

# Fife Partnership Board

[www.fife.gov.uk/committee/fifepartnership](http://www.fife.gov.uk/committee/fifepartnership)

**Tuesday 5 August 2025 - 10.00 am – Remote Meeting**

## AGENDA

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| 1.                           | <b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>   |           |
| 2.                           | <b>MINUTE</b> - Minute of Fife Partnership Board Meeting of 6 May 2025   | 3 – 5     |
| 3.                           | <b>COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPROVEMENT BOARD</b> – Presentation and verbal update by Liz Manson, Scottish Community Planning Network Representative, Community and Engagement Manager, Dumfries and Galloway Council  | 6 – 7     |
| 4.                           | <b>LOCAL CHILD POVERTY REPORT FOR SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT 204/25</b> – Report by the Executive Director, Communities   | 8 – 52    |
| 5.                           | <b>CHILDREN'S SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT 24/25</b> – Report by the Executive Director, Education Services  | 53 – 98   |
| 6.                           | <b>DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT 2023</b> – Report by the Director of Public Health, NHS Fife  | 99 – 161  |
| <br><b><u>Discussion</u></b> |  |           |
|                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There are examples within the report of different actions that together can help people stay active and move more. What more can we do as individual organisations to help our employees?</li><li>• Food is something that provokes a lot of discussion. Within the report, we have recommendations, which of these would FPB agree should be main area of focus in the coming year?</li></ul> |           |
| 7.                           | <b>PUBLIC PERFORMANCE REPORT 24/25</b> – Report by the Executive Director, Communities   | 162 – 177 |
| 8.                           | <b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b> – 11 November, 2025  |           |

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

Fife House  
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29 July, 2025

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THE FIFE COUNCIL - FIFE PARTNERSHIP BOARD – REMOTE MEETING

06 May 2025

10.00 am – 11.10 am

**PRESENT:** Councillors David Ross (Convener) and Linda Erskine, Ken Gourlay, Chief Executive, Fife Council, Carol Potter, Chief Executive, Esther Curnock, Consultant in Public Health Medicine, NHS Fife- (substituting for Joy Tomlinson), Lynne Garvey, Health and Social Care Partnership Lesley Caldwell, Senior Community Engagement and Social Responsibility Manager, St-Andrews University (substituting for Prof Brad McKay), Beth Harley-Jepson, Project Officer, SESTran, Jim Metcalfe, Principal, Fife College, James McLean, JCP Senior Customer Service, DWP and Kenny Murphy, Chief Executive, Fife Voluntary Action

**ATTENDING:** Sinead O'Donnell, Policy and Delivery Manager, Communications and Engagement, Lauren Bennett, Project Manager (Community Wealth Building), Communities and Neighbourhoods Service; Pam Ewen, Head of Planning Services, Ross Spalding, Service Manager, Climate Change and Zero Waste, Planning Services and Michelle Hyslop, Committee Officer, Legal and Democratic Services.

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** David Watt, Chair, Fife College and Patricia Kilpatrick, Chair of NHS Fife Board, NHS Fife.

**77. MINUTE**

The Board considered the minute of the Fife Partnership Board Meeting of 4 February 2025.

**Decision**

The Board approved the minute.

**78. ACE - DEEP DIVE PRESENTATION**

The Board considered a presentation by the Head of Planning Services in relation to Addressing the Climate Emergency.

**Decision**

(1) The Board welcomed and noted the presentation.

Partners were then asked to consider and reflect on the following questions: -

**Discussion Points** - How can we:

- build this capacity to deliver the skills we need?
- shape our collective response to climate impacts?
- adopt a place focused approach to climate action?

- Identify the cross-cutting themes that are most beneficial and who lead?

Identified next steps for board members to meet the challenge include: -

- skills for our energy future;
  - climate resilience;
  - collaboration across Plan4Fife theme; and
  - Place approach
- (2) Pam Ewen (Head of Planning Services) noted that Fife Council are undertaking an internal audit on climate challenges with the ACE board which is due to end May 2025. It was agreed that an update could be brought back to a future board meeting.
- (3) continue to have meetings on key points and decisions to be brought back to future board meetings;
- (4) Councillor Ross to link in with Jim Metcalfe to arrange an agenda item at the next board meeting on the city region deal; and
- (5) results of the feasibility study are envisaged to be finalised in July 2025 and it is hoped that business case change plans can progress following this.

## **79. DEVELOPING THE NEXT PLAN FOR FIFE 2027**

The Board considered a report by the Executive Director, Communities setting out the strategic intent of the next Plan for Fife 2027 and the approach for developing new strategies and related delivery arrangements.

### **Decision**

The Board:

- (1) agreed on the strategic intent, approach and timeline for delivering the next Plan for Fife;
- (2) noted the key shifts required as set out in section 2 of the report;
- (3) agreed to host an Integration Joint Board (IJB) Developmental session to present to partners the IJB Strategic Plan; and
- (4) welcomed the need to have more senior leadership team engagement sessions.

## **80. COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING (SCOTLAND) BILL: CALLS FOR VIEWS**

The Board considered a report by the Executive Director, Place setting out Fife Partnership's response to the Scottish Parliament's Economy & Fair Work Committee's call for views on the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill that was introduced to Parliament on 20 March 2025.

**Decision**

The Board: -

- (1) endorsed the response to the call for views as set out in Appendix 1 to the report;
- (2) noted the requirements outlined in the Bill at this stage;
- (3) noted that any additional comments on the Bill would be required to be submitted to Councill Officers by 20 May 2025;
- (4) considered what difference the new powers would make to the collaborative plans to implement Community Wealth Building in Fife; and
- (5) noted that additional comments provided by NHS Fife and St-Andrews University would be updated in the document prior to submission.

**81. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next Fife Partnership Board Meeting would take place on 5 August 2025.

## COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPROVEMENT BOARD – BACKGROUND NOTE

### **1. Purpose**

The Community Planning Improvement Board (CPIB) provides leadership and improvement support for community planning in Scotland, generating valuable evidence-based solutions to the significant challenges facing communities and local partnerships.

It brings together, and shares evidence, of what works well in community planning to influence policy, practice and reform of public services at local and national levels; and to support Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) to deliver their statutory duties effectively and to make better and more informed decisions that improve the lives of local communities across Scotland.

### **2. Membership**

CPIB membership includes representatives from:

- the 5 key statutory community planning partners (local government; health boards; Police Authority; Scottish Fire and Rescue Service; and Scottish Enterprise);
- some additional statutory community planning partners (e.g. Health and Social Care Partnerships, Public Health Scotland);
- Scottish Government;
- Audit Scotland;
- Third Sector Interfaces
- the Scottish Community Planning Network (which includes all 32 Community Planning Managers)

The full membership is available [here](#).

The Chair is the Chief Executive of Dundee City Council and the secretariat is provided by the Improvement Service.

### **3. Strategic Plan and Action Plan**

1. Consultation with all 32 CPPs took place in 2017/18 about what they wanted in this national Plan, with a particular focus on what would be the most useful if addressing challenges and helping individual CPPs to secure improvement. The Plan was then agreed and has been reviewed once. The full Plan can be found [here](#) and an Action Plan has also been drawn up with the key features as follows:

- to support implementation of new and existing local models relating to Third Sector funding;
- to work with Scotland Excel to bring greater co-ordination in procurement in relation to Climate Action;
- to support co-ordination and streamlining of Climate funding at a local level;
- to encourage greater focus of City Deal money on Climate Change;

- to promote good practice & learning on local progress in data sharing in relation to poverty, including Child Poverty;
- to develop national principles on data sharing and risk levels;
- to encourage partners to recognise, resource and sustain the places (inc. third sector) where nurturing relationships happen to improve wellbeing outcomes for children and young people; and
- to encourage CPPs to put in place mechanisms for collective prioritisation and decision-making in relation to allocating funding in relation to wellbeing for children and young people.

Other work which has been undertaken by the CPIB includes:

- National Community Planning Self Assessment
- Review of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act

#### **4. How the CPIB works**

There are 4 or 5 online meetings each year where the Action Plan is progressed, through 'deep dives' and short-life Working Groups.

Briefings are produced (available [here](#)) which are shared through CPP Managers and also the CPIB members cascading through their organisation/network.

Newsletters are also produced although there has only been 2 to date (available [here](#)). Again, this is sent out through CPP Managers and the CPIB members. Local government has regular reports and updates at meetings (through COSLA Leaders/Boards and the Society of Local Authorities Chief Executives) as does the Scottish Community Planning Network.

#### **5. Discussion at CPP and partner meetings**

The CPIB is delighted to have the opportunity to discuss its work with individual CPPs, and particularly to understand what is most useful to be addressed at national level to complement local activity. This feedback, combined with the information from the recent CPP self-assessments (linked [here](#)) will help to ensure that the CPIB is delivering what is needed to take this agenda forward.

There will be a short presentation at the Fife meeting to illustrate some of the key work delivered in the CPIB Action Plan and the self-assessment Overview Report, with time to hear feedback and have discussion around the challenges and opportunities.

Liz Manson, Member of the Community Planning Improvement Board  
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# Fife Partnership Board

[www.fife.gov.uk/committee/fifepartnership](http://www.fife.gov.uk/committee/fifepartnership)

Agenda Item No. 4

5 August 2025

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## Local Child Poverty Report for Scottish Government 2024/25

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**Report by:** Michael Enston, Executive Director, Communities, Fife Council

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### Purpose

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To report on tackling poverty and preventing crisis for the period 2024/25.

### Recommendations

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Board members are asked to:

1. Note the progress tackling poverty and preventing crisis.
2. Endorse the report set out in Appendix One in line with reporting for the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017.

