

People and Communities Scrutiny Committee

Committee Room 2, 5th Floor, Fife House, North Street,
Glenrothes



Thursday 15 May 2025 - 10.00 am

AGENDA

Page Nos.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **CHANGE IN MEMBERSHIP** – committee to note that Councillor Karen Beaton replaces Councillor Alistair Cameron as a member of the People & Communities Scrutiny Committee.
3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – In terms of Section 5 of the Code of Conduct Members of the Committee are asked to declare any interest(s) in particular items on the agenda and the nature of the interest(s) at this stage.
4. **MINUTE** – Minute of the People & Communities Scrutiny Committee Meeting of 13 March 2025 3 – 9
5. **VERBAL UPDATE ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING** – Verbal update by the Head of Housing Services
6. **SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE LOCAL PLAN 12 MONTHS PERFORMANCE REPORT** – Report by Scottish Fire & Rescue Service 10 – 26
7. **TACKLING DAMPNES AND MOULD IN PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING – UPDATE** – Report by the Head of Housing Services 27 – 37
8. **EQUALITY & DIVERSITY OUTCOMES PROGRESS 2023-2025** – Report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods Services 38 – 52
9. **FIFE CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD** – Report by the Head of Children & Families & Criminal Justice Services 53 – 68
10. **PEOPLE & COMMUNITIES FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME** – Report by Executive Director – Finance and Corporate Services 69 – 74

Members are reminded that should they have queries on the detail of a report they should, where possible, contact the report authors in advance of the meeting to seek clarification.

Lindsay Thomson
Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Finance and Corporate Services

Fife House

North Street
Glenrothes
Fife, KY7 5LT

8 May, 2025

If telephoning, please ask for:
Michelle Hyslop, Committee Officer, Fife House 06 (Main Building)
Telephone: 03451 555555, ext. 445279; email: Michelle.Hyslop@fife.gov.uk

Agendas and papers for all Committee meetings can be accessed on
www.fife.gov.uk/committees

BLENDED MEETING NOTICE

This is a formal meeting of the Committee and the required standards of behaviour and discussion are the same as in a face to face meeting. Unless otherwise agreed, Standing Orders will apply to the proceedings and the terms of the Councillors' Code of Conduct will apply in the normal way

For those members who have joined the meeting remotely, if they need to leave the meeting for any reason, they should use the Meeting Chat to advise of this. If a member loses their connection during the meeting, they should make every effort to rejoin the meeting but, if this is not possible, the Committee Officer will note their absence for the remainder of the meeting. If a member must leave the meeting due to a declaration of interest, they should remain out of the meeting until invited back in by the Committee Officer.

If a member wishes to ask a question, speak on any item or move a motion or amendment, they should indicate this by raising their hand at the appropriate time and will then be invited to speak. Those joining remotely should use the "Raise hand" function in Teams.

All decisions taken during this meeting, will be done so by means of a Roll Call vote.

Where items are for noting or where there has been no dissent or contrary view expressed during any debate, either verbally or by the member indicating they wish to speak, the Convener will assume the matter has been agreed.

There will be a short break in proceedings after approximately 90 minutes.

Members joining remotely are reminded to have cameras switched on during meetings and mute microphones when not speaking. During any breaks or adjournments please switch cameras off.

**THE FIFE COUNCIL - PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE –
BLENDED MEETING**

Committee Room 2, 5th Floor, Fife House, North Street, Glenrothes

13 March 2025

10.00 am – 3.50 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Gary Holt (Convener) Lesley Backhouse, Patrick Browne (substituting for Alistair Cameron), Ken Caldwell, Altany Craik, Peter Gulline, Jean Hall-Muir, Alycia Hayes (substituting for Blair Allan), Donald Lothian, Lynn Mowatt, Gordon Pryde (substituting for Alex Campbell), Sam Steele, Jonny Tepp, Ann Verner, Darren Watt and Jan Wincott.

ATTENDING: Michael Enston, Executive Director, Communities, Paul Vaughan, Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods Service; John Mills, Head of Housing Services, Patricia Spacey, Housing and Safer Communities Team Manager, Paul Short, Service Manager (Housing Management Executive), Joan Lamie, Service Manager (Housing Estates and Safer Communities, Liz Watson, Partnership and Strategy Officer, Income Poverty and Private Housing Service, Ian Dawson , Business Change Manager, Housing Services; Allan Barclay, Service Manager, Building Services; Lisa Mccran, Service Manager(Strategic Development), Patricia Pattison, Lead Officer - Child Protection Committee, Criminal Justice Services; Dougie Dunlop, Independent Chair, Fife Public Protection Committees; Carol Connolly, Executive Director, Place, Gaynor Graham, HR Lead Officer, Human Resources Service; Ronan Burke, Co-ordinator - Vulnerable Adult Protection Committee, Avril Sweeney, Manager (Compliance), Health and Social Care Localities, Alan Adamson, Service Manager (Quality Assurance) and Audrey Valente, Chief Finance Officer, Health and Social Care Partnership; Helen Guthrie, Accountant and Lesley Kenworthy, Accountant, Finance and Corporate Services and Michelle Hyslop, Committee Officer, Legal and Democratic Services.

ALSO ATTENDING: Chief Superintendent Derek McEwan and Police Sergeant Stuart Allan, Police Scotland, David Scott, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and Freya Lees, North Star Consulting Research (Tenants Scrutiny Panel).

170. CHANGE OF MEMBERSHIP

The committee noted that Councillor Jean Hall-Muir had replaced Councillor Bailey-Lee Robb as a member of the committee and welcomed her to the first meeting of the committee.

The committee thanked Councillor Bailey-Lee Robb for his contribution to the work of the committee during his membership.

171. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Watt provided a transparency statement relating to para 176 – Fife Community Safety Partnership as he was a member on the Fife Community Safety group.

172. MINUTE

The committee considered the minute of the People and Communities Scrutiny Committee of 16 January 2025.

Decision

The committee agreed to: -

- (1) rectify the meeting attendee list to remove Councillor Peter Guilline as an attendee at its meeting of 16 January 2025; and
- (2) otherwise approve the minute.

173. VOIDS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT

The committee considered a report by the Head of Housing Services providing an overview of the Housing Emergency Response and implementation of the Voids Service Improvement Plan. The report also incorporated a presentation and response from the Tenant and Resident Scrutiny Panel exercise that was reported in December 2024.

Decision

The committee: -

- (1) welcomed and noted the presentation by the Tenants Association;
- (2) thanked the Tenants and Residents Scrutiny Panel for undertaking the work on a sample of void properties;
- (3) considered the voids improvement and governance arrangements that were in place;
- (4) noted receipt of the Tenant and Resident Scrutiny Panel report and acknowledged that a full response would be provided following the People and Communities Scrutiny Committee;
- (5) noted the performance and standards slippage and recognised that measures were being put into place to support performance improvements; and
- (6) noted that an updated report on Voids including longer-term voids and re-let's would be brought back to a future meeting of the committee, to be determined following the workshop on 27 March 2025.

174. POLICE SCOTLAND PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTERS 1 TO 3 - 2024/2025.

The committee considered a report by the Chief Superintendent of Police Scotland providing members with an oversight of the performance within the Fife Division of Police Scotland.

Decision

The committee noted the performance as detailed in the report.

The meeting adjourned at 12.05pm and reconvened at 12.10pm

175. FIFE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

The committee considered a report by the Head of Housing Services updating members on the progress of the Fife Community Safety Partnership (FCSP) in implementing the current Community Safety Partnership Delivery Plan 2023-26.

Decision

The committee noted the progress to date.

Councillor Donald Lothian left the meeting during the above item.

The meeting adjourned at 12:45pm and reconvened at 1.20pm.

176. PUBLIC PROTECTION ANNUAL REPORT

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Communities providing an update on the work that had been undertaken within the Adult Support and Protection Committee, the Child Protection Committee and the Multi-Agency Public Protection arrangements for sex offenders.

Decision

The committee noted: -

- (1) the range of work that had been undertaken;
- (2) some of the key issues facing public protection services within Fife; and
- (3) that there were current discussions at a national level in relation to approaches on public protection.

177. CARE INSPECTORATE GRADE ASSURANCE AND MONITORING PROCESS – UPDATE

The committee considered a report by the Director of Health and Social Care Partnership providing an update on the range of inspections that had been undertaken by the Care Inspectorate and highlighted the inspection grades awarded for care services in Fife. The report detailed the inspection grades awarded and explained the processes that were in place within the Health and Social Care Partnership to effectively monitor improvement actions and support best practice across the sector.

Decision

The committee: -

- (1) noted the updated report on inspection grades awarded to care services in Fife following a request for a follow up report at the People and Communities Scrutiny committee on 27 June 2024; and
- (2) agreed that the figures on the care inspection website and the figures in the report be amended to reflect the current position for all care homes in Fife and arrange to upload a modified version of the report online.

178. FIFE COUNCIL DUTY OF CANDOUR ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

The committee considered a report by the Head of Children and Families and Justice Social Work Services advising members of the Duty of Candour provisions in the health (Tobacco, Nicotine etc. and Care) (Scotland) Act 2016 (The Act), that came into effect on 1 April 2018. The report advised on the requirement for each organisation subject to "The Act" to produce and publish an annual report detailing when and how the duty had been applied.

Decision

The committee considered and reviewed the information detailed in the report.

179. ARMED FORCES COVENANT REPORT

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Place updating on the work that had been undertaken across the Council and in accordance with the Council's commitments to the Armed Forces Covenant. The report highlighted the areas of work relating to the Council's MOD's Employers Defence Recognition Accreditation Scheme.

Decision

The committee noted the content of the report.

180. PRESSURES ON THE HOUSING ADAPTATIONS BUDGET

The committee considered a report by the Head of Housing Services providing an update on the current pressures in the Housing Adaptions budget. The report outlined the future pressures on managing the housing adaptions budget.

Decision

The committee considered and noted the current and long-term pressures on the Housing Adaptions budget.

181. AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAMME (AHP) DELIVERY UPDATE

The committee considered a report by the Head of Housing Services providing an update on the delivery of the Fife Affordable Housing Programme and the barriers in delivering the programme.

Motion

Councillor Holt, seconded by Councillor Watt moved to approve the report recommendations with the addition that the Head of Housing Services would look at the property acquisition figures for each local area and if there were discrepancies an updated report would be submitted to a future meeting of the People and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

Amendment

Councillor Backhouse seconded by Councillor Caldwell moved to continue the report to the next meeting of the committee.

Roll Call Vote

For the Motion – 8 votes

Councillors Browne, Pryde, Craik, Gulline, Holt, Tepp, Watt and Wincott.

For the Amendment – 7 votes

Councillors Hayes, Backhouse, Caldwell, Mowatt, Hall-Muir, Steele and Verner.

Having received a majority of the votes, the motion was carried.

Decision

The committee: -

- (1) noted the progress made towards completion of the Phase 3 and Transitional Affordable Housing Programme and the start of Phase 4; and
- (2) acknowledged the constraints on the Affordable Housing Programme delivery as detailed in the report; and
- (3) noted that the Head of Housing Services would clarify the property acquisition figures for all local areas and report back to committee should there be any discrepancies in the reported figures.

The meeting adjourned at 2.50pm – 2.55pm during the above item

182. TACKLING DAMPNESS AND MOULD IN COUNCIL HOUSES – UPDATE ON PROGRESS

The committee considered a joint report by the Head of Housing Services and the Head of Environment and Building Services providing an update on the work to date that Council Services have taken to support the Council's landlord role in managing efficiently condensation, dampness and mould. The report also acknowledged the changes that have been made in managing reported cases of dampness and mould and highlighted the improved performance in responding to tenant's enquiries.

Decision

The committee: -

- (1) noted the changes made in processing reports of dampness and condensation in council properties;
- (2) noted the benefits of using the Dynamic Resource Scheduling (DRS) system; and
- (3) considered the outcomes and performance results as detailed in the report.

Councillor Gulline left during consideration of the above item.

183. 2024-25 REVENUE MONITORING PROJECTED OUTTURN – COMMUNITIES SERVICE

The committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services) and the Executive Director (Communities) providing an update on the projected outturn position for the 2024/25 financial year for the Communities and Housing Revenue Account (HRA), which is an area of scope within this committee.

Decision

The committee considered the current financial performance and activity as detailed in the report.

184. 2024-25 CAPITAL PLAN PROJECTED OUTTURN – COMMUNITIES

The committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services and Executive Director, Communities providing an update on the Capital Investment Plan and advised on the projected financial position for the 2024-25 financial year.

Decision

The committee noted the current performance and activity for the 2024-25 Capital Monitoring as detailed in the report.

185. 2024-25 REVENUE BUDGET PROJECTED OUT-TURN – HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE

The committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services and the Director, Health and Social Care Partnership providing an update on the 2024-25 projected out-turn as at December 2024 and the movement from October 2024 for the Fife Council Social Care Services for Adults and Older People.

Decision

The committee noted the current financial performance and activity as detailed in the report.

186. 2024-25 CAPITAL PLAN PROJECTED OUTTURN – HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE

The committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services and the Director, Health and Social Care Partnership providing an update on the Health and Social Care Capital Investment Plan and advised on the projected out-turn for the 2024-25 financial year, which is an area of scope within this committee.

Decision

The committee noted the current performance and activity across the 2024-25 Financial Monitoring as detailed in the report.

187. PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services asking members to consider the future workplan for the People and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

Decision

The committee: -

- (1) noted the future workplan of the People and Communities Scrutiny; and
- (2) agreed that future meetings would contain no more than 10-12 items on the agenda to allow for better scrutiny at future meetings.

15 May 2025

Agenda Item No. 6

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Local Plan 12 Months Performance Report

Report by: Lee Turnock – Local Senior Officer

Wards Affected: All Fife Wards

Purpose

This report provides the Committee with incident information for the period 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025. The incident information enables the Committee to scrutinise the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) Fife - Local Senior Officer (LSO) Area - against its key performance indicators (KPIs)

Recommendation

- (1) Consider and comment on the progress across a range of KPI's within this report.

Resource Implications

Not applicable

Legal & Risk Implications

The Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 provides the statutory basis for fire reform, including the responsibility to:

- Put in place statutory planning and reporting requirements including providing facilities for consultation.
- Make new arrangements for strengthening local engagement and partnership working, including a new statutory role in the LSO and development of local fire and rescue plans linked to community planning, along with clear powers for local authorities in relation to the provision of fire and rescue services in their area.

Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment checklist is not required as this report does not have any immediate implications for service delivery and policy.

Consultation

This document is circulated amongst SFRS Fife LSO managers to enable areas of high incidence to be scrutinised for reduction strategies.

Report Contact - Lee Turnock
Author Name – Des Donnelly
Author's Job Title – Group Commander
Workplace – Clackmannanshire, Fife and Stirling LSO Area
Telephone: 07979 968483
Email: desmond.donnelly@firescotland.gov.uk



Fife

2024-25

Scrutiny Report



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
Working together for a safer Scotland

**Working together
for a safer Scotland**

Fife

All

Multiple selections

Fife

2024-25

Scrutiny Report

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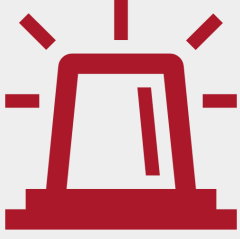




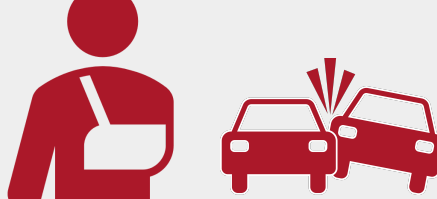



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About the statistics within this report

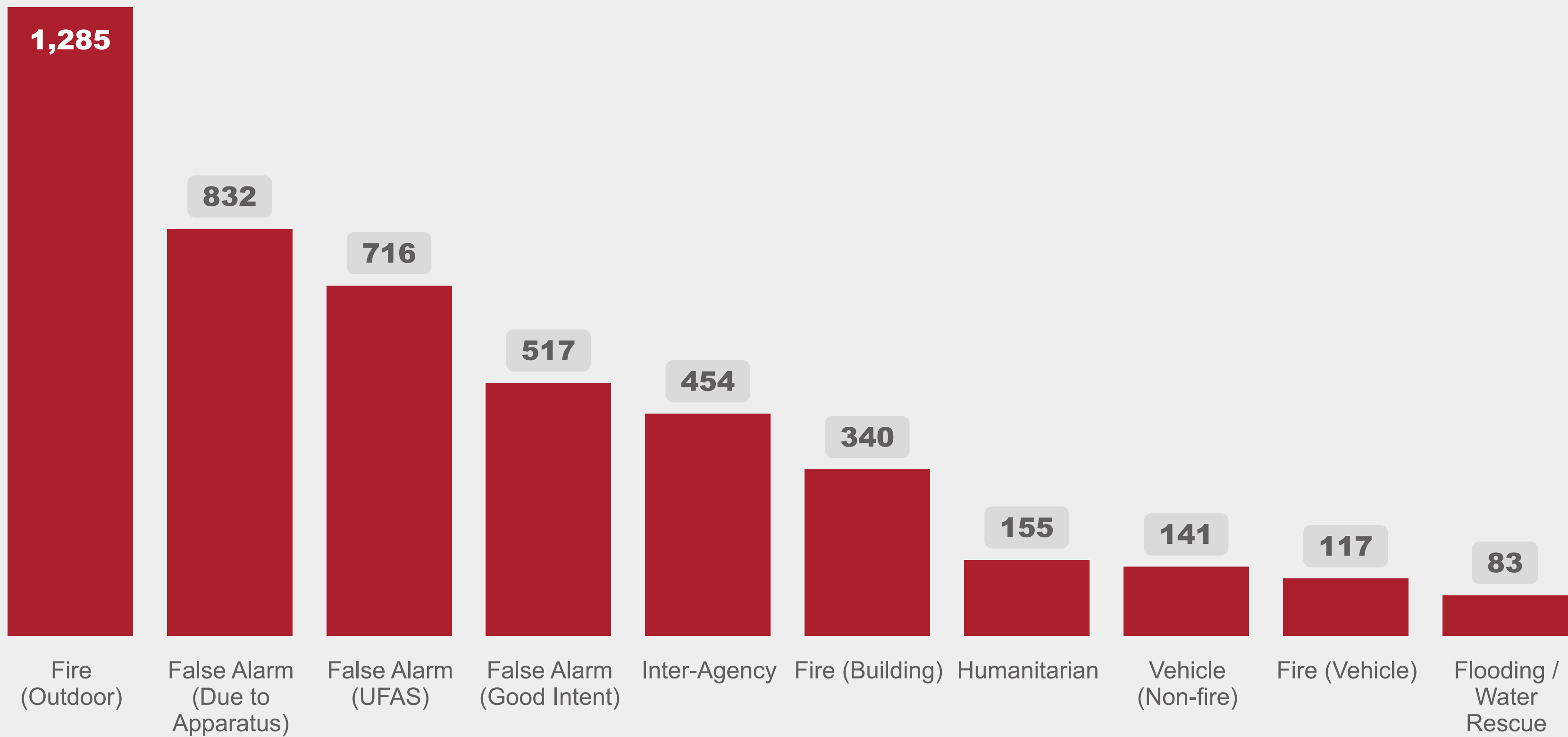
The activity totals and other statistics quoted within this report are published in the interests of transparency and openness. They are provisional in nature and subject to change as a result of ongoing quality assurance and review. Because all statistics quoted are provisional there may be a difference in the period totals quoted in our reports after local publication which result from revisions or additions to the data in our systems. The Scottish Government publishes official statistics each year which allow for comparisons to be made over longer periods of time.

