Fife Council

Fife Development Plan Scheme 2026

Seventeenth Edition

Planning, Climate & Sustainability Service

Dunfermline - © Ian McCracken

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About the Development Plan Scheme

The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended by the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019), and the Town and Country Planning (Development Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2023, require planning authorities to prepare a Development Plan Scheme each year.

This is the seventeenth edition of the Fife Development Plan Scheme which:

- Provides information about Fife's Development Plan and its preparation timetable;
- Summarises updated information on planning guidance, development frameworks and development briefs; and
- Let stakeholders know when and how they can get involved in the plan preparation.

Development Planning

The planning system in Scotland is led by development plans which form the basis for making planning decisions.

The Fife Development Plan is now comprised of the Fourth National Planning Framework (NPF4) (opens in a new window) and the adopted Local Development Plan (FIFEplan) (opens in a new window) together with supplementary guidance issued in connection with FIFEplan.

Following NPF4's adoption by the Scottish Government, the former **SESplan** and **TAYplan Strategic Development Plans** no longer have effect and are not part of the Development Plan. NPF3 and Scottish Planning policy have also been superseded.

The Act introduced provisions for **regional spatial strategies**. These are not part of the development plan but are to be taken into account in preparing local development plans. The Act does not prescribe the geographical areas to be covered by regional spatial strategies, nor at this stage the procedures for their preparation.

An interim regional spatial strategy has been produced for South East Scotland. It includes all of Fife. There is currently no agreed timescale for a formal version and the relevant part of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 is not in force at the time of writing.

Local Place Plans have also been introduced by the Act. These do not form part of the Local Development Plan but have an important role in preparing it. More information on local place plans is given later in this scheme.

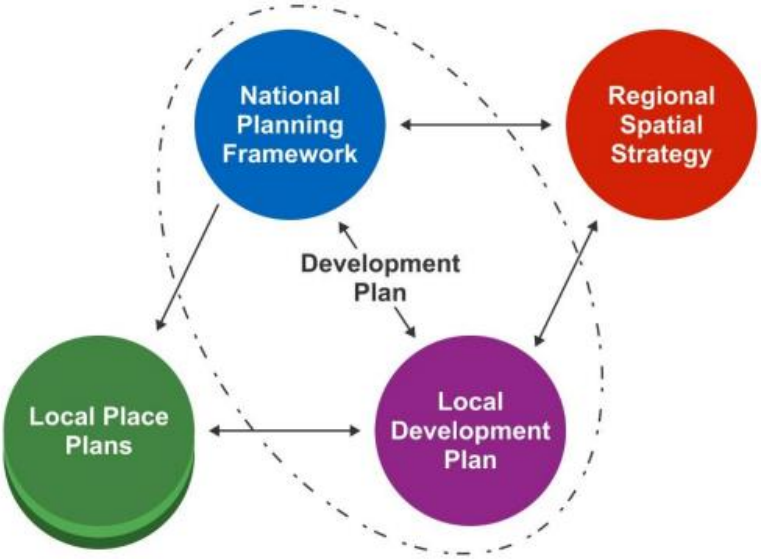


Figure 1 – The statutory development plan and related plans

Fife's Local Development Plan

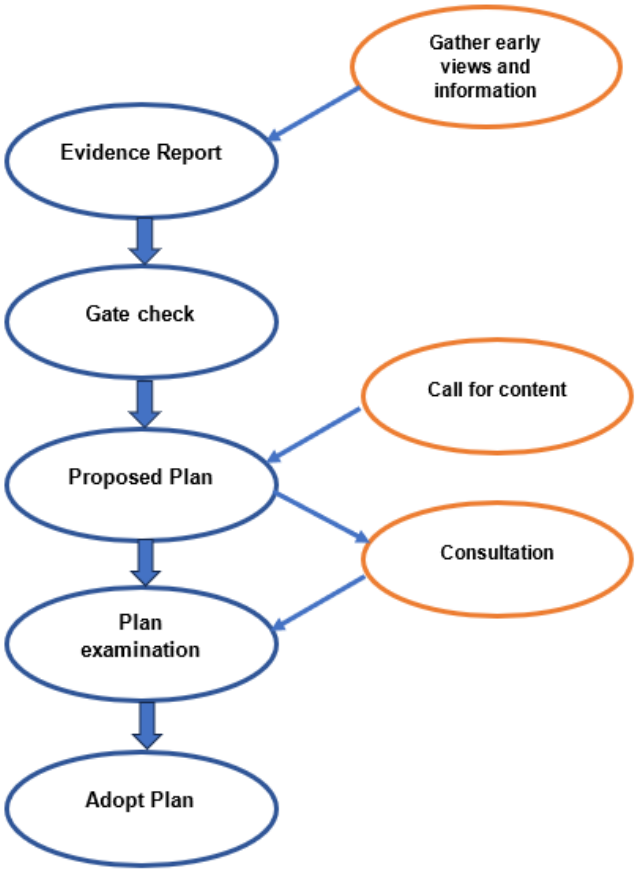
Adopted FIFEplan (Fife's Local Development Plan)

