sharing their views and then possibly why some of their suggestions might not have been able to be taken forward. It's really important to make sure that you are accountable to children explaining how their views have been used in this way. And I always think that accountability is just really about basic respect. It's about saying thank you, here's what we've done with your views and what we're going to do going forward. So just to finish up, we do an annual state of children's rights report every year in Scotland. This forms Scotland's civil society evidence to the UN Committee on the Rights of a Child roughly every six years. But every year we launch and this year, early in 2026, we released our state of children's rights report that was focused on how to take a children's human rights approach in practice. And that's my final link I'll pop in the chat. So this is a this is a report that is chock full of case studies of organisations all across Scotland taking forward these principles and their practice. And there is a whole chat around participation examples. So I would encourage you to go

and have a look at the report. It's not meant to be read from start to finish. It's huge. Dive in and explore it according to the themes that you're interested in. And if you want to talk in more detail about how these worked in practice, let me know. Someone to draw your attention to. If you go to the participation chapter of that report, you'll hear about Shetland Council and their work with Shetland's Youth Voice, which was about involving this group of children to help inform future transport decisions, obviously very relevant to island and rural communities. And they did a really beautiful example of how they did that. We've also got Highland Council, Importantly, I don't think this is actually in the participation chapter, I think it might be elsewhere, but they've got this really lovely case study where they talk about how they've created something called a library of voices. And this is about recognizing that we are at risk of constantly asking children the same questions over and over again, because we have this duty to consult. Actually, sometimes the best thing you can do is to engage with evidence that's already been shared by children. And so Highland Council have set up this library of voices that brings together anonymized, thematically coded views from children that have been shared in relation to areas that Highland Council might be interested in. And it's the first stop shop that organisations can go to before deciding if they need to do new participation activity, new consultation. Aberdeen Council use children's rights budgeting with children to shape their 25-26 budget. That's an incredibly hard thing to do in practice and I don't think, I don't think they completely finished it when we put this in. Oh, thank you so much, Louise, when we put it in this report, but we should definitely get an update from them on that. And then the last one that I wanted to draw your attention to was from one of our member organisations, Plus Forth Valley, who talk about how they delivered really inclusive participation to ensure that a disabled child that they were caring for was able to support, inform and get alongside the delivery of recruitment of new staff members. I'll stop there. I think it's worth diving into them in a bit more detail. We'll share these slides I think afterwards, so it will have our contact details and I think I'll just stop and I'll hand over to Sophia now, if that's okay. Stop cheating. Thanks very much, Carly. Hi everyone, my name is Sophie and I am a senior development officer of Children Scotland. I'm just going to share my screen just now, so bear with me. I'm hoping people should see that now. So yeah, thanks again, Carly. And I think what Carly's opened with is provided a really great introduction to children's human rights approach and taking an inclusive approach and sets us up really nicely actually to delve into participation models and participation in a practical sense as well. So I'll focus a bit more on that today. So before I do that, I'm just going to give you a little bit of an introduction to Children in Scotland for those of you who aren't aware. So we are a national children's charity working to improve children's lives. We're a membership organisation. We have around 400 members who are kind of a mixture of local authorities, charities, public bodies, all who work with and for children and young people and families. And members get access to different sort of training events and members news and things like that. So if you're not a member and you're interested, please do get in touch. All of our work is rooted in children's rights. and the UNCRC is embedded in everything we do. That includes our policy work and campaigning and influencing specifically led by children's views, supporting children and young people's participation, and this involves the work that we do to support participation of young people in consultation processes that contribute to the development of policy and legislation that affects young people's lives. And we also support the wider children's sector to engage with young people. So we've supported other organisations in setting up, facilitating and embedding learning from their own young advisory groups. And I'll talk a little bit more about this across my presentation today. But you also might know of Children Scotland from the services that we deliver. So Enquire, Resolve and My Rights, My Say are all services that offer advice, information and advocacy for children and young people who are entitled to additional support for learning. and of course, the work that we do to support the workforce more generally and through learning and events, covering sector news. So please do reach out if you have any questions. We can talk a bit more about that later on if you'd like. But I think probably worth going into a little bit more depth first about our work with children and young people. So the work that we deliver with children and young people has developed quite a bit over the years. So we have developed a participation practice through a number of different projects where there's a range of different topics and issues that are relevant for children and young people. and have been quite varied in terms of the topics and issues that we've covered. So a core example to draw on 1st and reflect on here is our organisation's young advisory group, Changing Our World, which the group have affectionately given the acronym or nickname COW. which is why you'll see in the bottom corner there, there's a little cow, which is kind of the mascot for the group on the slide there. So changing our world, they are aged from 8 up to 25. They work together on identifying a number of core topics and issues. that affects children and young people based on their own individual interests, experiences, and with recognition of the experiences of their peers as well. So currently, they're carrying out some focused work on climate and the environment, including some work that they're doing, some peer research on young people's experiences of eco distress, because this has been something that's slightly identified as a really a core issue that matters to members of the group. But before this, the group worked on

