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CONNECT



One Child. One Connected Story.

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Part 01:
Why Geco Exists

Every child and young person deserves to be understood, supported and heard. We begin with the challenges facing Scotland's care and education sector, the story behind Geco Connect and the people, partnerships and investment that have helped turn an ambitious idea into a working platform.

Part 02:
Geco In Action

Discover how Geco Connect is supporting residential care and specialist education today. Through the experiences of our early adopters, we explore how one connected platform can reduce duplication, strengthen oversight, support inspection readiness and give teams more time to focus on the children and young people in their care.

Part 03:
One Connected Future

Our vision reaches beyond individual organisations. We look at My Geco, Geco Protect and the next stage of development, bringing care, education, social work, health and Police Scotland together through secure, responsible technology. This is an invitation to help build a more connected Scotland around every child and young person.

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A Conversation That Started A Journey

A personal introduction from Martin Boyle, Founder of Geco Connect

Geco Connect began with a cup of tea, an honest conversation and a shared belief that Scotland could do better for those caring for children and young people.

Francis Scott, Director of St Philip's Care and Education Services, highlighted a challenge facing the sector: too much time spent recording, repeating reports and struggling to show a child's progress clearly. Despite the quality of care being delivered, the systems available made it difficult to bring those experiences and outcomes together into one connected story.

Through The Solutions on Demand Group, we had the technical expertise to begin addressing this. Francis and the St Philip's team brought invaluable practical experience, challenging us to build something that reflected the realities of care.

We started by listening, asking questions and working alongside practitioners. The result was Geco Connect, an operational platform bringing recording, reporting, safeguarding, outcomes and oversight together around the child.

Today, it supports organisations across Scottish residential care, specialist education, fostering and secure care. Our purpose remains the same, to reduce paperwork, improve oversight and create more time for meaningful relationships.

This magazine is not about saying, "look how good our platform is". It is about asking whether Scotland is ready to connect the people who share responsibility for a child's care, safety and future.

Organisational boundaries and different systems will always exist, but they must not prevent progress. The children and young people who depend on these services deserve better.

We invite you to challenge our vision, help shape it and work with us towards a credible next step. What began with one conversation at St Philip's has become a wider invitation to Scotland.

One child. One connected story. Many professions playing their part.



Martin Boyle
Founder, Geco Connect
Managing Director,
The Solutions on Demand Group

Our Journey

Growing the vision through practice and evidence

Geco Connect began with practical questions about how care and education organisations record information, understand outcomes and prepare reports. Those questions continue to guide the platform's development.

The vision board sets out a wider direction, from building evidence within organisations to exploring connections across services and, ultimately, broader learning for Scotland. That direction is shaped by what practitioners and young people tell us about their experience.

Building From Real Use

Development becomes more useful when it responds to everyday work. Teams can show where recording creates repetition, where information is difficult to find and what would help them prepare for a review or handover.

Those observations inform the way Geco is configured and improved. They also provide a basis for evaluating changes against the needs that prompted them.

Bringing the Child into Development

My Geco extends the conversation to children and young people. Their views help us consider how an interface feels, what they want to share and how adults should respond.

Their involvement should influence decisions throughout development. Listening once is insufficient when the experience continues to evolve.

Connecting Ambition with Learning

The wider journey includes appropriate collaboration with social work, advocacy, health and other services. Each connection brings questions about practice, responsibilities and information governance that need to be resolved with the people involved.

Research and evaluation contribute another perspective, helping us examine what is working and where stronger evidence is needed. The ambition is to expand a useful approach, supported by learning from its implementation.

The vision board sets our direction. The work that matters is the progress made with organisations and the experiences of the children they support.

Our journey continues through people willing to share their knowledge, test an idea and help shape what happens next.

What could your experience contribute to the next stage of more connected care?

From a Conversation to a Shared Purpose

The more we listened, the bigger our responsibility became.

After that first conversation with Francis, we began to understand how much sat behind his frustrations.

There were committed people doing extraordinary work. There were children making progress through moments that might appear small on paper but meant everything in their lives. There were relationships being built, confidence returning and possibilities opening up.

Capturing that progress, bringing it together and showing what it meant was another challenge entirely.

We saw an opportunity to put our experience to work. Through The Solutions on Demand Group, we committed our own investment, development expertise and wider infrastructure to building Geco Connect. We started with the practical realities. How information is recorded, how reports are prepared and how teams understand the child behind those records.

Every conversation helped us see more clearly. A record could inform an outcome. An outcome could support a better conversation. A clearer picture could help the adults around a child decide what to do next.

Giving time back to care became the purpose behind everything we built.

We have invested almost £350,000 to reach this stage. That investment covers more than software development. It includes discovery, design, infrastructure, cyber security, implementation, training, evaluation, legal and data protection work, and the continuing improvement needed to build responsibly in a highly sensitive sector.

Our UKRI-funded Knowledge Transfer Partnership with the University of Strathclyde brings academic challenge into the journey. Dr Laura Steckley, Dr Joanna Butler and KTP Associate Taranjot Singh Chopra help connect development with knowledge of residential child care, organisations, data and implementation. Evaluation matters because the benefits must be examined, not simply assumed.

Join the Geco Community

Stay up to date with our journey.

Four organisations. A growing understanding.

Our journey has brought us together with St Philip's School, Harmeny Education Trust, Stepdown and Rossie Young People's Trust.

Across residential care, specialist education, fostering and secure care, these organisations bring different experiences and a shared commitment to children and young people.

Their involvement helps us understand where technology can be useful, where it needs to adapt and what matters when a system becomes part of everyday working life. Each conversation, demonstration, onboarding session and piece of feedback adds to that understanding.

Working with Stepdown also opened a new chapter, adapting Geco for fostering and developing My Geco, giving children and young people a more direct way to communicate with the people supporting them.

Their involvement in development is already challenging our language, shaping features and reminding us that being asked for a view only matters when someone responds to it.