The current Local Development Plan, FIFEplan was adopted on 21 September 2017. As it was adopted more than five years ago, it needs to be updated.

Fife's Place Plan (LDP2)

Under the new Planning Act, Local Development Plans (LDPs) are to be reviewed every ten years, rather than five years as previously. The process for the preparation of LDPs has changed. There is no Main Issues Report stage; instead, the first main stage is the preparation of an Evidence Report. The Evidence Report sets out the Council's views on the matters listed which the Local Development Plan will address. It is the basis for an independent assessment of whether the Council has sufficient information to prepare the Plan. That assessment will be by a person appointed by Scottish Ministers during a 'Gate Check' at the start of the plan preparation process.

Every planning authority in Scotland should have a new style LDP in place within around five years of the Regulations coming into force – that is, by May 2028. LDP2 will be called Fife's Place Plan to reflect its role as a corporate document acting as the spatial expression of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan - *Plan4Fife*. It is programmed to be adopted by the Council in 2029. The milestone steps for Fife's Place Plan between now and adoption are outlined on this page and the timetable is set out later in this Development Plan Scheme.



Plan themes and changes

Fife's Place Plan will be quite different from FIFEplan in 2017. It will contain fewer policies because NPF4 provides most policies for development management. Climate change and the nature crisis will be core themes. The plan will be more place-focussed by setting out development requirements and objectives for local areas. As far as possible, development briefs and guidance will be included in the Plan. It will also be prepared alongside the Council's updated Plan4Fife, which will set the corporate policy direction for Fife's Place Plan to follow as a spatial land use plan.

Fife's Place Plan (LDP2) Timetable

The timetable for the plan preparation shows the expected dates for each plan stage. The date convention used is in accordance with local development planning regulations and guidance: 1Q = April-June; 2Q = July-September; 3Q October-December; 4Q = January-March.

Table 1 - LDP2 Key stage dates

Stage	Expected date	Change from DPS16 (2026)
Evidence Report submission to Gate Check	1Q 2024/25 (April 2024)	No change
Evidence Report re-submission to gate check	1st – 1Q 2025/26 (June 2025) 2nd – 4Q 2025/26 (February 2026)	No change No change
Gate Check Close	1Q 2026/27 (June 2026)	+ 2 months
Proposed LDP2 and consultation	2Q 2027/28 (August 2027)	+ 7 months
Submit Proposed Plan to Scottish Ministers	1Q 2028/29 (June 2028)	+ 7 months
Examination Report published by DPEA	4Q 2028/29 (February 2029)	+ 6 months
Adoption	1Q 2029/30 (May 2029)	+ 6 months

Timescales have shifted following a review of the Fife's Place Plan project plan. The DPEA's final Gate Check assessment concluded in June 2026, 2 months later than programmed in DPS16. In assessing the implications for the work programme post Gate Check, a range of scenarios were evaluated, considering Member engagement needs and alignment with other Council programme cycles and partner organisations.

The democratic process for preparing the LDP is set out in the Council's committee powers: Fife's seven Area Committees have a role in considering the potential impact of strategic policy proposals and making recommendations to the relevant committees. Cabinet Committee has a remit to recommend the Local Development Plan Evidence Report, the Local Development Plan, and the Local Development Plan Delivery Programme for final approval by the full Fife Council.

Participation Statement

The Participation Statement is a summary of when and how the Council proposes to engage the public on the production, adoption, and implementation of the Development Plan. This will include future changes to NPF4 although the consultation on that part of the Development Plan will be led and run by the Scottish Government. The Participation Statement also considers who is to be included, how the Council will consult, and the steps to involve the public in the process.