### Resource Implications

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There are no resource implications.

### Legal & Risk Implications

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Fife Council and NHS Fife have a duty under the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 to jointly produce an annual Local Child Poverty Action Report (LCPAR). This report to Fife Partnership Board sets out how the report meets the requirements for the LCPAR.

### Consultation

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Tackling Poverty & Preventing Crisis (TPPC) Board members, the Opportunities Fife Partnership and the Whole Family Wellbeing Leadership group that oversees use of the WFW Fund and is a sub-group of Children in Fife, have been involved in preparing this report.



**#Keeping  
The Promise  
in Fife**



# 1.0 Background

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- 1.1 The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 states that a local authority and each relevant Health Board must jointly prepare and publish a report - a “local child poverty action report” annually.
- 1.2 Examples and Learning from the Year 6 (2023/24) reports from across Scotland<sup>i</sup> highlighted the progress being made towards preventative and evidence-based approaches to tackling child poverty.
- 1.3 Specific feedback to Fife, given at the annual meeting between the Improvement Service, Public Health Scotland, Fife Council and NHS Fife noted as good practice:
  - the level of understanding of need in Fife and use of data to identify households underclaiming specific benefits
  - debt profiling using Low Income Family Tracker data to identify those in debt to the Council to inform future targeted campaigns
  - partnership work with collaborative approaches in relation to Making It Work
  - work with Health and Social Care Partnership and Housing (Housing First)
  - community driven childcare solutions and tax-free childcare take up campaigns
- 1.4 This report highlights specific examples of progress to date across the themes from Best Start, Bright Futures: tackling child poverty delivery plan 2022 to 2026.

Part A: Providing the opportunities and integrated support parents need to enter, sustain and progress in work.

Part B: Maximising the support available for families to live dignified lives and meet their basic needs

Part C: Supporting the next generation to thrive

This fulfils the statutory requirement to produce an annual local child poverty action report under the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017.

# 2.0 Progress Made

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- 2.1 The breadth of activity undertaken is substantial. Despite this, poverty remains persistent:
  - 2024 figures -11,038 children in Fife (18.0% of those aged under 16) are living in relative poverty before housing costs.
  - 8,925 children (14.6%) are living in absolute poverty before housing costs.
  - Both are above the Scottish rates of 16.3% and 13.2% respectively.
  - Although child poverty levels in Fife remain above Scotland, Fife has seen a slightly larger decrease in the rate of children living in relative poverty (-1.7 pp) compared to Scotland (-1.5 pp) between 2023 and 2024

## 3.0 Next Steps: 2024/25

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1. Tackling Poverty work in Fife has, over the last three years following the COVID pandemic, had a focus on supporting low-income households impacted by the rises in the cost-of-living.
2. There will be a funding gap on resource support for that mitigation work from April 2026. It has been temporary funding that has supported the mitigation work over the past 3 years.
3. It has been managed, despite this, to focus on preventative measures especially around income maximisation
4. The overall planning and strategy around the national delivery plan for Child Poverty, is fragmented across different partnership groups and a priority going forward, will be to look to pulling this together which has been highlighted in this Fife Local Child Poverty Report for 2025/2026.

### Report contact

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Tackling Poverty and Preventing Crisis Board Programme Manager

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5th August 2025

### Appendix 1 – Fife Local Child Poverty Report (LCPR) 2024/25

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<sup>i</sup> [Examples and learning from Year 6 local action on child poverty](#)

# Fife Local Child Poverty Action Report 2024/25



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# Foreword

Fife is working to tackle poverty and prevent crisis, helping to break cycles of disadvantage and provide early support, through the implementation of a 'No Wrong Door' approach.

The focus is on prevention, supporting families before they reach crisis point. Early advice and support is offered to households to address issues related to housing, employment, income maximisation, fuel/ food poverty and family issues.

There is a need for effective long-term action to address challenges associated with low incomes, insecure employment, substance use, mental health, and the poverty-related attainment gap.

Fife has adopted a cross-portfolio approach to help address these issues, involving various Council Directorates and services such as education, early learning and childcare, housing as well as partners including public health and the third sector coming together. Work is underway to strengthen this way of working and the current strategic structure is being changed to reflect this. The need for a clearer call for action on child poverty underpins this, and engaging with communities and families to understand their needs and tailor their approaches will be key. Fife is now part of Fairer Scotland Pathfinders and allied to No Wrong Door will be looking at collaborative place leadership for better child poverty outcomes.

# Introduction

The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 introduced a series of statutory income targets to measure reduction in child poverty in Scotland by 2030. The Act also places a duty on local authorities and health boards to jointly report annually on activity they are taking, and will take, to reduce child poverty.

This report provides an update on progress and developments for 2024/25 and gives a comprehensive picture of the expansive ways that Fife is working to reduce child and household poverty. These increased efforts are being made in the face of a growing challenge of the cost-of-living crisis exacerbating all aspects of poverty in our disadvantaged communities. We continue to listen to communities who are experiencing the worst of the impact, including developing Local Fairness Initiatives in two of the most affected neighbourhoods.

Our plan and subsequent workstreams acknowledge the need to focus on mitigating and preventing the negative impacts of poverty on children and families.

Within Fife, the **Tackling Poverty and Preventing Crisis (TPPC) Board** and the Children's Services Partnership, support a wider partnership approach to tackling poverty and preventing crisis.

A core aim of the Children's Services Partnership is to help break cycles of disadvantage. This is reflected in the inclusion of a cross-cutting theme within the Fife Children's Services Plan

[www.fife.gov.uk/FifeCSPlan2023](http://www.fife.gov.uk/FifeCSPlan2023) to improve equity and equality.

Achieving this ambition requires coordinating work across a broad range of national policies, each of which provides a different lens on the underlying wicked issues that lead to inequity and inequality in Scotland. This includes partnership delivery of: GIRFEC, The Promise, Whole Family Wellbeing, Corporate Parenting, Child Protection, as well as service specific policies such as the National Improvement Framework and Scottish Attainment Challenge.

The focus of partnership work is to ensure that work across all these areas of national policy is coordinated in a way that meets the needs of all children and young people at risk of adverse outcomes, including the significant numbers who are affected by multiple forms of disadvantage.

# Poverty overview

## Fife picture – understanding of need in Fife

The **Fife Strategic Assessment** informs strategic planning and prioritisation of resources across the Fife Partnership. **Local strategic assessments** are also produced three yearly for each of the 7 Areas to inform discussions about priorities and actions that need addressed locally, and support the shift to prevention and neighbourhood / place-based approaches.

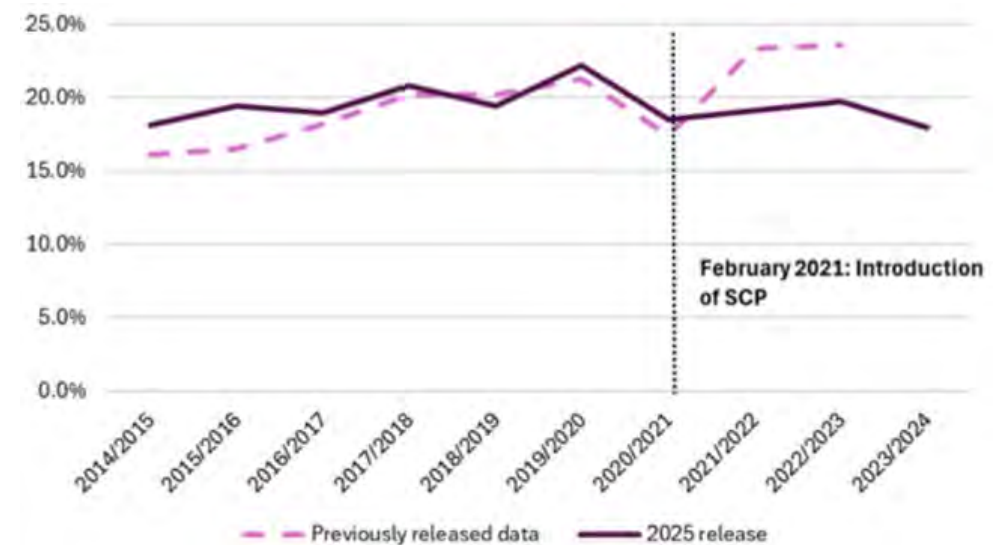
What recent assessments show is that poverty is persisting in Fife and living standards continue to be squeezed. Fife's recent declaration of a housing emergency reflects funding pressures, lack of affordable housing, rising housing costs and increased risk of homelessness.

As at 2024, 11,038 children in Fife (18.0% of those aged under 16) are living in relative poverty before housing costs. 8,925 children (14.6%) are living in absolute poverty before housing costs. Both are above the Scottish rates of 16.3% and 13.2% respectively. Although child poverty levels in Fife remain above Scotland, Fife has seen a slightly larger decrease in the rate of children living in relative poverty (-1.7 percentage points) compared to Scotland (-1.5 percentage points) between 2023 and 2024.

The latest figures show a reduction in child poverty across Scotland, reflecting a change to the methodology to include the Scottish Child Payment (SCP) – a payment to help low-income families towards the costs of looking after children - as a form of income.

In 2023, before taking account of Scottish Child Payment, 23.6% of Fife children (15,024) were in relative poverty. By including Scottish Child Payment in the methodology, 2,906 children in Fife were lifted out of poverty in 2023 (a difference of 3.9 percentage points for Fife, compared to 3.5 percentage points for Scotland).

