



# **From Insight to Impact:** Our Journey Towards Inclusive and Connected Cultures

**2026 Executive Summary**

Leading  
toChange

**NHS**  
Education  
for  
Scotland

# Executive Summary

Launched on 3rd October 2022, Leading to Change was commissioned to support a renewed view of leadership — one that is inclusive, collaborative, and capable of transforming workplace cultures across health, social care and social work organisations. A culture where people thrive in fulfilling roles and provide the best possible care for the people of Scotland.

Over the past three years, the programme has delivered a bold, adaptive and person-centred approach to leadership development across Scotland's health, social care and social work sectors. This report sets out how public investment has supported the ambitions of Public Service Reform — not only by developing individual leaders, but by strengthening the collective capacity of the workforce to lead change in complex and evolving environments.

Commissioned in response to longstanding challenges in workforce wellbeing, leadership culture, and system transformation, Leading to Change has engaged thousands of leaders across all levels. Our approach has been co-designed, evidence-informed, and shaped by real-time feedback, enabling iterative learning and co-created insight.

While traditional metrics of impact remain difficult to capture in a non-employing, cross-sector programme, insights gathered through testimony, engagement, and career progression reveal a compelling story of value, reach, and relevance. These lived experiences offer credible evidence of cultural change, supported by diverse data points.

The programme has engaged leaders across all 32 local authorities and every health and care sector, offering accessible, values-led development opportunities that meet people where they are. From bite-sized learning to in-depth cohorted pathways, Leading to Change delivers a diverse and evolving offer — inquiry-led and grounded in collective, compassionate and system leadership. We listen, learn and adapt in line with system needs and current priorities, as articulated in both the Public Service Reform Strategy and the health and social care Service Renewal Framework 2025–2035.

Senior leader development has been a priority from launch. Building on Leadership Cubed, we introduced the Developing Senior Systems Leaders (DSSL) programme for aspiring directors, followed by Adaptive Learning Sets (ALS) — a flexible, real-work model now in its fifth cohort. We also supported the Scottish Directors of Public health programme and adapted proven elements for other senior groups, including remote and rural leaders and strategic medical leaders. To sustain learning, we are establishing an alumni network, with its first event planned for March 2026.

Alongside senior leadership, we support leaders at all levels through events, courses, and tools such as the Operational Leadership Success Profile, Leadership Self-Assessment Questionnaire, 360° Feedback Tool, and career Conversation Process — all free for local teams to use. Equalities remain a golden thread, embedded in design and supported by initiatives like the Allyship Hub, Inclusive Leaders Hub, and Diversity Coffee Connect, developed in collaboration with NHS Education for Scotland's Diversity and Equality team.

The full report shares key insights from the past three years, lessons learned, case studies, and evidence of impact, along with our future direction. In response to Audit Scotland's call for clearer plans and joined-up leadership, Leading to Change demonstrates how rhetoric becomes reality through connected leadership, national collaboration, and a focus on inclusion and compassion. Looking ahead, we will invest in leadership development as a lever for reform — fostering resilience, innovation, and strategic collaboration to address complex challenges. As a cornerstone of Scotland's journey toward a more connected, equitable, and person-centred health, social care and social work system, we reaffirm our commitment to the future of public services.

# Every number tells a story



64,378

Website Views



8,422

Event Registrants



255

Leadership Bites Attendees<sup>1</sup>



133

Diversity Coffee Connect Attendees

4,542

Attendees<sup>2</sup>



10,823

Self Assessment Questionnaires Completed



600

Leadership Link Subscriptions



1,207

Event attendees from social work, social care and health and social care partnerships



2,933

Leadership Link Attendees



16,736

App Users

<sup>1</sup>Leadership Bites data is comprised of Leadership Bites Series 1&2 and Cohorts 1&2

<sup>2</sup>The comparative numbers of event registrations and attendees is reflective of the time pressures faced by the workforce, with many registrants unable to attend events due to this.