1. Summary

2024-25

 4,901 Total Incidents (Incl. Incompletes)	 1,742 Fires	 1,018 Non-Fire Incidents	 2,130 False Alarms	 716 UFAS
 167 People Rescued by Firefighters	 33 People Receiving First Aid or Hospital Treatment (Fires)	 1 Fire Fatalities	 112 People Receiving First Aid or Hospital Treatment (Non-Fire)	 31 Non-Fire Fatalities
 1,900 Home Fire Safety Visits	 455 Fire Safety Audits			

Top 10 Incident Types

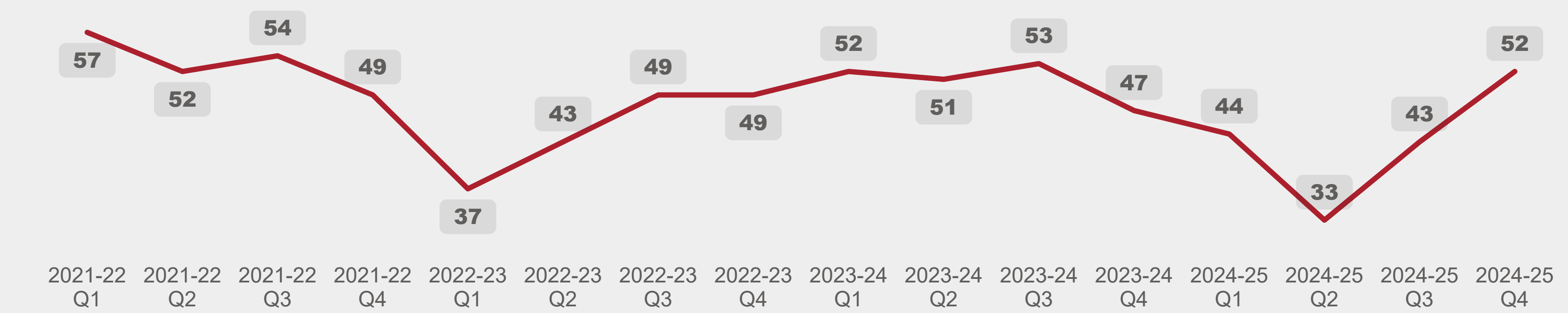


The section above provides a summary of the Annual activity from 1st April 2024 to the 31st March 2025 across the Fife Local Authority Area.

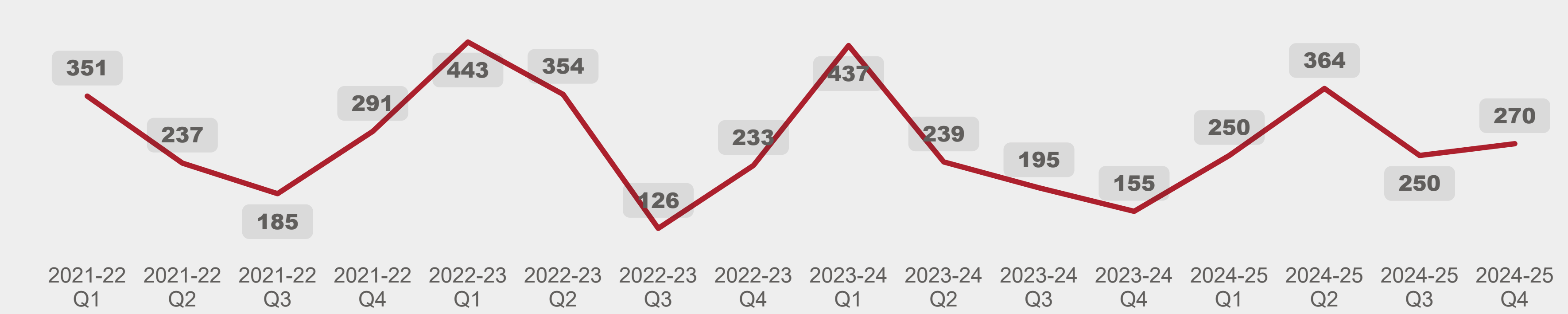
2. Trends

Previous 16 quarters (4 years)

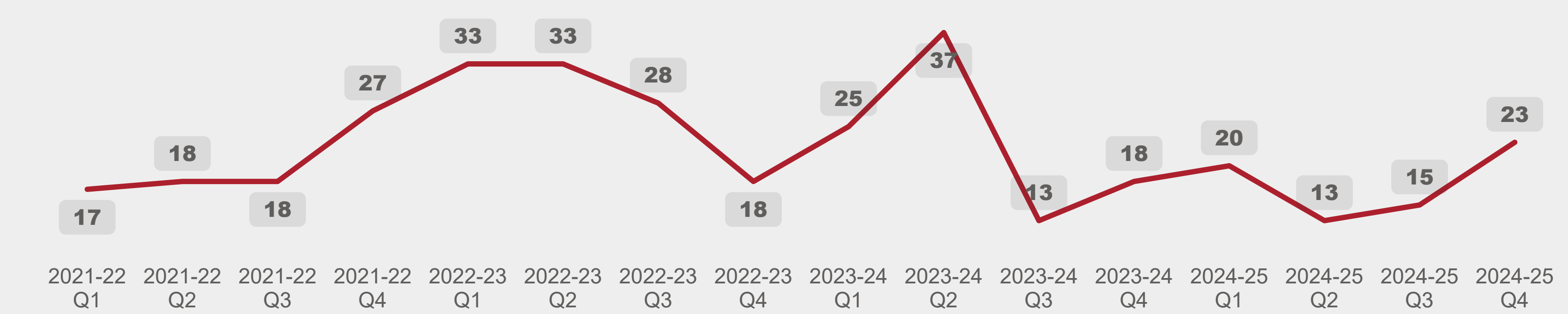
Accidental Dwelling Fires



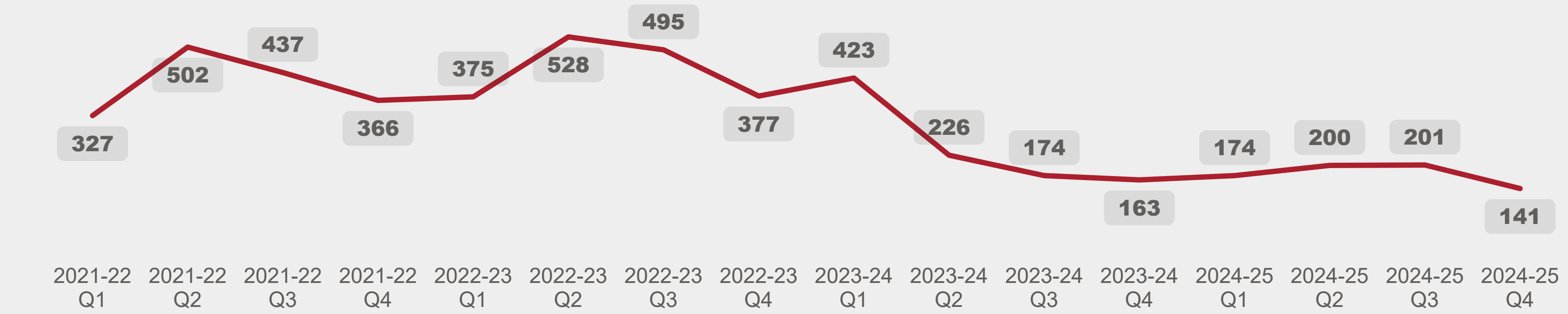
Deliberate Fires



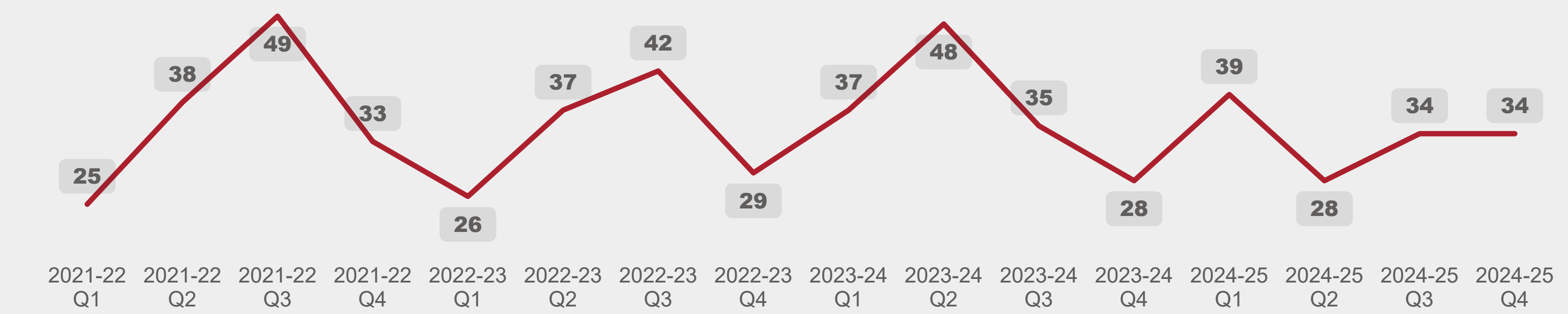
Non-Domestic Fires



Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals



Road Traffic Collisions



3. Accidental Dwelling Fires

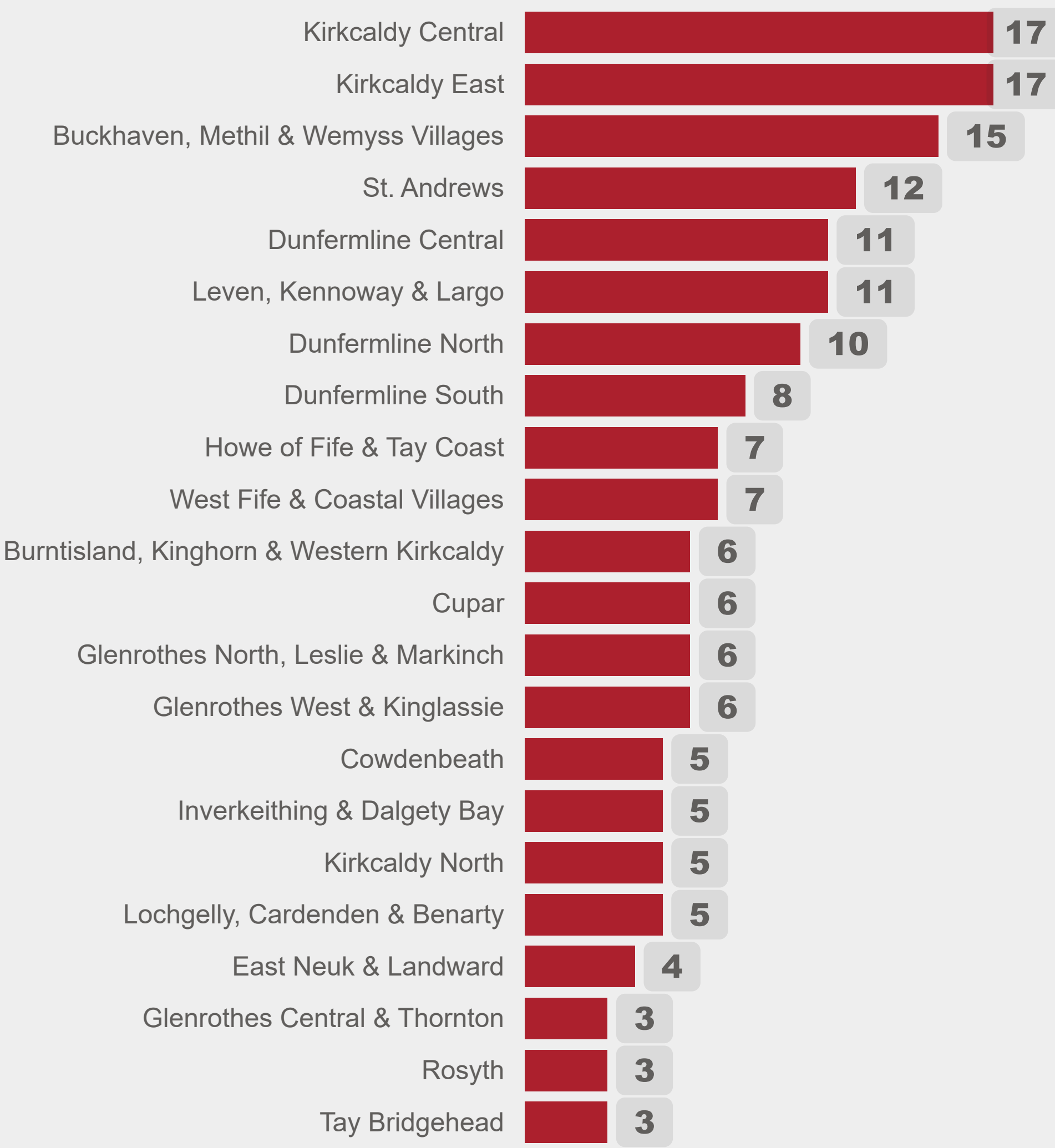
2024-25

Trend by Quarter (4 years)



Extent of Damage	Incidents
Limited to item 1st ignited	75
Not applicable	50
Limited to room of origin	28
Limited to floor of origin (not whole building)	11
Whole building	3
Limited to 2 floors (not whole building)	2
Roof space and other floors(s)	2
Affecting more than 2 floors (not whole building)	1

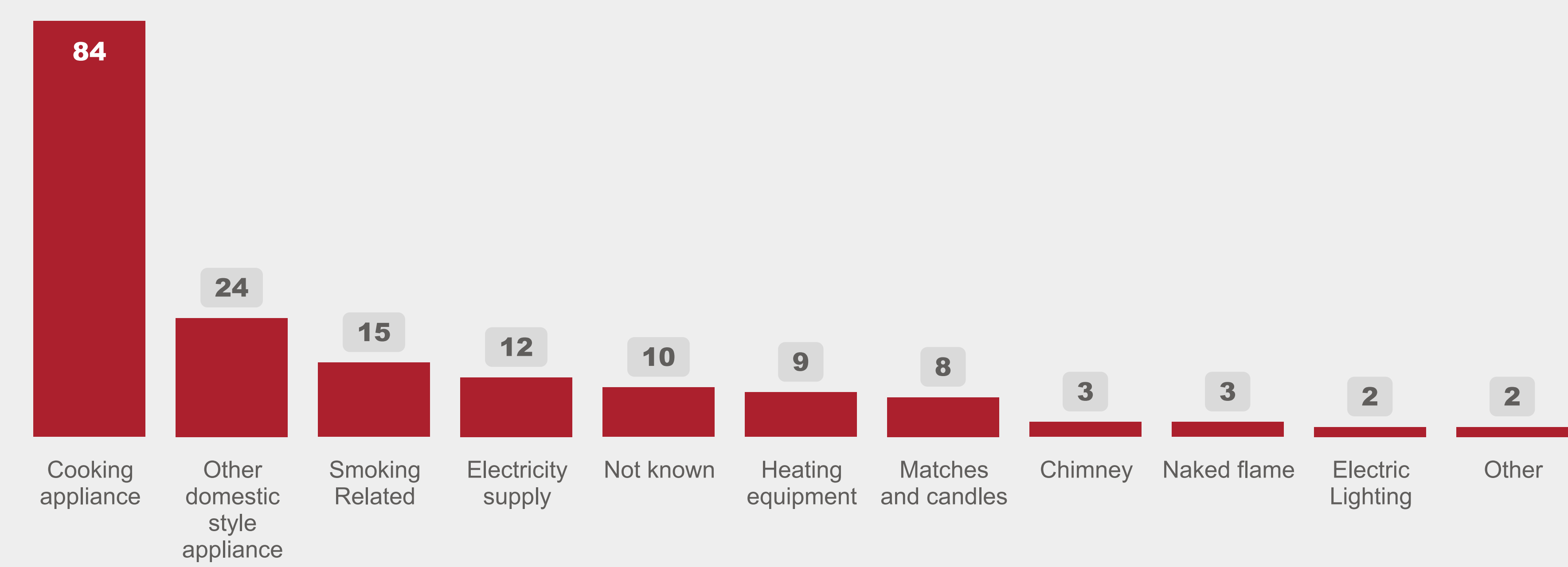
Incidents by Ward



172

Accidental Dwelling Fires in this period

Source of Ignition (Top 10)



Accidental dwelling fires continue to reduce over the last 4 years with 172 recorded last year across Fife. Of these 172 fires 153 were limited to first item ignited, limited to room of origin or had no damage to record.

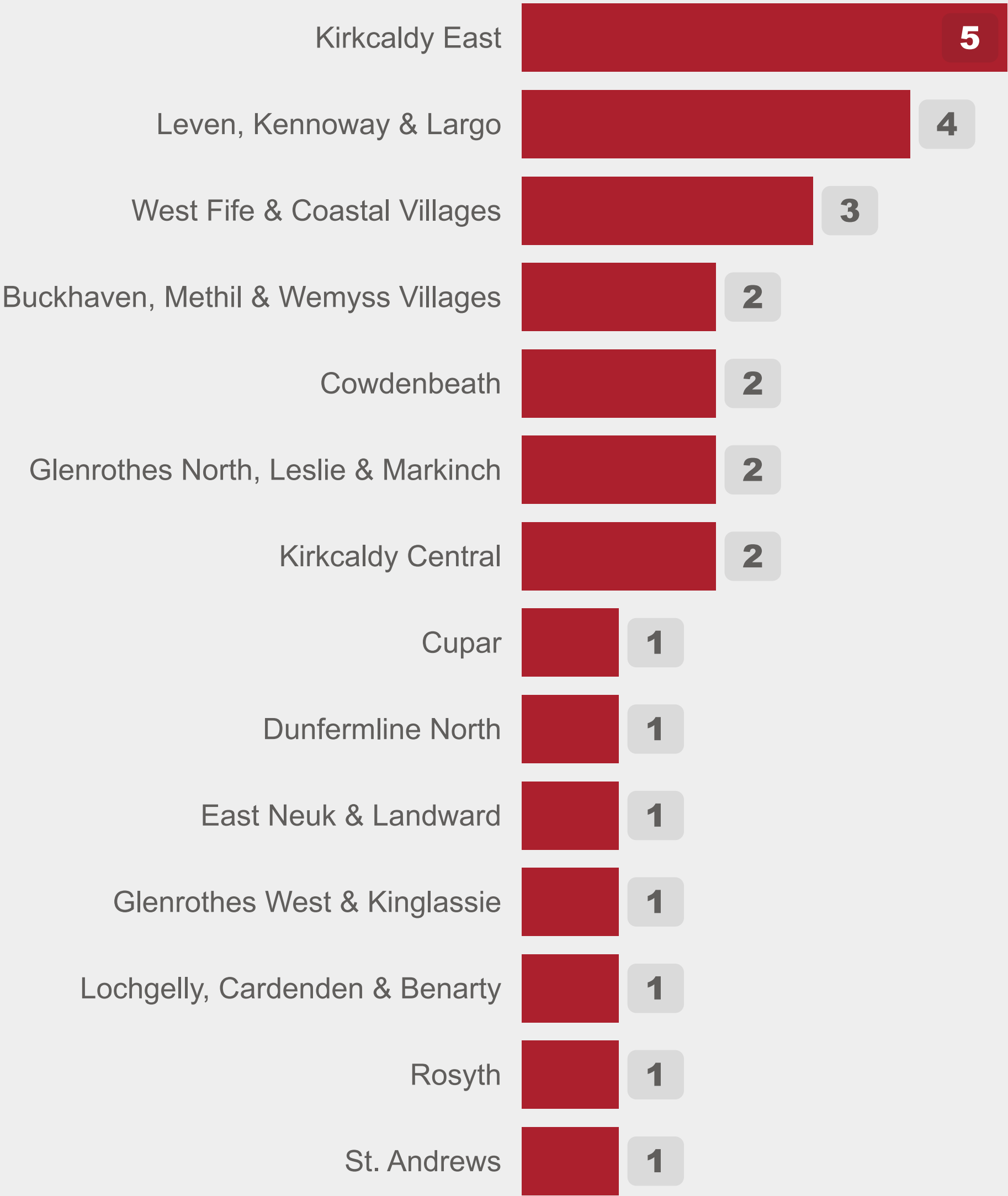
Cooking continues to be the main source of accidental dwelling fires in Fife.

