



**# STOP THE
DEATHS
CONFERENCE**

CONFERENCE SPEAKER

Statement from Advocates for Change Event,
Introduction and panel session

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ADVOCATES FOR
CHANGE**



STATEMENT FROM ADVOCATES FOR CHANGE EVENT

We believe that lasting, meaningful change happens when those with the deepest understanding of an issue are not only heard but are central to shaping solutions. This statement comes from a place of deep care, lived knowledge, and an unwavering commitment to improving Scotland's response to drug related issues - together. Our voices come with insight, resilience, and a shared desire to co-create systems that truly work for everyone. We invite service providers, commissioners, and government to walk with us, listen deeply, and recognise the unique leadership we bring.

We are not waiting for permission. We are not asking for a seat at the table — we are building our own table, and we expect Scotland to listen.

Living Experience Engagement Groups are here to take charge. We are not here to be managed, fixed, or saved. We are here to demand the future we deserve.

For too long, systems built without us have tried to define our worth, control our lives, and dictate our path. They've tried to erase our voices, reduce us to problems, and silence our power.

Enough.

Real change starts now — with us, leading the way. We will reshape policies, services, and communities with our living experience at the forefront. We are not asking for change. We are demanding it.





WE KNOW WHAT JUSTICE LOOKS LIKE.

WE KNOW WHAT CARE REALLY MEANS.

WE KNOW THAT NOTHING ABOUT US WILL CHANGE UNTIL WE TAKE THE POWER BACK INTO OUR OWN HANDS.

**Our participation is non-negotiable — and we are just getting started.
Living Experience Engagement is not a request — it's a revolution. We are not passive recipients.
We are the voices of change.**

We are here to disrupt the systems that have long been built to ignore or exclude us. These systems have failed us, and we will no longer allow them to control our futures.

We are not asking for space in a system that was never made for us — we are dismantling it.

Living experience is our power. Our leadership is the change. We are here to reshape the structures that have been imposed on us and build something that truly serves us.



STATEMENT FROM ADVOCATES FOR CHANGE EVENT

This is why it matters:

The Charter of Rights for people who use substances in Scotland is a call to action — it is the foundation for our dignity, equality, and leadership. It demands that we are not just heard, but that we lead.

The Charter is not just a promise. It is a demand that those with living and lived experience, those who have been most affected, are the ones at the heart of the change.

We are not here to ask for change. We are here to make it. We are the revolution, and we are shaping the future of Scotland. The Charter is our weapon, our guide, and our commitment to ensuring every voice is not only included but leading.

WE ARE BUILDING POWER.

WE ARE BUILDING FUTURES.

WE ARE CREATING CHANGE.

This is a moment of opportunity. We are extending our hands not in opposition, but in determined collaboration - rooted in truth, justice, and shared humanity. To those in positions of influence and power - stand with us. Let's build systems that honour dignity, empower communities, and deliver real outcomes. The revolution we speak of is one of hope, courage, and connection and there is room for all who are ready to join us in making change real.