When you can influence Fife's Place Plan (LDP2)

There are three stages where the public can influence the shape of the next plan: early engagement (Evidence Report); the call for content (the beginning of Proposed Plan stage); and following publication of the Proposed Plan.

Table 2 – Fife Local Development Plan engagement activity is listed on the next pages

Plan stage	Engagement	How	When
Early canvassing of views - • Younger persons (age 16-25) engagement – June 2022 • 20 Minute Neighbourhood Case Study survey – September 2022 • Have Your Say on the Future of Fife's places survey engagement outcomes (Fife-wide) – October 2022 • PAS Engaging with gypsies, travellers, and travelling show people – Fife-wide – February	*Involve* *Consult* *Collaborate*	• Online and in-person • Web based surveys and commissioned engagement • In person at Sinclairtown, Freuchie, Tayport, Donibristle, North Queensferry, Kingsbarns, Canongate, Lumphinnans, and Torryburn primary schools (Living Well Locally and Play Sufficiency Assessment) • In Woodmill and Bell Baxter High Schools (Play Sufficiency Assessment)	June 2022 – August 2023

Plan stage	Engagement	How	When
2023 • Businesses and Organisations Survey • Disabled Persons & Place survey engagement outcomes (Fife-wide) – April 2023 • Play Sufficiency Assessment (Fife-wide) – May 2023		• Community sessions in Cupar, Lochore, and Buckhaven (Play Sufficiency Assessment)	
Inviting community bodies to prepare local place plans	*Involve*	• Invite to all community councils and registered community bodies • Social media • Dedicated local place plans website (opens in a new window) created • Webinar workshop • Capacity support provided online and in person by Planning Aid Scotland	May 2022 – end June 2024

Plan stage	Engagement	How	When
Participation Statement	*Inform* *Involve* *Consult*	• Invitation in Development Plan Scheme 12 (2022) to comment on how the Council should consult and engage. • Social media • E-newsletter	December 2022 – November 2023
Gate check • The Scottish Government's Planning & Environmental Appeals Division (DPEA) conducts the gate check. This is to provide an independent assessment of whether the Council has sufficient information to prepare an LDP	*Inform*	• Website • Online forums • E-newsletter	April 2024 – June 2026
Plan preparation - • Call for content – what the Plan should say for communities and Fife-wide to address the issues identified in the Evidence Report	*Inform* *Involve*	• Website • Online forums • E-newsletter • Report back in a 'you said, we did' format.	November 2024 – February 2025 August 2027
Proposed LDP (draft plan) • Plan approved by Fife Council and published for public consultation – a minimum of 12 weeks	*Consult*	• Website • Notification for neighbouring land (conterminous with or within 20 metres of the boundary of a specific site) • In person drop-in events • E-newsletter	August 2027 – November 2027

Plan stage	Engagement	How	When
Modifying the plan • Assess representations to the Proposed LDP • Negotiate changes where agreement can be reached with objectors (and other affected parties) to make modifications to the Proposed LDP	*Inform*	• Website • Online forums • E-newsletter	December 2027 – May 2028
Submit Plan to Scottish Ministers for examination	There is no consultation on this stage. The examination is led and managed by the Scottish Government, but the LDP website will be updated with the latest news		June 2028
LDP progress	*Inform* *Involve* *Consult*	• LDP webpage • E-newsletters • Media articles and news	Throughout the plan preparation period since May 2022.
National Planning Framework	*Inform*	• LDP webpage • E-newsletters	When changes are made to NPF4

A summary of all engagement will be published in an engagement calendar as the Plan progresses.

Comments on this version of the Participation Statement are invited through the contact address in the HAVE YOUR SAY box on the last page.

Table 3 – Fife Local Development Plan assessments

Plan stage	Strategic Environmental Assessment	Habitats Regulations Assessment	Flood Risk Assessment	Development Plan Transport Assessment	Public Sector Equality Duty Assessment	Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment
Evidence Report	✓ Note 1		✓		✓	✓
Plan preparation including site assessment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Proposed Plan (draft plan)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Adopted Plan	✓				✓	✓

Note:

1. The Evidence Report is not subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Environmental Report, but it scopes the SEA and will be accompanied with a scoping report.