Trend by Quarter (4 years)



Nature of Injury/Cause of Death	Casualties
Overcome by gas, smoke or toxic fumes; asphyxiation	20
Burns - slight	3
Breathing difficulties (Other than 'Overcome by gas, smoke or toxic fumes, asphyxiation')	2
Combination of burns and overcome by gas/smoke	1
Other	1

Casualties by Ward



26

Non-Fatal Casualties

1

Fatal Casualties

14

People Rescued by Firefighters

Extent of Harm (Non-Fatal)



11

First Aid Given at Scene



13

Hospital Slight Injuries



2

Hospital Serious Injuries

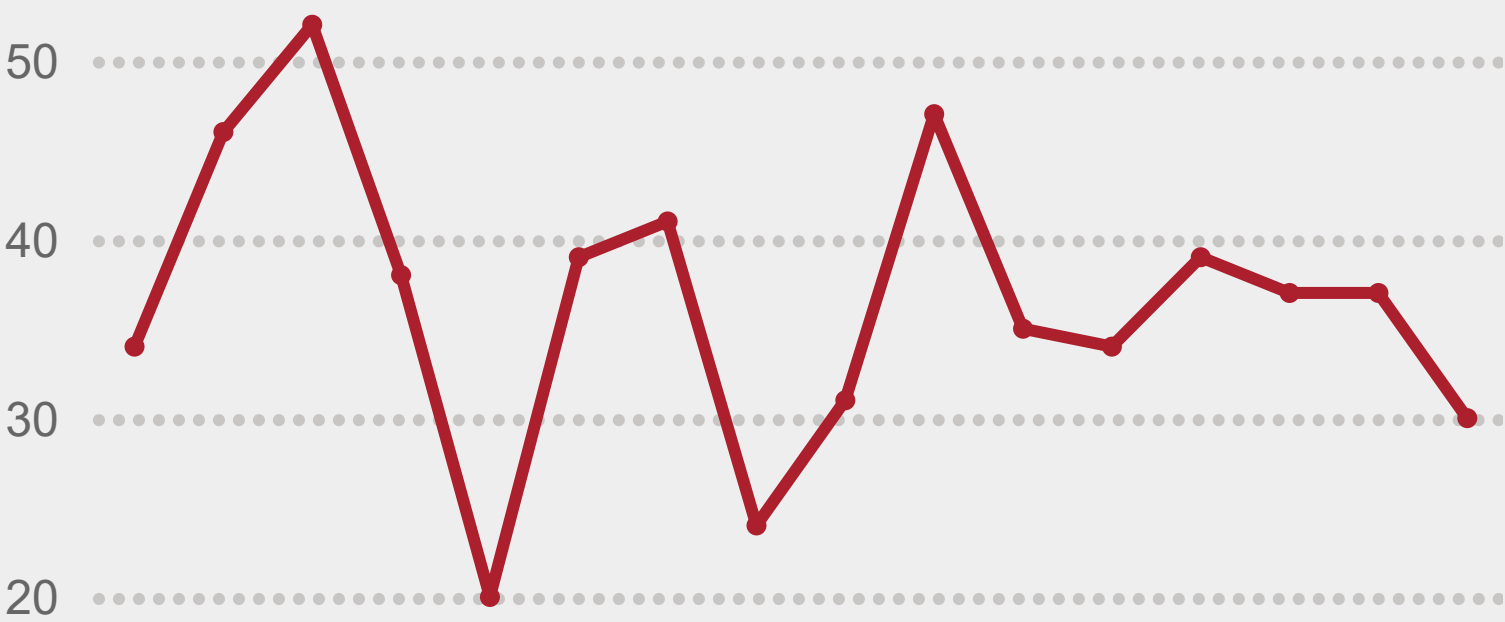
The Fife Local Authority area have recorded 26 casualties due to Accidental Dwelling Fires. Of these casualties 15 were transported to hospital and 2 were reported as having serious injuries. In the last 12 months, Fife has unfortunately had 1 recorded fire fatalities.

All Fire fatalities are investigated fully by SFRS Fire Investigation officers and information shared with relevant partners.

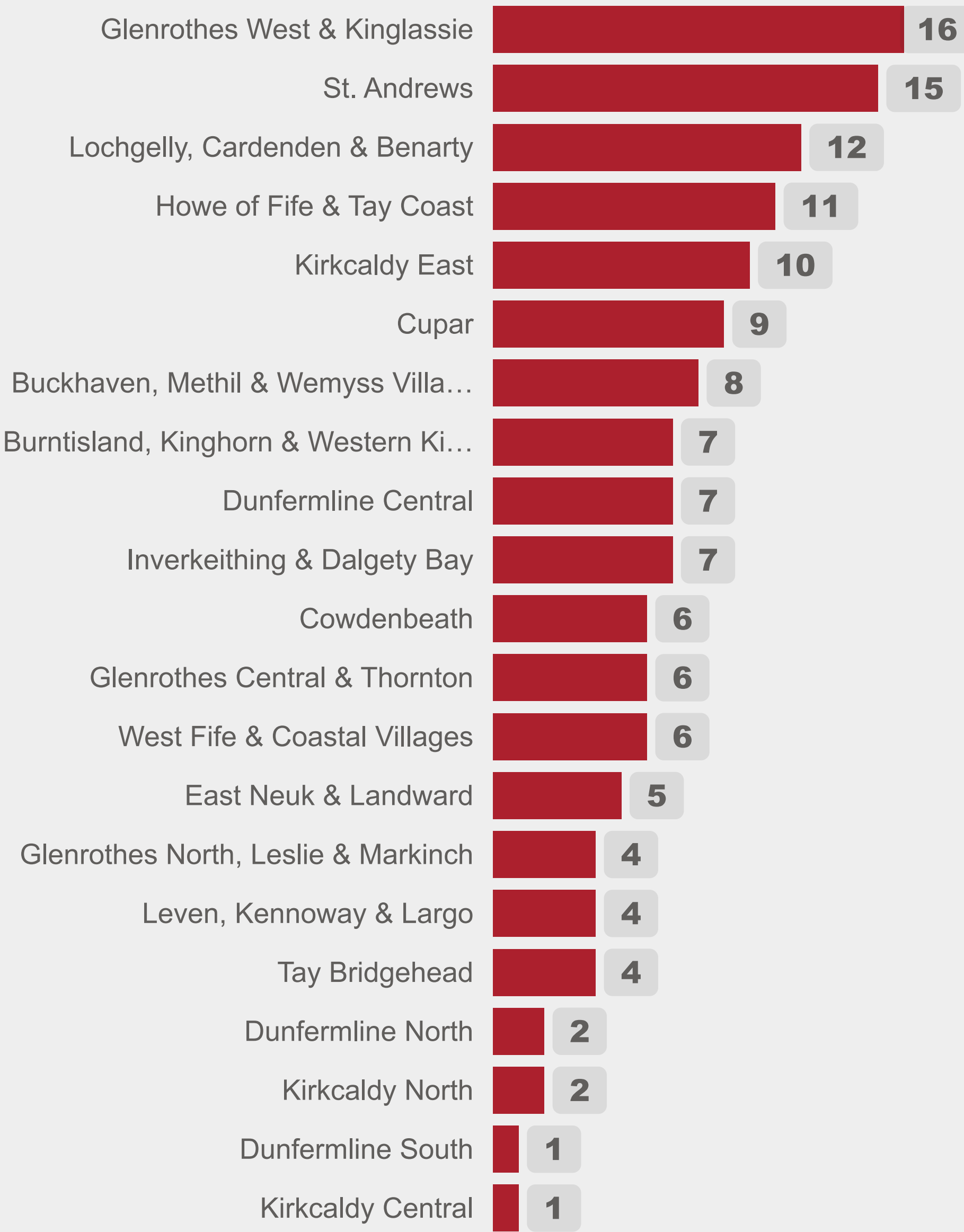
5. Non-Fire Casualties

2024-25

Trend by Quarter (4 years)



Casualties by Ward



112

Non-Fatal
Casualties

31

Fatal
Casualties

151

People
Rescued by
Firefighters

Extent of Harm
(Non-Fatal)



8

First Aid Given
at Scene



77

Hospital Slight
Injuries



27

Hospital Serious
Injuries

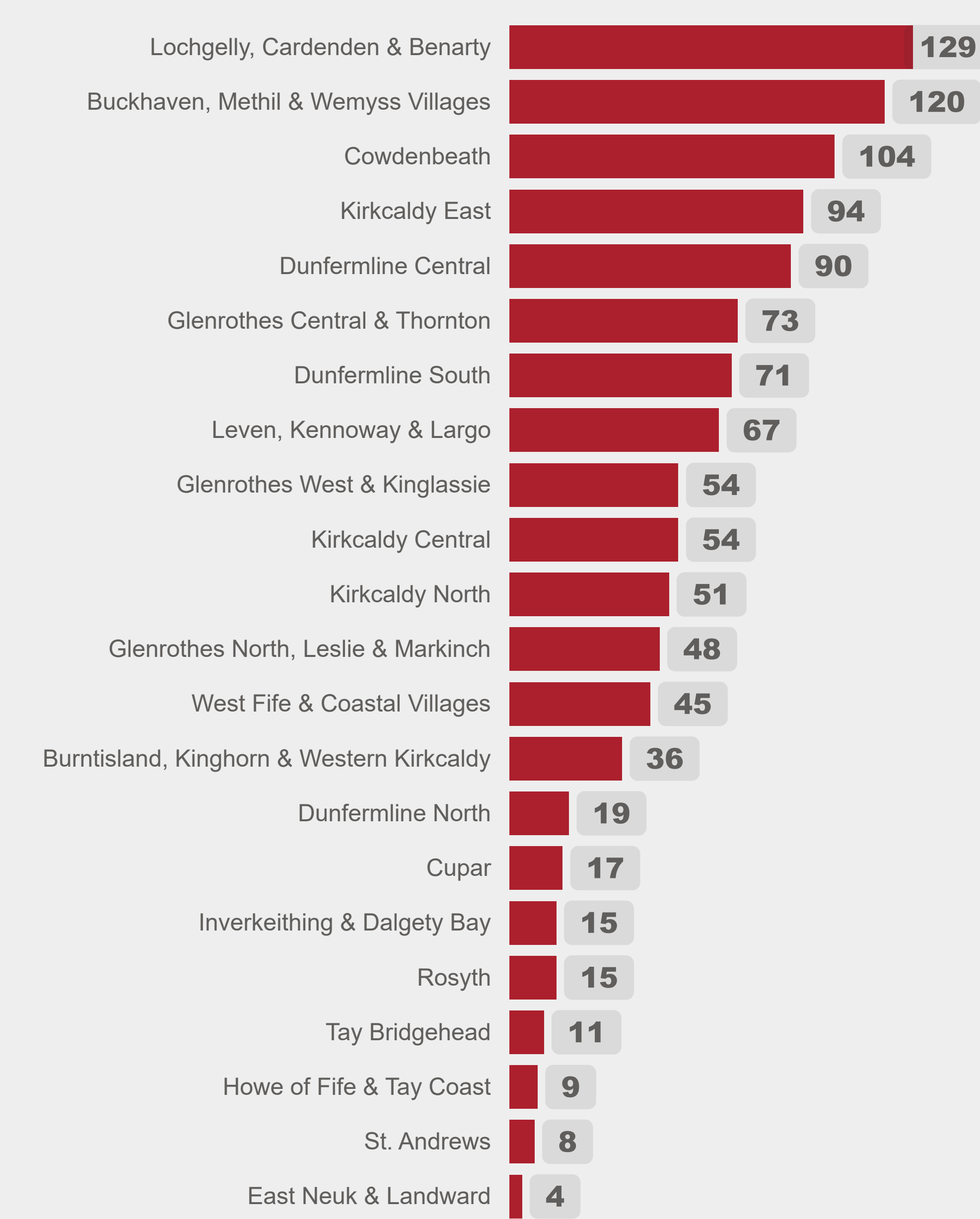
Non-Fire Casualties include rescues from Road Traffic Collisions, Water Rescue and other incidents where people have been rescued by Firefighters. The largest majority of Non-Fire Casualties have been reported in Glenrothes West and Kinglassie.

Trend by Quarter (4 years)



Property Type	Incident
Grassland, woodland and crops	493
Refuse	388
Other outdoors (including land)	104
Dwelling	42
Non Residential	36
Road Vehicle	33
Outdoor structures	26
Outdoor equipment and machinery	8
Other Residential	4

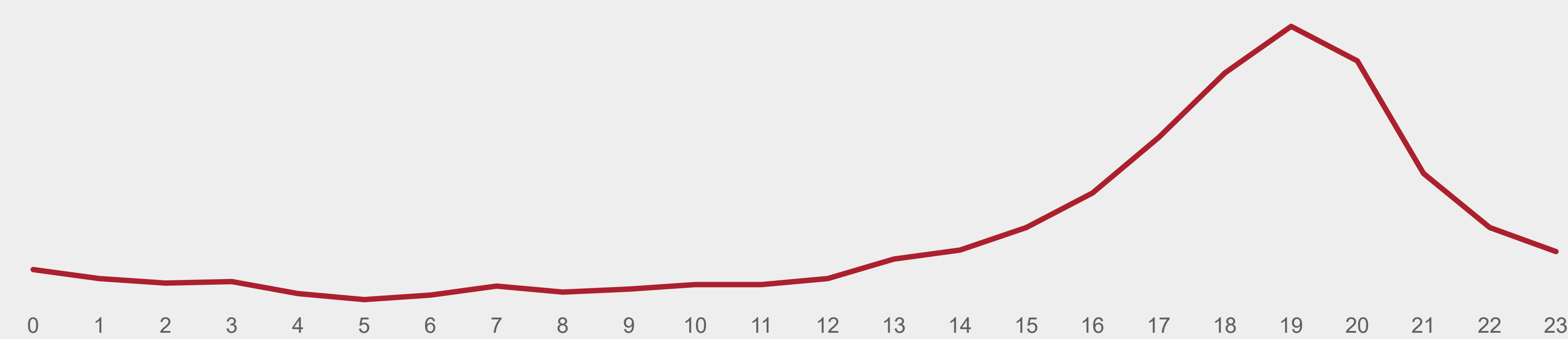
Incidents by Ward



1,134

Deliberate Fires
in this period

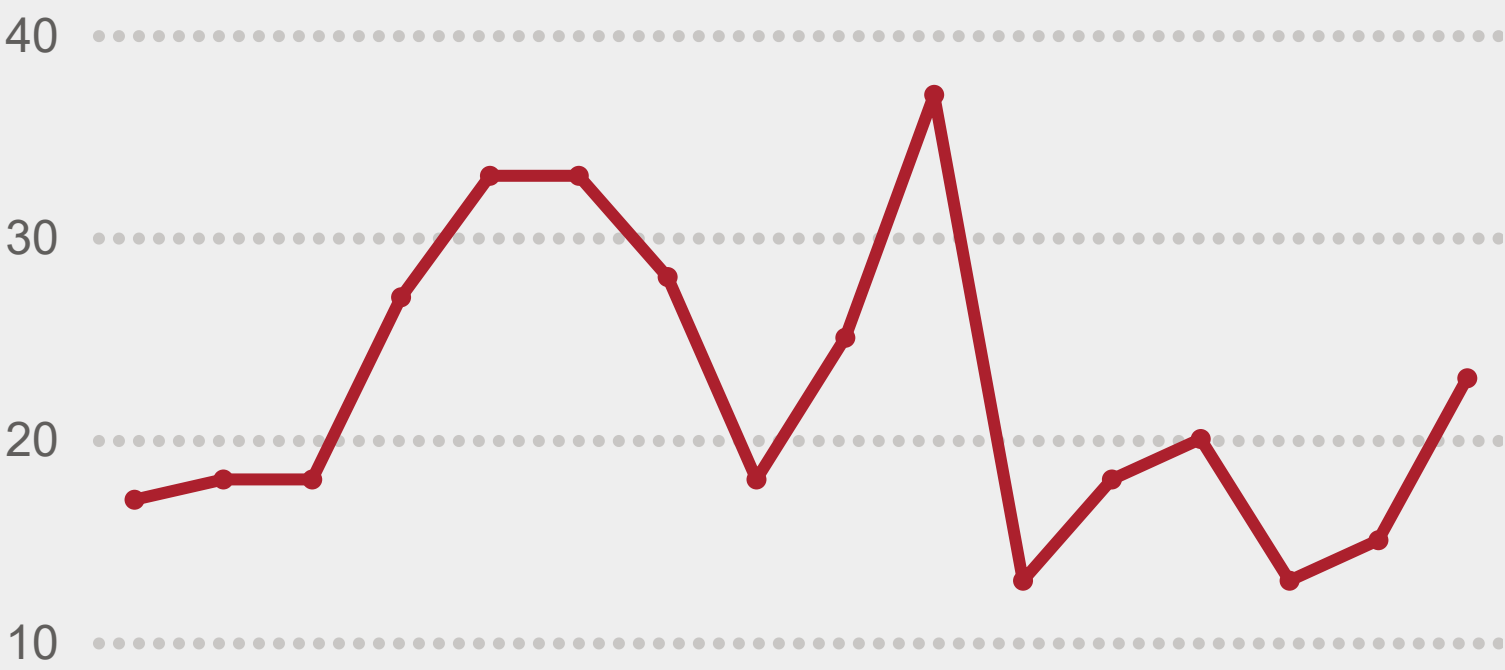
Hour of Day



Fife recorded 1134 Deliberate Fires within the last 12-month period with Lochgelly, Cardenden & Benarty reporting most incidents. Refuse fires continue to be the main cause of deliberate fire setting, and we continue to work with partners on reduction strategies to tackle this problem. This involves Secondary School visits and joint patrols with our colleagues in Police Scotland. Grassland and outdoor fires continue to rise year on year as the climate changes within Scotland.

This is an area of focus for the SFRS with the introduction of our Wildfire Strategy.

