



Getting in and getting on

Transforming policy and practice
across Scotland

**Speakers: Michelle Barker, Catriona
Cunningham, Robin Dallas-Childs, Vikki Hill**

Clare Taylor, Claire Garden, Derek Robertson



Overview

1. Genesis of the project
2. Theory of change
3. Where we are now
4. Thinking Tree
5. Questions



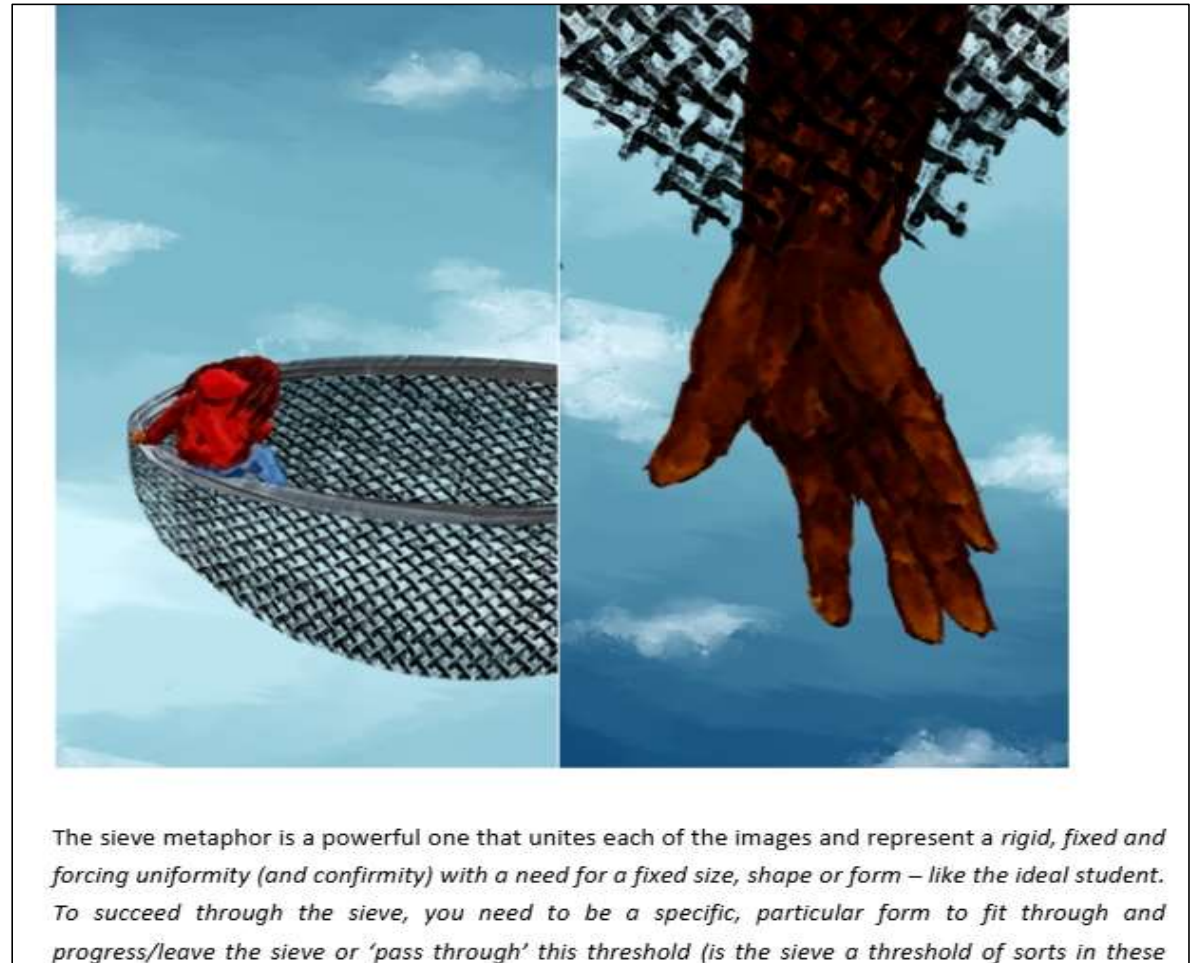
Michelle Barker, *Keys to Your Future*, 2026 [collage]

