

Saving Money by Doing the Right Thing **Coventry**

LDA Commissioners Conference

Time

Agenda

09:00 - 09:45

Arrival and Registration

- Attendees arrive, register, and network.
- Sponsor stands will be available around the venue, allowing delegates to engage with organisations involved in personalised support, housing, and commissioning solutions.

10:00 - 10:15

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Co - chairs: **Simon Duffy and Jake Banbury**

- Introduction to the conference: Why the network exists, the challenges being addressed, and the goals for the day.
- A brief introduction to the LDA Commissioners Network and SDS Network, emphasising its person-centred and values-driven approach, with a focus on innovations in support.

10:15 - 10:45

Keynote 1: A Family's Experience

Speaker: **Rebecca Davis**

- 20 - minute presentation: A personal story highlighting a family's lived experience of our system.
- 10 - minute Q&A

10:45 - 11:15

Keynote 2: Housing Opportunities and Challenges

Speaker: **John Verge**

- 20 - minute presentation: Opportunities and challenges in developing housing for adults with learning disabilities and autism.
- 10 - minute Q&A

11:15 - 11:30

Morning Break and Networking (15 minutes)

11:30-12:00

Keynote 3: Building Bridges

Speaker: Benjamin Andrew

- 20 - minute presentation: How the Building Bridges model helps people with learning disabilities and autistic people move on from hospital to long-term community-based supports.
- 10 - minute Q&A

12:00 - 12:30

Keynote 4: 'My Support Money' (Individual Service Funds)

Speakers: Michael Coultas, Jimmy Pearson and Leanne Geritz

- 20 - minute presentation: This keynote will explore how Individual Service Funds (ISFs) give people greater choice and control, and what's needed to make them truly flexible, person-centred, and effective.
- 10 - minute Q&A

12:30 - 13:30

Lunch and Networking (1 Hour)

- Buffet lunch provided.
- Delegates can network, visit sponsor stands, and take part in discussions on practical solutions.

13:30 - 14:00

Keynote 5: The Gradually Fading Support Framework

Speakers: Adam Burley and Chris Dixon

- 20 - minute presentation: How the Gradually Fading Support approach promotes independence and autonomy while offering a sustainable model for funding care and support.
- 10 - minute Q&A

14:00 - 15:00

Panel Discussion: Saving Money by Doing the Right Thing

Panel: Chris Watson, Ashleigh Fox, John Verge, Rebecca Davis, Benjamin Andrew, Adam Burley and Chris Dixon.

- A 1-hour interactive discussion, focusing on practical commissioner tools such as bridging support, ISFs and personal budgets, while welcoming questions and reflections from the audience.

15:00 - 15:30

Closing Keynote: Citizenship and Neighbourhood Care as Solutions

Speaker: Simon Duffy

- 20-minute presentation: The role of citizenship, neighbourhood care, and values-driven support in reducing reliance on traditional services.
- 10-minute Q&A

15:30 - 16:00

Closing Remarks and Networking

Co-chairs: Simon Duffy and Jake Banbury



The LDA Commissioners Network Conference is proud to be a carbon-neutral event, reflecting our commitment to sustainability and responsible practice.

Chairs:



Simon Duffy

Director, Citizen Network

Dr Simon Duffy is a philosopher, social innovator, and the Director of Citizen Network, dedicated to creating a world where everyone matters. He has founded and led multiple organisations, including Inclusion Glasgow, In Control, and the Centre for Welfare Reform, co-founded the UBI Lab Network and the Neighbourhood Democracy Movement, and now advises the global SDS Network. Simon's work focuses on citizenship, self-directed support, and social justice, and he has authored key publications such as *Keys to Citizenship* and *Peer Power*. He holds a doctorate in moral philosophy and has been recognised with the RSA's Prince Albert Medal and the Social Policy Association Award for outstanding contribution to social policy.



Jake Banbury

Co-Chair, LDA Commissioners Network

Jake Banbury brings lived experience and an unwavering commitment to inclusion to everything he does. As an autistic person and co-chair of the LDA Commissioners Network, he uses his voice to advocate for greater understanding, representation, and equity across health and social care. With a background in customer-facing roles and over eight years of experience as a steward at Exeter City Football Club, Jake is known for his calm presence, quick thinking, and compassion in high-pressure situations. His journey, shaped by resilience and honesty, reflects a deep desire to make a difference. By speaking openly about mental health and neurodiversity, Jake fosters empathy and supports a more inclusive, person-centred approach in care and commissioning.