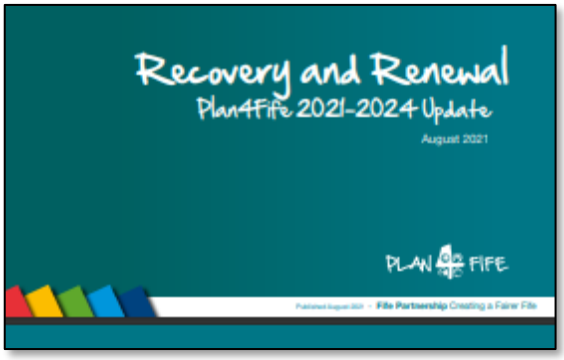
Delivery Programme

The Delivery Programme accompanies FIFEplan by identifying what is required to implement FIFEplan and deliver its proposals, the expected timescales and who is responsible. The Delivery Programme shows the linkages between development and the provision of related infrastructure and helps to coordinate activity in identifying priorities and funding. Delivery Programmes must be approved by the full Council and updated at least every two years following the Plan's adoption.

The **FIFEplan Delivery Programme 2024** is a step change to a more comprehensive and informative Delivery Programme to be used for Local Development Plans. Future iterations of the Delivery Programme will look to include information regarding estimated high level costs to the Council as a result of development and other relevant financial implications.

Community Planning

Community Planning is how public bodies work together and with the community in each council area to make life better for people. Fife's Local Outcome Improvement Plan - *Plan 4 Fife: 2017-2027* was published in April 2018 as Fife's new Community Plan. An update to this was published in August 2021 *Recovery and Renewal: Plan4Fife 2021-2024 Update*.



Work on revising the Plan 4 Fife will be co-ordinated with the LDP preparation.

Local Community Plans for each of Fife's seven local committee areas are in place, and these are in the process of being updated. Neighbourhood Plans have also been developed for selected areas. All these above plans will help to identify priorities as we review the Local Development Plan.

Local Place Plans

The 2019 Planning Act introduced provisions to enable community bodies to prepare Local Place Plans. These will not form part of the development plan but will help to inform it.

An invitation to communities to prepare Local Place Plans was issued in May 2022, through:

- Letters to community councils
- Our Planning e-newsletter
- Fife Voluntary Action e-newsletter
- News and social media releases

Local Place Plans have been introduced to encourage communities to be active participants in planning for their futures. Examples of the issues that they might address include:

- Proposals for new homes (including affordable), local employment, tourism or community facilities
- Sites which help support new renewable energy projects, or climate change adaptation measures, such as flood mitigation
- Improvements to town and neighbourhood centres
- Improvements to open space, play facilities and active travel
- Conservation of the natural and built environment
- Land for community food growing

These are plans for local communities that have a focus on development, land use and 'place-making' (an all-inclusive approach to the design, development, regeneration and management of the built environment).

Our **register of Local Place Plans** shows where Local Place Plans have been created by community groups across Fife.

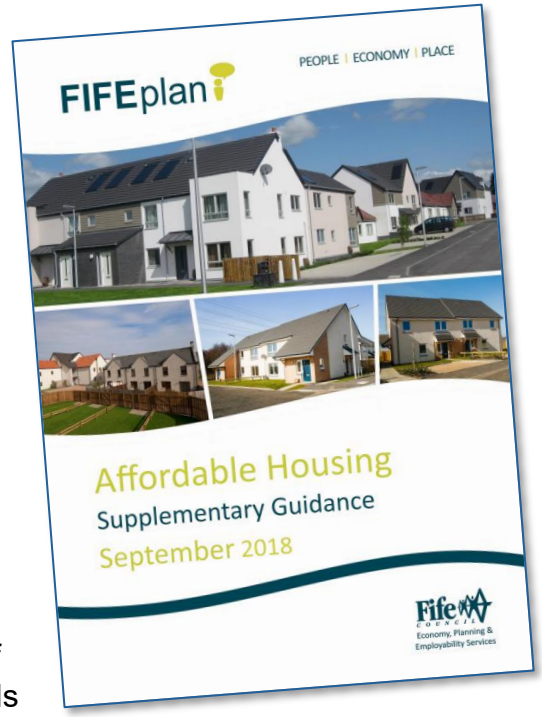
Supplementary Guidance

The main purpose of supplementary guidance is to help applicants understand what planning authorities expect in relation to planning applications.

Supplementary guidance prepared in connection with a Local Development Plan, subject to meeting consultation requirements, forms part of the Development Plan and is referred to in this document as statutory supplementary guidance. Supplementary guidance prepared for the former Strategic Development Plans no longer have effect and have been withdrawn.