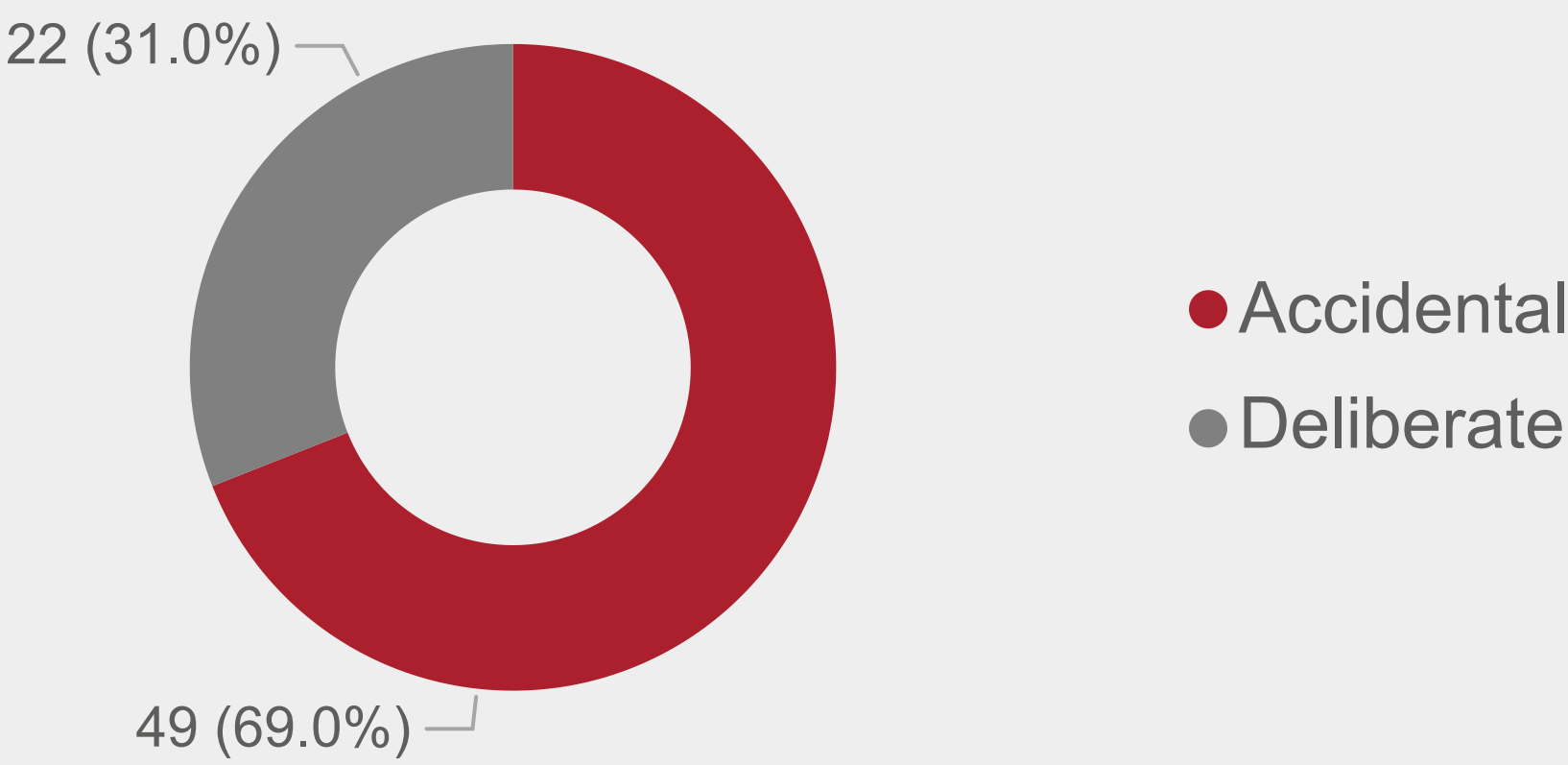
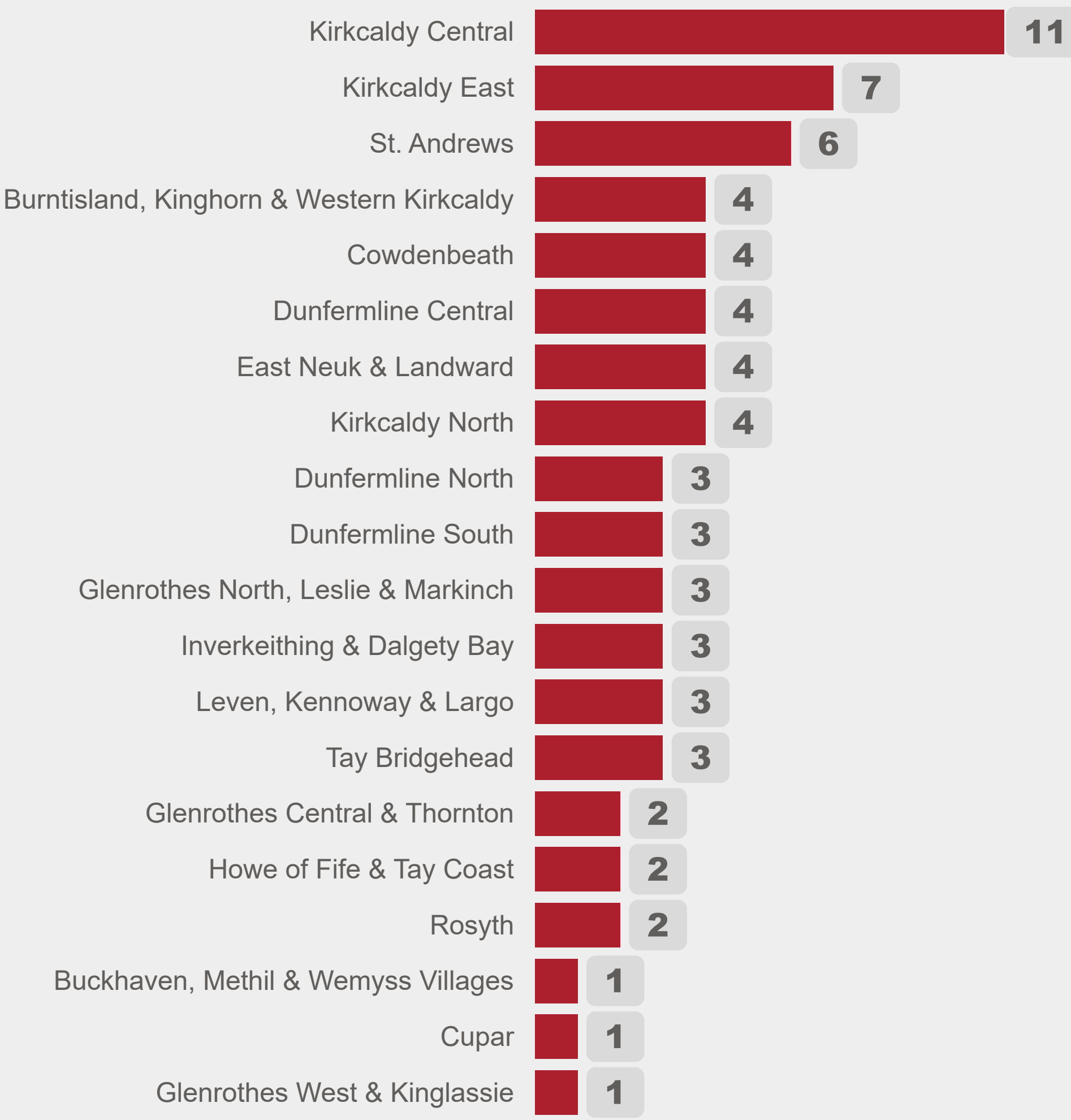
Trend by Quarter (4 years)



Top 15 Property Types

Property Type	Incidents
Education	10
Permanent Agricultural	8
Food and Drink	7
Retail	6
Hospitals and medical care	5
Industrial Manufacturing	4
Residential Home	4
Sheltered Housing - not self contained	4
Other buildings/use not known	3
Boarding School accommodation	2
Hotel/motel	2
Industrial Processing	2
Public Utilities	2
Vehicle Repair	2
Boarding House/B&B for homeless/asylum seekers	1
Car Parks	1
Entertainment and culture	1
Offices and call centres	1
Other Residential Home	1

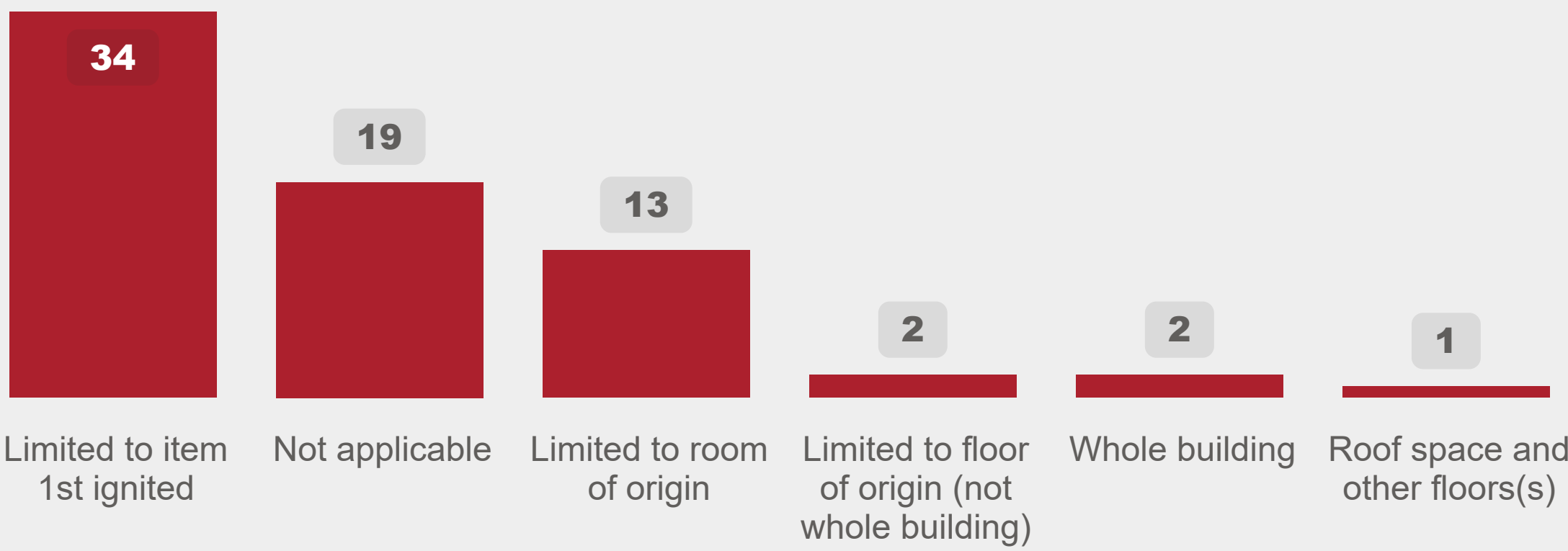
Incidents by Ward



71

Non-Domestic
Fires in this
period

Extent of Damage

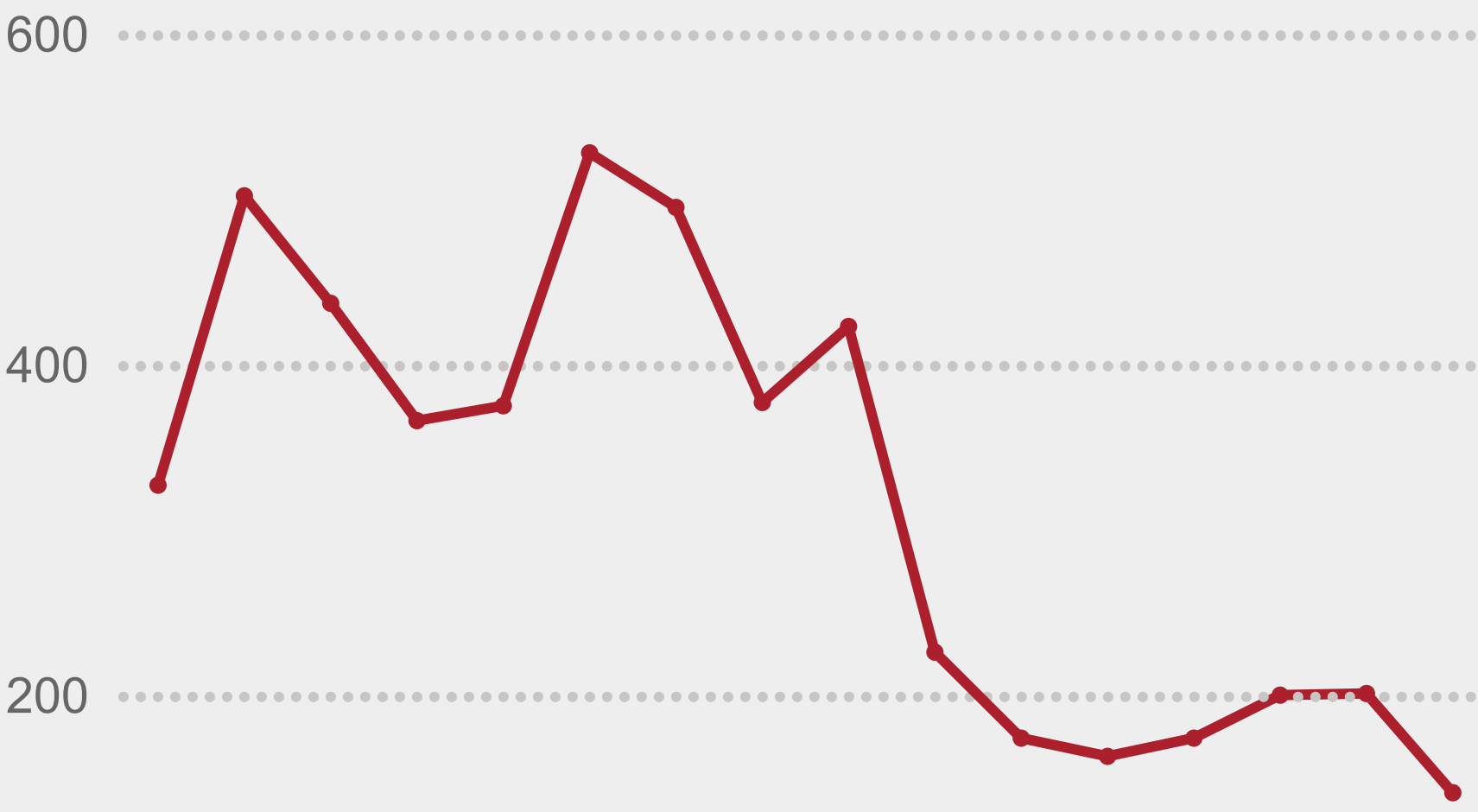


For the 12-month period, Non-Domestic Fires remain relatively low and have seen a reduction over the 4-year comparison period. The vast majority of these fires were set deliberately (69%). Of the 71 non-domestic fires 66 were limited to first item ignited, limited to room of origin or had no damage to record.

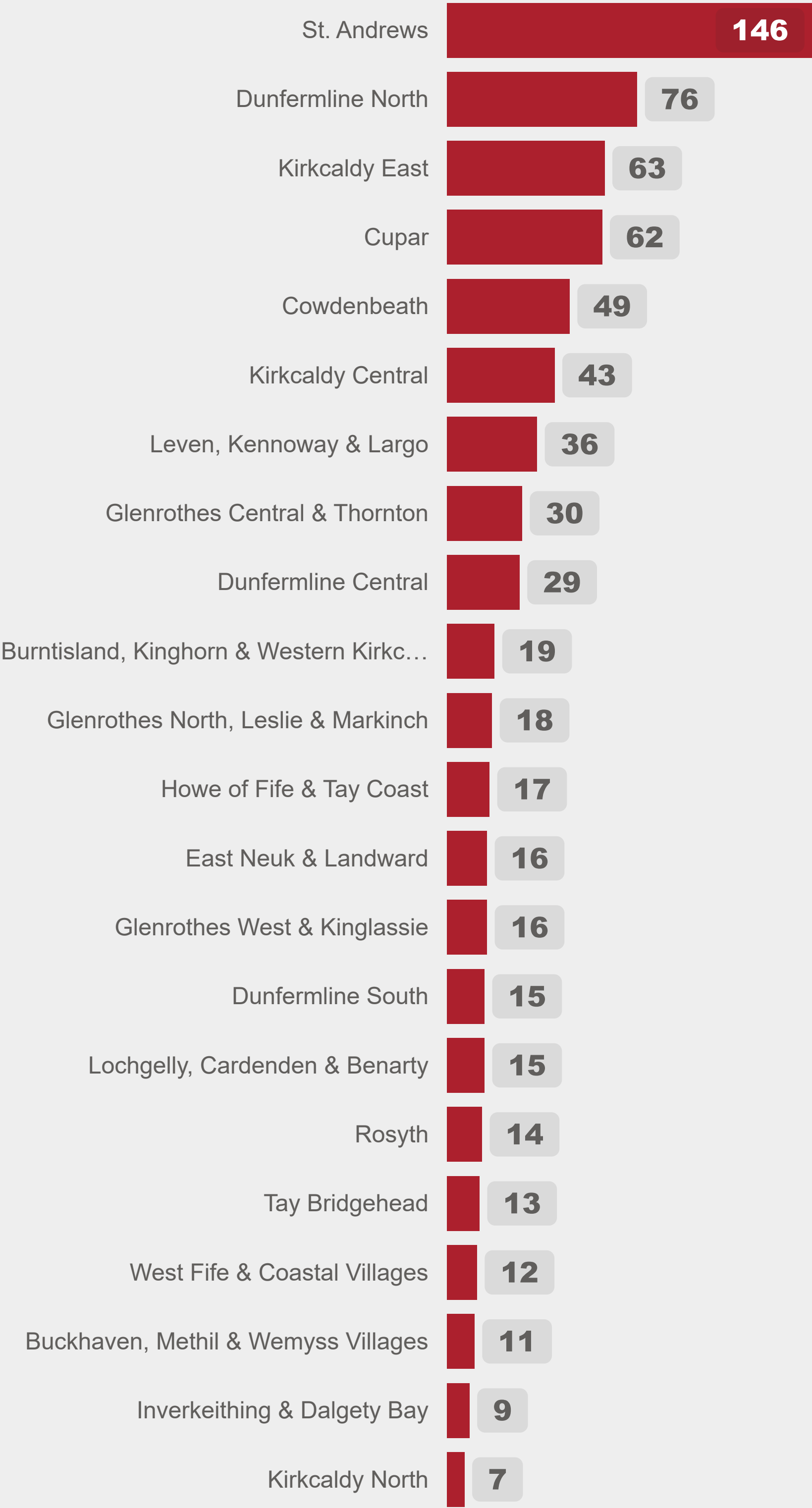
8. Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals

2024-25

Trend by Quarter (4 years)



Incidents by Ward



Top 15 Property Types

Property Type	Incidents
Residential Home	212
Hospitals and medical care	173
Student Hall of Residence	107
Sheltered Housing - not self contained	81
Hotel/motel	35
Boarding School accommodation	19
Education	13
Retail	10
Food and Drink	9
Boarding House/B&B for homeless/asylum seekers	6
Entertainment and culture	6
Offices and call centres	6
Industrial Processing	5
Other Residential Home	5
Industrial Manufacturing	4

716

Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals in this period

Following the introduction of our Unwanted Fire Alarm System (UFAS) Reduction Strategy, we continue to see a significant reduction in UFAS incidents. St Andrews has the highest UFAS incidents and our Fire Safety Enforcement teams work closely with these premises to achieve fire safety compliance and reduce unwanted calls.

We remain committed to supporting Premises Duty Holders achieve high levels of fire safety and the UFAS Champion will continue to engage robustly with all stakeholders in order to address spikes and drive these types of incidents down.