Keynote Speakers:



Rebecca Davis

Family Advocate

Rebecca is Elliot's sister and has been by his side through some of the most challenging years of his life. When Elliot, was institutionalised for over four years, Rebecca experienced the strain and heartbreak that families endure alongside their loved ones. Now, with the right support in place, Rebecca has seen the difference that person-centred care can make, not only for Elliot's life, but for hers too. She is passionate about sharing their story to highlight the importance of compassionate, community-based support that enables families to move out of crisis and simply be families again.



John Verge

Chief Executive, Golden Lane Housing

John has over 30 years' experience in the social housing sector and became Chief Executive of Golden Lane Housing in 2018, having first joined the organisation in 2000. He was appointed to the Board in December 2024. John has a real passion and drive to change the housing lives of people, which began from his first position as homeless officer in Swansea. His leadership has driven Golden Lane Housing's growth through strategic partnerships, capital funding, and innovative housing solutions across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Nationally, John is Chair of the Learning Disability and Autism Housing Network and sits on the advisory board of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Housing Market and Delivery. He is also a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Housing and the Royal Society of Arts, and a graduate of Warwick Business School.

Benjamin Andrew

PBS Practitioner and Multimedia Specialist



Ben Andrew is a Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) Practitioner with 16 years' experience in health and social care, specialising in supporting autistic adults and people with learning disabilities and complex needs. His career has included managing a residential service rated Outstanding in three CQC key lines of enquiry, and he is currently completing advanced PBS training with the Loddon Training Group. Passionate about person-centred care, Ben combines creativity, leadership, and technology to empower individuals - from developing multimedia advocacy tools to creating digital social stories and assistive applications that promote independence. His work reflects a commitment to modernising care and ensuring people with complex needs can live fulfilling, self-directed lives.

Chris Watson

Executive Director, SDS Network and Founder, Self-Directed Futures



Chris has dedicated over 27 years to transforming social care, with a career focused on advancing self-directed support and personalised commissioning. He is the Founder of Self Directed Futures Ltd, Co-Founder of Gradually Fading Support Ltd and the LDA Commissioners Network, and serves as Executive Director of SDS Network. Chris works alongside individuals, families, professionals, and policymakers to create greater choice, control, and community-based solutions. His career spans senior commissioning roles, including Joint Commissioning Manager for Learning Disabilities and Mental Health at Dorset Council, and consultancy with organisations such as the Institute of Public Care, Peopletoo, NDTi, and the Down's Syndrome Association. As Co-Founder of 360 Inclusive, he has also helped develop bespoke, person-centred support arrangements. A published author and recognised leader in Individual Service Funds (ISFs) and innovative commissioning, Chris continues to shape policy and practice nationally, ensuring people can live fulfilling lives beyond traditional service models.

Ashleigh Fox

Transforming Care Director



Over the past two decades, Ashleigh Fox has dedicated her career to transforming care for autistic people and those with learning disabilities, guided by frontline experience, family voices, and a steadfast belief in what's possible. She leads initiatives that help people transition from hospitals back into their homes and communities while preventing unnecessary admissions. Her experience across public and private sector organisations gives her a unique perspective on how the care workforce can be empowered to deliver real impact. Through Catalyst Care Group, the LDA Commissioners' Network, and system partnerships, she champions human-rights-led care, co-produced solutions, and meaningful collaboration with commissioners, families, and professionals. Ashleigh has also contributed to sector knowledge through publications such as "Building Bridges" and is passionate about mentoring the next generation of care leaders to drive lasting change.

Adam Burley

Managing Director, Burley Inclusive



Adam Burley is the Managing Director of Burley Inclusive, an alternative post-16 education provision in North Somerset for people with learning disabilities and autism. As the lead author of the Core Skill Curriculum (CSC), he has developed a new methodology that bridges education and social care, enabling learners to achieve meaningful outcomes and greater independence. Adam is passionate about creating innovative approaches that empower people with Individual Service Funds (ISFs) to take more control of their lives, and is also the founder of The Steel Squid Collective, a rock band led by Burley Inclusive learners.

Jimmy Pearson

My Support Money



My name is Jimmy. I live in a flat in Hartlepool where I have my own tenancy. I have outreach support from Dimensions. I am an expert by experience about 'My Support Money' for Dimensions. I like speaking to management to make sure people who can't advocate for themselves are treated fairly.

Michael Coultas

My Support Money



My name is Michael. I live in my own flat in Hartlepool and have outreach support from Dimensions. I volunteer at a hospice charity shop 3 days a week and enjoy visiting my mam every Sunday and seeing my brother. I also enjoy going places with Jimmy and Anth who live in the same small block of flats that I do.