Building the Evidence Alongside the Ambition

As our ambition grew, so did the importance of examining our work properly.

Our partnership with the University of Strathclyde, through a two-year Knowledge Transfer Partnership funded by Innovate UK, part of UK Research and Innovation, brings academic expertise into the journey.

The contribution of Dr Laura Steckley, alongside colleagues including Dr Joanna Butler and KTP Associate Taranjot Singh Chopra, helps connect our development with knowledge of care, organisations and how change happens in practice.

Scottish Enterprise has also supported our development and growth, helping us move forward with a clearer understanding of the opportunity and the work required.

Evaluation is central to that progress. We want to understand what changes when Geco is introduced: how staff experience recording, whether reporting becomes more useful, where duplication reduces and how information supports professional judgement.

Most importantly, we want to examine whether those changes help create better conditions for the care children receive.

That means listening carefully, testing assumptions and being willing to improve what we have built. Findings need to earn their place in our story.

The question that guides us is simple: what difference does this make to the people it is here to support?

A Shared Vision For Scotland

What Began in One Organisation is Opening a Much Wider Conversation.

The more we work with the sector, the more we see the importance of continuity.

A child has one life. Their experiences connect, even when the organisations supporting them change.

Our vision is for the information around that child to help people understand their journey, recognise their strengths and coordinate support with greater care. It begins within individual organisations and reaches towards better connections across education, social work, health, advocacy and the other services involved in their lives.

GIRFEC, SHANARRI and The Promise help frame that ambition. The challenge is making their principles visible in everyday practice, through the way people listen, record, share understanding and act.

Our roadmap gives that ambition a direction. The organisations and young people working with us help give it meaning.

Recognition Gives the Vision Reach

Awards have helped take the original conversation beyond the organisations already involved. They have introduced Geco Connect to business leaders, public bodies, politicians and people across the care and education sector who may never have heard the story otherwise.

Their value is not the trophy. It is the credibility and visibility that allow us to open more doors, invite more scrutiny and bring more experience into the work. The detailed milestones appear later in this magazine. Here, the important point is what that recognition now asks of us.

We must turn attention into evidence, evidence into collaboration and collaboration into practical progress. Recognition gives us a louder voice. It also gives us a responsibility to use that voice carefully.

The Foundation is Already Working

Geco Connect is the operational foundation supporting residential care and specialist education organisations today. It brings information that might otherwise sit across separate forms, folders and reports into one structured environment around the child.

Teams can record daily experiences, connect those records to goals and outcomes, maintain chronologies, manage safeguarding and incidents, and prepare reports from information already held. Leaders can see activity, actions and themes across homes and services, subject to their role and permissions.

What is Operational Today

- Child and young person profiles, case notes and daily records.
- SMART outcomes, SHANARRI-related reporting and connected chronologies.
- Weekly, monthly, LAC and redacted reporting.
- Child protection, safeguarding, incident and restrictive-practice workflows.
- Leadership dashboards, permissions and audit trails.
- AI-assisted finding and summarisation, with human review and professional accountability.

What Comes Next

The wider vision does not claim that every profession or public body is connected today. My Geco is being developed to strengthen the voice of the child or young person. Geco Protect is the proposed future layer for defined collaboration between authorised professionals in social work, Police Scotland, health, education, care and other relevant services.

That next layer must be co-designed, governed and tested with the organisations responsible for the work. The operational platform gives us a foundation. It does not remove the need for lawful purpose, data minimisation, security, accountability and professional judgement.

Better outcomes start with listening, sharing ideas and working together.



“Our team can give more attention to what matters most: supporting our young people.”

Francis Scott, St Philip’s Care and Education Services

ST. PHILIP’S
Residential Care &
Educational Services

A Place to Live, Learn and Develop

Based in Plains, near Airdrie, St Philip’s School brings residential care, education and specialist support together around children and young people. Founded in 1970, it has been part of Scotland’s residential child care community for more than five decades.

Its residential provision includes homes on and beside the main campus, alongside a community-based service in Blackwood, South Lanarkshire. The school describes its approach as trauma informed, with trusting relationships helping young people develop confidence and resilience.

"Geco Connect is making a real difference to how we work at St Philip's. Bringing care and education information together has helped us reduce duplication, save staff time and build a clearer picture of each young person's progress.

The significant time savings we have seen in our recording and reporting processes mean our team can give more attention to what matters most – supporting our young people.

What stands out is the partnership behind the platform. The Geco team listens to our experience, understands the challenges we face and works with us to develop a system that supports practice.

For us, Geco is helping create a more connected approach to care and education, with the young person at its heart."

Francis Scott
Director, St Philip's Care and Education Services

Learning that Recognises the Whole Person

Education extends across academic subjects, health and wellbeing, and practical skills. Alongside English, mathematics and sciences, young people can explore music, physical activity and vocational learning.

The school's facilities include a recording studio, swimming pool and spaces for craft, cooking and physical fitness. These create opportunities to recognise interests and achievements beyond the classroom.

Day services provide a specialist education setting for young people who can continue living at home. This adds another route through which St Philip's supports learning around individual needs.

The People Around the Young Person

Care, education, psychological services and learning and development form part of a wider staff community. St Philip's emphasises collaboration, transparency and a shared commitment to supportive relationships.

Bringing different disciplines together raises an important question: how can the adults around a young person understand progress together, while keeping that person's experience at the centre?

What helps a care and education team see the whole young person, rather than separate parts of their day?

Policy & Compliance

Connecting Expectations with Evidence of Practice

Policies describe how an organisation expects to work. The practical question is whether colleagues understand those expectations, follow them and know what to do when something changes.

Our policy and compliance vision connects organisational requirements with responsibilities, review activity and evidence from everyday practice. It helps teams see the work behind assurance.

Keeping Responsibilities Clear

A policy update needs more than a new document in a folder. Someone must review it, decide what needs to change and make sure the relevant colleagues understand their part.

