

Annual Review of Priorities and Ambitions



2022

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The 2021 Plan4Fife update recognised that existing progress, coupled with the challenges of the Covid-19 Pandemic, necessitated a shift in how we work to deliver our ambitions.

As part of this, it was recognised that an annual short, high-level review of progress against achieving these ambitions was required. This is the first of these reports.





Contents

	Page
1. Context and challenges	2
2. Recovery and Renewal Priorities	3
3. Review of Ambitions	7
4. State of Fife Indicators	9
5. Community Planning Outcomes	10



1. Context and challenges

The challenges identified in the 2017-2027 Plan4Fife under each of the 4 Themes remain and have been exacerbated by external factors such as the pandemic, which have affected both people and places.

Inclusive Growth & Jobs 	Opportunities for All 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of investment in Fife’s industrial estates and businesses infrastructure • Fife, and particularly mid-Fife, needs more businesses, with more of these trading outside Fife and investing in innovation and growth to improve their resilience. • Digital technology is rapidly changing, and people and businesses need to keep up to date with this, so they are not left behind. • We are not making the most of all of our tourism assets to grow existing or new businesses. • Travelling around Fife to access work can be difficult and the cost of travel can also be a barrier. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too many children in Fife live in poverty. • Too few children are ready to learn when they start school. There are significant gaps in health, well-being and children’s attainment between the most and least deprived areas in Fife. • Many people in Fife are unable to manage financially and suffer from significant insecurity and lack of control as a result. • People’s life chances and ability to participate are being affected by physical and mental well-being and health inequalities. • We need to make sure that everyone without work, including people with a disability and mental health issues, gains the skills and has access to the support they need to enter and sustain employment.
Thriving Places 	Community Led Services 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our town centres need to meet changing needs in order to support viable mixed economies and communities. • The quality of the local environment in many communities is poorer than in other parts of Fife. • Fife’s population is changing rapidly, with more than 20,000 new homes needed over the next 10 years, bringing both economic opportunities for Fife but also increasing pressure on our public services. • Too many homes in Fife are poor quality, and Fife has high levels of fuel poverty. • Many of our community facilities and amenities are in poor condition and do not meet the needs of local people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be an increase in levels of need and service demand over the plan period. • There will be a reduction in available funding. • Many communities feel excluded from key decisions that affect their everyday lives. • A great deal of public spending currently goes on dealing with the consequences of problems, rather than their causes.

2. Recovery and Renewal Priorities

The revised Plan identified the need to focus on the ambitions of the original 2017-2027 plan, but that there were overarching priorities for recovery and renewal from the pandemic, along with the need to address the climate emergency. These recovery and renewal priorities show a mixed picture. While some progress is apparent, Fife continues to face significant challenges, particularly around economic recovery.

Community Wealth Building	
Progress	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a new priority, there has been a need for extensive promotion of the concept of community wealth building. • Fife has a Partnership CWB Delivery Plan • Each partner organisation has adopted the Anchor Charter. • There has been local procurement success for Fife Council and supporting partners • There has been development work on Community Benefits Portal & Joint Public Assets Register • In relation to workforce pillar, there have been in-roads on Progressive Recruitment through Fife Council workforce mapping, vacancy profiling, stakeholder engagement, Facilities Management and Housing tests • Through the Leadership Summits consensus has been reached on the community wealth building systems approach. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need to move beyond theory to implementation of the policy at pace. • Fife Council is leading the Fife CWB agenda. There are internal barriers to change (culture, risk aversion, ties to current systems and processes that will need to be overcome). • There is a need for clarity around partner delivery of plan & accountability. • Existing systems and processes – both strategic and local - will require to be redesigned to support both the implementation of an organisation and partnership wide CWB approach. • This will need to be aligned with refreshed plans and strategies. • A key challenge remains to ensure that the benefits of any interventions are felt across Fife and among all social groups • The scope and extent of emerging SG CWB legislation has the potential to limit Fife's ambition.

