

# SCDN

Scottish Community Development Network

SCDN Annual Conference 2024  
May 2025

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## Introduction

SCDN is a member led organisation for people who, paid or unpaid:

- Have community development as their main role or part of their remit
- Actively use community development approaches
- Support the values and principles of community development
- Aspire to use community development approaches in their practice

Membership is open to individuals who ascribe to the principles and practice of community development. As a member led organisation, the key purpose of SCDN is to engage with a broad range of community development practitioners, strengthening their voices and raising the profile of community development across Scotland.

As a result of our members' feedback, SCDN:

- Organise national conferences and network meetings
- Provide regular bulletins on policy and practice developments
- Maintain and develop an up-to-date website with access to downloadable resources and materials
- Develop partnerships with relevant agencies to promote effective and empowering community development practice

## Annual Conference 2024

This report provides an account of the topics discussed during SCDN's Annual Conference 2024, participants' reflections and evaluations of the event, and next steps for SCDN.

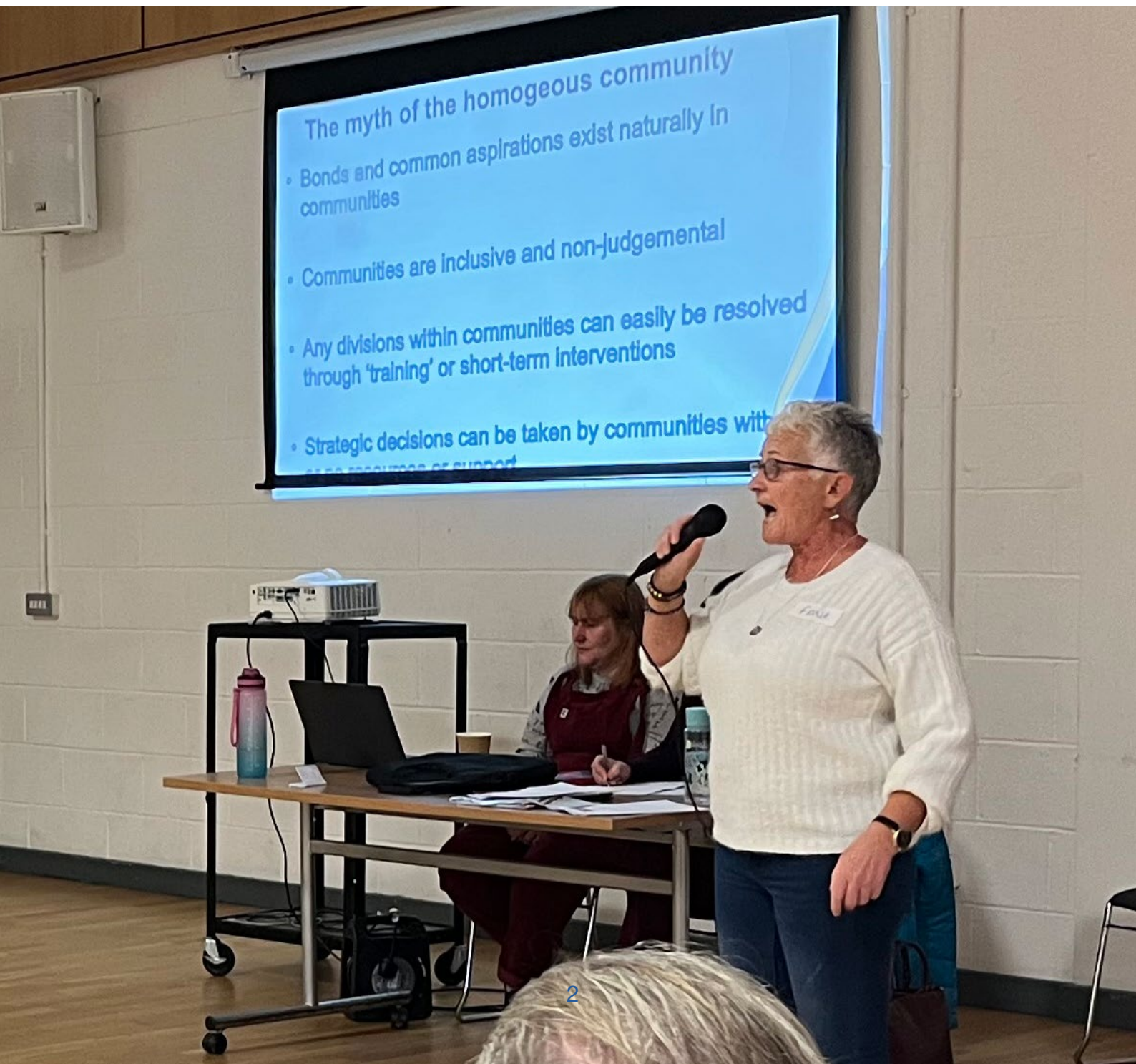
Our conference last year took place on Friday 25th October at Townhead Village Hall, Glasgow and the theme was:

*Time for Change: a more radical approach to community development in Scotland. Now is the time to reclaim local democracy. How can community development influence democracy in Scotland's neighbourhoods?*

## Conference Speakers

**Fiona Ballantyne**, Chair of SCDN, welcomed everyone and opened the day with a presentation on democracy and community development. She spoke about the importance of effective public services and the issues within our current democratic structures. Key messages from her presentation included:

- The Scottish Government has highlighted a call for significant investment in community development professionals across Scotland as a result of the Democracy Matters consultation.
- There is a disconnect between policy aspirations and the experiences of communities.
- It's time to reclaim our values and language and build dissent rather than compliance.



This was followed by our keynote speaker, **Dr Craig Dalzell**, Head of Policy and Research at Common Weal, spoke on the topic of 'When People Lack Power ... Campaigning Without Local Democracy'. He spoke about a local campaign he was involved with that was unsuccessful due to the lack of democracy in Scotland. Key messages from his presentation included:

- We need municipal democracy. (the decentralised governance of local areas, where power and decision-making are vested in democratically elected officials and local communities).
- Until then, we need better community engagement in the places that currently have the least.
- We can't rely on volunteer efforts, especially when campaigns can come at high risk of burnout.



## Creative Workshops

We took a more creative approach to our workshops which followed, asking delegates to create an individual zine (a small magazine using images and text) in the morning reflecting on the following prompts:

- What does that mean in terms of democratic rights?
- What has informed your relationship with democracy?
- How can you express what democracy feels like?
- What barriers or blocks or difficulties do you experience when thinking about democracy?
- Are there times in history or your own experience that have inspired the importance of democracy?

Delegates were able to take their personal zines home with them. After lunch we had an input from **Billie Dunleviewood**, Community Worker with Fife Council on Creative Community Development and her work with young people in Fife. In the afternoon workshops, delegates were asked to work on a collective zine with all materials provided. To encourage discussion the following questions were used as a guide.

- Are there collective voices in the community?
- Have you experienced any real community influence on decisions?
- What is the power of a collaborative voice?
- How are communities experiencing democracy from your perspective as a practitioner?
- How could you, as a practitioner, encourage communities to challenge the current democracy deficit?
- Anything you've brought from the morning into your reflections for the collaborative zine.

Details of the personal and collective zines created by delegates are shown in the following pages.





LGBTQI+  
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CLIMATE  
EMERGENCY  
!!!

cultural  
mysogyny



Are we close  
to destruction.

WORLD TO

e th





**HONESTY**

**HONESTY**

**spurred on for**

**ACTION**

**New ballot for strike action**

or Alice, "it would  
my shoulders. C  
up like a telescope!  
new how to begin."  
f-the-way things ha  
had begun to thin

*H. J. Grover  
Sudbury  
Dear Alice  
say we  
light a  
candle*

is but, you know it, from the begin  
me knew I had to go, to have  
not regret time we spent together. There  
are best moments I'll never have. I still do  
t know if it'll help me endure my dreary  
litten life, or if the companions will make  
it pass  
I'll never forget you

burning with curiosity, she ran across the  
ter it, and was just in time to see it pop  
r the hedge.  
own went Alice af  
how in the world she  
straight on like a tun-  
then dipped suddenly  
Alice had not a moment  
herself before she found  
herself falling down what seemed to be a very  
deep well.