A connected governance layer could bring policy versions, review dates and agreed actions into view. Leaders could follow outstanding tasks and establish who is responsible for completing them.

Making Evidence Easier to Use

Geco's care and education records already contribute information for organisational review. The wider vision would connect relevant evidence with audit findings and improvement plans, reducing the work of rebuilding the same account for different purposes.

This could help organisations prepare for scrutiny and explain how their approach is reflected in practice. Owning a platform does not itself establish compliance; the organisation's decisions and actions remain essential.

Connecting with Wider Processes

The vision board also considers commissioning, strategic planning and Children's Hearings processes. Any future connections would need to be defined with the services involved, including what information is needed and who is authorised to use it.

Our intention is to support traceable decisions and appropriate reporting, with professional responsibility retained. A clear record should show what was considered, what was agreed and how the organisation followed through.

Good governance should help practitioners understand expectations and help leaders identify where further support or change is required.

How easily can your organisation demonstrate the link between its policies and the care people experience?

Residential Care

Understanding the Child Through Everyday Life

Residential care is shaped by everyday relationships. A conversation over breakfast, a difficult afternoon or a moment of achievement can tell staff something important about a child. Good recording helps that understanding continue across shifts and over time.

Geco Connect brings care planning, daily recording, safeguarding and outcomes into a connected organisational record. Teams can build a clearer picture of what is happening and how it relates to the support a child needs.

Continuity Between Colleagues

The colleague arriving for the next shift needs relevant context. What has changed? What helped? Is there something to follow up? Connected information supports handovers and helps staff prepare for the children they are supporting.

A record becomes more valuable when it preserves the reasons behind an action, as well as the action itself. This helps colleagues understand the approach being taken and discuss whether it remains appropriate.

Recognising Progress

Progress may be visible in small changes before it appears in a formal review. A child asks for help earlier, manages a familiar situation differently or begins to trust a new member of staff.

Recording those experiences alongside agreed goals helps teams explain development with evidence. The child's own account can add meaning that an adult's observation alone would miss.

Oversight That Supports Care

Leaders need visibility of concerns, actions and patterns across their service. Geco's reporting and dashboards help bring information into view, supporting review and questions about where staff need guidance or additional support.

AI-assisted summaries can help teams prepare, with practitioners checking the underlying records and retaining responsibility for decisions. The aim is to reduce repeated administration while strengthening the information available for care.

When someone reads a child's record, can they understand the person, the relationships around them and the progress being made?

STEPDOWN



“When you’re non-compliant, all you do is chase compliance. When you are compliant, you can innovate and care.”

Jim Shields, Stepdown

Supporting the Next Step with Confidence

Stepdown supports children and young people through residential care and services that help them move towards greater independence. Its values include compassion, belonging, empowerment, safety and trust.

Its residential homes accommodate small groups of one to four young people. Support is shaped around individual needs, with an emphasis on relationships, understanding past trauma and helping young people engage in education and personal development.

Independence With Support Around It

For young people aged 16 and over, Stepdown offers tailored interdependent and independent living support. Its accommodation includes residential houses, flats and semi-independent spaces where young people can build skills while preparing for their next move.

The approach recognises that taking on responsibility can involve trying new things, making decisions and learning with support. Preparation may lead towards returning to family or living in the community.

"The ability to track and establish patterns of behaviour and events is groundbreaking. The real-time analysis offers opportunities to intervene, divert and/or protect before a crisis. Stepdown is currently developing this aspect of Geco Connect to improve our understanding of exploitation and guide our strategy to protect children from exploitation.

I am fortunate that Stepdown maintains (and often surpasses) regulatory requirements. However, across my career, I know first hand the pressures of chasing compliance.

The burden of perceived non-compliance and/or operating below regulatory expectations is all-consuming. Compliance becomes the strategic and operational priority, leaving little space for innovation and intuitive care.

Geco Connect facilitates and evidences compliance, and removes much of the demand placed on frontline practice."

Jim Shields
Head of Service, Stepdown



Opportunities Beyond the Placement

Stepdown works with education providers, training centres and employment services to help young people access opportunities relevant to their goals. Psychological support also forms part of its services, including input into the My Journey process and reflective support for staff.

Daily care, meaningful progress and preparation for the future are closely related. Understanding that journey means recognising the young person's achievements alongside the support they continue to need.
A connected story should help adults understand both the support someone needs now and the future they want to work towards.

When a young person takes their next step, what should the people supporting them understand about their journey?

Geco Intelligence

Making Recorded Information Useful for Action

Care and education teams hold valuable information about children's experiences, progress and support. Its usefulness depends on whether people can find the relevant evidence, understand it in context and act at the right time.

Geco Intelligence builds on connected recording, reporting and organisational visibility. The aim is to help practitioners and leaders ask better questions of information already being captured.

Understanding the Individual

Case notes, chronology, outcomes and the child's own contributions can reveal changes over time. AI-assisted summaries help organise that information for review, while the underlying records remain important for checking context and accuracy.

A pattern can prompt a useful conversation. Has something changed in the child's routine? Is support helping? Does the current plan still reflect what matters to them? Professionals remain responsible for interpreting the evidence and deciding what to do.

Learning Across a Service

Leaders also need to understand themes across homes, schools and teams. Organisational reporting can help them examine practice, follow actions and identify areas needing attention.

Different recording habits or service circumstances can influence what a dashboard shows. Useful insight explains those differences rather than treating every number as directly comparable.

Join the Geco Community

Stay up to date with our journey.

Building a Wider Evidence Base



Our vision extends towards local authority trends and anonymised national insight. This could help the sector understand needs, consider provision and learn from experiences across organisations.

That wider use requires agreed purposes, reliable information and safeguards against identifying individuals. Removing a name alone does not necessarily make a record anonymous.

Intelligence should make the next professional question clearer. It should help people investigate concerns, recognise progress and learn from practice, without allowing an automated conclusion to define a child's future.

What could your organisation understand more clearly if the evidence it already holds was easier to bring together?