a lot of different topics, including education, and which you can read a bit more about on our website to delve into the approaches and what we learned from that work. And of course, ultimately, the purpose of all this really is that the learnings from the work that we carry out with changing our world are reflected in our organizational policy work. It shapes how we plan and coordinate events and how their views are brought into all the areas of organisational decision making in some way, shape or form. They inform our strategy and I would say that they're quite a good example for us to look to of what meaningful participation can look like in some contexts. But of course, participation takes lots of different forms. There's lots of different approaches and methods that can be used. So you might be aware of some other bits of participation work we've been involved in across the years. So an example is the Inclusion Ambassadors, who are a national group of secondary age children, young people, who are entitled to additional support for learning and even the direct work that we deliver through the My Rights, My Say service, which supports individual children and young people with more complex additional support needs to communicate their views and matters relating to their own education. profession and that then can be used to support them through any changes in their school or their additional support for learning that they receive. So, that's like a bit of a rough overview of some of the things that might be of relevance or of interest and I'll be threading some of these learnings and reflections through the next few slides and talking about what our approach looks like. But if any questions come up about the different projects or areas of work, we can pick that up later on. So, spoken a bit about the projects, but I want to delve into how we view and how we plan our participation work at Children Scotland. And of course, the best place to start with that is a reflection on the UNCRC and participation theory. So, Carly's already given us a bit of an introduction to the UNCRC. But it's really important to note that the convention gives really, really useful detail on participation, which I've shared an extract from on this slide. So it gives a bit of detail and describes participation as ongoing processes, which includes information sharing and dialogue between children and adults and based which are based on mutual respect and how children can learn how their views and those of adults are taken into account and shape the outcome. So there's a few elements to that and changing our world a few years back, spent a bit of time delving into what their view of what participation should look like. And one of the members at the time, Darri, they had, they kind of created a really interesting analogy that we found quite useful and we've used as a way to communicate the group's views on this topic. So the way that Darri described it is that it feels like participation should be baked into the whole cake. It should be part of every stage of planning and creation of any bit of work, not just the sprinkles on top. So that was a bit of a reflection from Barry about very often consultation processes can feel a bit like an afterthought or something that comes along some stage in the process. But by that point, the cake is already made and decisions have been pushed forward. When we unpacked it a little bit further, we learned that the different ingredients that that could involve could be the hopes of children and young people for the future, their ideas, their individual experiences, their feelings, their views, but also their needs. and it's important to explore children's experiences on a really wide scale, including all of these things, rather than essentially expecting children and young people to come up with the solutions for us. So of course, it's a big task. Participation involves a lot of work and a lot of resource. So, in going into this, I do want to introduce you to the Lundy model. So, the Lundy model is a, I would say, a really effective model for examining any participatory process or for planning participation. in a way that allows you to reflect on the needs of any particular project or piece of work or task, no matter what scale it is. I think it's applicable in all areas and it's a process that allows you to be really reflective. and continue to seek that continuous improvement of the participation processes that we have laid out and planned. So a bit of context, Lundy's model was developed by Professor Laura Lindsay at Queen's University in Belfast. and it was developed and based around Article 12 of the UNCRC off the back of some consultation work that was carried out with more than 1000 young people where they continuously reported frustration that their views were not being listened to or taken seriously and they felt that frequently Participation was falling short of the aims of Article 12. So Lundy's model proposes that rights-based participation needs to incorporate these four concepts of space, voice, audience and influence and relates directly to how the UNCRC describes participation. So again, like I said, I really like this model because I think it can be applied at lots of different stages of any participation process. It's cyclical in nature and it reinforces that participation isn't something that begins and ends as much as it should continue to be reflected on and continue to be drawn on. It's not a hierarchical structure. It allows us to continue to come back to the different areas of participation and continue to reflect and improve on it. So I'll break it down in a little bit of detail. So the The 4 concepts can be kind of split off into two stages. So in this first stage, we've got space and that's all about providing a safe and inclusive space physically and also just in terms of comfortability and the and space in a more theoretical sense for children to share their views. So, Lindsay provides some really useful kind of challenge questions as part of this and asks us to consider, firstly, have children's views been actively sought? Was it a safe space in which children can express themselves freely? And have steps been taken to ensure that all children can