Either the well was very deep  
very slowly, for she had  
went down to  
what w



water into a  
let it dissolve  
and simmer  
or until a  
Pour into a  
cold and  
required.  
**GINGERBREAD**  
INGREDIENTS  
lb. of butter,  
sugar, 1 lb. of  
1 oz. of ground  
ful of carbonate  
warm water,  
METRIC.—Put  
bowl with the  
basin with the  
and allspice;  
the butter, and  
treacle to the  
Stir well; make  
When cool, mix  
prepared fruit,  
syrup to each  
coconut, and  
TIME.—To bake  
minutes. AVERAGE  
to 12. 6d., exclusive  
SUFFICIENT for 10  
**RED CURRANT AND RASPBERRY  
TART**  
(See Danson Tart.)  
cooked on one  
the slice, and  
the other side.  
When the muf-  
of the flour, and  
a clean cloth or  
To toast them,  
the edge of the  
muffin all round,  
by pulling it  
open to the depth  
with the fingers.  
Put it on a toast-  
ing-fork, and hold  
it before a clear  
fire till one side  
is nicely browned.

**SALETS.**  
Homogenized—1 lb. of flour,  
oz. of butter, 1 oz. of compressed  
yeast, 1 teaspoonful of carboxy-  
methyl cellulose, 1 egg,  
1 pint of lukewarm milk.  
METHOD.—Mix the flour and salt  
in a basin and make a well in the  
center. Cream the sugar and  
sugar, beat and add the egg, and  
stir in the milk. Add gradually  
the yeast, and mix thoroughly  
with smooth. Warm and cream  
two equal cake tins, put in three  
tablespoons of butter, and three  
tablespoons of sugar, and brush  
them with the butter. Bake in a  
oven. Time, 45 minutes. AVERAGE  
COST, 7d. SUFFICIENT for 20 rolls.

**RABBIT-HOLE.**  
Alice had not a moment  
herself before she found  
herself falling down what seemed to be a very  
deep well.  
Either the well was very deep  
very slowly, for she had  
went down to  
what w

## **Participant Feedback and Evaluation**

Participants were asked to each complete an evaluation form to rate the value of the conference and highlight its specific benefits, as well as providing feedback on SCDN's broader services and ideas for future directions.

Feedback foregrounded the role of the conference in supporting networking and discussion amongst community development practitioners, enabling a space for sharing and gaining knowledge, exchanging experiences, increasing motivation, and making new contacts.

The following quotes set out participant responses to the question:

*What aspects of the conference do you think were most beneficial and why?*

***“The zine workshop was valuable and creative.”***

***“The creative approach helped to create conversation.”***

***“Loved the programme title – Time for change: a more radical approach.”***

***“A more radical approach is necessary. Speakers and workshops were excellent.”***

***“Discussing a democratic deficit.”***

***“Useful to discuss tactics and strategies to improve democracy and participation.”***

***“Zine activity and general discussions.”***

***“It will be something I can do in the future and good hearing different discussions.”***

***“Meeting people, Positive, vibrant, can-do atmosphere.”***

***“I felt truly energised by the people and conversations in the room.”***

## Next Steps

- Opportunities will be identified to influence policy and campaigns with a focus on illustrating the issues facing practitioners and evidencing the need for community development capacity.
- Continue to offer spaces for practitioner to come together through our networks.
- Continue to Promote value-based community development.
- Members-led Conference in 2025.

To find out more read our [Strategy](#)

For further information go to [our website](#) or email [susan.campbell@scdn.scot](mailto:susan.campbell@scdn.scot)

Take out free SCDN membership [here](#)

# SCDN

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