Rossie

A Team Around the Young Person

Rossie Young People's Trust is a Scottish charity near Montrose in Angus. Its history dates to 1857, and its current services bring care, education, health, therapeutic interventions and throughcare together for young people up to age 18.

Rossie provides secure and residential care, with support shaped around individual needs. Its approach recognises the effects of adversity and trauma while focusing on relationships, strengths and preparation for the future.

Connecting Professional Perspectives

The Team Around the Child brings practitioners together with the young person to create and review their placement plan. Care, education and intervention planning are considered within the same discussion.

Rossie describes review meetings taking place every six weeks, with young people contributing their views and being supported to chair meetings. A Wellbeing Web uses the SHANARRI indicators to help young people express how they are doing and contribute to planning.

This provides a practical context for examining how information can support shared understanding without losing the young person's perspective.





Preparing for Life Beyond Rossie

Education and employability support aim to rebuild engagement in learning and develop skills for life and work. Throughcare begins during a placement and continues beyond it, helping young people consider decisions and prepare for the next stage.

Rossie's residential provision supports young people unable to live at home or who no longer require secure care. The organisation describes a multidisciplinary model that includes care, education, health and psychology.

What information helps the team around a young person agree a useful next step together?

Multidisciplinary working with Geco Connect

A more connected picture of the child. A clearer way to work together.

A child's life does not fit neatly into the boundaries between care, education, social work and health. Each professional may see a different part of their experience. Bringing those perspectives together helps teams understand what matters and agree how best to respond.

Yet preparing for a multidisciplinary meeting can mean gathering updates from separate records, chasing contributions and piecing together what has happened since the last review.

Geco Connect supports this preparation by bringing care and education information together, helping teams build a clearer picture of a young person's needs, experiences and progress.

Before the Meeting

Daily records, care plans, outcomes, chronologies and incident information can help staff prepare a review grounded in everyday experience. Education records can add context around attendance, engagement and achievement.

The young person's views should shape that discussion. My Geco provides an additional way for children and young people to express what matters to them, alongside conversations and other communication suited to their needs.

Relevant information can then inform the meeting through reports or appropriately authorised access, according to the organisation's arrangements and each participant's role.

In Practice

Consider a young person whose engagement in education has begun to decline. An attendance figure alone may tell only part of the story.

Reviewing that change alongside care records, significant events and the young person's own views may help the group explore what is happening. Residential staff, teachers and the social worker can bring their perspectives, with health professionals or others involved where appropriate.

Together, they might agree a change to the morning routine, additional emotional support or a more suitable learning approach. Recording the agreed actions, who is responsible and when progress will be reviewed gives the team a clear basis for follow-up.

After the Meeting

The value of a review depends on what happens next. Keeping plans and outcomes up to date within Geco helps staff connect agreed decisions to daily support.

At the next review, the group can consider what was delivered, what changed and how the young person experienced that change. This helps distinguish completed tasks from support that has made a meaningful difference.

Sharing with Purpose

Working together requires thoughtful information sharing. Participation in a multidisciplinary group does not automatically mean access to every record. Relevant information should be shared through appropriate permissions and agreed processes, respecting confidentiality and the young person's rights.

Geco supports the information behind the discussion. Relationships, professional judgement and the child's voice remain central to decisions.

When teams can connect their understanding, they are better placed to connect their support.

**Reducing paperwork.
Improving oversight.
Creating more time for children and young people.**

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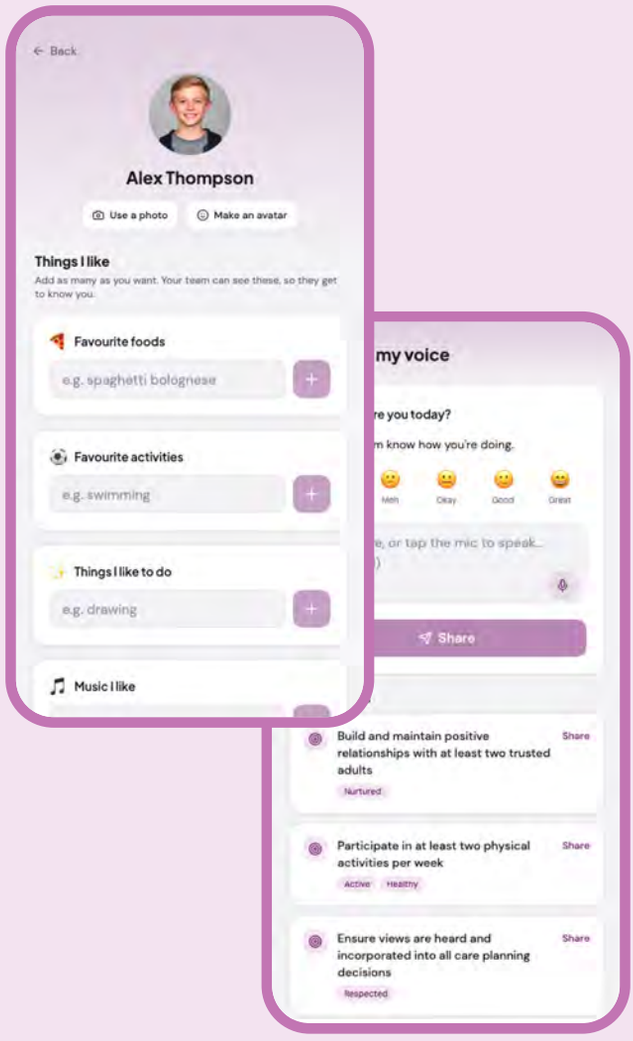
The Child's Voice

A Say in Their Care and in How Their Story is Told

A child's care record can contain years of observations, assessments and decisions. Yet the person at the centre of that record may have had little influence over how their experiences are described.

My Geco gives children and young people a way to contribute in their own words, helping the adults around them understand what matters to them and how they experience their care.

Their voice belongs throughout their journey, including the everyday moments between meetings when something important happens or a feeling is difficult to explain.