Tackling Poverty and Preventing Crisis

Progress

- The Tackling Poverty and Preventing Crisis Delivery Plan focuses on financial Insecurity, tackling homelessness, food and household support, No Wrong Door, data and insight.
- New data tools have been procured and are now in place - Low-Income Family Tracker and Entitled2 Benefits Checker.
- A significant Winter Support Programme has been deployed to provide support in response to cost of living crisis.
- Work on Child Poverty, Homelessness and Employability is being integrated.
- Service redesign around people and place, has delivered "wrap around support" in Housing First and Employability, and building out from Kirkcaldy tests of change in Community Social Work and Putting People First.

Challenges

- This is an escalating priority, with the ambition unlikely to be achieved given levels of uncertainty facing people with the ongoing cost of living crisis and recovery from the pandemic.
- Impacts are being felt across all social groups, but particularly for those already experiencing hardship. Work is ongoing to ensure that measures consider impacts on the general population, as well as specific impacts on people and families.
- While there has been significant support provided for tackling poverty, the funding is not there to sustain this. There needs to be a rebalancing of resources from crisis to prevention.

Leading Economic Recovery

Progress

- A short-term Leading Economic Recovery Action Plan was successfully delivered
- This included 10,241 grants totalling £106m to Fife businesses
- Just under half of Fife Council procurement spend was with Fife businesses in 2021-22
- Good progress has been made in supporting business start-ups and supporting people into employment.
- Major connectivity projects include the Leven Rail Link / River Leven Programme / Levenmouth Reconnected
- Under the City Regional Deals, progress has been made with the Fife i3 Programme, Eden Campus and Arrol Gibb Innovation Campus
- The 150th Open Championship at St Andrews in 2022 saw a record number of 290,000 visitors.
- The City of Dunfermline was granted city status in 2022 as part of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations.

Challenges

- The context for economic recovery continues to be challenging, particularly for Fife businesses, many of which are faced with significant concerns.
- While the many indicators continue to mirror Scottish trends, it is highly likely that businesses will be significantly affected by increases in energy costs and an accompanying decline in people's disposable income.
- As well as addressing the impact of cost-of-living / cost-of-doing-business crisis, the new Economic Strategy for 2023-28 will need to align to community wealth building aspirations to mitigate the impact of anticipated increases in unemployment and high level of economic inactivity.
- This presents a challenging context for improving educational attainment and positive destinations for Fife school leavers.
- Mid-Fife continues to be an area of specific economic interest, and will need consistency of focus.
- Challenges remain around the just transition to net zero

Addressing the Climate Emergency

Progress


- Climate Action Plan sets out actions around reducing carbon emissions, greater resilience to climate change, increased community capacity to tackle climate change, and community wealth building
- Work is ongoing to take advantage of climate funding opportunities at both a Fife and Scottish level.
- Development of a comprehensive public sector asset register is ongoing, with the intent of helping to develop a place-based approach to climate action.
- Climate Place project developed to assess, develop and deliver local climate opportunities in Kirkcaldy area, using public sector assets and supported through the shared-prosperity fund
- Support for the development of a Community Solar Co-Operative in place with feasibility studies across 11 sites in Fife
- A test of change project in West Fife Villages has supported community Food redistribution hubs.
- The Sustainable Procurement policy has been reviewed and a programme established to develop pilot projects and training
- Improvements have been made in Climate Literacy, with Fife Council and Fife College becoming Bronze Carbon Literate Organisations and Planning Services Gold.
- With rising energy costs, work is progressing to support services, households and businesses to manage their energy bills.