Trend by Quarter (4 years)



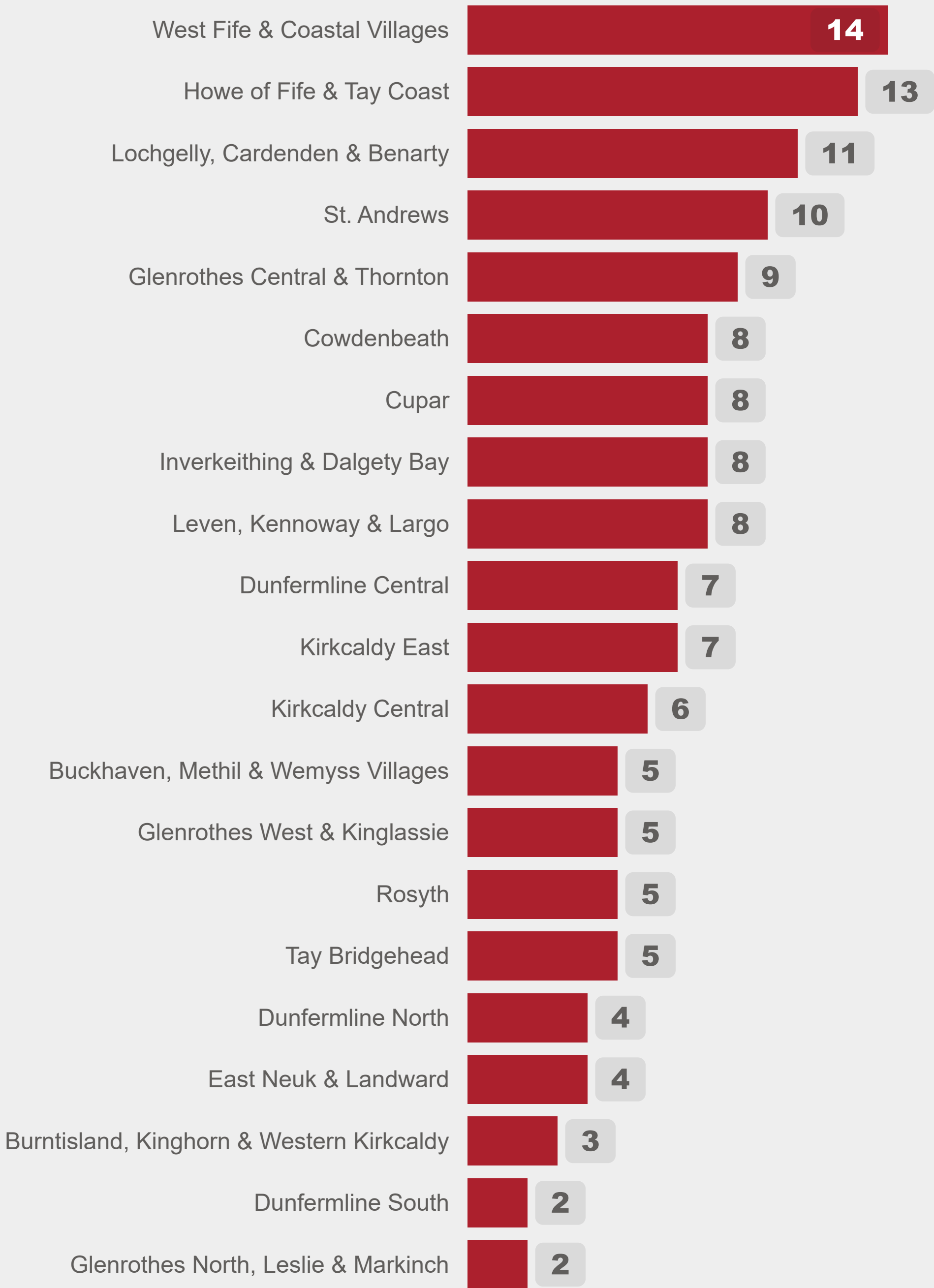
144

Road Traffic Collisions in this period

Property Type	Incidents
Car	123
Van	7
Multiple Vehicles	5
Bus/coach	3
Lorry/HGV	2
Motorcycle	2
House - single occupancy	1
Private garage	1

Incident Type	Incidents
Vehicle (Non-fire)	136
Fire (Vehicle)	4
Inter-Agency	2
Flooding / Water Rescue	1
Other Non-Fire	1

Incidents by Ward



62

Non-Fatal Casualties

7

Fatal Casualties

32

People Rescued by Firefighters

Extent of Harm (Non-Fatal)



4

First Aid Given at Scene



49

Hospital Slight Injuries

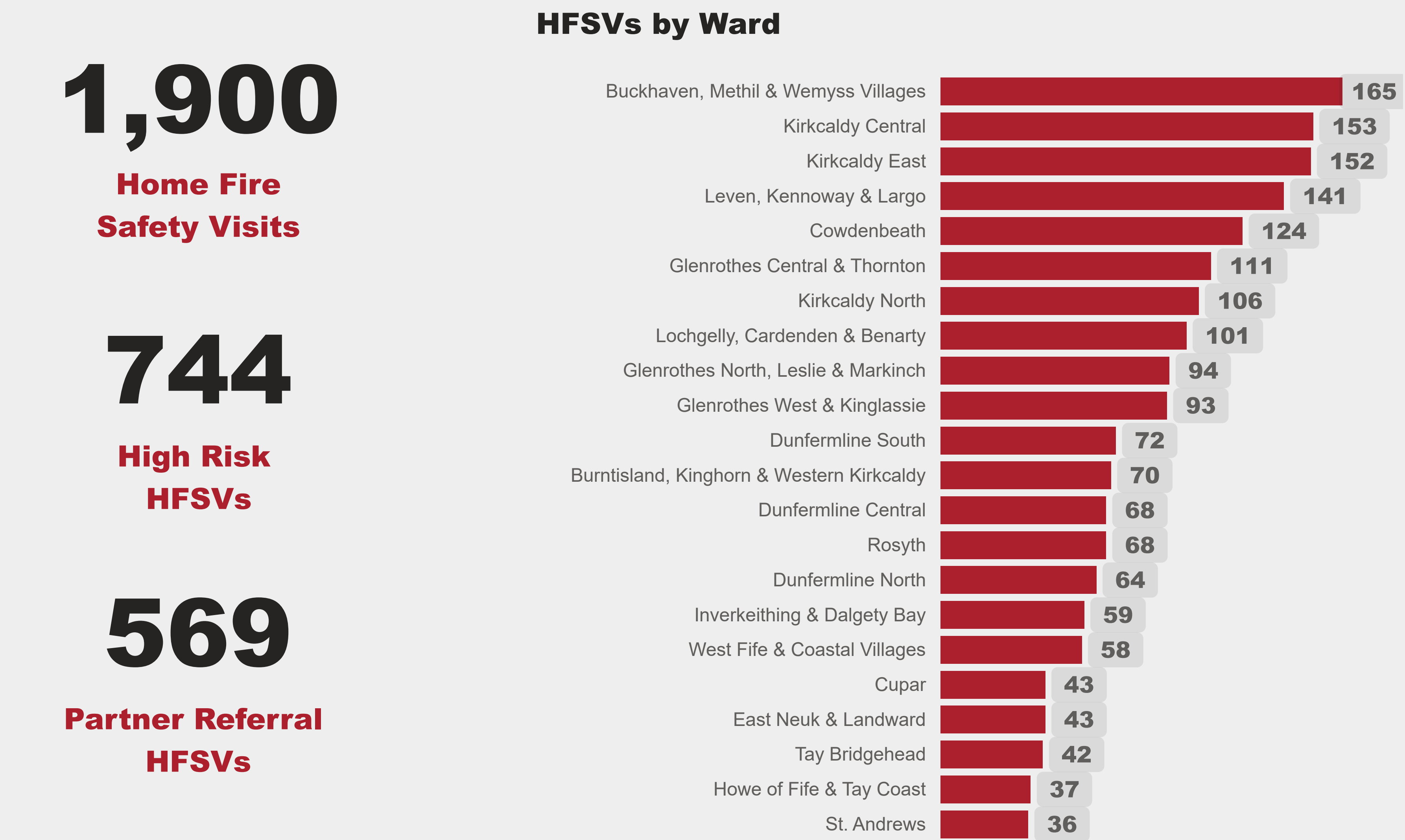


9

Hospital Serious Injuries

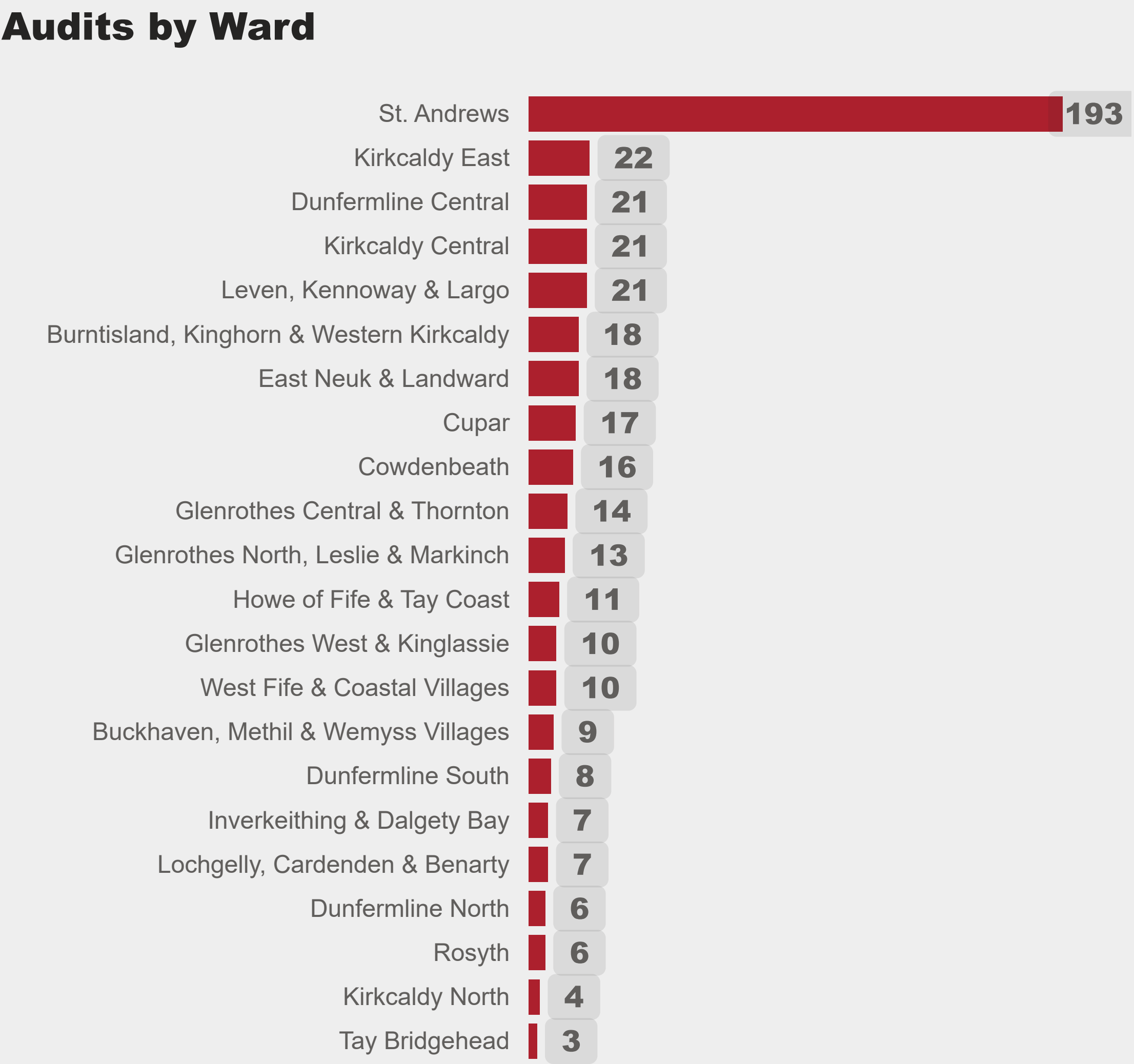
Road Traffic Collisions have seen remained low over the last 12 months when compared with the previous 3 years data. SFRS have carried out several Road Safety initiatives over the last year and continue to support partners to educate and inform drivers.

There have been 7 road traffic fatalities in Fife over the last year.



11. Fire Safety Enforcement

Job Type	Count
Audit	455
Consultation	309
Specific Visit	8



To support Community Safety and ensure people stay safe in their own homes, the SFRS continues to carry out their Home Fire Safety Visit Programme, specifically targeting those deemed as High Risk.

Our Legislative Fire Safety Enforcement Officers carried out 455 audits within relevant premises within the Fife Council area.

Home Fire Safety Visit Programme.

The SFRS carried on with our Home Fire Safety visit programme within the Fife Council area, visiting 744 high risk premises. This year also saw the introduction of a new home Fire Safety Visit App that will allow us to target HFSV's to those most at risk and allow us to refer onwards to partner organisations in a more streamlined manner. Numbers include:

Total Completed 1900 (744 high risk)
Adult Protection (AP1) Referrals 147

Anti-Social Behaviour ASB and Bonfire Safety.

Ten talks to over 600 young people carried out by the Community Action Team. Some large events and some smaller more targeted events in problem areas across a range of schools and youth groups. Additionally, schools were given information for their digital boards and presentations for their own use to support delivery of ASB information and reduction initiatives.

Partnership Training.

Locally we carried out twenty partnership training sessions on risk recognition and referring into SFRS. Groups we worked with included NHS, Social work and education groups. In total 360 people received training.

Youth Volunteer Scheme.

This course has continued at Methil Community Fire Station over the year. As a national course the YVS aims to provide a safe, welcoming and enjoyable environment for young people to learn and work together.

Water Safety and Water Safety School Talks.

SFRS attended a number of events to promote water safety. These included joint patrols with Police Scotland and engaging with the public at problem areas to reassure and educate the public. Also, six talks carried out at Schools in the area to approx. 785 young people ahead of the summer holidays.

14. Glossary of Terms

Term - What it means

ADF

Accidental Dwelling Fire.

HFSV

Home Fire Safety Visit.

PDIR

Post Domestic Incident Response, a term used to indicate actions taken following attendance at a fire or other incident in the home. PDIRs include amongst things the offer of a free follow up home fire safety visit.

RTC

Road Traffic Collision.

Special Service

Calls to incidents which are not fires or false alarms such as RTCs, rescues, flooding, incidents involving hazardous materials or the provision of assistance to other agencies.

UFAS

Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals. When an automatic fire detection and alarm system is activated as a result of anything other than an actual fire the activation is classed as a false alarm. If an attendance is made to such an event by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, then the event is recorded as an UFAS incident.

UFAS Policy Change

In response to COVID, on the 6th May 2020, the SFRS decided to send 1 pump to UFAS premises that did not have their own Predetermined attendance (PDA).

As of 1st July 2023, the COVID interim 1 pump response was ended and a new UFAS policy was implemented.

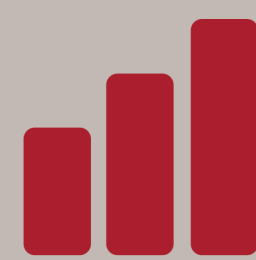
The new policy is to call challenge all UFAS incidents with the intention of non-attendance. Hospitals, care homes, and sleeping risk premises are all exempt and receive either 2 pumps or their premise specific PDA.



SCOTTISH

FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland



BUSINESS
INTELLIGENCE

Design, figures and charts by the Business Intelligence team.

15 May 2025
Agenda Item No. 7

Tackling Dampness and Mould in Private Sector Housing – Update

Report by: John Mills, Head of Housing Services and Nigel Kerr, Head of Protective Services

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

The report provides an update to members on the actions by Housing Services and Protective Services to implement improvement actions in the private rented sector in relation to dampness, mould and condensation for the wellbeing of tenants and families.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- (1) Consider the progress made to mitigate the incidence of dampness, condensation and mould more effectively in private sector properties.
- (2) Note the re-alignment of staff
- (3) Note the progress on current caseload
- (4) Note the focus to improve procedures and communications
- (5) Note the delivery of training to staff

Resource Implications

Resourcing is provided from revenue budgets within the Private Housing Standards Team (under the Building Standards & Public Safety Team) and the Environmental Health (Public and Environmental Protection) to enable a focus on this area of work.

Legal & Risk Implications

The council has legal duties in respect to ensuring that residential dwellings in the private sector are safe, meet certain repairing and environmental standards and that public health is protected. The measures explained in this report satisfy the legal duties.

Impact Assessment

An equalities assessment has not been completed and is not necessary as no change to policy or service provision are being proposed at this time.

The Fairer Scotland Duty, which came into force on 1 April 2018, requires the council to consider how it can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socioeconomic disadvantage when making strategic decisions. There are no negative impacts identified as part of this work and will protect and enhance health and wellbeing for all.

The Head of Service for Finance has been consulted in the preparation of this report. Protective Services and Housing Services work together to develop actions in the private sector.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Housing Services review of the Council's approach to tackle complaints of dampness, condensation and mould in Council houses and proposed action plan was reported and agreed at [Cabinet Committee](#) on 4 May 2023. As part of the Cabinet's recommendations, it was agreed that a report be brought back to Cabinet on measures to tackle dampness and mould in private sector housing.
- 1.2 A subsequent report was submitted to Cabinet Committee on 9 May 2024 with proposals to implement improvement actions in the private rented sector in relation to dampness, mould and condensation.
- 1.3 Local authorities have a duty to prepare and maintain a register of private landlords operating in their council area. Only those landlords that have been assessed by the local authority as being fit and proper should be entered on the register. Local authorities consider how landlord registration can be used alongside other legislation to drive improvements in landlord practice or tackle illegitimate landlord businesses.
- 1.4 Private landlords including Houses in Multiple Occupation and Private Let's have a duty to comply with the Repairing Standard at the start of a tenancy and at all times during a tenancy. Private rented houses (in common with all other houses in Scotland) are subject to the Tolerable Standard. A house meets the Tolerable Standard if it complies with all the criteria including it is substantially free from rising or penetrating damp.
- 1.5 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 requires that private landlords must be satisfied that any house they rent to tenants is fit for the tenants to live in.
- 1.6 Landlord registration gives local authorities an effective means of dealing with the worst performing landlords who, by their behaviour and attitude, mismanage their properties, or fail to act in respect of anti-social tenants, and fail to meet the Repairing Standard.
- 1.7 If a tenant or third party believes that a rented house does not meet the standards, an application can be made to the First-tier Tribunal for Scotland (Housing and Property Chamber) for a decision by a tribunal on whether or not the landlord has complied with that duty.
- 1.8 Local authorities have a statutory duty and specific powers to deal with houses that fall below the Tolerable Standard. (As noted in Appendix 1)
- 1.9 The Scottish Government intends to introduce amendments to the Housing (Scotland) Bill that will broaden Ministers' powers to impose timeframes on social landlords to investigate disrepair and start repairs, through regulation, following engagement with the sector.
- 1.10 With reference to damp and mould in the private sector the Scottish Government is committed to considering how to implement Awaab's law for private tenants, using existing powers, after engagement with the private rented sector.
- 1.11 The Scottish Government has announced a revised Heat in Buildings Bill to be brought forward. Regulations will be progressed under existing powers to introduce a minimum energy efficiency standard in the private rented sector.

- 1.12 The Scottish Housing Survey provides information on the prevalence of damp condition across Scotland. Around 90% of all dwellings in 2023 were free from any form of condensation or damp. This rate has been stable in recent years but represents an overall improvement from 86% in 2012. Similarly, 90% of all dwellings were free from mould in 2023. This rate has been stable in recent years but represents an overall improvement from 88% in 2012. [Scottish House Condition Survey: 2023 Key Findings](#)
- 1.13 Rising or penetrating damp, or mould can cover anything from a small damp patch or area on a single wall in one room to prevalence throughout the entire dwelling. Therefore, it does not indicate a serious housing quality issue in all cases. The table below shows the most recent profile of damp by tenure in Fife and Scotland:

Tenure	Fife	Scotland
Social Rented	*	2%
Private Rented	8%	5%
Owner Occupied	3%	2%

**base sample too small to report*

Scottish Housing Conditions Survey 2017-19

- 1.14 This report contains an update on the council's approach to manage dampness, condensation and mould in the private sector.

2.0 Service Principles and Priorities

- 2.1 In December 2022, the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) published a guide for social landlords on effectively responding to tenants' complaints of dampness, condensation and mould and how to deal with the problem.
- 2.2 In February 2023, the Scottish Housing Sector came together to publish a briefing on damp and mould. "Putting Safety First - a briefing note on damp and mould for social housing practitioners".
- 2.3 Although primarily aimed at social housing landlords, the above guidance has been adapted for use by the private sector recognising the common issues within premises:
1. Stop blaming tenants' behaviour as the cause of condensation and shift the culture of services to work alongside tenants and landlords to provide effective advice and support
 2. Be proactive by providing information and promoting awareness for tenants and landlords
 3. Fast and effective response to tenant enquiries and complaints
 4. Engage with landlords to offer support and assistance
- 2.4 Providing information for private tenants and landlords informs and educates on how to prevent mould growth within the home by:
- Producing less moisture and preventing the spread of moisture
 - Adequately heating and ventilating the home
 - Support available to alleviate fuel poverty
 - Access to energy advice services
 - Review of information available online
- 2.5 Engaging with tenants and landlords ensures that appropriate advice is given at all stages including regarding enforcement action if required.