Space to Speak in Their Own Way

Speaking openly is not always easy. A child may feel uncomfortable raising a concern face to face, struggle to find the right words or need time to think before sharing.

My Geco offers another route into that conversation. It creates space to express feelings, share experiences and ask for support at a pace that feels more manageable.

Greater Influence Over Their Own Story

Children and young people need to understand how their contributions are used, who can see them and how adults respond. They should have opportunities to explain their perspective and share how their understanding changes over time.

Choices about sharing must be understandable, with clear explanations of when information needs to be passed on to help keep someone safe.

Shaped with Children and Young People

Their feedback helps shape the language, interactions and ways of contributing. This requires room to try things, say what feels uncomfortable and change what does not work. Consultation should lead to improvements children can recognise.

When a child shares something, the response matters. Knowing that an adult has understood, followed up or explained a decision helps make participation worthwhile.

Strengthening Trusted Relationships

Digital communication sits alongside conversation, advocacy and the reassurance of a trusted adult. Our vision is for every child and young person to have a meaningful part in their care, with their own words helping shape the support they receive today and the story they can look back on tomorrow.

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Shaped by Children and Young People

The child's voice is influencing how My Geco is built. A care-experienced consultant is testing the child's app, questioning its language and helping the developers understand what would make it feel useful to a young person living in care.

Listening Before Deciding

The first demonstration showed promise, particularly in the interaction between child and carer. It also revealed that some language and functionality felt designed for adults. That feedback created an opportunity to involve someone with direct experience of care in the development process.

The consultant described the frustration of being asked for views around meetings and reviews, while feelings expressed at other times could seem to disappear. There was also frustration when sharing a view produced little visible response.

Those experiences give the development team a practical question to work with: can a young person express what matters when it matters to them, and understand what happens afterwards? Check-ins, feedback and messaging provide different routes into that conversation.

A Role with Influence

The consultant meets the developers in a formal business setting and receives payment for the contribution. Testing explores whether the language feels respectful, whether the app feels like the child's space and whether its features are worth returning to.

Feedback is shaping the functionality and how it is presented. Things I Like helps children describe their interests in their own words. An avatar offers a way to personalise their profile. Reviewing their story and commenting on outcomes creates opportunities to discuss how adults understand and record their experience.

The child's side is tested alongside the carer's side. Testing in the foster carer role checks whether appointments, forms and communication fit the practical demands of caring for a household. Both perspectives inform development.

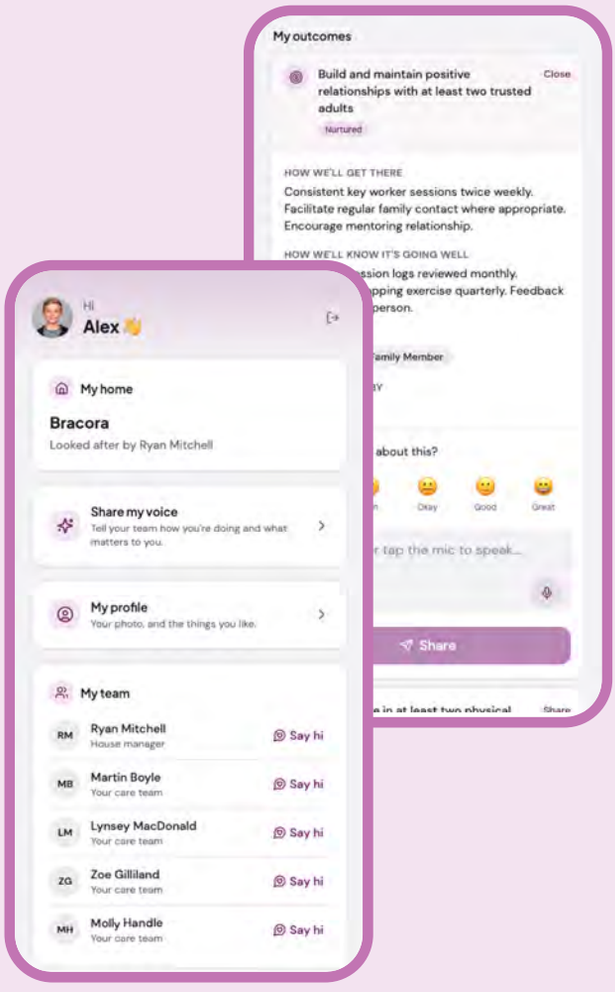


Participation That Respects the Person

Consultation follows an agreed approach, with existing support and safeguards around the participant. A formal review takes place every three weeks, with a digital route for feedback between meetings. There is room for things to go wrong and be discussed without placing pressure on the consultant to make the process succeed.

The role focuses on reviewing the fostering experience from a consultant's perspective. Personal history is not required as material for the app, and the participant's identity and experiences are protected from public promotion.

Hearing a child's voice requires adults to return to what has been shared, explain decisions and show where feedback has changed something. Our aim is to carry that approach into both the design of My Geco and the everyday care it supports.



geco® CONNECT

One Child. One Connected Story.

A child has one life, even when the organisations and professionals around them change. Our vision is to help the right people work from a more connected understanding of that life, with access limited by role, purpose, case and time.

This is not one uncontrolled database. It is a connected model with three distinct layers and clear responsibilities.

My Geco

The developing child and young person layer, supporting feelings, participation, goals and outcomes. It is another route into trusted relationships, not a replacement for them.

Geco Connect

The operational foundation already supporting care and specialist education with recording, reporting, safeguarding, compliance, outcomes and leadership oversight.

Geco Protect

The proposed next layer for defined collaboration between authorised professionals in social work, Police Scotland, health, education, care and other relevant services.