The chart below shows trends in relative poverty in Fife according to the Children in Low Income Families Dataset (DWP), before and after the introduction of the Scottish Child Payment:



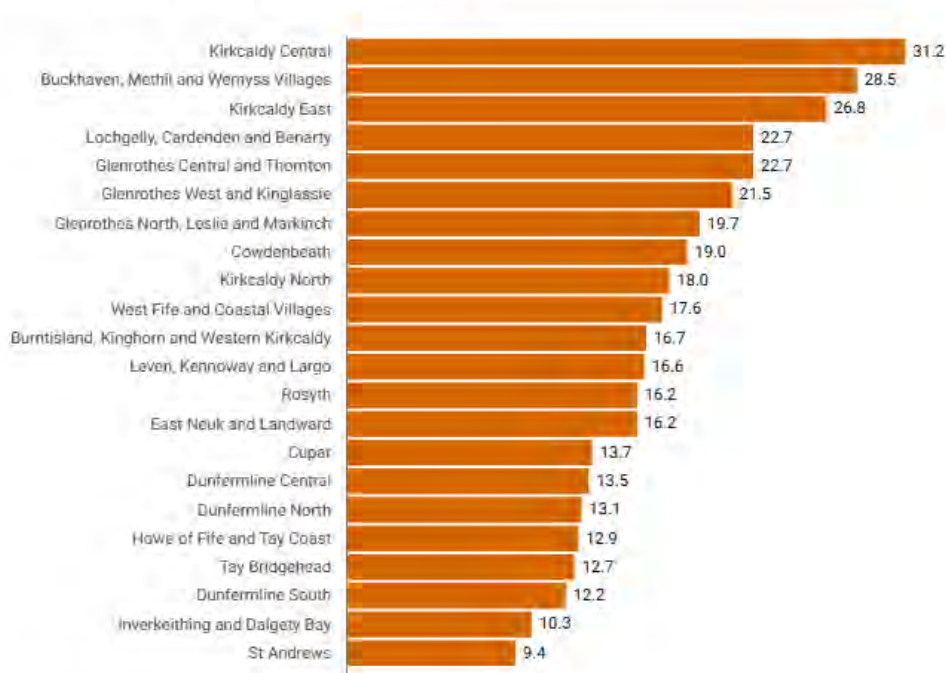
Comparison of relative child poverty figures in Fife before and after the introduction of the Scottish Child Payment (SCP) (Children in Low Income Families, DWP)



Poverty rates vary across Fife, with relative child poverty (before housing costs) being highest in Kirkcaldy Central, Buckhaven, Methil and Wemyss Villages, and Kirkcaldy East. It is lowest in Inverkeithing and Dalgety Bay, and St Andrews. 30.2% of children living in the 20% most deprived areas are in relative poverty, compared to 7.1% of those living in the 20% least deprived areas of Fife.

## Child poverty in Fife

11,038 children are living in poverty in Fife (18% in relative poverty before housing costs). Levels of child poverty vary across Fife wards.



DWP - Children in low income families dataset, FYE 2024

The latest figures from End Child Poverty coalition show that 25% (17,166) children in Fife, are living in relative poverty (after housing costs). This is just above the Scotland rate of 23% but below the UK rate of 31%, showing that devolved policies such as the Scottish Child Payment have contributed to overall lower levels of child poverty in Scotland.

In two-thirds of parliamentary constituencies, at least one in four children are in relative poverty after housing costs. Child poverty is highest in Glenrothes and Mid Fife (30.1%) and Cowdenbeath and Kirkcaldy (27.3%) and lowest in Dunfermline and Dollar (21.2%) and North East Fife (21.4%) parliamentary constituencies.

Local level child poverty rates are directly and strongly correlated with the percentage of children affected by the two-child limit - providing further evidence that the policy is a key driver of child poverty, actively contributing to higher child poverty rates in some parts of Fife.

Data published in 2024 by the End Child Poverty Coalition on the number of children impacted by the two-child limit highlighted that 6,760 children (9%) in Fife are affected by the two-child limit, in line with Scotland. 2,460 children (14%) are affected in Glenrothes and Mid-Fife, 1,990 (10%) in Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath, 1,550 (7%) in Dunfermline and West Fife, and 760 (6%) in North East Fife.



# Impact of poverty

## Poverty is associated with adverse developmental, health, educational and long-term social outcomes.

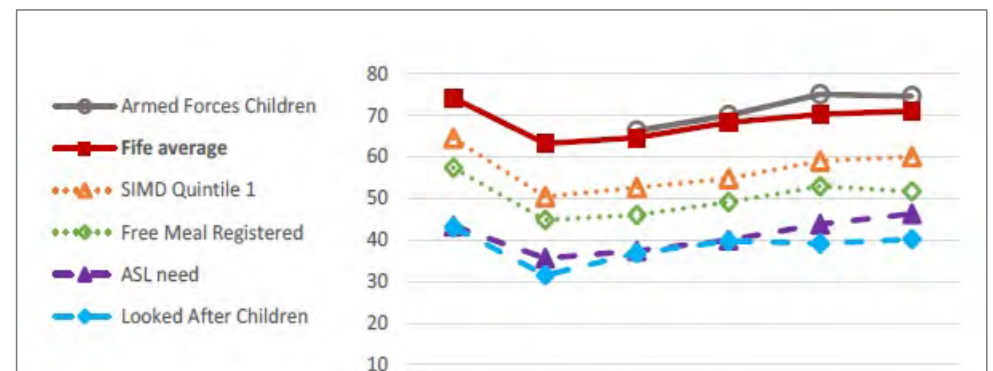
Child poverty is linked to a wide range of poorer outcomes, including:

- Low birth weight
- Poor physical health (linked to chronic conditions and obesity);
- Mental health problems / low sense of wellbeing.
- Experience of stigma and bullying from peers.
- Academic underachievement.
- Subsequent employment difficulties.
- Social deprivation.

Our plan and subsequent workstreams acknowledge the need to focus on mitigating and preventing the negative impacts of poverty on children and families.

Evidence shows that disadvantaged and vulnerable groups (including those: living in SIMD Quintile 1, registered for free school meals, living in a family affected by disability, having any other form of additional support need for learning (ASL), from a minority ethnic group, from an armed forces family) frequently have lower achievement of development milestones, lower school attendance, poorer attainment and poorer health and wellbeing outcomes. For example:

- An attainment gap is still apparent at all levels of qualification for almost all disadvantaged and vulnerable groups; an example is illustrated in the figure below. The attainment gap for school leavers widens with increasing SCQF difficulty.
- Attainment is linked to school attendance which has been declining since 2014/15.
- The number of Fife pupils that require additional support in schools has increased significantly with the rate in secondary schools approaching 50%.
- Mental health is a significant issue for young people. Referral rates for support remain above pre-pandemic levels. Pupils experiencing feelings of anxiety is an area of concern in the recent 2023 Fife Health and Well Being survey.



Literacy CfE achievement levels for different groups of disadvantaged and vulnerable children at stages P1, P4 and P7 of primary school.

## **Poverty is related to – and compounds – other forms of disadvantage**

Evidence shows that the children and young people affected by multiple forms of disadvantage generally have poorer outcomes than those who affected by fewer forms of disadvantage. For example:

- Outcomes for those living in SIMD Quintile 1 with an Additional Support Need are generally poorer than outcomes for those living in SIMD Quintile 1 (but with no additional support need) or those with an additional support need (but who do not live in SIMD Quintile 1).
- Outcomes for those affected by three different forms of disadvantage will generally be significantly lower than outcomes for those affected by only one form of disadvantage.

## **Multiple disadvantage and poverty are risk factors for experiencing care**

We know that 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 Next Turn in Children, Families and Justice social work services. It is these inequalities on an individual and structural basis that the Fife Corporate Parenting Board 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.

## **Better understanding the link between poverty and other barriers to outcomes**

Work within the Children's Services Plan has a strong focus on reducing barriers for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, enabling all children and young people to develop their individual potential to the full. These barriers show a clear link to:

- Different proxy measures of living in poverty (e.g. living in SIMD Quintile 1, being registered for free school meals, having a disability, having an additional support need related to family issues or wellbeing).
- Other forms of individual need (e.g. having an additional support need linked to a learning or communication issue).

A risk-based approach to modelling the outcomes for children affected by multiple forms of disadvantage has been developed within the Children's Services Partnership. This is being used to better understand: the risks of poor outcomes faced by individual children, and how different forms of disadvantage affect different outcomes.

The box on the next page illustrates how this approach can help distinguish different risk factors for different outcomes.

## What a risk-based analysis can tell us about the importance of different forms of disadvantage for different outcomes

### What factors present the highest risk of not attending regularly at high school?

The biggest risk factor for non-regular attendance at high school (i.e. having a personal attendance of less than 85%) is poverty. In particular:

- The single biggest risk factor is being registered for a free school meal.
- For those not registered for a free school meal, the biggest risk factor is living in SIMD Quintiles 1 or 2.
- For those neither registered for free school meals nor living in SIMD Quintiles 1 or 2, the biggest risk factor is having an additional support need relating to family, emotional or mental health issues.

Those affected by multiple indicators of poverty (as highlighted above) have particularly poor outcomes.

Learning and communication support needs (e.g. having a learning disability, having autistic spectrum disorder, not having English or Scots as a home language) can also be a significant factor for groups affected by poverty.

### What factors present the highest risk of not attaining in primary school?

The biggest risk factor for not attaining in primary school achievement (i.e. not achieving the expected level of CfE at the end of stages P1, P4 and P7) is having an additional support need.

Those affected by specific additional support needs relating to a learning difference (e.g. dyslexia, autistic spectrum disorder, having a moderate or specific learning disability) have particularly poor outcomes.