Challenges

- There is a need to anticipate and plan for the more pressing implications of climate change and how it will affect peoples' lives. A Risk & Vulnerability Assessment will be required to identify agree action on adaptation to climate change across Fife.
- The energy crisis is now being experienced by households, businesses and organisations throughout Fife and beyond. This brings to the fore the need to reduce demand for energy, as the important first step in reducing carbon emissions.
- Natural Gas is the largest source of emissions and is the largest contributor to the Council's Footprint. Decarbonising heat will be a critical challenge in the coming years and will require substantial additional capital investment. Current alternative solutions primarily use electricity and therefore potentially have increased revenue costs.
- Given budget restrictions anticipated in the coming years, it will be crucial that carbon emissions reductions are considered with all new investments, in creating a new business-as-usual, and that climate is considered throughout the broad range of anchor organisations decisions and investments. There is a need for a co-ordinated and joined up approach to carbon management across partner's public sector estate and review of capital plan.
- Other areas for future action include delivery of Local Heat & Energy Efficiency Strategy requirements, Natural Capital Project, and an updated Local Biodiversity Action Plan.
- While climate funding opportunities are being maximised, the resources required to deliver Net Zero and ensure a just transition, remain a challenge.

3. Review of Ambitions

The annual review of progress against the ambitions is not about describing the activity that has been happening but looking at what impact this activity has had on the ambition by reviewing progress with performance indicators aligned to the Plan4Fife. There is a need to regularly review the indicators that are actively been used to monitor performance for the Plan4Fife to ensure they remain relevant and fit for purpose.

Inclusive Growth and Jobs		Progress Against Ambitions
	Ambition Economic activity and employment in Fife is improving faster than the rest of Scotland	Progress remains mixed. Both claimant and underemployment rates remain higher than the Scottish average, although infrastructure such as broadband access is good.
	Economic activity and employment in Mid-Fife is catching up with the rest of Fife and Scotland	Mid-Fife continues to face challenging economic circumstances, falling further behind Fife for measures linked to employment. Work continues identifying the best way to capture data for mid-Fife that is both consistent and dependable.
	Fife has year-on-year increases in visitor numbers and tourism spend	Current trends show tourism rebounding from pandemic lows, but still below pre-pandemic figures for visitor numbers, jobs supported, and tourist spend.
Opportunities for All		Progress Against Ambitions
	Ambition Fife has lower levels of poverty in line with national targets	There are signs of progress in areas such as median weekly earnings and fuel-poor households, but national trends and decisions, (particularly concerning the cost of living) will undoubtedly shape future actions and require responsiveness and adaptability.
	Educational attainment continues to improve for all groups	Current indicators show a slight improvement for some pass rates, although the gap between the least and most deprived areas persists.
	Fife has reduced levels of preventable ill health and premature mortality across all communities	While there has been slight improvement across some areas, Fife has fallen further behind Scotland for key indicators. Ongoing challenges remain around inequalities in health, including for healthy life expectancy, and substance use.

Thriving Places

Ambition

Everyone has access to affordable housing options

Fife's main town centres stand out as attractive places to live, work and visit

All our communities benefit from low levels of crime and anti-social behaviour

Every community has access to high quality outdoor, cultural and leisure opportunities

Progress Against Ambitions

Progress appears steady, with a spike in the number of households in temporary accommodation. The economic context is likely to increase the need for affordable housing options.

Town centres continue to face significant challenges, with retail vacancies increasing and challenging economic conditions likely to have an impact. The effects are being felt across Fife.

Fife continues to perform well at a Scottish level. Public concern about specific anti-social behaviour issues remains low, while recorded crime shows only minor fluctuations.

This ambition has seen some decline, with figures for cultural engagement and attendance all decreasing. The effect of COVID on this ambition, in both the short and medium term, may be significant.



Community Led Services

Ambition

Our public services are more joined up and acting 'one step sooner'

Fife's communities and individuals are more involved in local decision making and in helping to plan and deliver local services

Progress Against Ambitions

There is a mixed picture for this ambition. Public services have experienced unprecedented demand from disadvantaged and vulnerable support as a result of both the pandemic and the ongoing cost of living crisis. The belief that council services are designed for needs remains above the Scottish average.

The partnership and community response to the pandemic showed that there is more scope for local people to get involved in helping to plan and deliver local services. There has been a five percentage point drop in ability to influence local decisions from a historic high relative to other areas in Scotland.



Addressing Climate Change

Ambition

Fife has lower levels of carbon emissions in line with national targets (75% by 2030 from 1990 baseline).