Education

- Attendance & engagement
- Achievement
- Wider outcomes
- Care & education visibility

Residential Care

- Care planning
- Daily recording
- Safeguarding & outcomes
- Staff handover



Health & Wellbeing

- Mental health support
- Therapeutic services
- Appointments
- Wellbeing tracking
- Integrated care

Secure Care Transport

- Safe, planned journeys
- Risk & safeguarding
- Journey records
- Care-team communication



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Social Work

- Assessment & planning
- Chronology
- Safeguarding & reviews
- Case Management

Independent Advocacy

- Young person's voice
- Rights & representation
- Connected to My Geco
- Independent & impartial

Transitions & Placement Moves

- Moves between organisations
- Secure information transfer
- Archived care history
- Continuity of relationships

Geco Intelligence

Helping authorised teams understand relevant information, patterns and outcomes while keeping professional interpretation and human accountability at the centre.

Connected Continuity

Supporting a clearer journey through changes in home, school, service or local authority area, with agreed rules for what is shared, retained or archived.

Learning for Scotland

Robustly anonymised and aggregated insight could help organisations and government understand needs, service pressure and outcomes without identifying children or families. That use requires its own governance, safeguards and transparency.

Connected does not mean everyone sees everything.

It means the right person can access the right information for the right purpose at the right time.



Child Exploitation

Recognising Patterns and Supporting Earlier Protective Action

A concern about a child may first appear as a small part of a daily record. When observations sit across shifts, settings and separate reports, the wider context can be harder to recognise.

Our child-exploitation vision builds on Geco's connected records and chronology. The aim is to help staff bring relevant observations together, recognise possible patterns and respond earlier to circumstances that may expose a young person to harm.

Understanding the Pattern in Context

Repeated missing episodes, recurring locations, concerning relationships or changes in a young person's routine may prompt questions. None proves exploitation on its own, and professionals need to consider the child's wider circumstances and their own account.

An AI-assisted review could help surface connections in information already recorded and point staff towards the underlying evidence. It would support professional investigation rather than assign a child a predictive risk score or draw a conclusion about them.

Turning a Concern into Action

The purpose is to help staff act on what they learn. Authorised teams could record concerns, agree protective actions and review whether those actions are helping reduce exposure to harmful situations.

An illustrative pattern involving repeated contact at a particular place might prompt a review of the circumstances, a trusted conversation with the young person and coordinated safeguarding action. The response must address the source of harm and the support the child needs.

Keeping the Child At the Centre

Exploitation is abuse. The approach must avoid blaming a young person for the behaviour of people exploiting them. Their voice, relationships and sense of safety belong at the centre of the response.

Information sharing should support the appropriate child-protection processes. Staff must act on immediate concerns through established procedures, without waiting for a pattern or an automated flag.

Our ambition is to make important connections easier to see so professionals can interrupt harmful circumstances and strengthen protection. Pattern recognition can assist that work; it cannot guarantee prevention.

Better outcomes start with listening, sharing ideas and working together.

What could your team notice sooner if relevant concerns were easier to understand together?

Harmeny Education Trust

Care and Learning Shaped Around the Child



Harmeny Education Trust provides therapeutic care and education for children and young people aged 5 to 18, through residential and day services. Its campus in Balerno, on the outskirts of Edinburgh, brings school, homes and outdoor learning spaces together.

Its five residential cottages are designed as homes, with individual bedrooms, shared meals and everyday opportunities to develop relationships and life skills. The focus is on helping children feel safe, connected and valued.

"As a Lead Child Protection Officer, I have found Geco to be an invaluable tool in strengthening safeguarding practice within our therapeutic residential childcare and education setting.

The system enables robust recording and monitoring of child protection and wellbeing concerns, supports real-time management of safety plans, and produces professional GDPR-compliant reports for external stakeholders.

What has stood out most is the collaborative approach taken by Ryan and the Geco team. Their technical expertise, responsiveness and understanding of residential childcare have been invaluable throughout the development process. They have supported us to create a system that meets our needs for recording, planning and monitoring safeguarding concerns. The flexibility of the platform also means it can continue to develop alongside our practice as our requirements evolve.

It has been reassuring to work with a team that understands the importance of safeguarding and who are genuinely invested in achieving positive outcomes. The result is a system that strengthens child protection practice, improves information sharing, and enhances the safety and wellbeing of the young people we support."

Alys Dickens
Lead Child Protection Officer, Harmeny

"Working within a therapeutic residential childcare and education setting requires systems that can be tailored to the unique needs of both our regulated service and the young people we support. From the outset, Ryan and his team demonstrated a genuine understanding of our sector and took the time to fully appreciate our specific requirements.

Their responsiveness, professionalism, and solution-focused approach were instrumental in delivering a database that truly met our needs. Throughout the implementation process, they remained readily available, provided comprehensive training, worked collaboratively with our IT team, and ensured that agreed timelines were achieved. As with any new system requiring refinement, the support has always been available.

The result is a bespoke database that has not only enhanced our operational efficiency but continues to evolve alongside our service as we explore and utilise its wider capabilities. Most importantly, the efficiencies it creates help reduce administrative burden, allowing our staff to dedicate more of their time and attention to supporting the young people in our care.

Ryan and the team at Geco have been an excellent partner throughout this journey, and I would have no hesitation in recommending them to other residential childcare services seeking a responsive, knowledgeable, and customer-focused solution."

Craig Paul
Service Manager, Harmeny

"I would highly recommend Ryan and his team based on the quality of support and service they have provided. Their responsiveness and availability have been excellent, and any design or technical challenges have been addressed quickly and collaboratively. The improvements implemented have enhanced our data handling and compliance, and enabled our team to complete key administrative tasks more efficiently and with greater confidence."

Denise West
Administration Manager, Harmeny

How can the progress a child makes in everyday life become visible alongside their learning and care goals?

From Positive Experience to Credible Evidence

Geco Connect has been shaped by organisations willing to test a new approach in live care and education settings. Their experience is essential, but the next stage requires evidence that can stand up to wider scrutiny.

Our two-year Knowledge Transfer Partnership with the University of Strathclyde, supported through UKRI, brings research, evaluation and academic challenge into the development of the platform. Dr Laura Steckley, Dr Joanna Butler and KTP Associate Taranjot Singh Chopra help examine what changes when Geco is introduced and what conditions influence those changes.