Poverty, sex, and age within the year group are risk factors that can also be important for those with no additional support need.

## **Social Connectedness**

The learning from the last three years delivering the cost-of-living programmes suggests that a more integrated neighbourhood-based approach to support helps people access assistance early and in ways that contribute to more positive outcomes

## **Fife's Employability Pathway – Support into work and training**

The Employability Pathway is Fife's coordinated system for supporting people who are economically inactive, unemployed, or underemployed. It's focused on those furthest from the labour market including many families living in or at risk of poverty.

People are referred via Jobcentre Plus, health services, schools, community groups or can self-refer. Once referred, they are matched with a dedicated keyworker who helps them identify goals and access the right support, including training, volunteering, childcare advice, mental health support, and job opportunities.

The pathway brings together public, third sector, and private providers to deliver joined-up support across Fife. Providers work collaboratively to ensure wraparound support such as housing or health is connected with employability services.

# Addressing the impact of poverty

Successfully addressing both types of barrier to life outcomes (poverty and individual need) requires:

- Improving initial assessment and early help and support. This is being addressed through ongoing development of the No Wrong Door model.
- Better understanding how specific individual circumstances (including different types of additional support need) can adversely affect life outcomes. This is being addressed by the risk-based analysis of data being developed within the Children's Services Partnership.
- More effective tracking and monitoring of the improvements seen for children and young people receiving support by a range of partners. This is being addressed via development of a Whole System Framework for children's services partnership approach; this is a systems-based framework, being developed with the support of the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund.
- Building opportunities for social connectedness which can act as a support against the negative impacts of poverty. Fife is supporting community led warm and welcoming places. These are helping those on low incomes deal with the challenges of high fuel costs as well as providing dignified approaches to food insecurity and social isolation.
- Increasing earned incomes by supporting and providing opportunities for parents and carers, to enter, sustain and progress in work is being delivered through the work of the Opportunities Fife Partnership and Community Wealth building approaches. This includes employability support and the provision of essential infrastructure such as childcare and transport.

# Part A - Increase Income from Employment

Increasing income from parental employment remains a core part of Fife's strategy to reduce child poverty. For many families, particularly those in priority groups, getting into work or progressing within it is one of the most effective ways to improve financial security and long-term wellbeing.

In 2024/25, Fife Council and the Opportunities Fife Partnership continued to invest in employability services that support parents to prepare for, move into, and sustain meaningful work.

Fife's approach is focused on practical outcomes, not just getting people into work, but helping them stay there, develop new skills, and progress.

Over 1,300 parents were supported through the pathway, with dedicated services tailored to their needs and including access to training, volunteering, confidence building, and in-work progression support.

## Partnership in action

OFP operates through a referral-based pathway. Individuals can be referred by Jobcentre Plus, social work, health professionals, schools, or community organisations, or they can self-refer.

Once referred, individuals are matched with a keyworker or case manager who helps identify their goals and supports them to access the right mix of services. This can include:

- One-to-one employability support
- Accredited training and short courses
- Volunteering opportunities
- Job matching and employer engagement
- Support with childcare, digital access, mental health, and financial wellbeing

The system is person-centred and trauma-informed, meaning support is flexible and built around what matters to the individual, not just what's available. Providers work closely with other services to ensure that employability support is joined up with housing, family support, and health where needed.

The pathway supports both short-term progress - such as starting training or improving confidence - and longer-term outcomes, including entering and sustaining paid employment.

## Multi-agency delivery

At the heart of OFP is a network of delivery partners from the public, third, and private sectors. These include:

- Fife Council services (Employability, CLD, Education)
- Third-sector providers such as Brag Enterprise, Fife Gingerbread, FEAT, Venture Trust and Fife International Forum
- Private Sector providers such as Triage.

This ensures that employability support links with wraparound services like childcare, mental health, housing, and financial advice.

## The keyworker approach

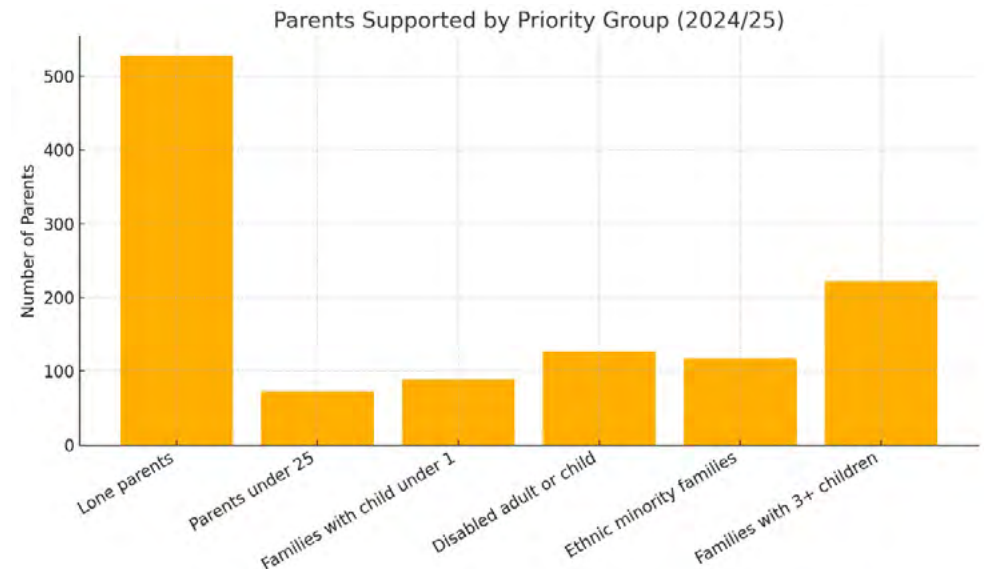
All participants are supported by a dedicated keyworker or case manager who stays with them throughout their journey. The keyworker builds trust, helps set goals, and coordinates access to services. They also help with practical issues - like securing childcare or accessing digital tools - so that people can fully engage in training or work.

This relational approach is central to the pathway's success. It ensures that support is not only available, but accessible and meaningful for the people who need it most.

## Priority Groups Reached

In 2024/25, Fife's Employability Pathway supported 1,303 parents across Fife. 1,156 were from priority groups. The data reflects both the scale of engagement and the effectiveness of local referral routes: including from Jobcentre Plus, health and social care, early years teams, and voluntary sector organisations. It also highlights the continued demand for flexible, trauma-informed support among parents working to improve their family's financial future.

- Lone parents - 528
- Parents under the age of 25 - 73
- Families with a child under one - 89
- Families with a disabled adult or child - 127
- Families from ethnic minority backgrounds - 117
- Families with three or more children - 222



## Case Study: Supporting Lone Parents into School-Based Roles – Fife Gingerbread

In 2024/25, Fife Gingerbread piloted a new Pupil Support Assistant (PSA) Traineeship designed to help parents move into meaningful, family-friendly employment within schools, while also addressing local recruitment challenges in the education sector.

Key features included:

- Guaranteed school placements in partnership with Fife Council Education
- Accredited training delivered flexibly to fit around school hours
- One-to-one keyworker support from Fife Gingerbread throughout the programme
- Confidence building, peer support, and practical help with childcare, transport, and digital access

The traineeship was successful in building both confidence and capability among lone parents who had been out of the workforce or lacked recent experience. Many participants had previously faced barriers such as isolation, low self-esteem, or lack of formal qualifications.

Outcomes included:

- Increased confidence and employability
- Successful completion of qualifications
- Progression into permanent or longer-term school-based roles

“This has completely changed how I see myself. I never thought I’d be working in a school – now I can’t imagine doing anything else.”



## Case Study: Building Confidence and Finding Work - Mr C's Journey

### Background

Mr C, a 43-year-old father of three, moved to Fife from India in April 2024. Although Mr C held a technical degree and had over 10 years of experience as a mechanic, he was unemployed after arriving in Scotland and unsure of how to access work in his field.

Mr C received direct help with job applications and was supported to identify roles that matched his skills and aspirations. After two initial interviews for mechanic roles, Mr C gained valuable experience and greater self-assurance. Soon after, he was offered a full-time job with a gas company in Edinburgh, starting with paid training as a mechanic and went on to secure a permanent position.

Mr C's confidence, communication, and motivation have grown significantly. He is now contributing to the family income, feeling more secure in his future, and better connected to his local community.

"I am truly grateful for the support I've received. The guidance from the caseworker has made a real difference in my life, and I now feel much more confident in attending job interviews. I can see a clear path ahead, and I am excited about the future."

## Priorities for Part A 2025/26

- Strengthen data capture and reporting, especially around training outcomes, job starts, and sustained employment to better understand what's working and where support is most effective
- Expand employer engagement, with a focus on inclusive hiring, flexible roles, and pathways into priority sectors such as care, education, and retail
- Enhance rural access, through local outreach, transport solutions, and digital options to reach families in isolated areas
- Build peer support opportunities, particularly for lone parents, young parents, and those new to the area or the labour market

These priorities reflect what families tell us they need — practical support, opportunities that work for their circumstances, and services that are accessible, respectful, and joined-up.

# Community Wealth Building and Anchor Work

Fife has adopted the Community Wealth Building approach to economic development to achieve better outcomes for people and reduce socio-economic disadvantage. It seeks to ensure that money stays local, and more decisions are made by the people who live and work in Fife.

Public sector organisations rooted in local places play a lead role in putting community wealth building into practice. These are sometimes referred to as ‘anchor institutions’, a term that describes organisations that have a strong foothold in communities. Anchor institutions in Fife include Fife Council, NHS Fife, Fife College and the University of St Andrews, and can also involve the third sector and large private sector employers. These organisations can change the way systems, processes and decision-making work to give local people more influence and control over the economy.