Progress Against Ambitions

Fife Council's carbon footprint is still on track to achieve Scottish Government's target for 2030 of a reduction of least 75% lower than the baseline year (61% reduction from 1990 baseline to 2022). Area wide emissions per capita are also falling steadily, though the total area emissions rose marginally in 2020.

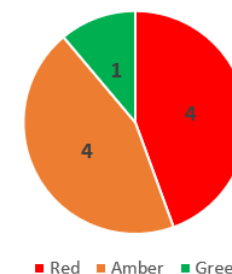
4. State of Fife Indicators

The State of Fife indicators are a focused set of indicators developed to monitor whether the Plan4Fife is having the high-level strategic impact it aims to achieve. The indicators are intended to provoke discussion on whether we are doing the right things, approaching them in the right way and achieving the right level of impact.

Of 9 indicators, 1 shows improvement, 4 give some level of concern, and the remaining 4 track the Scottish average.

Please note that this represents a retrospective assessment of performance over time. It is common for there to be a lag in reporting data on longer term outcomes.

State of Fife Indicators



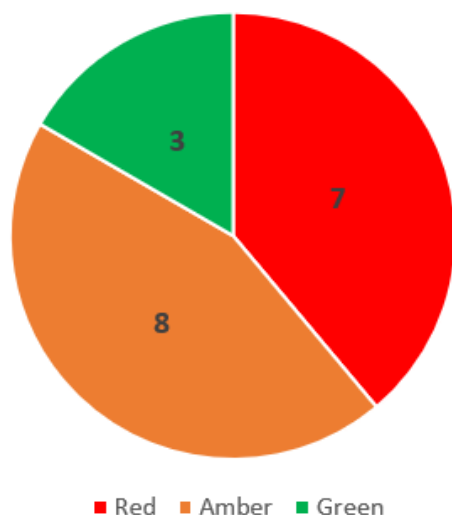
State of Fife Indicator	What is the data showing?	RAG
Life Expectancy (males and females)	Life expectancy continues to stall, indicating a need to monitor trends and inequalities in mortality in more general need to improve health and its determinants.	Yellow
Healthy Life Expectancy	While healthy life expectancy overall has been reducing, Fife is reducing at a sharper rate than Scotland. The long term impacts of COVID-19 on population health have yet to be seen.	Red
Early child development	The proportion of children in Fife with any developmental concern recorded at the 27-30 month review has shown improvement in the context of a slight decrease for Scotland.	Green
School Attainment (One or more higher pass at S5)	Fife's school attainment score for those seeking access routes through higher education, as a means to improving the inclusion of post school opportunities, continues to track below the Scottish average. The reduction in this figure for both Fife and Scotland should be interpreted with caution given changes to SQA accreditation with the pandemic.	Red
Employment Rate	While the Fife rate has mirrored Scotland it has been decreasing at a faster rate leading to a widening of the gap	Red
Income Deprivation	Fife income deprivation tracks the Scottish level	Yellow
Influence over Decisions in Local Area	While Fife residents feel more able to influence decisions in their local area compared to Scotland, this has fallen in Fife from a previous high.	Yellow
Mental Health (Prescriptions for anxiety and depression)	The proportion of the population in receipt of prescriptions for anxiety and depression is greater in Fife than Scotland.	Red
Mental Wellbeing	Fife continues to track Scotland on mental wellbeing	Yellow

5. Community Planning Outcomes

Through the Community Planning Outcomes Profiling (CPOP) Tool, the Improvement Service provides an assessment of how Community Planning Partnerships are performing against a set of core measures on important life outcomes including early years, older people, safer/stronger communities, health and wellbeing, and engagement with local communities.

At a level below the State of Fife Indicators it provides a good high level reflection of the broad range of life outcomes that the Plan4Fife is looking to improve. It helps to assess if the lives of people in Fife are improving and provides a consistent basis for measuring outcomes and inequalities of outcome, from Fife, down to Area, and neighbourhood level (as per Local Strategic Assessments). Please note the assessment below is retrospective, based on a snapshot of data available as at October 2022. More recent progress will be reflected in future annual updates.