take part? So an example of where this has been really useful for ourselves at Children's Scotland has been a reflection of the Inclusion Ambassadors project. So I mentioned before that the project itself began with a core group of secondary age children and young people who are entitled to additional support for learning. Now, in our reflection, we had recognised that learnings from this group were limited by the scope of the project. And actually, there's so much more we can learn about additional support for learning provision and what young people are experiencing by engaging with younger children. and by engaging with young people who wouldn't necessarily be as comfortable in group based settings. So we used that to develop a new approach and across the years we've now expanded on work streams in the project to involve visits to primary schools. and to specialist provisions where we can engage with individual young people and in smaller spaces where young people are comfortable and have existing relationships with adults in the space and using that as a way to make sure we can strengthen the learnings from the project and not relying from I guess what maybe in some senses would have been the easier way to engage with young people by bringing young people together in a group based setting, actually going beyond that and thinking about other ways we can we can extend that space. Then reflecting on voice. So this is all about providing the appropriate information and facilitating the expression of children's views. So asking yourself, have children been given the information that they need to form a view? Do children know that they don't have to take part? And have children been given a range of options as to how they might choose to express themselves? So we really, we have to think about how young people will come into any process with entirely different experiences and contexts and we can't make assumptions about what those contexts are. So to look for an example there and the changing our world work I mentioned earlier around climate and eco distress. So a way for us to navigate that issue with young people in the group is by meeting them where they are developmentally. And we created stations across a room when working with the group that were focused on a range of different topics that we knew were of interest to the young people, but also introducing new things. So we had a station on fast fashion, a station that was all about carbon impacts, and we used that as an opportunity to to support the young people to develop their own understanding of the issue and through games and quizzes and also for them to learn from their peers all the while developing an understanding of what their existing knowledge was before focusing in on understanding what their views and experiences are. That allows you to adapt your approach, allows you to change the process to meet the needs of the young people, but it also supports them to really form their view and understand what the context is all about. and also recognising that young people don't need to be experts on the topics and issues that they speak on. We can do the work to analyse what young people have told us and importantly explore what they do know and that's a really important part. Then moving into the second stage, which is all about what we do with what young people tell us. So the first part of this is looking at audience and that's ensuring that children's views are communicated to someone with the responsibility to listen. So asking, is it a process for communicating children's views? The children know who their views are being communicated to and does that person or body have the power to make decisions? So again, I'll draw on inclusion ambassadors for this one. So this work is directly funded by the Scottish Government and we report back to them. This gives us quite a unique opportunity to work closely with the education directorate to advocate for young people's views and their best interests and share and kind of that holding accountability of this is what young people have told us and now it's time to take action. And in any process, it's really important to map out who the audience is. who the audience needs to be to be able to identify those groups for influence. And the final part of the Lundy model is influence. So ensuring that children's use are taken seriously and acted upon where appropriate. So where are the children's use considered by those with the power to affect change? Are there procedures in place to ensure that children's use have been taken seriously? And have children, young people been provided with feedback that explain the reasons for decisions taken? You know, there's lots of things I'm sure we can all reflect on where we've been asked to contribute to something in some way, but then we've not really heard much about it after. And this is a continual frustration that young people have about participatory processes. And it's really important to make sure young people understand what we mean when we say that their views will be given due weight and understanding that the complexity of all decision making means that there's lots of different stakeholders involved. and that where young people's, where young people are directly affected by those decisions, that needs to be part of the, of the, that needs to lead to some form of influence, but also recognizing that there's other factors, there's resource challenges that we're all working with across the third sector and public sector that sometimes make it hard to create the progress that young people ask for at the pace that they really need it. But it's putting the plans in place to get towards that final outcome that the young people are looking for and where that final outcome might not be possible. Making sure young people are understanding of that, making sure they know what the route is, what the plan is and what's going to happen next with What they've told you? So. bringing it all together and reflecting on the model as a whole. The model itself is really ambitious. So it's important to reflect on that. But some of the things it asks us are really hard to make happen