Project genesis

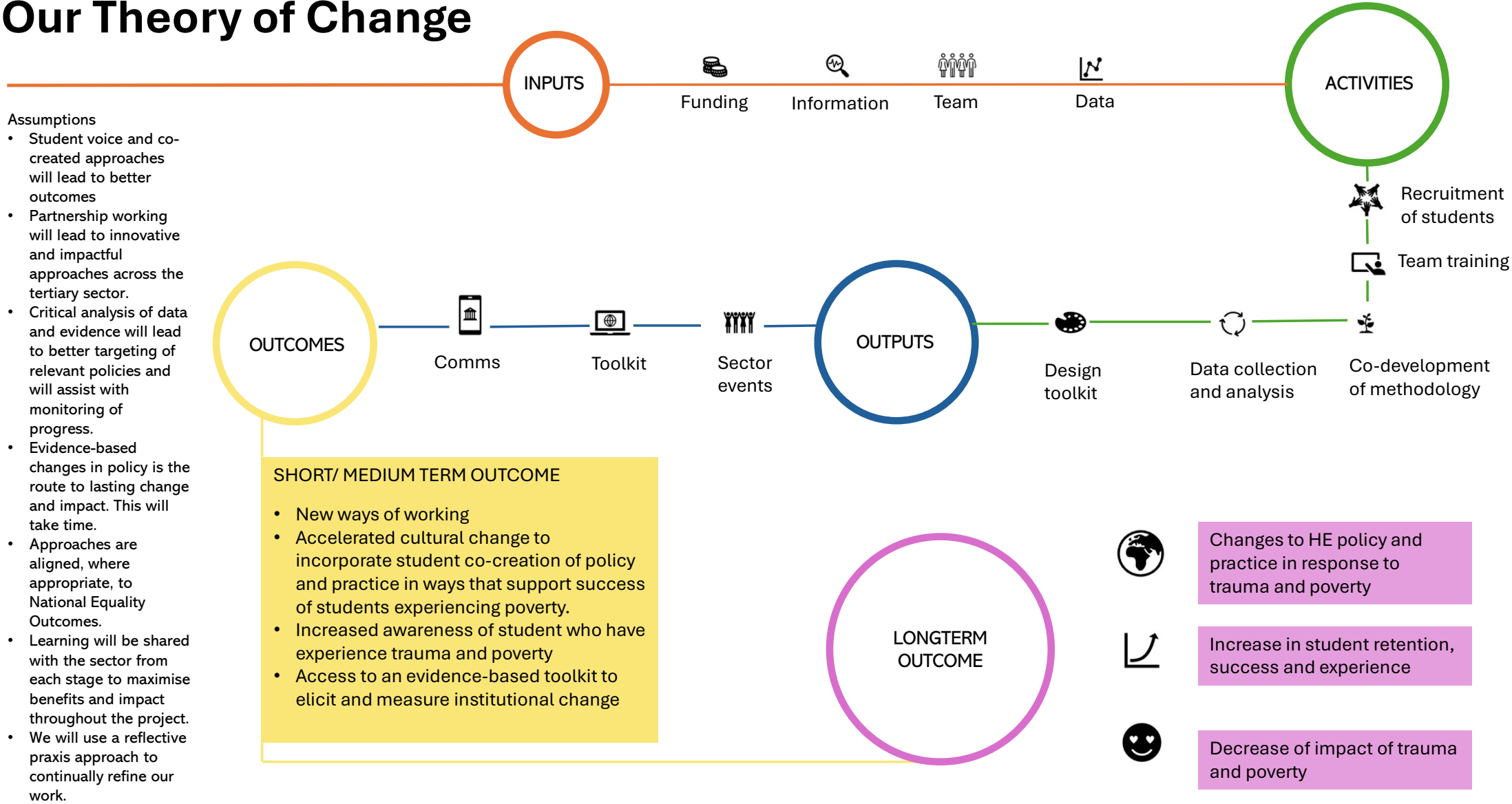
Shared sense of purpose

Growing awareness that things are not working...

A sector-wide 'wicked problem'



Our Theory of Change



Where we are

- Student co-investigators
- Beginning to co-create methodology
- Principles:
 - Strengths based
 - Relational
 - Reflective
 - Collaborative
 - Connected
 - Responsive to needs