3.0 Current Approach

- 3.1 Data collected from 1st March 2024 to end of February 2025 indicates that the Private Housing Standards Team received approximately 173 cases in the year with approximately 106 of these that mention dampness or mould. The vast majority of cases relate to tenants having concerns regarding their individual privately let property with a few cases relating to common repair issues or water leaking from an adjacent property.
- 3.2 On receipt of a complaint, officers will contact complainants. Actions may include:
- A visit to the property to carry out an investigation
 - Use of a damp meter to test walls for dampness
 - Look for signs of water leaks internal and external
 - Undertake a risk assessment to identify the severity
- 3.3 For minor cases, or where landlords do not have a responsibility to carry out works (such as if issue can be addressed by tenants' actions), officers will often provide advice to the resident (and potentially the landlord).
- 3.4 In more serious cases where landlords could be held liable for the cause of the damp and mould, officers will contact the landlords and identify which piece of legislation is most relevant should more formal action be required. In these cases, factors such as the cause of the issue and the severity of the situation will be some of the main areas considered in deciding what actions can be taken under what legislation. Where cases involve breaches of the repairing standard, these are the responsibility of the tenants to progress and advice will be given on this basis. Where appropriate, a third-party referral can be made to the Housing Tribunal.
- 3.5 As outlined in Appendix 1, legislation places a duty on officers whereas other regulation is discretionary. In extreme cases immediate action can be undertaken without having to contact the landlord.
- 3.6 In addition to reacting to damp and mould enquiries the council provides support to tenants and landlords with repairs and maintenance and cost of living pressures which may contribute to damp and mould issues. These include:
- The Scheme of Assistance outlines assistance for owners and landlords in relation to repairs, maintenance, improvements and adaptations in privately owned or rented properties. This also provides information on where to get support for energy saving advice and funding.
 - Fife Council facilitate advice and financial support to tenants experiencing fuel poverty and promote energy efficiency measures to address fuel poverty across all tenures. Both sets of action can help resolve damp and mould depending on the causal factors.
 - The council supports the private sector through a Service Level Agreement with Greener Kirkcaldy, the lead partner in the Cosy Kingdom Partnership. As well as energy advice, they offer a Handy Service to increase efficiencies (curtains, radiator panels, energy saving light bulbs, etc.)
- 3.7 The council's [Cost of Living Support](#) webpage informs residents on how to access support and advice services on a wide range of entitlements for home energy, food, heating and utilities, transport, home support, employment and more.

4.0 Improvement Activity

- 4.1 Within Protective Services, the Private Housing Standards Team has been relocated to the Environmental Health (Public and Environmental Protection) team. This has enabled relevant officers to have a greater focus on this area of work, allowing for more cases to be discussed with tenants and landlords, and has developed closer working in relation to cases which cut across different team's remits.
- Relevant to Damp, Mould and Condensation, Environmental Health (Public and Environmental Protection) now includes the following teams:
 - Public Protection – Deal with statutory nuisance complaints which can include Housing related matters such as water ingress
 - Private Housing Standards – Deal with complaints relating to the condition of private rented properties
- 4.2 A hybrid role is to be created linking the work of the Private Housing Standards team and the Public Protection team. This will enable the teams to work more closely together on Housing related matters. The officer involved will be well placed to determine whether complaints relating to Damp and Mould best sit under Housing related legislation or Statutory Nuisance.
- 4.3 Overall, officers are better placed to support and assist residents and landlords until the case is resolved. This ensures a better customer service and support for tenants through the process, whilst providing the landlord with an improved advisory service. There is also a potential for officers to give advice to a wider group where communal works are involved / required.
- 4.4 In addition to the officer relocation, a review exercise was undertaken including the following:
1. Review historical/ outstanding cases of dampness and condensation in private sector housing.
 2. Audit of actions taken and/or to be taken for all outstanding cases.
 3. Review current processes and procedures to tackle dampness and condensation.
 4. Collate and analyse all available data relating to private sector housing conditions.
 5. All relevant staff to undertake training on condensation, dampness and mould.
 6. Review the effectiveness of the information and engagement provided by Services to all parties on dampness/mould in private sector housing.

Whilst the initial review is now complete, much of this has now formed part of Business as Usual and ongoing development / improvement.

- 4.5 Work is underway ultimately provide a better service to the public. The two main areas included in to improve both the type of data recorded and the sharing of important information across relevant teams. This will enable better reporting of figures; greater analysis of data allowing officers to better understand trends in complaints relating to damp, mould and condensation; development of close working relationships and this work are:
- Work is ongoing to develop a register of properties that are below tolerable standard (BTS), to identify the particular cases for each element of BTS to ensure complaints relating to dampness can be categorised and monitored accurately. This will help to standardise complaint reporting but will also enable better sharing of data, where

appropriate. The system which will allow the creation of a BTS register is currently being designed

- The Environmental Health (Public and Environmental Protection) team has begun work to further develop / enhance the system it uses to record case information. This involves the addition of Enterprise to the Uniform system and will enable more detailed recording of relevant case information, better reporting and allow officers and managers to better track and manage workloads. At the current time, relevant officers are undergoing training with the intention that the updated system will be rolled out across relevant teams in due course.

- 4.6 Work has begun on the development of updated / new procedures across the Environmental Health (Public and Environmental Protection) team. The updated / new procedures will take into consideration lessons learnt from previous cases and will be developed in line with the latest guidance and similar.
- 4.7 All officers within the Private Housing Standards team have received training in damp, mould and condensation, and a number of those in the Public Protection team have done so as well. Officers will continue to attend relevant training to keep up to date with the latest developments relating to damp, mould and condensation, and the subject will form part of future internal training workshops and similar. A number of officers have also attended courses covering interrelated subject matters as such as Statutory Nuisance and Legal training.
- 4.8 The Private Housing Standards team has invested in new dampness meters to assist with their investigations, and these can be shared with officers from other relevant teams where required.
- 4.9 The Housing Service Landlord Registration Team promote online training to private landlords in collaboration with external providers, sessions offered in relation to repairs and maintenance obligations include the following:
- 25/02/2025: Home Energy Scotland. Advice, support and funding available for energy efficiency for landlords
 - 27/03/2025: Home Energy Scotland. An introduction to heat pumps
 - 03/10/2023: Landlord Accreditation Scotland. Understanding Landlord Repairing & Maintenance Obligations
- 4.10 A Damp and Mould advice webpage has been developed to provide information to both council and private sector tenants, private landlords and residents of Fife. A wide range of information is shared to understand the different types of damp and mould, preventative actions, repairs and maintenance obligations and health impact.
- 4.11 The Housing Service Private Sector Team have developed a Newsletter with the focus on information, resources and support available to tackle damp, mould and condensation. The information is available through social media and on the Damp & Mould advice webpage.
- 4.12 Fife Council is considering options on the use of the First Tier Tribunal for enforcement where private lets may not be meeting the repairing standards.
- 4.13 Officers are investigating options for approaches to enable the team to expand on actions which could be taken in relation to enforcement cases.

5.0 Conclusions and Next Steps

- 5.1 Members are asked to note the improvement actions to deliver, inform and react to Damp and Mould complaints.
- 5.2 Protective Services and Housing services will continue to work together implement improvement actions in the private rented sector in relation to dampness, mould and condensation for the wellbeing of tenants and families.

John Mills
Head of Housing Services

Nigel Kerr
Head of Protective Services

List of Appendices:

- 1. Summary of Private Sector Housing Legislation

List of publications relied on in the preparation of this report:

- February 2023 Putting People's Safety First - CIH, ALACHO, SFHA, SHR
[putting-safety-first.pdf \(cih.org\)](#)
- [Fife-Scheme-of-Assistance-2022.pdf](#)
- [Local heat & energy efficiency strategy \(LHEES\) and delivery plan | Fife Council](#)

Report Contacts

Mhairi Mullen
Service Manager - Housing
Mhairi.mullen@fife.gov.uk

Rob Bowditch
Service Manager - Protective Services
rob.bowditch@fife.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Summary of Private Sector Housing Legislation

There are a range of different pieces of legislation which are applicable to damp and mould in private sector housing. In summary, the main ones are:

- Repairing Standard – Chapter 4 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006, as amended, places a **duty on private landlords** to ensure that properties they let out meet minimum physical standards. Specifically, private landlords must ensure that, at both the start and at all times throughout a tenancy, as per section 13(1):

“(a)the house is wind and water tight and in all other respects reasonably fit for human habitation,

(b)the structure and exterior of the house (including drains, gutters and external pipes) are in a reasonable state of repair and in proper working order,

(c)the installations in the house for the supply of water, gas and electricity and for sanitation, space heating and heating water are in a reasonable state of repair and in proper working order,

(d)any fixtures, fittings and appliances provided by the landlord under the tenancy are in a reasonable state of repair and in proper working order,

(e)any furnishings provided by the landlord under the tenancy are capable of being used safely for the purpose for which they are designed...

(h)the house meets the tolerable standard”

However, the duty only applies where a tenant has notified a landlord, or the landlord has become aware of the need for works to be undertaken for the property to meet the repairing standard. Once aware, landlords need to undertake relevant works as soon as reasonably possible. One exception to this is where there are communal areas shared between different owners and the landlord has been refused access / consent to undertake work by the other owners.

Where a landlord refuses to undertake works after becoming aware of the need for them to be carried out, it is for the tenant to report matters to the Housing and Property Chamber. A tribunal from the Housing and Property Chamber will then decide if repairs are required, and the tribunal can require the landlord to undertake works. In cases involving vulnerable tenants, local authorities can report landlords to the Chamber.

In making a determination as to whether a property meets the standard, consideration will be given to factors such as the age of the property and its location. Relevant guidance would also need to be taken into account.

In relation to damp and mould, the repairing standard could apply to cases where a property is not water tight due to cracks in the property or where there are damaged windows. Similarly, defective guttering causing water to enter a property. Defective heating systems can also exacerbate any damp and mould issues. Officers from Fife Council can provide advice to tenants and landlords on matters which could be covered under the repairing standard, however it is ultimately for the Housing and Property Chamber to make a determination where required.

- Tolerable Standard – Section 85 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, as amended, places a **duty on local authorities** to ensure that any properties which do not meet a specified list of standards are either brought up to standard, closed or demolished. A property meets the tolerable standard where it, as per section 85(1):

“(a)is structurally stable;

(b)is substantially free from rising or penetrating damp;

(c)has satisfactory provision for natural and artificial lighting, for ventilation and for heating;

(ca)has satisfactory thermal insulation;

(d)has an adequate piped supply of wholesome water available within the house;

(e)has a sink provided with a satisfactory supply of both hot and cold water within the house;

(f)has a water closet [or waterless closet] available for the exclusive use of the occupants of the house and suitably located within the house;

(fa)has a fixed bath or shower and a wash-hand basin, each provided with a satisfactory supply of both hot and cold water and suitably located within the house;

(g)has an effective system for the drainage and disposal of foul and surface water;

(ga)in the case of a house having a supply of electricity, complies with the relevant requirements in relation to the electrical installation for the purposes of that supply;

“the electrical installation” is the electrical wiring and associated components and fittings, but excludes equipment and appliances;

“the relevant requirements” are that the electrical installation is adequate and safe to use;]

(h)has satisfactory facilities for the cooking of food within the house;

(i)has satisfactory access to all external doors and outbuildings;

[F6(j)has satisfactory equipment installed for detecting, and for giving warning of, fire or suspected fire;

(k)has satisfactory equipment installed for detecting, and for giving warning of, carbon monoxide present in a concentration that is hazardous to health”

Where properties fail to meet the tolerable standard, tenants can report matters to the Housing and Property Chamber as outlined above for the repairing standard.

In terms of actions which can be taken by Fife Council to deal with below tolerable standard properties, these are widespread and dependant on the nature and extent of the failure. In summary, these include:

- A defective or dangerous building notice under the Building (Scotland) Act 2003 (outlined below)
- A works notice under section 30 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 for urgent repairs
- A closing order under section 114 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987
- A demolition notice under section 33 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 / a demolition order under section 115 of the Housing (Scotland)
- Maintenance orders and Maintenance plans under section 43 and 44 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006
- Designation of an area as a Housing Renewal Area, as per Chapter 1 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006

Many of these can be applied to common repairs where multiple owners are involved. Indeed, some, such as Housing Renewal Areas, are more relevant for widespread issues across multiple properties in an area.

In relation to damp and mould, the tolerable standard covers matters such as rising damp due to insufficient damp proof course, penetrating damp caused by cracks to the property and defective drainage or poorly installed bath's, showers and similar causing water leaks.

- Statutory Nuisance – Section 79 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 outlines a number of matters which can constitute a statutory nuisance. Specifically, in relation to damp and mould, 79(1)(a), states that “any premises in such a state as to be prejudicial to health or a nuisance” can constitute a statutory nuisance. For damp and mould, it is the prejudicial to health limb which would need to be proven, i.e. that the damp and mould was prejudicial to health. Further, it would also need to be proved that the damp and mould was down to the actions of the owner, and not due to another party or actions of the tenant.

Officers from Fife Council are under a duty to investigate complaints relating to statutory nuisance, and where a statutory nuisance is identified they **shall serve** an abatement notice on relevant parties. An abatement notice requires steps to be taken to abate the nuisance within a set timeframe. It is an offence not to comply with an abatement notice, and where this happens works can be undertaken in default and costs recovered. However, there is no duty for steps to be taken beyond serving a notice, with various factors having to be taken into account such as the extent and cost of works involved, seriousness of the issue and similar, when considering appropriate actions following non-compliance with a notice.

In relation to damp and mould, this would primarily relate to cases where there was a defect in or on a property causing water to ingress into another property. For example, damage to a communal roof or a leak at a shower tray. Where multiple owners are involved, all would be deemed to be liable for common parts.

- Building Standards – Section 28 of the Building (Scotland) Act 2003 provides that a local authority **may serve** a “defective building notice” on a building owner, requiring them to rectify any identified defects to a building in set timeframes, in order to bring it back into a reasonable state of repair. Consideration needs to be given to factors such as the age and location of the building.

It is an offence for parties not to comply with the requirements of a defective building notice, and local authorities can carry out works where compliance has not been achieved, and recover expenses.

In relation to damp and mould, this could potentially include issues such as missing roof tiles, which are causing water to ingress into a property.

- Building Standards – Section 29 of the Building (Scotland) Act 2003 provides that where a local authority has identified a building which is deemed to be a “dangerous building”, they **must undertake works**. The building must be considered to be a danger to people in or near to the property and / or members of the public. In terms of works, these can include preventing access to the area through to demolition, and any costs can be recovered.

Local authority officers have the option of serving a notice on an owner requiring steps to be taken. Where notices are not complied with, **works may be undertaken** by the local authority with costs recovered. Similarly, where immediate action is required, local authorities can undertake emergency works to make the building safe, and recover costs.

Damp and mould could be a side effect of the main cause of a property becoming dangerous, as opposed to the reason for it becoming dangerous. For example, significant cracks to a building could allow water ingress, however it would likely be the potential for the building to collapse which would lead to a notice being served. Alternatively, excessive dampness / water ingress could lead to rotting timbers or similar, potentially affecting the stability of parts of a property.

As can be seen, cases involving damp and mould, and its causes, often fit under more than one piece of legislation. Officers will undertake discussions to determine the most appropriate course of action for the specific case / circumstances and work collaboratively to achieve satisfactory outcomes.

Officers will try to work with relevant owners / agents etc., encouraging parties to take responsibility for remedying any defects found. However, where compliance is not achieved, or more immediate works are needed, Fife Council officers have a range of enforcement tools which can be utilised, as outlined.

15th May 2025

Agenda Item No. 8

Equality & Diversity Outcomes Progress 2023-2025

Report by: Paul Vaughan, Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods

Wards Affected: all

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Committee with progress on the Council's Equality and Diversity outcomes 2023-2025.

Recommendation(s)

Committee members are asked to consider and comment on the contents of this report.

Resource Implications

There are no immediate resource implications although some elements of the proposed action plan may require the allocation of staff resources and funding.

Legal & Risk Implications

The Council has complied with the legal requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010 and published online the progress report covering the two year period [2021-2023](#).

Impact Assessment

An EqlA is not required as the report does not propose a change to existing policies and practices.

Consultation

Council Services and Partner organisations were consulted and asked for progress in relation to the outcomes.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty requires public authorities to publish every four years, a revised set of equality outcomes and progress against the previous four years of outcomes and actions. In addition, progress against the outcomes is required to be published online every two years (by April 2025).
- 1.2 Attached at Appendix 1 is progress covering the period 2023-2025.

2.0 Progress on the 2023-2025 Outcomes

- 2.1 The Equality and Diversity document [2021-2025](#) was approved in June 2021 and set the following five outcomes:
 - Outcome 1 - Fife's communities are provided with services and information accessible to them particularly those who face barriers through disability, language and digital exclusion
 - Outcome 2 - Women and girls live free from all forms of violence and abuse – and the attitudes that help perpetuate it
 - Outcome 3 - Fife's communities (including people from the protected characteristics) have increased confidence to participate in decision making, their human rights respected and have an improved quality of life
 - Outcome 4 - The Council understands its workforce better and it reflects the diversity of the local population
 - Outcome 5 - Raising educational achievement and attainment particularly for those in their early years or in early learning and childcare
- 2.2 The achievements to date include the following:
 - The Council continues to provide information in a range of formats including community languages, BSL and by SMS text to people who have hearing impairments. Future provision will include trialling machine readable translations in community languages.
 - A [community engagement toolkit](#) has been developed to help support engagement with communities and sets out which engagement method is best for the type of consultation. The toolkit can be used in the planning, delivery and evaluation of work and sets out various tools to help with informing, consulting and engaging with members of the public.
 - In to work around violence against women, the Council successfully achieved Equally Safe at Work accreditation at the Bronze level in October 2023. The award is designed to create sustainable change in workplace practice and Fife Council holds the accreditation until November 2025.
 - [Fife People's Panel](#) was launched in 2006 and consists of a group of people who have volunteered to help improve Fife by giving their opinions and observations on a variety of public issues. The Panel is organised by Fife Partnership – which combines Fife Council, NHS Fife, Police, Fire Service and the voluntary sector.
 - The Council continues to fund Fife Centre for Equalities to undertake engagement with the protected characteristics on behalf of the Council on topics such as access to Council services, supporting specific engagement

activities and providing information to the Council on changes to Fife's 'equality' communities.

- In relation to our workforce, Fife Centre for Equalities (FCE) undertook research into the public's perception of Fife Council as an employer and access to the job opportunities we offer. This piece of work was specifically targeted at minority ethnic communities within Fife as our data from the last reporting period showed we had a disproportionately low number of applications from these groups. The survey results highlighted some potential barriers to individuals applying for employment including the requirement for a supporting statement and the need for flexibility and accessibility in communication. Since the results of the survey were published in 2023 we have taken action to address the issues raised.
- We also continue to operate the Workforce Youth Investment Programme (WYI) whereby £800k is invested annually into providing a range of opportunities for those aged 16-24 residing in Fife.
- In relation to actions taken as an Education authority, all family Nurture Centres offer a range of formal and informal parenting support mechanisms which all parents for the local area can access. Revised Personal Learning Journals have been implemented in all funded provider settings. Tracking and monitoring reference materials will help to plan for children's individual developmental needs. All children in Fife who are eligible for funded ELC receive the full entitlement of 1140 hours and the Council continues to review this provision to ensure it best meets parent's needs.
- Fife Centre for Equalities is funded by Fife Council to engage with all protected characteristics on behalf of the Council. Over the last two years, they have further developed their community engagement sessions (Get Togethers); supported in-person consultation and participation sessions; undertaken in-depth interviews to provide information on barriers to ethnic minority people taking up employment with the Council and provided diversity and inclusion training for Education staff.

3.0 Conclusion

- 3.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, the Council developed a revised set of equality outcomes in 2021 and reported on two year progress on the outcomes and actions in April 2023. This report has set out some of the achievements in relation to the five outcomes covering the period 2023-2025.

List of Appendices

1. Equality & Diversity Outcomes – Progress 2023-2025

Report Contact:

Zahida Ramzan

Policy Co-ordinator

Policy & Delivery Team

Zahida.ramzan@fife.gov.uk

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1. Introduction

Fife Council approved its [equality and diversity outcomes in 2021](#) following extensive consultation and engagement with protected characteristics led by Fife Centre for Equalities. Although there is much equality and diversity work that goes on in the Council, feedback from the engagement exercise ensured that the Council was taking forward outcomes and actions which would benefit as many people as possible.