Fife Community Planning Outcomes



Of the 18 indicators in the Community Planning Outcomes Framework, only 3 are assessed as Green, showing good progress relative to other areas of Scotland. While crime rates continue to improve, more progress could be made on child healthy weight. The impact of covid has yet to be reflected in premature mortality figures.

8 indicators are assessed as Amber. This includes child poverty, healthy birthweight, unplanned hospital attendances, emergency admissions and wellbeing, business survival, dwelling fires, and carbon emissions. Where progress against key life outcomes has been assessed as Amber, this is often against a generally improving trend, but Fife is not improving at the same rate as Scotland.

7 indicators are assessed as Red, including employment rate, median earnings, out of work benefits, fragility, and fuel poverty reflecting the particularly difficult economic context for recovery. Challenges remain around raising attainment and supporting positive destinations.

More information on the Community Planning Outcomes Profiling Tool, including indicator definitions, and locality information, is available at [Community Planning Outcomes Profile | Improvement Service](#)

RAG	Outcomes compared to the previous year, and over time
	CPP outcome better than Scotland AND CPP outcome improvement rate faster than Scotland
	CPP outcome better than Scotland AND CPP outcome improvement rate slower than Scotland OR CPP outcome worse than Scotland AND CPP outcome improvement rate faster than Scotland
	CPP outcome worse than Scotland AND CPP outcome improvement rate slower than Scotland

Key Life Outcomes

Indicator

Progress against outcomes

RAG

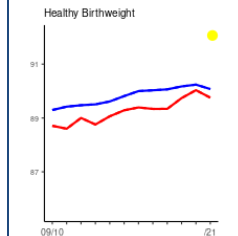
Change over time



Healthy Birthweight

Despite steady progress between 2018 and 2020 taking the figure above 90%, the percentage of babies with a healthy birthweight in Fife remains below the Scottish figure. Both Fife and Scottish birthweights decreased in 2021, with the Fife figure returning to 2019 levels.

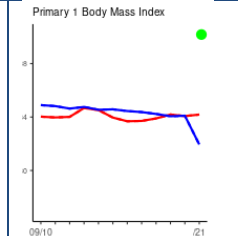
Amber



Child Healthy Weight

At 84.2% in 2021, the proportion of P1 children in Fife with a healthy BMI was more than 2% higher than the Scottish figure. This was not due to a significant Fife improvement, with the Fife proportion remaining steady between 2019 and 2021. Rather it highlights a substantial drop in the Scottish percentage, to 81.9% in 2021.

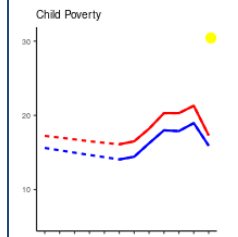
Green



Child Poverty

This indicator relates to the percentage of children in low-income families – households where income is less than 60% of median income. While the Fife figure has consistently been higher than the Scottish equivalent, it has tracked the general trend. This includes a fall in 2020/21, with the Fife percentage decreasing from 21.3% to 17.3%.