and won't happen overnight. But it's our job as adults to find the solutions to that. And a good way to make that happen is by sharing understanding of participation models like Lundy model with the stakeholders who are involved in decision making. So awareness and buy-in is key. Make sure that people understand why they have to consult with young people, why they should be involved at all stages. and what that looks like and making the process that are planned out reflect this cyclical approach. Really important to reflect that young people in the room might be the first instinct as adults for finding ways for them to contribute to decision making, but it doesn't necessarily always mean that they're going to have influence and actually we need to meet young people where they are developmentally. and to ensure that they are able to share their views and we've mapped out the routes for influence. And again, it's not young people's job to give us solutions. It's our job to interpret what we've found and what we've heard from young people. Now, that being said, in some participation processes, you might find that you're in a position where young people are able to contribute to developing solutions much more than you might have expected. And it's important to draw on that and feed on that, but actually not to rely on young people to have the answers. So I'm conscious of time, so I don't want to go into too much depth beyond the Lindsay model. But what I do want to do is just give you a little bit of an overview of what those approaches might look like in practice and some examples of some of the ways to make participation fun for young people. So I'll run through a couple of things, but important to recognise that different approaches will work for different contexts. Of course, I've made reference to different advisory groups. I've also made reference to programmes of engagement where we visit schools or different service provisions where young people are comfortable and have existing relationships with adults that know them well. This can happen in person, but of course as well, there's ways to engage with young people where resources are tight. can still be effective in doing sort of similar things, but drawing on the existing services and provisions that are in place for them. So engagement packs is one way that has been used by ourselves as a way of essentially sharing I guess, the activities and the asks that we have for adults and gathering children, young people's views on a really wider scale and getting a much larger sample size of young people's views. But of course, within that, there has to be recognition of the limitations that can go. you know, what one practitioner might do in one service or in one space will be very different from another service. And we also need to recognise that within that comes the bias that we all have as adults and that we have to really be careful to unpack and those who are experienced with participation and those who have who have developed their participation practice are often in a good position to carry out that work. There's also peer research is a really, can be a really enjoyable way for young people to be involved in participation processes. The work that we're doing at the moment with changing our world around eco-distress and we're employing a peer research approach for that where young people and the group have been involved in the development of a wider approach, but then will carry out research with other groups of young people in other spaces. So again, because of time, I'm not going to go into lots of depth here, but I'll just show you a couple of things here that could be of interest, different things that we might do with young people when we're with them to understand the complexity of their experiences as we may create characters with them. that takes away from the personal feeling of sharing their own experiences. We may create journey maps with them, which I've got some pictures to show you. Drawing, painting, different arts activities can be really beneficial to allow young people to express themselves in different ways. but also it allows young people to be comfortable with an activity and listen and hear to other young people's conversations and and as adults you can gather information and have discussion with young people while they're engaged in other activities. which can also be beneficial and enjoyable for young people. And here's an example here from some journey mapping activities we've done previously. And again, we can go into a bit more depth in discussion. And there's some notes here around methods such as voting and kind of limitations that come from voting. and with children and young people in the same way that there's limitations in voting for adults and that you might not get the definitive information and complex information about why they formed a view, but it can be useful as a starting point and it can be useful to gauge understanding, but it shouldn't be. you necessarily use as the final, to kind of lead to the final product, essentially. And I've got a few examples that I can I can pick up in discussion as well around methods for one-to-one participation, small group. Again, and recognizing that when young people are engaged in play and arts activities, they're often more comfortable. And within that allows them to explore and develop a bit more of of complex expression of how they feel and their experiences. So just some final thoughts. I think from today that I would like you to take away is just that children do have the right to be listened to and have their rights given duly and it's our duty to uphold this. And participation with children and young people should be baked into the cake, not the sprinkles on top. and the Lundy model can be used as a framework for planning and evaluating child participation. So I'm going to stop sharing there. I do have some resources, which I think you'll get the slides after this that you can have a look through that might be useful for planning your participation and processes. So I'll stop. there so you can have a look at those in your own time. But thank you again if there's any questions or discussion.