The outcomes and actions approved covered a four year period – this report is the final update and sums up what has been achieved against each outcome. The 2021-2023 progress report is available [here](#).

The Council is also due to publish its revised equality priorities for the next four years starting April 2025 and these are referenced in this report. A report on the latter will be submitted to the June Cabinet Committee. A workshop to seek Member feedback on the new four year priorities will be held on 6th May 2025.

2. Public Sector Equality Duty & National Context

Public Sector Equality Duty

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 came into force in April 2011, introducing a new Public Sector Equality Duty that became law across Scotland. The public sector equality duty has 3 parts which all public authorities need to comply with. The 3 parts are called the general duty and public authorities need to consider each of these:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between those who have a protected characteristics and those who do not
- Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not

The protected characteristics under the Equality Act are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race – this includes ethnic or national origin, colour and nationality. This includes Gypsy Travellers
- Religion or belief – this includes lack of belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The public sector equality duty under the Equality Act requires the Council to:

- **Mainstream** – How the duty is being integrated into other functions undertaken by the Council.
- **Set equality outcomes** – The results which the authority wishes to achieve. The outcomes must have been set with the engagement of protected characteristics and/or evidence relating to the protected characteristics.
- **Involve** all protected characteristics - and anyone else the local authority considers represents the interests of people with protected characteristics.
- Consider **relevant evidence** relating to people with protected characteristics.
- **Assess** and review policies and practices.
- **Gather** and use employment information.
- **Publish** a revised set of outcomes within a reasonable timescale.

3. Progress on Equality & Diversity Outcomes 2023-2025

The Council set five equality outcomes for the period 2021-2025. The Senior Equalities Group, which oversees the equalities work across the Council, regularly receives updates on how the outcomes and actions are being implemented. This section sums up some of the achievements over the final two years of the initial outcomes.

Outcome 1: Fife's communities are provided with services and information accessible to them particularly those who face barriers through disability, language and digital exclusion.

What we prioritised

The Council recognised that there will be people from the protected characteristics and other vulnerable groups who are not able to use digital forms of communication and do not take part in decision making. This was evident during the pandemic when certain groups including ethnic minority people, people with disabilities and people from low income households missed out on communication about the pandemic.

We committed to: providing information in a range of formats including BSL and community languages; using a range of consultation tools and engagement tools to seek views; and channel more information through the Community Portal.

What we achieved

The Council continues to provide information in a range of formats including community languages, BSL and by SMS text to people who have hearing impairments. In 2024, we trialled a machine readable translation app for documents with the aim of turning around translated documents quicker – from days to minutes as well as saving money. The trial went well although we realised that machine readable translations are better for non-personal information and routine non-technical documents. Going forward we aim to develop the trial further and provide guidance to staff on providing machine readable translations.

A [community engagement toolkit](#) has been developed to help support engagement with communities and sets out which engagement method is best for the type of consultation. The toolkit can be used in the **planning, delivery and evaluation** of work and sets out various tools to help with informing, consulting and engaging with members of the public.

Outcome 2: Women and girls live free from all forms of violence and abuse – and the attitudes that help perpetuate it

What we prioritised

- The actions under this outcome related to the Fife Violence Against Women Partnership (FVAWP) and specifically the Priority 2 sub-group.
- Revised Equality and Diversity Scheme to reflect impact of Covid -19 including identifying inequality of outcome and disadvantage on women, children and young people.
- Fife Council to work with FVAWP to progress actions within the Equally Safe at Work framework
- Consult with women, children and young people with lived experience of VAW.

What we achieved

Equally Safe is Scotland's national strategy to prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls. The strategy was refreshed and re -published in December 2023 setting out four priorities:

1. Scottish society embraces equality and mutual respect and rejects all forms of violence against women and girls
2. Women and girls thrive as equal citizens: socially, culturally, economically, and politically
3. Interventions are early and effective, preventing violence and maximising the safety and wellbeing of women children and young people
4. Men reject all forms of violence against women and girls and perpetrators of such violence receive a robust and effective response

In relation to priority 2, Fife Council successfully achieved Equally Safe at Work accreditation at the Bronze level in October 2023. The award is designed to create sustainable change in workplace practice and Fife Council hold the accreditation until November 2025. Other work included prioritising violence against women and girls within community planning and building relationships with the Health and Social Care partnership. See the full annual report here [FVAWP Annual Report 2023-2024](#)

Outcome 3: Fife's communities (including people from the protected characteristics) have increased confidence to participate in decision making, their human rights respected and have an improved quality of life

What we prioritised

This was very much a partnership outcome ensuring that there was: regular monitoring reports around harassment and bullying motivated by hate; there was awareness of Police Scotland's third party reporting centres; a partnership approach to participation in decision making was developed; and that People and Place local arrangements would be used to build a stronger community-led approach.

What we achieved

The Council has a hate incidents policy and managers will receive and deal with any incidents of hate motivated by protected characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, disability. The Council is also represented on the Hate Crime Core Group chaired by Police Scotland which considers reports of hate crimes including by locality and type of crime. Hate crime reports are reported through the Community Safety Partnership.

[Fife People's Panel](#) was launched in 2006 and consists of a group of people who have volunteered to help improve Fife by giving their opinions and observations on a variety of public issues. The Panel is organised by Fife Partnership – which combines Fife Council, NHS Fife, Police, Fire Service and the voluntary sector.

Another partnership resource is the community engagement toolkit which has been mentioned in outcome 1 above.

[Fife Centre for Equalities](#) is funded through a Service Level Agreement to engage with protected characteristics on behalf of the Council. They undertook engagement with individuals and groups when setting the 2021-2025 equality outcomes and have been involved in shaping the new priorities. The qualitative engagement is particularly essential in helping the Council to plan and deliver services which meets the needs of different communities.

Outcome 4: The Council understands its workforce better and it reflects the diversity of the local population

What we prioritised

The Council recognises that as one of Fife's largest employers we have a responsibility to model fair and inclusive workplace practices. In line with the Council becoming a data driven organisation, we need to improve our data collection in relation to staff perceptions, needs and wants. This will give us an opportunity to analyse and interpret relevant data to produce coherent and targeted policies and actions.

Our workforce priorities therefore were focused on improving the data we hold about employees; engaging with local communities (including young people) about the Council's workplace practices; supporting our trans employees; supporting the recruitment and retention of disabled employees and reviewing equality and diversity training as well as developing more flexible workstyles.

What we achieved

We have an ongoing communication campaign to explain why and how we collect information, encourage employees to check that their information has been recorded and if not request they complete it. These key messages have been built into a variety of different communications for employees on issues such as Transgender Awareness, Interfaith Week and Global Diversity Awareness.

Fife Centre for Equalities (FCE) undertook research into the public's perception of Fife Council as an employer and access to the job opportunities we offer. This piece of work was specifically targeted at minority ethnic communities within Fife as our data from the last reporting period showed we had a disproportionately low number of applications from these groups. FCE ran a survey from August to November 2022 with follow up focus groups and interviews.

The survey results highlighted some potential barriers to individuals applying for employment including the requirement for a supporting statement and the need for flexibility and accessibility in communication. Since the results of the survey were published in 2023 we have taken action to address the issues raised. Some key actions include:

- Reducing the requirement for a supporting statement in recruitment for certain posts
- Streamlined communication through the website and a renewed emphasis on the use of plain language
- Bi-annual job fairs held in different parts of Fife, backed by BSL support with the aim of targeting all parts of the Fife community

We continue to operate the Workforce Youth Investment Programme (WYI) whereby £800k is invested annually into providing a range of opportunities for those aged 16-24 residing in Fife. Opportunities include apprenticeships, traineeships, graduate roles and entry level work placements. WYI also continue to support care experienced young people and work with Employability and Social Work colleagues to fund work opportunities to those from this group who have completed a successful

work-based placement. In 2023/24, WYI supported 24 young people into roles across the Council. The roles varied from Modern Apprenticeships in Horticulture, Early Years Education, Care and Digital Media to Traineeships in Digital Skills and Health and Safety.

As an employer, we must make reasonable adjustments to ensure employees with disabilities, or physical / mental health conditions, are not disadvantaged at work. We've devised a new reasonable adjustment and assistive technology system to create a central hub for employees and managers. It summarises the types of supports that can be accessed, as well as guidance on the application process and grants available.

The [Equality and Diversity in Employment](#) report setting out detailed progress of achievements including workforce profile information and gender pay gap is available online.

Outcome 5: Raising educational achievement and attainment particularly for those in their early years or in early learning and childcare

What we prioritised

The Fairer Fife Commission report stated that the Fife Partnership should require all schools to develop and deliver a plan for significantly reducing the educational attainment gap.

The actions we prioritised under this outcome were wide-ranging with a focus on: pupils being made aware of Fife's historical links to slavery; improving educational achievement and attainment for pupils with protected characteristics and Care Experienced pupils; improving early years development of children including two year olds; and increasing participation of parents living in deprived areas.

What we achieved

- All ELC settings benefit from trained Bookbug and PEEP facilitators, offering regular opportunities for parents to share in children's learning.
- Incredible Years parenting programme is facilitated across Fife to enable parents to build their capacity.
- All family Nurture Centres offer a range of formal and informal parenting support mechanisms which all parents for the local area can access.
- Revised Personal Learning Journals have been implemented in all funded provider settings. Tracking and monitoring reference materials will help to plan for children's individual developmental needs.
- In all local authority settings an early language observational tool is now embedded to assess children's language and communication needs and development. This observational language tool has been further developed in partnership with Dundee University to now take into account the language development of children aged two. This will be rolled out to all local authority settings in August 2024.
- Scottish Government now share data through the DWP to enable FC to target areas where the uptake of eligible two year old places is lower. This has supported FC to link with families in specific localities to support the increase in uptake of eligible two year old places.
- All children in Fife who are eligible for funded ELC receive the full entitlement of 1140 hours and the Council continues to review this provision to ensure it best meets parent's needs.
- All children who turn five years from the start of the academic session until the end of February the following year can now have their start to school deferred by a further year.

Setting equality priorities for 2025-2029

A workshop with members of the Senior Equalities Group was held on 29th January 2025 to start the discussion around future equality priorities. A workshop with elected members is due to be held on 6th May 2025 to seek feedback on suggested priorities.

The suggested priorities are:

- Access to communication & services
- Inclusive communities
- A working environment where inclusion is prioritised and promoted
- Raising educational achievement & attainment

4. Fife Centre for Equalities

Fife Centre for Equalities (FCE) is a local charity, funded by Fife Council, with the charitable aims of raising awareness and understanding amongst all communities and community groups in Fife of equality and diversity.

In 2023/4 and 2024/5, continued to provide access to appropriate information, assistance and training to communities and community groups, in support of fair and inclusive community development and engagement activities across all the Equality Outcomes. Some achievements in relation to the five equality outcomes are as follows:

Outcome 1

Starting January 2023 and throughout 2023-2024

FCE worked with the Fife Council Transport Strategy consultation to gather the views of service users, practitioners and members of the general public in Fife. Initiating the process with an in-person consultation event at St. Luke's in Glenrothes with 20 participants in person, using feedback to adapt questions and prepare the survey campaign through online forums, social media, WhatsApp's and word of mouth networks. FCE service users were also supported to respond where required, leading to a good take up (1335 total responses, of which 180 said they have a disability and 33 were from an ethnic minority background) and considerable data to inform the strategy.

Under this outcome, FCE also piloted from February 2024 monthly open-ended engagement sessions (Get Togethers), where participants were provided with guidance and advice on services and information so that they were accessible to them, targeting Fifers who face barriers through disability, language and digital exclusion. This pilot completed in December 2024 and is now a new National Lottery Community Fund project (Fife Inclusion Network) with monthly meetings and casework support. FCE is also continues to providing support for the BSL Plan by hosting and promoting Deaf Support Service BSL videos for Fife Council Reception Staff on FCE's media website and YouTube channel. Description videos for member community groups and organisations of the Fife Equalities Forum are in production from February 2025 to widen information about diverse community-based services.

Outcome 2

FCE promoted engagement and consultations from the FVAWP programme to members of the Fife Equalities Forum and Get Togethers participants, supporting and encouraging participation from minority groups in 16 Days of Activism Campaign and by widening awareness in discussions around gender equality (e.g. Book Events with authors of 'The Patriarchy' and 'Lads') and by hosting International Women's Day events aimed at community building. From 2025, IWD events at FCE moved to being mixed-sex event, with attendees and guest speakers engaging in discussion on how to work together to progress gender equality, as well as provided women-only spaces.

Outcome 3

FCE continued to support participation in consultations, using the approach taken in the LTS consultation - breaking down complex questions in components, avoiding jargon and systematically using plain English. Key FCE achievement under this outcome was the Human Rights Bill for Scotland Consultation from June to October 2023. The original document was adapted for online, in person and discussion/workshop format. The FCE workshop took place in September 2023 with notetakers, interpreters and advocates for 23 participants with multiple barriers including learning disability, sight impairment and language barriers. Responses from the workshop featured in the analysis published by the Scottish Government / Alma Economics in January 2024.

Outcome 4

FCE followed on from the February 2023 survey and in-depth interviews for insights on barriers to minority ethnic recruitment and retention with an independent review in July 2023 of Fife Council's Diversity Inclusion Policy, and in September 2023 with EDI framework recommendations based on the LGA Equality Framework from Local Government. From October to February 2024, FCE hosted an employability student (in partnership with FVA) focussing on applications of Disability Passports to support neurodivergent jobseekers and produced an initial guiding briefing based on Lived Experience.

Outcome 5

FCE provided equality diversity and inclusion training and workshops to the Education Extended Leadership team, which were disrupted due to strikes at the end of FY22-23. FCE worked with partners from the Fife Afro-Caribbean Network and Fife Equalities Forum to prepare a presentation to just over 100 headteachers in Fife at the Fife Equality and Sustainability Conference in May 2024. Feedback from the workshop also helped share FCE's engagement programme including a Get Together themed on Black History Month in October 2024 and continued involvement of new minority ethnic projects in the forums (e.g. Africans in Fife, ADELPHE) with FCE.

15 May 2025

Agenda Item No. 9

Fife Corporate Parenting Board

Report by: James Ross, Head of Service, Children, Families and Justice Social Work Services

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

To update on the work of Fife Corporate Parenting Board (FCPB) and developments planned to improve the Corporate Parenting agenda across Fife.

Recommendation(s)

The committee is asked to: -

- Note the work of the Corporate Parenting Board to ensure that care experienced young people in Fife are supported, with the best offer from their 'corporate parents', to reach their full potential.
- Note the priority areas identified within the Corporate Parenting Plan 2024 – 2027

Resource Implications

The proposed recommendations can be met utilising existing resources.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no perceived legal risks associated with the recommendations.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA is not necessary at this time, however, recognising the particular vulnerability of care experienced young people, this will be subject to ongoing review.

Consultation

This report is based on discussion between members of Fife Corporate Parenting Board and wider stakeholder group.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Fife's Corporate Parenting Board (FCPB) has been in operation since 2008. The board currently meets on an 8 weekly basis and has representation from a wide range of relevant partners, including elected members, one of whom is the current chair.
- 1.2 FCPB is well placed to capture and report on the effectiveness of the strategic responsibilities placed on 'the whole organisation' in relation to their corporate parenting role, achievement, and intent.
- 1.3 Corporate parenting responsibilities are defined in Part 9 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014). Corporate parenting is not a task which can be delegated to an individual or team. Fulfilling the corporate parenting duties, set out in Part 9 of the Act, demands a whole organisation responsibility/approach. This includes elected members.
- 1.4 The purpose and intention of Part 9 is to improve how organisations support care experienced children and care leavers. Implementation of this part of the Act requires it to be led by senior managers across all departments, regardless of their focus or function. Staff at all levels must understand their duties and be supported and enabled to fulfil them.
- 1.5 As corporate parenting is a corporate responsibility, an organisation's most senior corporate management teams will be held responsible for ensuring that the duties set out in Part 9 are met. Moreover, senior corporate managers will be held accountable for an organisation's performance in respect to corporate parenting.
- 1.6 It is the role of Fife Corporate Parenting Board (FCPB) to reflect and report on this and hold each other to account, to provide the assurances required.

2.0 Local and National Issues

- 2.1 The Fife Corporate Parenting Board reports on the effectiveness of organisational wide activity to meet the needs of care experienced young people. It holds commitment to champion the voices of those with lived experience.
- 2.2 The work of FCPB oversees the strategic delivery of The Promise in Fife. This Promise is a key driver of change for care experienced young people, placing responsibility on practitioners across all disciplines to support care experienced young people to achieve good outcomes. This relates to attainment within education, having their health needs met, and access to local intensive support to enable them to remain within their wider families (Kinship Care), in the places they know, with those they love. Children in Fife have agreed that the work of The Promise will report directly to the Corporate Parenting Board given their interconnected responsibilities.

- 2.3** FCPB is committed to having a positive impact on individual experience and outcomes by addressing systemic, structural and societal inequality, exclusion and discrimination that the care experienced community can and does face.
- 2.4** There are children and adults who were previously looked after in Fife, and it is these collective voices we strive to hear. Services feedback to the FCPB around the feedback mechanisms that they have in place to gather feedback on the challenges and successes when they leave care.
- 2.5** The 8 weekly reports submitted to the FCPB capture the local successes of those who are currently cared for in Fife. Examples have included the National House Project successfully supporting all 5 cohorts of care leavers to manage their own homes, with no experience of failed tenancy. Employability and Education services have also embedded enhanced supports across their services and give priority to care experienced young people, recognising their additional vulnerabilities without treating them differently from their peers.
- 2.6** We know there are a disproportionate number of care experienced young people who experience multiple disadvantages such as homelessness, substance use, mental health and conflict with the law. Supports are being developed to improve outcomes for care experienced young people at risk of secure care or Justice involvement through the development of the Youth Intervention Service and Nex Turn in Children, Families and Justice social work services.
- 2.7** It is these inequalities on an individual and structural basis that the FCPB seeks to expose and address, especially when considered through the lens of poverty, trauma, and loss, that is indelibly linked with the lived experiences of those in the care community.

3.0 Strategic Aims

- 3.1** The Children & Families Belonging to Fife (B2F) strategy and our Childrens Services Plan are strongly aligned to the key building blocks of the Promise and continue to be successful in addressing the balance of care.
- 3.2** Over the last 6 years, the profile of care in Fife has significantly changed, in alignment with B2F and the national drivers, with most young people who need alternative care now being placed within kinship arrangements. This very much sets the tone and culture for supporting children and young people within their own family and community wherever safe to do so, with the right supports, to ensure they feel loved and cared for.

Below is the breakdown of data from April 2025 in relation to the current cared for population. Please note that in order to detail change in the balance of care this data includes all kinship care and not just those formally looked after, it also includes some relevant care leaver data.

Type of Placement	Number of children in placement type April 2019	Number of children in placement type April 2025
Looked after at home	186	155
Foster Care	484	253
Kinship Care	598	793
Residential care	147	42
Supported Lodgings	22	3
Continuing Care	37	67

- 3.3** Corporate Parenting Training sessions have been developed to highlight and improve the understanding of Corporate Parenting responsibilities across the wider workforce. This should improve collective understanding of the experiences of the care experienced community, including the importance of being trauma informed and the connections to the priority areas of The Promise.

4.0 Corporate Parenting Plan

- 4.1** To deliver on the FCPB framework, the Board have developed a new Corporate Parenting Plan 2024 – 2027 (See appendix 1). The Plan identifies 7 priority areas for the FCPB to focus on. Key highlights for each area are listed below:

Improvement activity 1: We will provide safe, secure, stable and nurturing homes for care experienced and looked after children

- The focus over the course of the plan is to listen and learn from the feedback of children and young people and their families with care experience. Ensure all corporate parents offer effective intervention to support Looked After Children at Home, and supporting young parents with care experience to prepare for parenthood proportionately and with compassion. Young people leaving care will also be provided with additional support to have access to sustainable housing.