NHS Fife is committed to embracing its role as an Anchor Institution through sharing its resources and assets to maximise the wealth within Fife’s communities, influencing social determinants of health, providing fair employment opportunities, purchasing locally where possible, using procurement influences, and strengthening partnerships. To do this, NHS Fife is embedding its anchor ambitions within existing and future strategies, working in partnership with other local organisations.

Fife Council is committed to embedding community wealth building within key policies, strategies and ways of working, and working collaboratively with fellow anchor partners to embed and scale approaches to achieve greater impact and maximise benefits for Fife’s communities. The commitment to community wealth building is reflected in plans and strategies, including the Food4Fife Strategy 2024-29 in which community wealth building aims to ensure the local food system works well for local people and that any wealth generated by the local food economy stays in Fife.

A key pillar of Community Wealth Building is Workforce, which involves recruiting locally, supporting long-term employment opportunities, and redesigning recruitment processes to remove barriers to employment. It involves embedding Fair Work principles and promoting work that is secure, flexible and offers training. In response to this pillar, NHS Fife has developed targeted programmes for young people to help onboard them, for example hosting interactive career events for Fife secondary school pupils and developing various apprenticeship opportunities in partnership with Fife College, some of which have led to permanent employment.

Research consistently tells us that the most effective intervention in tackling poverty and inequality is in securing employment. The Plan for Fife 2017-2027 notes higher levels of unemployment in mid-Fife, a widening inequality gap and stubborn generational poverty and social problems impacting negatively on people and families. Some people face multiple barriers to employment due to, for example, long-term unemployment, little or no work experience, or long-term health conditions. These barriers make it difficult to progress into fair, sustainable work, contributing to the cycle of poverty and challenges for the public sector. In addition, anchor partners face skills shortages and challenges with recruiting and retaining staff in the current market (some vacancies are routinely referred to as ‘hard to fill’).

## Overview of progress

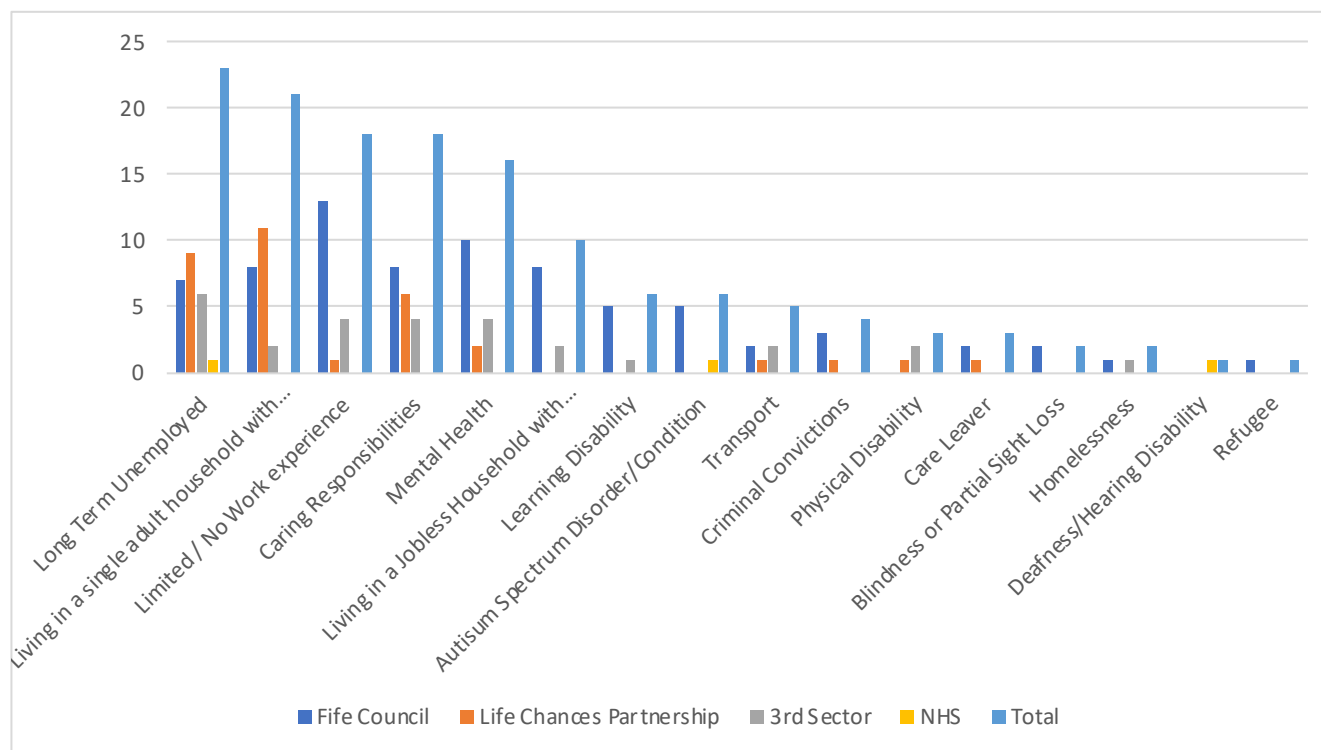
Life Chances is a progressive approach to recruitment that was developed and piloted by Fife Council in 2023/24, designed to take structural steps to reduce socio- economic disadvantage by using the power of public resources and levers within the council's sphere of influence. Life Chances has been designed with the client at the heart of the model. It involves linking clients on Fife's employability pathway and providing them with paid placements in the public and third sectors within supportive environments that enable them to flourish.

During 2024/25, Life Chances was rolled out across Fife with a target of filling 60 Life Chances placements. This was surpassed with 77 clients gaining placements and included 49 placements with council services, 2 in NHS Fife and 13 in the third sector. In addition, there were 13 Life Chances Partnerships. These partnerships are a collaboration with Fife Gingerbread to support lone parents. Nine placements were in Fife Council's Education Services, which offered opportunities for Pupil Support Assistants. Four were provided by Fife Sports and Leisure Trust which involved roles as receptionists (see the Case Study on page 12). These partnerships have supported lone parents to access new opportunities, gain confidence and secure sustained employment in Fife Council, have their placements extended or access higher / further education.

In terms of the outcomes achieved for individuals following their placement in 2024/25, 23 found employment in Fife Council; 18 had their placement extended; 2 moved into higher or further education; and 1 began volunteering. In addition to keeping track of these early outcomes post-placement, the Life Chances team in Employability will also track outcomes 52 weeks following the placement. Data has not been obtained for this yet, but the tracking aims to ensure people are reaching positive outcomes 12-months after their placement ends.

Participants are asked to report the barriers they have experienced to finding employment. The table below shows the barriers reported by participants by their placement provider. Living in a single adult household with dependent children is reported by 21 clients as being a barrier. This is the second highest barrier after long-term unemployed. Many barriers reported align with the child poverty priority groups, including disability and other health conditions, as well as refugee status, however, as noted, it is not possible to tell what proportion of clients are parents. Obtaining knowledge from clients about the barriers they face helps ensure placements are flexible to their needs and go at the pace that's right for them.

Table 1. Reported barriers experienced by Life Chances participants (2024/25)



During 2024/25, Fife Council secured the commitment to provide guaranteed jobs for successful participants and make Life Chances a mainstream alternative to traditional recruitment, helping the council address recruitment challenges and generate positive outcomes for people on the employability pathway. The target for 2025/26 is 160 Life Chances placements, a significant increase that will require more organisations and services coming forward with opportunities. Next steps also involve exploring how in-work progression and skills and qualifications can be embedded in the model to ensure people on Life Chances can access more opportunities and higher paid work.

## Case Study

JLF is a 28-year-old single parent. They have a disability that impacts their mental health and have transport issues. JLF was supported by a Life Chances Partnership between Fife Council, Fife Gingerbread and Fife Sports & Leisure Trust to gain a paid placement with the Trust for 16 hours per week as a receptionist.

Prior to commencing the Life Chances placement, Fife Gingerbread made a referral to Citizens Advice and Rights Fife (CARF) for a benefit check and better off in work calculation. JLF has received support from Fife Gingerbread throughout their placement, alongside support from a Fife Council Employability Key Worker.

JLF has worked on building confidence during the placement in a slower paced environment that suits their learning needs. Discussions with the Key Worker have focused on additional opportunities near their home, as well as setting financial goals and learning how to drive.

Direct quotes from services and participants help illustrate the impact the project has had on organisations and for the individuals who have been on Life Chances placements and have experienced the benefits first-hand.

### Fife Council Education Service and Fife Gingerbread

“Working in partnership with Fife Gingerbread to support our overarching goal of tackling child poverty, Life Chances has provided eight lone parents with opportunities to gain confidence, improve their self-esteem and re-enter the workplace as Pupil Support Assistants in Schools.”

### Life Chances Participant

“I felt lost and unsure of how to get myself out of the hole I had gotten myself into. I had forgotten who I was and needed a push in the right direction. When my support worker told me about this opportunity, I felt this was a good chance to get myself back into the world. Being on the placement has brought me stability, I’ve made new friends, and I feel like I’ve found myself again. I am enjoying setting myself goals to work towards.”

# Part B - Income Maximisation

Fife has embedded early income maximisation activity across a wide range of community and statutory based services. In recognition of the increasing demand on services, and crossover of service users between services, work to upskill frontline staff and volunteers to give advice and support in income maximisation is increasing access to help at the earliest opportunity.