Yeah, I'll pass back over to Louise and Niamh for that. Oh, thank you both. Oh, Sophie and Carly, that was great. I had lots of questions, but you answered them throughout. Really, really comprehensive. It was a great look at it. And I really like the bit from earlier that Carly had said about participation is often the one thing that happens and actually not much is then done. with the participation and I love the library of voices as well. I thought that was fantastic to think actually rather than just keep asking the same questions and not doing anything with it and actually seeing what's already out there. And then Sophia, when you were talking about the children being involved or kind of being very worried about the environment and I thought that was a good segue and as well in terms of food and how I guess, yeah, the Good Food Nation and how Scotland could, and what kids think of that. I thought that was a kind of a way for it to intersect as well. So thank you both very much. That was brilliant. So what I'll do is I'll hand over to people to see if they've got any questions. feel free to just raise your hand or just speak up or also type them in the chat as well and I can read them out for people. But that was brilliant, thank you. So just see if anybody. Has any questions? Oh yeah, Niamh, go for it. Yeah, well I could ask lots of questions. Thanks both. Like that was just really fantastic overview that you provided. I guess I'm wondering just straight in with It's probably not a difficult question in a way, but I guess, you know, given the Scottish Government on the one hand is so, you know, committed to this and has, you know, passed this kind of new legislation, What do you have to say about the Scottish Government's actual kind of follow through in its own kind of practice about, you know, taking this seriously and its other aspects? So I guess I'm kind of thinking about, you know, our interest in the kind of in the Good Food Nation and how, you know, local authorities and health boards are being kind of responsabilized in different ways. So I, yeah, so I guess I'm just interested in how well the Scottish Government is actually doing with taking this seriously and it's outside of the realm of, you know, children and young people's policy. But that's not too big a question. Jump in if that's helpful. I guess I would only speak from the point of view of the UNCRC Incorporation Scotland Act and, you know, that was we incorporated the UNCRC in 2024, but we've had lots of legal duties to consult with children and young people. in other pieces of policy and law before now. And I think because we've had it in lots of kind of sectoral pieces of legislation, it means that it's quite piecemeal in terms of how participation rates and other rates are actually delivered in practice. So I think you could look at one sector and think, wow, they're doing amazing stuff, and then you look at another and it's not the same across the board. the whole point of incorporating the UNCRC. Sorry to get a bit to baby, but our UNCRC Act is essentially quasi-constitutional. It's not sector-based. It's about whether a child's in education or health or whatever aspect it is of their life. These rights should apply. So if you keep that in mind, we're actually only two years. years into that piece of legislation being in place. And we're seeing loads of really good examples, but we're absolutely not seeing it the way that we would hope yet. And I think another thing to note is there is a children's rights unit based within the Scottish Government whose job it is to talk to all of the other civil servant teams. about how they should be upholding children's rights in practice. It's no small task and we know that civil servants don't always talk well to each other when it comes to planning and delivery. But there are people who are actively trying to make sure that children's rights based approach is spread throughout the whole of government. I just think systemic change like that takes such a long time though, doesn't it? I think it's probably quite early. Also, I do think our parliamentarians are key to this. They hold government accountable to the promises that they make in law and I do worry a little bit that post 2026 election that we have such a different parliamentary landscape. I think we have more new MSPs than returning and that creates a bit of a risk in terms of we had loads of appetite to protect children's rights in the last parliamentary term. So we're doing a bit of work to really try and push that with the new Parliament and I think that will be key to holding government accountable. That makes sense, yeah. Hi, yeah, sorry. Phil, got a question from you. Hi everyone, thanks so much for your presentations. I really thoroughly enjoyed that. So I'm Phil, I'm from Biteback 2030 and we're gearing up in Scotland. We launched in Scotland last year and we're kind of readying ourselves for a real drive for Good Food Nation. I do have a question about It's a bit wordy, so I'll try my best to get out in a coherent way. But the gist of it is, is that we're thinking of trying to engage and support local authorities in their efforts to consolidate youth insights and kind of intervene on local food plans across all 32 boroughs. And... Yeah, 32 constituencies in Scotland. And given that you at Together Scotland and Children of Scotland have both worked with local authorities, my question is, based on the things in the presentation, where is the like uptake and interest and appetite to do those things? Where do local authorities need more support? And I suppose what are the greatest opportunities for an organisation like ours to engage with local authorities and make the biggest difference? Sorry, that was a mammoth question. No, no. I'll give a quick answer if that's all right, Sophie, and you can come if you want. I will endlessly be the DB person in the chat, so sorry for this. I'm about to copy legislation into the chat. I don't even know if that'll take you to the right page. Anyway, that's the UNCRC Act. Within there, they list specific authorities. who have a duty to report every three years on what they're doing to uphold children's rights in their practice. So all public bodies in Scotland must uphold children's rights now legally, but there's