Improvement activity 2: Enable all care experienced and looked after children to develop and maintain positive relationships with their family – especially brothers and sisters, friends, professionals and other trusted adults:

- Corporate parents will be focused on activities to support brothers and sisters to live together where it is safe to do so, but if they are separated, support them to retain positive relationships with one another. Young people leaving care will have a pathway plan which meets their individual needs, and all carers in life will be supported through training and supervision to understand the importance of relationships.

Improvement activity 3: We will uphold and promote children's rights with a particular focus on participation

- Corporate Parents will focus on supporting children and young people to understand their rights and access advocacy support whilst they are in care and after care. Services will be supported to embed improved participation approaches across Fife, whilst ensuring voice is truly heard and responded to, and considered within the Corporate Parenting Board.

Improvement activity 4: Secure positive educational outcomes for care experienced and looked after children

- Supporting all children with care experience to have a Coordinated Support Plan which identifies their needs and how these will be met. Ensuring corporate parents demand that we are ambitious for all children with care experience to learn and be the best they can be. Effectively preparing young people for life afterschool and supporting them to access work, apprenticeships or higher education opportunities. Looked after young people should be supported in a person-centred way to access education, and should not be excluded from school.

Improvement activity 5: Improve the physical and/or mental health of care experienced and looked after children

- Corporate parents will work together to support all young people to have their health needs assessed when they first come into care. Services will work together to reduce the number of placements moves a young person has, and improve the coordination between services which support the mental wellbeing of young people at all stages and particularly transitions.

Improvement activity 6: Increase the number of care leavers in higher education, training, apprenticeships and employment

- Supporting young people with care experience to access and succeed in college/university. Develop a prioritised care experienced apprenticeship scheme across the council and partners. Upskilling staff to provide trauma informed careers advice and employability support.

Improvement activity 7: Reduce the number of care experienced and looked after children who enter the justice system

- In line with legislation, review and develop Early and Effective Intervention pathways to redirect young people away from the justice system. Corporate parents will work closely to support the development of a new Youth Intervention Service that will support young people children who are at risk of entering secure care or being in conflict with the law.

5.0 Voice of the Child

- 5.1 The FCPB and The Promise can only be successful if it listens to those with lived experience. Our online feedback tools were evaluated in 2024. The use of these was low in comparison to the overall looked after community. Feedback from young people highlighted a preference to speak to key adults around them, including teachers, social workers and advocacy workers who they felt could share their views instead of using an online system. It was identified that there is a good range of options available to young people to share their views and therefore our online feedback tools were not renewed when their contract expired.
- 5.2 Fife is a Bairns Hoose pathfinder, and an element of that work is driving forward the participation and engagement work to ensure that children and young people with lived experience are involved with every aspect of designing Bairns Hoose in Fife.
- 5.3 We are progressing the Children's Rights agenda and implementation of UNCRC in Fife and are progressing our communication and workforce development strategy. The Fife Children's Rights Charter was co-produced with children and young people in Fife and this was launched in December 2024 (see appendix 2). A new Children's Rights service is also being developed within the Children and Families service, with the aim of increasing the capacity of advocacy support available to young people and increasing their participation in decision making processes.

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1 It is recognised that FCPB has the key role in driving forward the strategic Corporate Parenting agenda in Fife, recognising the challenges that young people are exposed to throughout their time in care. The FCPB has worked hard to ensure that its membership represents those organisations and holds them accountable to support young people through their care journeys.
- 6.2 There is a growing focus on improving the experience and life chances of care experienced young people, through local and national drivers including The Promise. The revised FCPB is committed to meeting this challenge. There are clear cross cutting themes around poverty, risk, vulnerability and achievement that need to be better challenged.
- 6.3 The FCPB continues to develop a much more visible position across Fife, advocating for the care experienced community, through local community planning forums. By building up this positive presence the collective voices of the care community in Fife should be central in driving forward the transformational change required to address the inequalities faced.
- 6.4 The FCBP will report on progress annually.

Appendices

The following appendices are included with this report:

Appendix 1 – Corporate Parenting Plan 2024 – 2027

Appendix 2 – Fife Children's Rights Children's Charter

Report Contacts

Laura Lowrie
Service Manager
Children and Families Social Work
Email: laura.lowrie-sw@fife.gov.uk

James Ross
Head of Children and Families and
Justice Social Work and CSWO
Email: james.ross-fc-d1@fife.gov.uk

Fife's Corporate Parenting Plan 2024 – 2027



The Promise

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What is a Corporate Parent?

A corporate parent is the name given to an organisation or person who has special responsibilities to support, nurture and advocate for children and young people with care experience:

- those in residential care, including residential schools or secure care,
- those in foster care,
- those in kinship care, who live with a family member other than a parent,
- those who are looked after at home.

Who are Corporate Parents?

There are lots of organisations who are named as a Corporate Parent, with everyone in these organisations being responsible and accountable, not just those who work directly with children and young people.

*This category includes Accountant in Bankruptcy; Disclosure Scotland; Education Scotland; The Scottish Prison Service; The Scottish Public Pensions Agency; Student Awards Agency for Scotland; And Transport Scotland



Corporate Parenting Duties

Part 9 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 puts the concept of corporate parenting into Scots law. It makes it so:

- there are certain things corporate parents have to do by law for the children and young people they're responsible for,
- corporate parents have to report to Scottish Ministers on how they're carrying out their responsibilities through preparing and following a corporate parenting plan



The Corporate Parenting Plan is linked to the wider Children's Services Plan which you can see here:

[Fife Children's Services Plan](#)

Who are the Corporate Parenting Group?



Fife's Corporate Parenting Group is made up of people from organisations and services that support children and families across Fife. Members of the group include people from Education, Social Work, Community Learning & Development, Housing, NHS Fife, Fife Health and Social Care Partnership, Police Scotland, Third Sector, Fife College and the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration. We also consult and involve a range of views from the care experienced community in Fife.

The Group reports to Chief Officers Public Safety (COPS)

The Group holds the responsibility to:



Develop and put into action the Corporate Parenting Plan and make sure it works with other local plans for improvement whilst making sure Corporate Parents work together for the benefit of children and young people with care experience.

How do we know what we need to do?



We spoke to the looked after community in Fife including those involved in the National House Project, Embrace, Young People's Team and Care Leavers and working with members of Fife's Corporate Parenting Board to identify our key priorities.

Our Corporate Parenting Plan

Identifying areas we have heard that are important to our looked after population, Corporate Parents in Fife want to do 7 things:



1. Provide safe, secure, stable and nurturing homes for care experienced and looked after children.



2. Enable all care experienced and looked after children to develop and maintain positive relationships with their family – especially brothers and sisters, friends, professionals and other trusted adults.



3. Uphold and promote children's rights with a particular focus on participation



4. Secure positive educational outcomes for care experienced and looked after children.



5. Improve the physical and/or mental health of care experienced and looked after children.



6. Increase the number of care leavers in higher education, training, apprenticeships and employment.



7. Reduce the number of care experienced and looked after children who enter the justice system.

Read on for more information about how we plan to make these things happen.

1. We will provide safe, secure, stable and nurturing homes for care experienced and looked after children by:

- Listening and learning from the feedback of children and young people and their families with care experience.
- Ensure all corporate parents offer effective intervention to support Looked After Children at Home.
- Support young parents with care experience to prepare for parenthood proportionately and with compassion.
- Make sure that every child or young person leaving care has access to sustainable housing.

2. Enable all care experienced and looked after children to develop and maintain positive relationships with their family – especially brothers and sisters, friends, professionals and other trusted adults by:

- Keeping more children and young people in Fife.
- Keeping brothers and sisters together where it is safe to do so but if they are separated, make sure that they are supported to keep in touch with one another.
- Ensuring every young person leaving care has a pathway plan which meets their individual needs.
- Support all of our carers through training and supervision to understand the importance of relationships.

3. We will uphold and promote children's rights with a particular focus on participation by:

- Making sure children and young people involved in the Children's Hearing system have access to advocacy.
- Supporting children and young people to understand their rights and access support whilst they are in care and after care.
- Reduce and monitor our use of restrictive practices across children's services.
- Develop improved participation approaches across all services whilst ensuring voice is truly heard and responded to by developing a co-produced Children's Charter for Looked After Children by the end of 2025.
- Ensure the voice of lived experience is included within the Corporate Parenting Board.

4. Secure positive educational outcomes for care experienced and looked after children by:

- Ensuring all children with care experience have been considered for a Coordinated Support Plan which identifies their needs and how these will be met.
- Ensuring corporate parents demand that we are ambitious for all children with care experience to learn and be the best they can be.
- Preparing our children and young people for life afterschool and supporting them to access work, apprenticeships or higher education opportunities.
- Stopping the exclusion of looked after children.
- Support care experienced pupils to build connections within schools and communities to build Social Capital.

5. Improve the physical and/or mental health of care experienced and looked after children by:

- Ensuring all children and young people have their health needs assessed when they first come into care.
- Reducing the waiting time for support from mental health services.
- Reducing the number of moves of placements a child or young person has.
- Improving the coordination between services which support the mental wellbeing of children at all stages and particularly transitions.

6. Increase the number of care leavers in higher education, training, apprenticeships and employment by:

- Supporting young people with care experience to access and succeed in college/university.
- Develop a prioritised care experienced apprenticeship scheme across the council and partners.
- Upskilling staff to be able to better support job seeking and employability.

7. Reduce the number of care experienced and looked after children who enter the justice system by:

- In line with legislation, review and develop Early and Effective Intervention pathways to redirect children away from the justice system.
- Develop a Youth Intervention Service that will support children who are involved in the justice system and at risk of entering secure care.
- Delivery of the 'NexTurn' intensive welfare support project for care experienced young people aged 16-18 who are involved in the justice system.
- Development of employment/training pathways that meet the needs of care experienced young people involved in the justice system.

Children and young people in Fife have the right to:

★ Article 3: Have their best interest at the heart of decisions

★ Article 2:
No discrimination

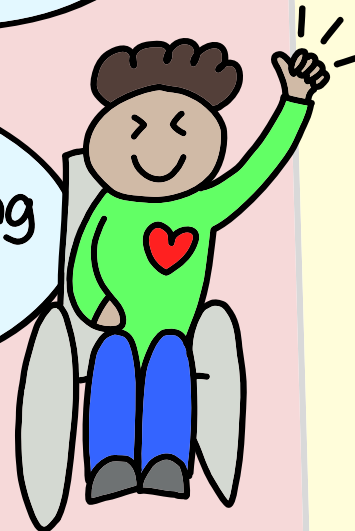
I am unique and I deserve to be treated with respect, no matter what.



We want to be involved more.

We deserve to be heard.

We should be told what is happening in ways that make sense to us.



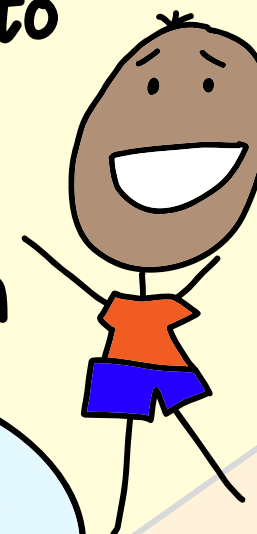
★ Article 12: Be listened to and taken seriously

★ Article 13:
Freedom of expression

Some adults think we don't know anything. I have the right to be respected.



We have the right to be listened to and taken seriously.



★ Article 16: Privacy

We deserve respect & kindness, even for the parts of our lives others can't see.

I don't want everyone knowing everything about me, some people can be cruel & share stuff online and so I like being private.

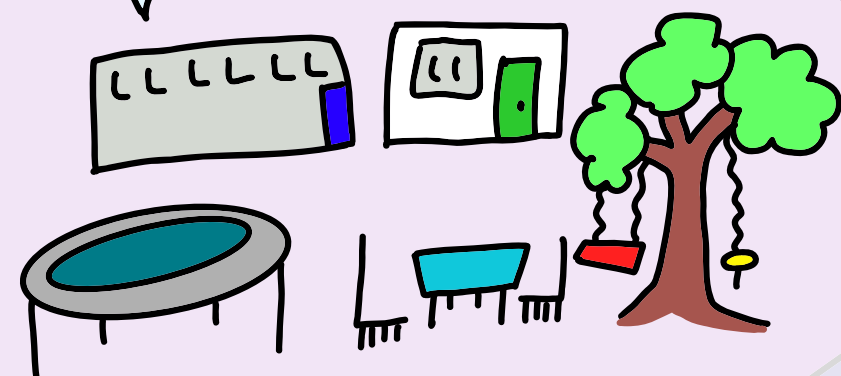


Fife Children's Rights Charter

★ Article 31: Rest and play

We deserve safe places to play, explore and have fun.

We want to go to places and do more things.



Speaking another language and sharing different foods can be a good thing.

I am proud of my identity.

I don't want to hide who I am.

★ Article 8: Identity



★ Article 29:
Quality of education

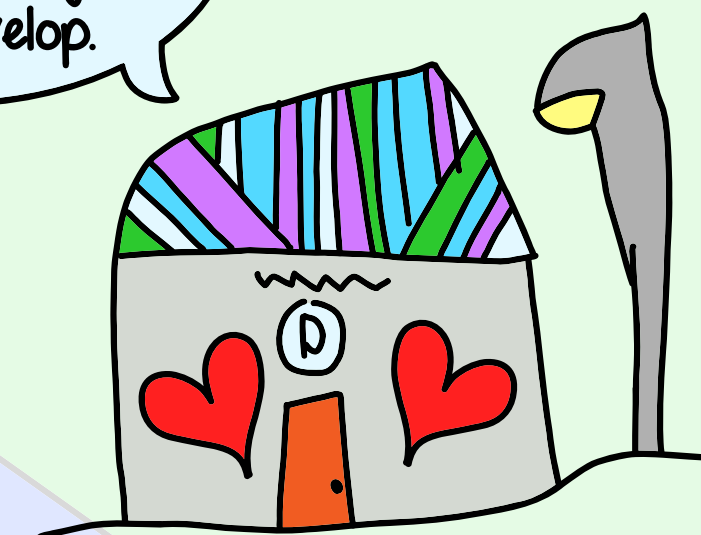
We have the right to be the best we can by making choices.

We should have choices in our learning because our voices matter.



★ Article 27: Safe homes, food and clothing

We all deserve to feel cared for so that we can grow and develop.



★ Article 30: Share our culture, language and religion

15 May 2025

Agenda Item No. 10

People & Communities Scrutiny Committee Workplan

Report by: Eileen Rowand, Executive Director Finance & Corporate Services

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

This report supports the Committee's consideration of the workplan for future meetings of the Committee.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that the Committee review the workplan and that members come forward with suggestions for areas of scrutiny.

Resource Implications

Committee should consider the resource implication for Council staff of any request for future reports.

Legal & Risk Implications

Committee should consider seeking inclusion of future items on the workplan by prioritising those which have the biggest impact and those which seek to deal with the highest level of risk.

Impact Assessment

None required for this paper.

Consultation

The purpose of the paper is to support the Committee's discussion and therefore no consultation is necessary.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Each Scrutiny Committee operates a workplan which contains items which fall under three broad headings: performance reporting, planning; and improvement work. These items will often lead to reactive rather than proactive scrutiny. Discussion on the workplan agenda item will afford members the opportunity to shape, as a committee, the agenda with future items of business it wishes to review in more detail.

2.0 Conclusions

- 2.1 The current workplan is included as Appendix one and should be reviewed by the committee to help inform scrutiny activity.

List of Appendices

1. Workplan

Background Papers

The following papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1973:-

None

Report Contact

Helena Couperwhite
Committee Services Manager
Telephone: 03451 555555 Ext. No. 441096
Email- helena.couperwhite@fife.gov.uk

People and Communities Scrutiny Committee of 25 September 2025			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Cafe Inc update report - on review of changes from 2024	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Paul Vaughan	
2025 Health & Social Care Annual Performance Report	Health and Social Care		
2025 Customer & Online Services Annual Report	Customer and Online Services	Diarmuid Cotter	
Housing - Garden Fencing Policy Update	Housing Services	John Mills	
Update Report on Gypsy Traveller Encampments in Fife	Housing Services	Paul Short	
Housing Services and Safer Communities Performance Report	Housing Services	Mhairi Mullen	

People and Communities Scrutiny Committee of 20 November 2025			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
2025 Chief Social Work Annual Report	Children and Families and Criminal Justice Services	James Ross-fc-d1	
2025 Citizen Advice & Rights Fife Performance Report	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Ashley Birrell	
Communities & Neighbourhoods Annual Report	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Paul Vaughan	
Fife Coast & Countryside Trust Annual Report	Fife Coast & Countryside Trust (FCCT)	Jeremy Harris	

People and Communities Scrutiny Committee of 15 January 2026			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Fife Golf Trust Annual Report	Fife Golf Trust (FGT)	Paul Vaughan, Iain Evans	

People and Communities Scrutiny Committee of 15 January 2026			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Fife Sports & Leisure Trust Annual Report	Fife Sports & Leisure Trust (FSLT)	Paul Vaughan, Emma Walker	
On-Fife, Fife Cultural Trust Annual Report	Fife Cultural Trust	Heather Stuart	

People and Communities Scrutiny Committee of 12 March 2026			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Fife Duty of Candour Annual Report		Avril Sweeney, Jennifer Rezendes	
Police Scotland Local Policing Plan - Annual Report	Police Scotland		
Scottish Fire & Rescue Service Annual Report	Scottish Fire & Rescue Service		
Fife Community Safety Partnership Annual Report	Housing Services	Patricia Spacey	
Public Protection Annual Report			
Armed Forces Covenant Report (Annual update)	Planning	Carol Connolly	

People and Communities Scrutiny Committee of 21 May 2026			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Outcomes of care inspectorate & grading processes	Health and Social Care	Fiona Mckay	
Fife Corporate Parenting Board	Education	James Ross-fc-d1	
Allotment & Growing Strategy Update Report	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Paul Vaughan	

People and Communities Scrutiny Committee of 20 August 2026			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Housing Services and Safer Communities Annual Performance Report	Housing Services	Mhairi Mullen	
Health & Social Care Annual Performance Report	Health and Social Care		
Customer & Online Services Annual Performance Report	Customer Services Improvement Service	Diarmuid Cotter	

People and Communities Scrutiny Committee of 29 October 2026			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Chief Social Work Annual Report	Social Work Services	James Ross-fc-d1	
Citizen Advice & Rights Fife Annual Report	Citizens Advice & Rights Fife (CARF)	Ashley Birrell	
Communities & Neighbourhoods Annual Report	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Paul Vaughan	
Fife Coast & Countryside Trust Annual Report	Fife Coast & Countryside Trust (FCCT)	Jeremy Harris	

People and Communities Scrutiny Committee of 21 January 2027			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Fife Golf Trust Annual Report	Fife Golf Trust (FGT)	Iain Evans	
Fife Sports & Leisure Trust Annual Report	Fife Sports & Leisure Trust (FSLT)	Emma Walker-sl	
OnFife - Fife Cultural Trust Annual Report	Fife Cultural Trust	Heather Stuart	

People and Communities Scrutiny Committee of 4 March 2027			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Fife Duty of Candour Annual Report	Health and Social Care	Avril Sweeney, Jennifer Rezendes	
Police Scotland Local Policing Plan	Police Scotland		
Scottish Fire & Rescue Service Performance Report	Scottish Fire & Rescue Service		
Fife Community Safety Partnership	Housing Services	Patricia Spacey	
Armed Forces Covenant Report	Place	Carol Connolly	

Unallocated			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Allotment & Community Growing Strategy 2024-2029 Update	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Paul Vaughan	Following cabinet committee on 01.05.23 report to be re-submitted to cabinet committee in June 2025 and determine remit should it be required at scrutiny.
Staff vacancies across all services	Communities	Michael Enston	
Grenfell Update Report following cabinet committee	Housing Services	John Mills	