A range of statutory Supplementary Guidance has been produced since the adoption of the Local Development Plan:

- Making Fife's Places Supplementary Guidance
- Affordable Housing Supplementary Guidance
- Minerals Supplementary Guidance
- Low Carbon Supplementary Guidance



The Council will also continue to use existing non-statutory guidance listed in this Development Plan Scheme and will prepare other guidance on a range of planning matters as required. A full list of current and proposed Fife Council planning guidance is included in Table 4.

Non-statutory guidance - Policy for Development and Noise was produced in 2021. This guidance aims to ensure that new development does not lead to detrimental impacts on existing businesses and future investment, or to impacts on the health and wellbeing of new or existing residents exposed to unacceptable levels of noise.

The future of Supplementary Guidance

Statutory provisions for Supplementary Guidance have been removed under the 2019 Planning Act. Local Councils will still be able to produce supplementary guidance on specific planning issues, but this will no longer have 'development plan' status.

Table 4 – Supplementary Guidance, Development Frameworks and Development Briefs (position at September 2026)

Topic	Status	Timescales
Statutory Supplementary Guidance		
Affordable Housing	Adopted Supplementary Guidance	Adopted Autumn 2018
Making Fife's Places	Adopted Supplementary Guidance	Adopted Autumn 2018
Minerals	Adopted Supplementary Guidance	Adopted Autumn 2018
Low Carbon Fife	Adopted Supplementary Guidance	Adopted January 2019

Topic	Status	Timescales
Non-Statutory Guidance		
Planning Obligations Framework Guidance	Updated version of this guidance approved in March 2026	Complete
Houses in Multiple Occupation in Central St Andrews Conservation Area	Approved Supplementary Planning Guidance June 2011.	To be reviewed as part of the Fife's Place Plan (LDP2)
Lochgelly Supplementary Planning & Transportation Guidance	Approved Supplementary Planning Guidance September 2011	Complete
St Andrews Design Guidelines	Approved Supplementary Planning Guidance August 2007	Complete
Inverkeithing Design Guide	Approved Supplementary Planning Guidance October 2024	Complete

Topic	Status	Timescales
Development Frameworks & Briefs		
East Sands Urban Design Framework	Approved September 2010	Complete
Levenmouth Strategic Land Allocation Strategic Framework	Approved October 2012	Complete
St Leonards Fields and Memorial Hospital	Approved November 2011	Complete
Development brief for Bonnygate, Cupar gap site	Approved November 2012	Complete
Gap site at 269-293 High Street, Cowdenbeath	Approved March 2011	Complete
Millgate Development Brief, Cupar	Approved November 2008	Complete
Crail North Development Framework	The community led charrette report 'Deciding Crail's Future' and Crail's Local Place Plan will inform the Council's framework for this site.	Timescales to be confirmed – to follow assessment of 'Local Place Plan' by local community.
Rosyth Waterfront Development Framework	Approved December 2017	Complete
ATS depot, Cupar	Updated Brief Approved March 2019	Complete
Madras College (Kilrymont) – Design & Development Framework	Framework approved January 2020	Complete

Topic	Status	Timescales
Town Centre Frameworks		
Kirkcaldy Town Centre Design & Development Framework	Approved October 2015	Complete
Kirkcaldy Charrette Area - Green Infrastructure Masterplan	Produced April 2018	Complete
Kirkcaldy Town Centre Car Parks Design & Development Brief	Produced February 2023	Complete
Glenrothes Town Centre Design & Development Framework	Produced September 2016	Complete
Glenrothes Town Centre Masterplan	Approved March 2021	Complete
Cowdenbeath Town Centre Design & Development Framework	Approved July 2015	Complete
Leven Town Centre - Urban Design Study	Produced August 2012	Complete
Dunfermline City Centre Design & Development Framework	Approved March 2025	Complete

KEEP IN TOUCH

You can keep in touch with the Policy & Place team preparing the Fife's Place Plan (LDP2) using the options shown.

If you prefer to write to us, you can do so by addressing your mail to:

Policy & Place Team,

Planning, Climate and Sustainability Service,

Fife House,

Glenrothes,

Fife KY7 5LT

We also welcome your views on the Participation Statement which sets out how we will engage with you and keep you informed.

HAVE YOUR SAY

E-mail your suggestions on this Development Plan Scheme to:
fife.devplan@fife.gov.uk

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