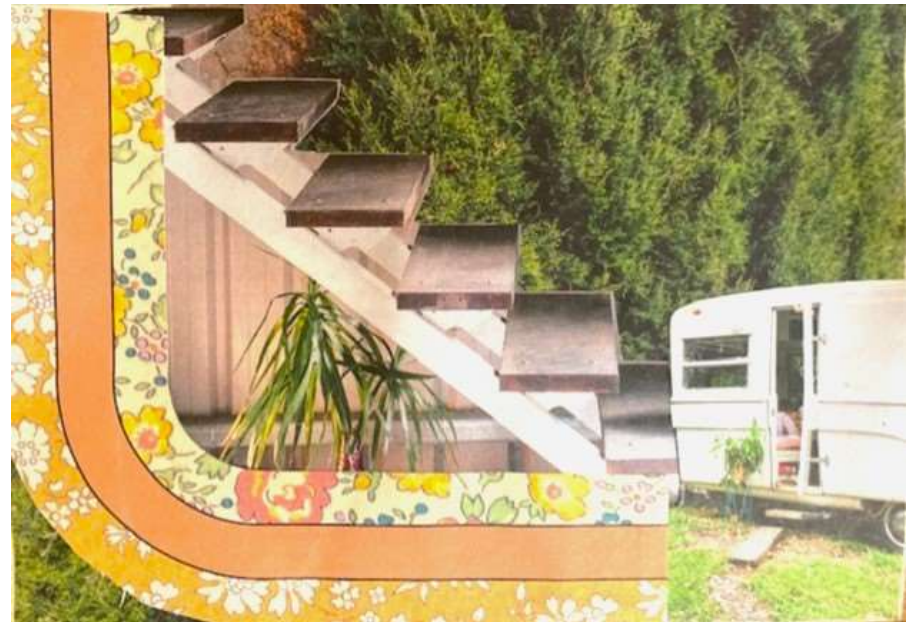
Michelle Barker, Access, 2026 [mixed media]

Where we are and where we're going

- Knowledge and experience of co-investigators



- Research methodology
 - Questions
 - Who?
 - How?
- Training
- Data collection and analysis



Michelle Barker, *Terrain of Childhood Memories*, 2026 [collage]

Arts-based Research Workshop

Michelle Barker

Student QMU, MSc Art Psychotherapy

Thinking Trees

Student facilitated workshop

Engaging with creative idea generation

Exploring lived experience of barriers to educational success

How these might be overcome

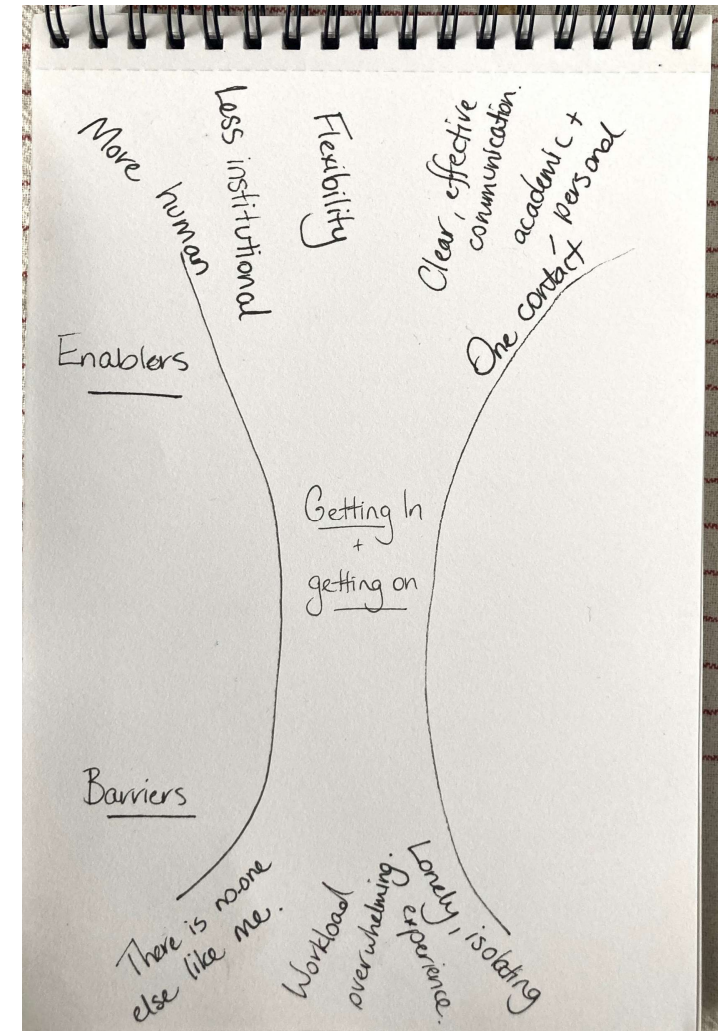
Process

Roots

- core of the issue
- past experiences/ barriers

Leaves

- growth areas
- possible ways to overcome
- experiences that enabled success



Facilitator's example

Forest of Thought



Emerging Themes

Uncertainty about belonging & identity.

Structural barriers.

Information gaps & navigation challenges.

Emotional & psychological dimensions.

Difficulty accessing support.

Academic confidence & pressure.

Human relationships.

Institutional
responsiveness/communication.

Flexible learning.



Thank you!

Any questions?