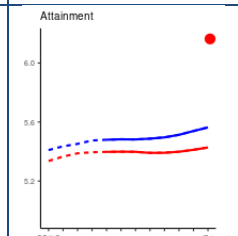
Amber




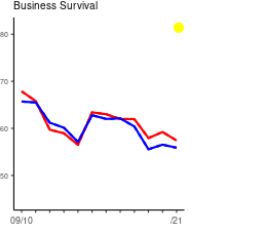

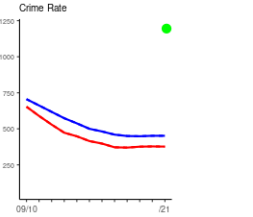

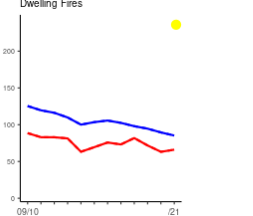

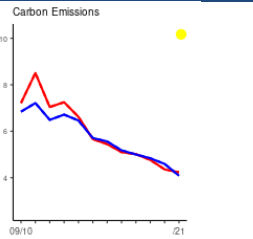

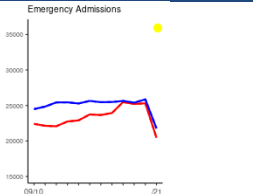
Attainment


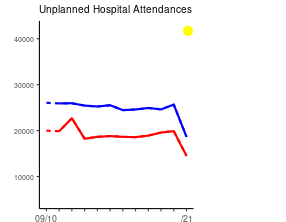

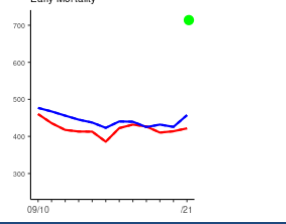

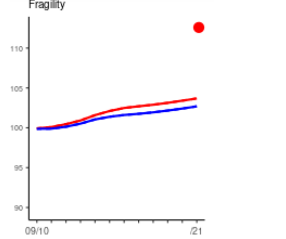

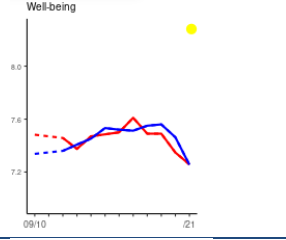

Attainment levels in Fife (based on the highest level of qualification achieved by school leavers, averaged across all leavers within a data zone) have consistently been lower than the Scottish figure. Fife is remarkable for its consistency, with a score of 5.4 in each year between 2010/11 and 2020/21. This has led to a growing divide with the Scottish figure, with the attainment level growing from 5.4 to 5.6 over this time.

Red



<p>Positive Destinations</p>	<p>Positive destinations for school leavers include higher education, further education, employment, training, voluntary work or activity agreements. As trend data shows, the gap between Fife and Scotland has increased over time, with the recent Scottish increase in positive destinations yet to be replicated in Fife. Between 2018/19 and 2020/21, the Fife percentage of positive destinations decreased from 91.0 to 89.8. The Scottish figure over the same period increased from 92.9 to 93.2. Fife has made improvements in this area in the last year, but still below outcomes for Scotland.</p>	<p>● Red</p>	
<p>Employment Rate</p>	<p>The employment rate encompasses the percentage of the economically active population (16-64) who are in employment. While the Fife and Scottish rates have broadly mirrored each other over the last decade. The gap has grown in the last two years, primarily due to a steeper decrease in the Fife rate. The Fife employment rate decreased from 74.00 to 72.33 between 2018/19 and 2020/21. The Scottish decrease over this time was smaller, from 74.07 to 73.93.</p>	<p>● Red</p>	
<p>Median Earnings</p>	<p>Fife continues to closely track the Scottish median earnings rate, albeit at a consistently lower level. Fife median earning of £479.10 in 2020/21 are slightly below the Scottish figure of £488.30. Of note is that this is the largest difference between Scottish and Fife earnings since 2012/13.</p>	<p>● Red</p>	
<p>Out of Work Benefits</p>	<p>This indicator shows the percentage of the 16-64 population in receipt of out of work benefits. Examination of the data over the long-term shows some interesting trends between the Scottish and Fife figures. While Fife has consistently had a higher rate of out of work benefits, the difference was never greater than 0.3 percentage points between 2008/9 and 2017/18. Since this point, Fife's percentage rate has ranged from 0.8 - 1 percentage points above Scotland. The impact of COVID led to a significant increase in Fife's rate, from 12.9 in 2019/20 to 16.6 in 2020/21.</p>	<p>● Red</p>	