A Fife Advice framework has been developed with Citizen's Advice and Rights Fife (CARF). This is increasing the confidence of staff and volunteers to give first level advice, with benefit checks becoming embedded in services that traditionally haven't offered this kind of activity. In 2024-25, over 500 staff and volunteers were trained in first level advice giving.

Referral pathways have been developed to provide clarity for organisations supporting individuals with more complex difficulties. This embedding of advice giving into frontline delivery, is key to increasing access to early help. Having as few points to signpost and refer onto as possible helps to provide wrap around support.

Evidence is showing that targeted advice at touch points like foodbanks, schools and maternity services is also impactful. In Fife there has been a drop in the number of food parcels issued by Trussell Trust in 2024/25 with the two areas seeing the highest reduction being the areas where an advice worker is available to access at the food bank.

Total Trussell Trust Food Parcels Distributed in Financial Year

	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
<b>Fife</b>	12,451	14,689	18,606	16,332	14,866	18,108	17,119	15,683
<b>Scotland</b>	173,278	217,051	238,583	224,620	199,741	262,861	264,778	239,503

## Cash First

Fife was awarded £151 k from the Scottish Government to:

- Improve urgent access to cash in a crisis
- Reduce the need for foodbanks, improving dignity and choice
- Better integration of support
- Develop appropriate and sustainable pathways of support

Two tests of change were delivered in Kirkcaldy and South West Fife in 2024/25 with another 4 planned. A Cash First Charter is being developed by the Poverty Alliance with those with lived experience of poverty in Fife. This will be used to support food insecurity work going forward and the work to provide early holistic support and reduce the offering of one-off transactional support.

Initial feedback from participants has been positive, with participants reporting improved confidence and mental health and that they are better able to seek advice in the future if required. Additional benefits from the South & West Fife project have included peer support and the formation of friendships and improved social connectedness.



# Benefit Take Up Campaigns

There has been a rolling programme of benefit take up campaigns run throughout the year. A campaign to increase awareness of help with childcare costs saw 360 new families accessing and using Tax Free Childcare Accounts, saving each 20% of their total childcare costs. Fife also delivered a benefit take up campaign covering health related benefits. This achieved an increase of 540 new claims for Child Disability Payment worth at least £805,896 and nearly 7 million in financial lifetime gain has been achieved from the 3 pension credit campaigns run since 2023.

## Enhanced Statutory Provision

### Food Poverty

The Scottish Government funds direct payments to families in receipt of free school meals during the school holidays, at a rate of £2.40 per child per day. Fife Council extends holiday hunger provision through 'Cafe Inc' - providing families with access to free meals throughout the school holiday period.

In 2024/25, 171,541 meals were served. And, from 1 April, The Financial Wellbeing and Revenues team has been ensuring access to free school meals is awarded automatically to those entitled including, for example those in receipt of clothing grants.

This is an extra step to ensure families can access the support they are entitled to, and entitlement checks will be carried out throughout the year to ensure any change in people's circumstances can be picked up as early as possible.

### School Clothing Grants

Changes to Fife Council policy and eligibility criteria has ensured no parent loses their clothing grant when moving from Tax Credits - as part of the UK Government's move to migrate legacy benefits - over to Universal Credit.

Universal Credit has a much higher threshold for school clothing grant than the Tax Credit system, potentially leaving up to 300 families ineligible when they move system.

Fife Council has increased this threshold protecting those most at risk.

### Debt Write off

Fife wrote off £39,864.31 of council tax debt through the council tax allowance policy and £45,837 in school meal debt in 24/25.

### Housing Support

A wide range of work is under way in Fife to improve access to affordable, healthy and sustainable accommodation and to address fuel poverty. This includes work to eliminate the need for children to be living in temporary accommodation, promoting rapid rehousing and supporting families presenting as homeless to transition from temporary accommodation into settled permanent homes.

Fife is looking at providing furnished tenancies, given the challenges around people being able to afford to carpet and furnish their homes (especially after relationship breakdowns). Recognising the particular challenges of rural poverty, we are exploring opportunities for affordable housing for key workers and their families in rural parts of Fife.

In 2024/25 the average number of days a homeless household spent in temporary accommodation reduced from 139 to 134. The number of children in temporary accommodation also reduced from 387 to 342.



Poverty Priority Groups	Advice Work	Change
<b>Disabled household members</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Fife benefit Checker used by 3,109 people where a disabled adult resided in the household.</li> <li>● 740 disabled children featured within the benefit checks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● % increase on the volume of adults featuring within the benefits check compared to previous financial year</li> <li>● 60% increase in the volume of disabled children featuring within the benefit checks compared to the previous financial year.</li> <li>● An increase of 540 new claims for Child Disability Payment worth at least £805,896.</li> </ul>
<b>Households with single parents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Benefit take up campaign covering health related benefits.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● At least 1,342 Lone Parents received advice and assistance from CARF</li> </ul>
<b>Minority ethnic families</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 183 Minority Ethnic families</li> <li>● 600+ preferred not to disclose ethnic background</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Support and advice accessed by minority ethnic groups</li> </ul>
<b>With a child aged under one, or a mother aged under 25.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A dedicated maternity services project in Fife assists pregnant mothers and those with children under 3, mainly with income maximisation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In 2024/2025 the project assisted a total of 333 clients.</li> <li>● Of these, 186 households secured a combined client financial gain of £543,311.74</li> <li>● 93 lone parent families accessing this project received advice on Child Maintenance issues. ·</li> <li>● 173 families where the mother is under 25 years of age were assisted by CARF.</li> </ul>

# Cost of Living Programmes

The Council has delivered Cost-of-Living support programmes to help individuals and families manage through the cost-of-living crisis and as part of Fife's recovery from pandemic. We have developed a wide range of targeted support to help individuals and families navigate the ongoing cost-of-living crisis. For example, in 2024/25, our successful Café Inc programme provided over 171,000 meals during school holidays, and more than 11,500 families received help with the cost of school clothing.



## Fuel Poverty

Through 2024/25, Fife Council worked closely with the UK Fuel Bank and Cosy Kingdom (third sector) to deliver crisis and early intervention support.

**40% of those supported with fuel bank vouchers were families (and over 80% of those families were single parent households).**

Significant delivery areas have been:

- Financial crises support through the provision of Fuel Bank vouchers
- Support given to those repaying fuel debt to manage current consumption
- Home energy advice delivered in residents' homes or by telephone
- Service and agency workers capacity built to provide clients with first level energy advice. Most have also been given Benefit Checker training and offer income maximisation support alongside energy advice.
- Energy saving measures installed in homes through Cosy Kingdom's 'Handy Service'
- Low-income owner occupiers supported with boiler repair or replacement
- 2,742 crisis Fuel Bank vouchers were awarded to 1109 households

**An assessment of the Social Return on Investment for the Handy Service and Energy Advice provision calculated that for every £1 of investment the benefits to the customer were £34.**

Survey findings and feedback indicates impact:

'You have made me and my little girls home so much cosier and removed so much extra stress from my life'

## Advice and support

**23,613 clients**

supported by Citizens Advice and Rights Fife (CARF)

**Financial gain - £9.4m**



**235 families**

supported by CARF Community Advice Workers

**Financial gain - £247,000**

**186 clients** supported by Maternity Services Advice Worker

**Financial gain - £543,211**

## Campaigns

**Almost £7m**

in financial gain from

**3 Pension Credit campaigns**

**£1.9**

**in financial gain**

from Carer support benefit campaign



## Home

**£1.66m on school clothing**

for 11,562 children



**597 households supported**

by Handy Service from Cosy Kingdom help

## Fuel

**2,742 fuel top ups**

awarded

totalling **£139,560** of support from Fuel Bank



**89 Warm Places**

**616 temporary accommodation**

top ups totalling **£53,141**

**474** damp and mould awards made to **427 households**

**434 frontline workers** trained to give energy advice.

**38 households** benefited from Boiler Repair Scheme, with a spend of **£50,082**.

## Money

**8,001** completed benefit checks

The Our Fife/Get Help website had **32,179 views**



**£39,864.31**

of Council Tax Allowance debt written off

**£2.34m** awarded through Scottish Welfare Fund Crisis Awards

**29,948 awards** averaging **£78.00**

## Food

**171,541 meals**

were provided in the school holidays by Cafe Inc



**Auto enrolment to free school meals** serving around **11,000 children**

## Case Study - Maternity Services Advice Pathway

Young person, 19 years old, was referred to the service for Income Maximisation following her 20 weeks scan where twins had been identified. Client was concerned about the financial implication of having twins and although living with parents, was concerned about how they were going to manage as she would be expected to also contribute to the household budget going forward.

The adviser explained that the client could apply for The Best Start Pregnancy and Baby Payment at 24 weeks gestation and since this was a multiple birth, she would receive £ £754.65 for the first child, £377.35 for the second child and £377.35 multiple birth supplement (total being £1509.35) one off payment.

The adviser signposted the client to support groups of breastfeeding and young parent clubs in her local community as well as TAMBA (Twin and Multiple Births Association).

### Client Financial Gains:

- Best start Pregnancy and Baby Payment: £1509.35 One off Payment
- Best Start Foods: £ 1017.60 for the first year
- Child Benefit: £ £1405.35 for the first year
- Scottish Child Payment: £2776.80 for the first year
- Universal Credit child Element added to claim: £3455.04 (for the first 6 months)
- **Total: £10,164.14**

## Case Study - Lone Parent

Client was referred through Barnardo's Stronger Families (Fife - Stronger Families Service | Barnardo's) project to support them with Income Maximisation.

Family consists of single parent and 2 children. Parent also has regular access to another child, usually a few nights per week. Parent has never been in full control of their own money due to previous domestic and financial abuse therefore was unsure of how to manage this well or pay priority bills.