What the Evaluation is Asking

- Does recording become more consistent and useful?
- Where does duplication reduce, and where does it remain?
- Can practitioners find relevant information more easily?
- Does reporting become more efficient without losing context?
- What becomes clearer for managers and organisational leaders?
- How do staff experience implementation and change?
- What evidence links platform use to better conditions for care?

Why This Matters

Awards can create visibility and testimonials can describe experience. Evaluation helps us understand what can be claimed, how confidently it can be claimed and where the platform still needs to improve. Findings should inform development, implementation and the decisions organisations make about adoption.

Anonymised analysis must remain genuinely non-identifiable. Removing a name alone is not enough. Any wider learning must use appropriate technical and governance controls, clear purposes and thresholds that prevent individuals being recognised.

We do not want the evidence to fit our story. We want the evidence to help decide what the story should become.

Connecting the Professionals Around the Child

A social worker, police officer, health professional, teacher and residential care practitioner may each hold information that matters to the same child. They should not all see everything. They may, however, need a better way to share a defined concern, decision, action or update within a lawful multi-agency process.

Geco Protect is the proposed future layer for that defined collaboration. It would begin with the workflow professionals need to complete together, not with a request for broad access to every record. Partners would agree the purpose, responsibilities and minimum information required before technology is configured.

Trust by Design

- A clear legal purpose and accountable organisations.
- Role, case, purpose and time-based permissions.
- Data minimisation and separation where appropriate.
- Strong identity, security monitoring and audit trails.
- Human oversight and professional responsibility.
- Transparent retention, correction and exit arrangements.
- Children's rights and lived experience informing the design.



Connecting the Systems Professionals Already Use

Police Scotland, local authorities, NHS services, education and care providers already rely on internal systems built around their own duties. A useful national approach should respect those systems, investments and security boundaries.

The next layer would explore agreed interfaces through which a professional can access or contribute only the information required for a defined workflow. Where appropriate, the resulting action, decision or notification could feed into that professional's authorised internal system, preserving the organisation's own record and accountability.

A Controlled Workflow Could:

- Create a concern or request for a defined child and purpose.
- Give authorised partners access only to what their role requires.
- Record decisions, actions, ownership and follow-up in one controlled process.
- Return relevant outputs to approved internal systems.
- Close access when the purpose or authorised period ends while retaining the audit record.



This is a model to explore with Police Scotland, social work, health and other partners. It is not a claim that national integration is already live. Technical design should follow operational, legal and safeguarding agreement.

Let the Child's Journey Move with Them

A change of home, school, service or local authority area should not break the continuity of a child's story. Important history, plans, outcomes and safeguards should not have to be rebuilt simply because organisational responsibility changes.

Our long-term vision is for an authorised transfer process that allows the appropriate part of a child's record to move with them. The sending organisation would prepare and approve the transfer. The receiving organisation would accept it into the correct environment. Both would retain a clear record of what was shared, when and under whose authority.

Continuity with Control

- Transfer only the information required for the new care or education context.
- Preserve provenance so the original source, date and authorship remain clear.
- Agree what is retained, archived or no longer required.
- Use secure identity, permissions and audit records throughout.
- Help the young person understand how their information is being used, where appropriate.



A Place to Connect and Share Learning

Shared Learning Through Geco Connect

Across care and education, teams are finding ways to listen more closely to children, improve practice and make better use of the information around them. There is value in sharing those experiences, including the challenges and lessons that sit behind progress.

We host girfec.co.uk to help those conversations reach beyond individual organisations. Alongside information about Geco Connect, the website shares sector perspectives and research. Our ambition is to develop that work into a growing space for practical ideas and contributions from people working to improve children's lives.

Learning From the People Doing the Work

Our Voices of the Sector series already includes contributions from Joe Gibb on residential childcare education and Lynn Pilkington on what happens when the children we support grow up. We want to build on these perspectives with more organisational journeys, practitioner experiences and interviews across care, education, social work and advocacy.

A useful story should make room for honest questions. What proved difficult? What would you do differently? What evidence helped you understand whether a change was making a difference?

Join the Geco Community

Stay up to date with our journey.



Making Useful Knowledge Easier to Find

The website also gives visibility to sector research, including Holding Differently, Containing Distress, which explores physical restraint in residential child care. As the website develops, we want to make articles, interviews and relevant resources easier to discover, with clear authorship and links to the original evidence.

There is also an opportunity to explore GIRFEC, SHANARRI and The Promise through practical experience: how teams use these approaches in everyday work, where barriers remain and what could help turn ambition into action.

Keeping Children and Young People in the Conversation

As this develops, we want to explore how children and young people can contribute safely and meaningfully, with the right support and control over what they share. Their perspectives should help shape the questions we ask and the learning we bring together.

An Invitation to Contribute

We are inviting practitioners, organisations, researchers and others across the sector to help shape this idea. You might have a useful lesson, a question worth exploring or an example of practice that others could learn from.

What has your team learned that could help another organisation support a child better?

Awards and Recognition

Celebrating the People and Ideas Behind Geco Connect.

From FSB recognition to Scottish EDGE success and two Glasgow Business Awards, 2026 has brought important milestones for Geco Connect and The Solutions on Demand Group, which developed the platform.

Each milestone gives us an opportunity to thank the people helping us build a more connected approach to care and education. Our purpose remains the same: to support the professionals around a child and help make their story easier to understand.









Thank You to Everyone Shaping the Journey

To our team, customers and partners, thank you for the ideas, feedback and commitment you bring to this work. Awards are moments to celebrate together. The work continues through listening to the sector, improving the platform and keeping children and young people at the centre of our decisions.

Celebrating Our Progress

ROCCO **Innovation and Technology** Award 2025 winner.

SOD-IT named UK **Edge Partner of the Year** 2025.