Business Survival	<p>This indicator covers the proportion of business surviving 3 years since the birth of the enterprise. What is immediately apparent is that, at both a Scottish and Fife level, there are significant year-on-year fluctuations, with the Fife rate ranging between 56.5 and 67.9 over the indicator period. Although the Fife rate fell below the Scottish figure on several occasions during the indicator period, from 2017/18 to 2020/21 the Fife survival rate has been consistently higher.</p>	 Amber	
Crime Rate	<p>In common with the Scottish trend, the Fife crime rate (number of crimes per 10,000 population) has seen a long-term decrease before stabilising in recent years. Between 2016/17 and 2020/21, the Fife crime rate stayed within the range of 370-377 crimes per 10,000, with this rate expected to decrease further in the coming years.</p>	 Green	
Dwelling Fires	<p>The number of dwelling fires per 100,000 population considers both deliberate and accidental fires. While the Fife rate has consistently been below the Scottish equivalent, there has been consistent yearly variation which contrasts with the Scottish trend. The Scottish figure has decreased, year-on-year, since 2016/17, with a 2020/21 figure of 85.3. Fife figures have seen great fluctuation over the same period, including increases in 2017/18 and 2020/21.</p>	 Amber	
Carbon Emissions	<p>Carbon emissions in both Fife and Scotland have seen a long-term decrease, particularly in the years since 2012/13. The Fife figure has reduced from 7.2 to 4.2 over this period, with the Scottish figure seeing a similar reduction, from 6.7 to 4.1.</p>	 Amber	
Emergency Admissions 65+	<p>From 2009/10 to 2016/17 emergency hospital admissions (65+) rose in Fife, indicating increasing pressure on health services. An increase to 25,492 in 2017/18 saw Fife increase to a comparable level just below the Scottish rate, where it has broadly remained. While Fife saw a greater decrease than Scotland in 2020/21, to 20,451, this may have been affected by differences in COVID impact on services around Scotland.</p>	 Amber	

Unplanned Hospital Attendances	<p>This data shows the number of emergency department attendances per 100,000 population. Apart from an increase in 2011/12, Fife has generally mirrored the Scottish trend. Both Fife and Scotland saw a sharp decrease in unplanned attendances in 2020/21, likely due, in part, to lockdowns and other ramifications of the COVID pandemic. The Fife rate decreased from 19881.86 in 2019/20 to 14484.80 in 2020/21.</p>	 Amber	
Premature Mortality (under 75)	<p>Premature mortality statistics show the European age standardised rate of deaths for persons under 75 per 100,000 persons per year. These are based on historic trends and do not take into account Covid-19 related deaths. The data shows that, except for 2017/18, Fife has consistently tracked lower than the equivalent Scottish rate. Of note is that while both Fife and Scotland saw an increase in 2020/21, the Fife rise was much smaller, from 414 to 422, compared with 426 to 457 in Scotland.</p>	 Green	
Fragility	<p>This is a combined index of three indicators: depopulation, Old Age Dependency Ratio (the ratio of older people to the working age population) and rural depopulation. A rising index indicates an increasingly fragile demographic. While the Fife number has been consistently above the Scottish equivalent since 2012/13, the rate of increase has been broadly similar over this period. The Fife 2020/21 figure of 103.7 is slightly above the Scottish figure of 102.7.</p>	 Red	
Wellbeing (ONS)	<p>Wellbeing figures at both a Fife and Scottish level have seen some fluctuation in recent years. With higher scores evidencing a greater sense of wellbeing, the Fife wellbeing score was lower than Scotland for the period 2017/18 - 2019/20. However, the more pronounced Scottish decrease in 2020/21 means that both Fife and Scotland have a rate of 7.26 for that year.</p>	 Amber	
Fuel Poverty	<p>Fuel poverty data is not directly comparable due to a change in methodology in 2018. Prior to 2018, fuel poverty was defined as one tenth of household income was spent on fuel costs. From 2018 this focus was narrowed so that as well as meeting the one-tenth criteria, household income after fuel costs had to be insufficient to maintain an acceptable standard of living. Post 2018 figures have reduced the gap between Fife and Scotland, with both on a downwards trend. Fife reduced from 26.3 to 23.1 between 2018/19 and 2020/21, with the Scottish rate decreasing from 24.8 to 22.9 over the same period.</p>	 Red	