Once the Universal Credit issues were resolved, the parent's income increased by £575.84 per month.

### Client Financial Gains:

- Child Benefit: £2,212.60
- Scottish Child Payment: £2,776.80
- School Meals & Clothing grant: £ 744
- Best Start Foods: £ 1,102.40
- Best Start grant: £ 319.80
- Universal Credit Increase: £ 7,726.08
- Crisis Grant: £ 230
- **Total: £15,111.68**

## Case Study - Disabled Young Person

Client was referred through a Mental Health and Wellbeing Service project to support them with maximising their income. Client is single, age 16 and estranged from parents. They were homeless and struggling with their mental health when first seen.

At that time the client was only receiving £89 UC per month.

New entitlement on Universal Credit is £311.68 per month.

The client was supported with opening their own basic bank account to ensure full financial control of their own money.

### Client Financial Gains:

- Universal Credit Increase: £2,672.16
- Crisis Grant: £120
- Food Bank voucher: £24.48
- **Total: £2,816.64**

## Case Study – Fife Equalities Centre

Client received support from the Over 60 project within Fife Equalities Centre. After meeting client, it became apparent that client was also in need of some income maximisation regarding benefits. There were some health issues that were adding to the financial pressures, as the client could not work for a long period of time. This added to the overall stress for the family.

### Outcome

Estimated Financial Gain for Client following Intervention:

- Adult Disability Payment = £68 per week
- Carers Allowance = £76 per week
- Council Tax Reduction = £12 per week
- Total weekly financial gain = £156
- **Total yearly financial gain = £8,112**

## Smoking Cessation

Smoking remains a major public health issue in Scotland and is recognised as one of the most preventable causes of ill health and premature death in Scotland. Smoking is strongly linked to a variety of comorbidities; these can include cardiovascular diseases, respiratory illnesses like COPD and asthma, and cancers. Additionally, smoking can exacerbate existing conditions and increase the risk of adverse outcomes from other illnesses. Associated risks fall substantially when someone stops smoking, even if they have been long-term smokers.

**In 2018, smoking rates among adolescents were higher in Fife than the national average, with 2% of 13-year-olds and 8% of 15-year-olds smoking.**

In 2024, women in Fife reported smoking tobacco in 10.2% of pregnancies with a known smoking status; this is higher than the rate seen for Scotland at 8.2%.

Overall, in the most deprived areas of Scotland, 35% of people are smokers, while in the least deprived areas, 10% are smokers. Children born in the most deprived areas are significantly more likely to grow up around people who smoke and to go on to start smoking themselves, so smoking cessation initiatives are important in breaking cycles of deprivation and health inequality.

Quit Your Way services are available Fife wide, and Community Pharmacies are key partners in widening access to the Quit Your Way service. Tobacco education programmes are provided to S1 & primary 5/6/7 school children.

## Case Study – Smoking Cessation

Participant and husband are both unemployed and receiving UC, Child Benefit, PIP, Kinship for their grandchild and the Scottish Child Payment. It was identified that the participant was in rent arrears and a successful DHP application was made and backdated.

Participant engaged with Kingdom Community Bank (Credit Union) with regards to budgeting. Participant was in shock with how much they spent on Cigarettes. Participant decided to attend the Smoking Cessation at the Pharmacy and has now been stopped for 5 weeks. And although her husband has not stopped, he has cut down and they are saving £25 a day. Participant is attending smoking Cessation in the Community Centre for support on a weekly basis. Participant has fed back how this extra money from the Safe Project has allowed her to buy a variety of fresh fruit, veg and meats, which she would not have considered before.

## Community Support

Community support plays a vital role in building community resilience, helping communities and individuals to adapt to, and recover from challenging circumstances.

Strong social networks, and access to resources are key components. The development of community responses to the provision of warm places in Fife are helping to do this.

**Working with communities to create welcoming places that provide wrap around advice and support.**

**Kincardine Soup and a Roll**

**Grow West Fife**



## Bricks at Six - provided by BRAG (Benarty Regeneration Action Group)

Bricks at Six is a weekly session where young people can attend to enjoy building Lego in a friendly and welcoming environment. Sessions support family activity and bonding, alongside socialisation opportunities between peers and families. It operates at 6pm, allowing families to attend and take advantage of free food and drink at the session. It is provided by BRAG (Benarty Regeneration Action Group). There are a number of other support services offered by BRAG and the organisation is well connected to Fife Council and other supports, being a member of the Poverty Action Group within the area. Staff at BRAG ensure that families are aware and connected with support services including their pantry, benefit checks, referrals to CARF and have the opportunity to engage with a number of employability programmes. These sessions have been well attended and embraced by the local community, which sits within the top 10% of SIMD. STEM opportunities to further develop learning are being explored, which includes access to virtual reality equipment and robotics.



## Home-Start Levenmouth

Home-Start Levenmouth provide support and positive experiences and connections for families with children under 8 years old. They have been essential to supporting the recent improvements to local amenities through the development of their Letham Glen Hub.

They have been able to offer a warm welcome and activities for 957 visitors across Winter 2024/25 in the area. The team provide a variety of groups, learning, preventative support and activities across the week including valuable weekend family learning sessions along with lunch and refreshments.

"Feels like a home from home, all staff are so nice and make everyone feel welcome. My son loves visiting and doing the different crafts they always have prepared and help him with. He loves the toys and enjoys playing away independently which he doesn't do most places"



## Priorities for Part B 2025/26

Learning from the large-scale cost of living support programmes delivered over the last 3 years, has influenced the setting of several priorities to guide the move from a temporary high level of crisis support to a sustainable mainstream provision. These are to:

- Maximise household income through benefits and financial advice
- Help people to better manage including initiatives around energy efficiency
- Bring people together, reduce isolation, improve connectedness and provide a basis for support and advice
- Enable voluntary and community initiatives to develop and maintain local support
- Enable key and front-line workers to work effectively together

# Part C – Supporting the next generation to thrive

Education, health and children's services play a vital role in shaping a thriving future for the next generation by creating inclusive, nurturing environments where every child feels seen, supported, and inspired. Through early intervention, targeted support, and collaborative working across agencies, our services can break cycles of disadvantage and champion equity. By embedding wellbeing, creativity, and voice at the heart of learning, and linking families to practical help—from food to emotional support—we are laying foundations for confidence, resilience, and lifelong opportunity.

## Improving our Whole System Approach

### Whole Family Wellbeing

The Whole Family Wellbeing Fund is helping Fife provide holistic support to children and families at an earlier stage, and to break cycles of deprivation. It has been particularly helpful to have investment over a number of years, rather than year on year.

In Fife, progress to transform and redesign services is captured in annual reports to Scottish Government on Whole Family Wellbeing and in the Children's Services Plan Annual report.

WFW funding has supported No Wrong Door developments, enabling the local model to be informed by learning nationally and the development of infrastructure - a new community information database - to support better coordination of resource at a local level.

A number of tests of change have informed service redesign within the Children & Families Social Work Service. Early Help and Support Teams will soon be in place across Fife's seven localities. Comprising Social Work and Family support staff, the teams will offer earlier advice and help for children whose wellbeing is impacted by a range of adversities. This will be a whole family approach, offering a family decision making approach, group work, one to one support and working collaboratively at a local and school level with key partners.

Supporting the development of workforce, leadership and culture, Practice Development Sessions have been held across all seven localities. Simplifying local structures to support a more joined up/ flexible and collaborative approach is a key next step.

## Whole Family Wellbeing - High Five

Five Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings successfully completed a Quality Improvement (QI) programme aimed at enhancing early language and communication, particularly for children affected by poverty. Ten children were identified for targeted support, with staff testing and measuring the impact of specific strategies.

Seventeen staff members embedded the Communication High 5 approach into daily routines, enriching language interactions for all children. This led to notable gains in staff confidence:

- Face-to-face strategies: 69.3% to 100%
- Thinking time: 53.9% to 100%
- Turning questions into comments: 46.2% to 62.5%
- Using WOW words: 61.6% to 100%
- Supporting language needs: 54% to 75%, with 25% confident with support

The programme has enhanced communication-rich environments and empowered staff to better support children's language development. It highlights the value of early intervention in addressing the effects of poverty on language and communication. Using targeted support, collaborative leadership, and evidence-based strategies like Communication High 5, participating Early Learning and Childcare settings have made measurable progress in improving outcomes for children at risk of language delay. This work is a vital step toward breaking the cycle of poverty by promoting early language equity—ensuring all children, regardless of background, have the communication foundations needed to reach their full potential.

### Parent Feedback

"We have noticed a big difference in his speech since starting. We've also noticed that some of the negative behaviour he had previously shown has lessened because he is able to express himself more and he isn't getting as frustrated when he is trying to tell you something."

## Let's Connect

Reduced access to quality play and interaction in early childhood can significantly affect a child's cognitive, emotional, and social development. Let's Connect (LC) addresses this by equipping early years practitioners and caregivers to embed responsive, high-quality play into daily routines through modelling and coaching. LC recognises play as essential to early development, secure attachment, and communication. The programme supports Scotland's ambition to close the poverty-related attainment gap, particularly for children under three, and aligns with national priorities on early intervention, inclusion, and children's rights. By empowering families and professionals, LC promotes a more equitable start for all children.

The Let's Connect (LC) team is now working with 66% of 2-year-old provisions in Fife, marking strong progress in embedding the approach across early years settings. Bespoke training has also been delivered to third-sector partners, including The Cottage and Gingerbread. Engagement with Health Visiting teams is ongoing, with plans to expand LC into broader family support services. A trained Early Years Officer, funded through additional support, continues to aid implementation.