FSB Scotland and Northern Ireland Awards 2026 runner-up in **Innovation** and runner-up in **Expansion and Growth**.

Scottish EDGE **Round 27 award of £90,000**.

Glasgow Business Awards 2026 winner for **Innovation in Business** and **Best Performing Small-Medium Business**.

Ayrshire Chamber Business Awards 2026 winner for **Digital Innovation Award**.

The Journey Continues

Shortlisted for the ROCCO Awards 2026 for **Outstanding Performing Business 5-25 Employees**.

Shortlisted for Scotland Growth Awards 2027 for **Breakthrough of the Year** and **Scale-Up of the Year**.

Recognition at the Scottish Parliament

A Motion Highlighting Geco Connect and the Opportunity for More Connected Care and Education.

On 16 September 2026, Patricia Gibson MSP lodged motion S7M-01224, titled Geco Connect Ltd Secures EDGE Awards, in the Scottish Parliament.

The motion congratulates the Stewarton-based business on its Scottish EDGE success and recognises the leadership of founder and managing director Martin Boyle.

It highlights the potential of Geco's AI-enabled platform to support residential care and education, including SHANARRI reporting, outcome tracking and inspection readiness. It also recognises that administration can take time away from the young people whom committed care and education teams support.

Read the Motion:

Motion reference:
S7M-01224

Lodged:
16 September 2026



An Opportunity to Move the Conversation Forward

For us, this recognition strengthens the case for a practical conversation about how technology can support the people around a child.

Our ambition is to help practitioners spend less time duplicating information and more time using it to understand progress and support relationships. The organisations working with Geco are helping shape that journey through their experience and feedback.

The next step is to bring more perspectives into the conversation, such as practitioners, young people, organisational leaders and those responsible for the wider system. We want to understand what evidence, safeguards and collaboration would make a connected approach useful in practice.

We thank Patricia Gibson and the MSPs who have added their support to the motion.

What would need to happen next for recognition of the problem to become a more connected approach around the child?

A Practical Next Step for Scotland

Scotland does not need another large technology promise made in isolation. It needs a contained route to understand one real problem, test the safeguards and decide whether a pilot is justified.

A 90-day discovery phase focused on one multi-agency workflow in one willing local area would create that route. A child-protection discussion, including the recording of concerns, decisions, actions and follow-up, is one possible place to begin. The exact scope should be agreed with Scottish Government and the participating partners.

The Discovery Would Establish

- The current journey, systems, duplication, delays and points of risk.
- The experience of children, young people, families and professionals.
- The legal purposes, duties, information-sharing rules and accountable roles.
- The minimum information required and the access model around it.
- Security, data protection, safeguarding, retention and exit requirements.
- A prototype using synthetic information before live data is considered.
- Measures of value, feasibility, cost and risk for a pilot decision.

The Promise Scotland's Information Sharing Project and the Data for Children Collaborative provide important foundations. Geco can bring operational experience, a configurable technology base and a willingness to co-design, measure and share learning.

Your Part in the Story

We are not asking sector leaders to accept every part of the vision without question. We are asking them to challenge it constructively, show us where it does not align with practice and help define a credible route forward.

If you believe Scotland can become better connected around the care and protection of a child, please reach out. You do not need to make a public statement. Start with a conversation and share the problem you believe we should solve first.

Every organisation holds part of the story. **The child lives the whole of it.**

We are determined to help change how the sector connects around children and young people.

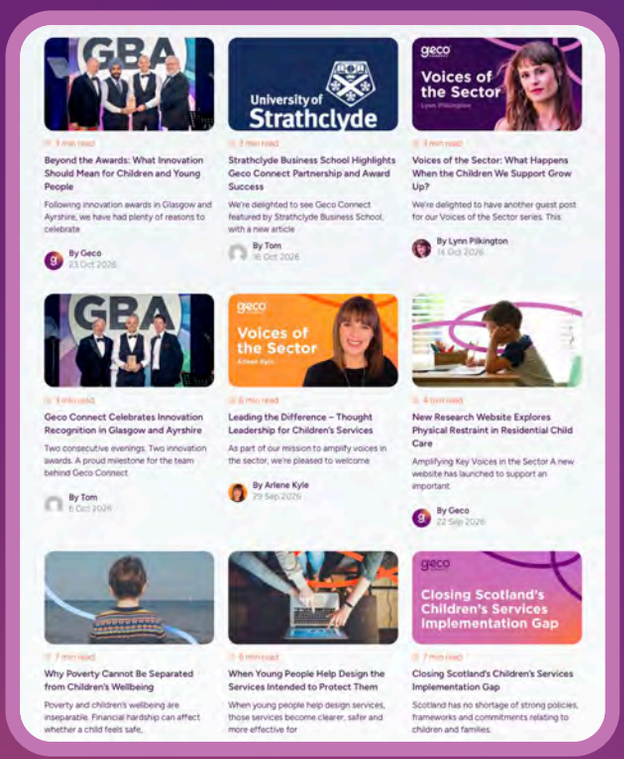
Challenge our thinking.
Help shape the vision.

If we all want better for children, what are we prepared to change?

hello@girfec.co.uk

Voices of The Sector

A Shared Space. A Stronger Voice. A More Connected Future.



Across care and education, extraordinary work happens every day. **Voices of the Sector** gives that work, and the people behind it, a shared platform.

Our vision is for GIRFEC.co.uk to become a central hub for sharing ideas, practical resources, events, training opportunities and success stories across the Geco network.

By bringing people together, we aim to celebrate innovation, share good practice and make valuable knowledge and connections easier to find.

Have an experience, insight or success story to share? We'd love to hear from professionals and organisations who would like to contribute a blog to Voices of the Sector.

Get in touch at hello@girfec.co.uk and help others learn from your experience.

Share your Voice

Visit GIRFEC.co.uk.
Help shape what comes next.

geco®
CONNECT

One child. One connected story.
Many professions playing their part.

Explore the platform.
Challenge the vision.
Help shape what comes next.

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