only a certain number of listed authorities who do these reports. I think those reports are a really important accountability tool for charities and other organisations like yourself. So I would have a look at what the listed authorities are. Most of those listed authorities will have a key person in them whose job it is to coordinate children's rights practice across the authority and to compile the reports. So if you can work out who those people are, we can absolutely help you identify that if you want to get in touch at a later date. Those are the people that you need to be liaising with around the broader children's rights duty, of which of course relates to all of the work that you're doing, Philip at Biteback. And once you get, you know, maybe you're not, maybe it's a bit early, a lot of the reports are getting launched at the moment. They might not have commitments around Good Food Nation or any of the related policies yet. But if in the next stage you can get something in, and that becomes a really good accountability tool for you to hold them to account on their promises. So, that's just a little a little play that we're kind of encouraging, yeah, that we're encouraging a lot of people to do, but happy to talk about that in more detail on another, if that's helpful. There's nothing I would add to that, Carly. I think you could that really well. Really, really insightful. Thank you so much and yeah, I would love to catch up with you both. Great, thank you. Has anybody got any more questions before we finish up? If nobody does, can I, sorry, can I put something else in the chat? Yeah, go for it, go for it. This is so unhelpful. I just was so conscious that when Sophia and I were talking that you could look at what we're talking about and think about participation of children as children who are of a certain age category. And I think it's really important to always remember that the UNCRC applies to Mhm. all children, so that includes babies, pre-verbal. very young children. So when you're thinking about the duty to consult with children, it's important that you're also thinking about how do we hear from those communities who would typically rock up to our session in your office and do something fun. And Star Captures as an organisation are leading a lot of work around how you think about gathering the views of babies and young children through parents and carers and creative activities. So, you can have a look at that, so... Brilliant, thank you. Well, I think we've only got a minute left. I think we might leave it there if nobody has any other questions. But thanks both so much. That was brilliant, really, really informative. And I'm sure you'll have lots of people contacting you after. Oh, I think Niamh has something to say. Sorry. That was an accident. I was trying to clap and instead put my Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, lots of claps. hand up. But yes, I will just say thanks a lot and Yeah, I whatever. Lots of food, lots of food for thought. And, you know, I guess just, you know, one of my kind of closing observations is, you know, I will know, usually we've got like a lot more attendance at these sessions. And to me, it's kind of really telling that we haven't had such big attendance at this session. And, you know, to me, that's kind of like diagnostic, like somehow. The people who are rocking up for, you know, our events on kind of community food are still somehow not thinking that children and young people are important. So, so I'm thinking too about how we can do more in the project around that. So anyway, but thanks a lot. So presentations are great and it's great that we have them recorded and we'll be able to send them around to people. Yeah, thank you. And I don't know, is there, so the next forum will be in four weeks time and I don't know if there is a theme yet, Beth, to reveal or? To be revealed shortly. to be revealed. Also, what I'll do though is I'll put in a little, if you have, if you want to suggest, sorry, I'm hopefully copying this, if you want to suggest a theme or a speaker, please fill in this form here and yeah, for any ideas for the future. that people have. That would be great. And if you want to sign up to our newsletter, one last thing, I will put that in here too. But also just go to our lab website. You can sign up there, but this will be there. So thanks so much for joining us and thanks to both Sophia and Carly and have a good rest of your day. Thanks everyone. Bye. Simon. Thank you. Bye. Bye. Thank you, bye. Take care, bye bye. If. Is that okay? Hello. Hold on, let me take my headphones out. Help. Thank you so much for doing that, Louise. My internet was semi okay, but... Definitely cut up. What's fine, they were both really good, weren't they? I think it was worth doing to get the recordings and presentations. Guys, look at you, let it live in the Dolce Vita. Oh, you, I can't hear you now. You're muted, babe, you're muted. Oh, could you stop the recording? Nobody needs to see this, but... It's alright, I'll be edited.