Strategic oversight is provided by the LC development team, with quality assurance in place. Practitioner and leadership networks support sustainability and shared learning across settings.

## Whole Family Wellbeing - Sleep Project

Children and young people with disabilities and complex health needs are disproportionately affected by sleep difficulties, impacting their well-being and that of their families. In Fife, around 6,500 children are affected by disability, with an estimated 80% experiencing sleep issues.

Sleep deprivation reduces family resilience, strains relationships, and affects mental health and financial stability. For children, it impairs learning, concentration, behaviour, and overall health.

Sleep difficulties are a significant barrier to inclusion and achieving positive outcomes, making early support essential for improving quality of life for both children and their families.

Practitioners report that sleep training has significantly influenced their work with children, young people, and families. Sleep is now routinely discussed in assessments, planning, and educational sessions, with resources shared to promote awareness. Tools like sleep diaries are used to co-create achievable plans with families. Support is delivered across universal to specialist levels, including tailored advice and structured sessions. Training has boosted practitioner confidence to address sleep issues proactively and explain sleep science clearly. Sleep support is embedded in daily practice, and ongoing reflection and team collaboration are helping sustain impact and drive new initiatives across services.

"My teenager completed sleep routine, she is now calmer and she has gone twice to school as she is able to get up in the morning. I am very pleased" – Mother

"The mood and energy level of my child always improves after a good night sleep. They eat better and are more engaged in what they were doing" Parent

"Families implementing advice to improve sleep which is resulting in improved morning routines and school attendance" – Worker

## Keeping the promise

The 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.

Over the last 6 years, the profile of care in Fife has significantly changed, in alignment with Belonging to Fife (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.

Some of the local successes of those who are currently cared for in Fife include:

- the National House Project successfully supported all 5 cohorts of care leavers to manage their own homes, with no experience of failed tenancy.
- Employability and Education services have 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.
- The school nursing service have developed a self-referral tool for young people aged 12- 19 through a QR code.

## Voice of the Child

We can only keep The Promise in Fife if we continue to listen 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. Work is underway through the Children's Rights Participation and Engagement Subgroup to map all existing channels of participation to hear the voices of young people. =

The Fife Children's Rights Charter was co-produced with children and young people in Fife and launched in December 2024. A new service is also being developed within the Children and Families service, with the aim of increasing young people's participation in decision making processes.

## Other forms of support

### Childcare

Fife Council's Childcare Services Team is contributing to a Scottish Government funded Early Adopter Community (EAC) project. The EAC project is now in year 2 – the delivery phase.

Three Fife-based Out of School Clubs—Methilhill Community Children's Initiative (MCCI), Mountfleurie, and Kennoway—have expanded inclusive childcare options. MCCI, a registered charity, now offers 32 weekly 'Pay What You Can' sessions at its Outdoor Adventurer After School Club and has transitioned to Care Inspectorate registration, enabling access to childcare subsidies. Children receive food and outdoor play, with wraparound support including emotional care, free baked goods and donations, Café Inc holiday meals, benefit checks, and a Community Café.

Mountfleurie Out of School Club, launched during this phase, runs Breakfast, After School, and Holiday Clubs, serving nearby schools with walking taxi transport and child-led nutritious meals. The club offers fee-paying and funded spaces, with families supported via benefit checks and signposting to job clubs, budgeting, and more.

Kennoway Out of School Club also provides funded places and mirrors Mountfleurie's holistic family support model.

Levenmouth EAC has collaborated with support agencies and internal colleagues as referral partners to allocate subsidised or fully funded after-school places. These partners already work closely with vulnerable families, including those affected by child poverty, and are well-placed to identify those meeting our eligibility criteria. This targeted approach ensures that existing support networks help direct families most in need to the available provision, strengthening access to childcare and enhancing wraparound support.

## Increase in breastfeeding levels in Fife

There is evidence of a variety of benefits of breastfeeding to the health of both mother and baby so encouragement of breastfeeding has been a focus for investment in Scotland in recent years.

**As a result, the rate of any breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks in Fife has increased from 33.7% in 2012 to 44.6% in 2024.**

However, there continues to be a significant drop from the number of women who start breastfeeding to those who remain breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks, with the highest rates of drop off being seen in the most deprived areas. It is vital that women can access timely, skilled support and advice to continue to improve this situation in Fife and move towards a local culture where breastfeeding is normalised and widely supported.

NHS Fife has been “Baby Friendly” since 2014. Available services include access to breastfeeding support and advice from midwives, health visitors (or family nurses), the breastfeeding support team or infant feeding advisors. Fife has a dedicated team of experienced breastfeeding support workers who can provide early personalised support to those wishing to breastfeed. A recent training programme has also enabled 24 mums to complete training in breastfeeding peer support to further strengthen the role of volunteers in running breastfeeding groups across the area.

Having stopped due to the COVID-19 pandemic, 2024 has also seen the return of antenatal parent education infant feeding

sessions in Fife. These sessions provide breastfeeding advice alongside information on when to offer solids and signs of readiness, how to access best start foods and safe formula feeding.

### Priorities for 2025-26 include:

- Supporting targeted Community-Based initiatives with the aim of reducing 6–8 week breastfeeding drop off rates, focusing on SIMD 1 and 2.
- Further supporting antenatal colostrum harvesting pilot to enhance early breastfeeding initiation.
- Ongoing development of breast milk bank provision to ensure equitable access to donor milk where clinically indicated.
- Community-based support groups offering baby massage, feeding support, and play opportunities for siblings.



## Childsmile - Supporting early oral health

Children from more deprived areas experience higher levels of tooth decay compared to those from less deprived areas. While there has been improvement in overall dental health since the early 2000s, inequalities persist, with the gap between the most and least deprived widening in some cases.

**64.7% of P1 children in Fife had no obvious sign of dental decay compared to the national average of 73% - indicating that 35.3% children had decay experience.**

The Childsmile Toothbrushing Programme helps children build lifelong oral hygiene habits. **In Fife, 93% of nurseries and 31% of P1/P2 classes support daily toothbrushing.** Children receive dental packs - including a toothbrush, fluoride toothpaste, and oral health messages - on at least six occasions by age five. Health visitors also provide free-flow feeder cups in infancy.

The Community and Practice Programme addresses oral health inequalities by embedding Dental Health Support Workers in disadvantaged areas. These workers offer tailored support through home visits and community initiatives, helping families overcome barriers to good oral health and access dental services.

The Fluoride Varnish Programme targets schools with higher levels of disadvantage. **Currently, 31% of schools and all five ASN schools participate.** This will reduce to 19% in 2026/27, though ASN schools remain included. Schools exiting the programme will be encouraged to implement whole-school toothbrushing.

## EMERGE (Post 16)

In collaboration with Fife College this is a course designed by Fife College and undertaken with the schools/college partnership which offers high school pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, who have indicated that they are interested in careers within the health service, but who are facing attainment challenges, the opportunity to study an SVQ5 level qualification whilst undertaking simulated, hands-on experience and access to NHS environments. The pilot, with pupils from Levenmouth Academy and Viewforth High School.

Pupils have reported an increase in confidence, reduction in anxiety along with an increase in knowledge and awareness of careers within the health service and pathways to qualification.



## Priorities for Part C 2025/26

As highlighted in the Introduction, work to Support the Next Generation to Thrive is supported by the Children's Services Plan. This addresses barrier to life outcomes arising from poverty and individual support needs, both of which require:

- **Improving initial assessment and early help and support.**  
This is being addressed through ongoing development of the No Wrong Door model. A key priority is the redesign of Children and Families Social work to Early help and support teams and Enhanced teams which aim to deliver services that are accessible at the right time, build capacity and resilience in families, are co-produced, reduce the need for crisis intervention, are budget efficient and have a skilled and confident workforce with a “can do” approach.
- **Better understanding how specific individual circumstances** (including different types of additional support need) can adversely affect life outcomes. This is being addressed by the risk-based analysis of data being developed within the Children's Services Partnership. This understanding is also informing a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for children and young people in Fife, which will be used in updating both the Fife Children's Services Plan (in 2026) and the Plan for Fife (in 2027).
- **More effective tracking and monitoring of the improvements seen for children and young people** receiving support by a range of partners. This is being addressed via development of a Whole System Framework for children's services partnership approach; this is a systems-based framework, being developed with the support of the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund.

# Priorities for 2025/26 Tackling Poverty and Preventing Crisis

Tackling Poverty work in Fife has, over the last three years following the COVID pandemic, had a focus on supporting low-income households impacted by the rises in the cost-of-living. There is significantly less funding available to support mitigating work from 25/26, but Fife is managing despite this, to focus on preventative measure especially around income maximisation.

The learning from the last three years delivering the cost-of-living programmes suggests that a more integrated neighbourhood-based approach to support helps people access assistance early and in ways that contribute to more positive outcomes. The updates in this report for 2024/25 are another step towards that, however, funding challenges and uncertainty, coupled with the need to support people from crisis towards stability, calls for a new model. Development work on that through No Wrong Door is underway.

Our overall planning and strategy around the national strategy on Child Poverty is fragmented across different partnership groups and a priority going forward will be to look to pulling this together.

# Background Papers

- Fife's previous annual Tackling Poverty report  
[Tackling Poverty report 2023-24](#)
- Latest report on Fife's work to address the cost-of-living crisis  
[Cabinet Committee - 12 September 2024](#)
- Help with the cost of living  
[our.fife.scot/gethelp](https://our.fife.scot/gethelp)
- Current Fife Children's Services Plan  
[www.fife.gov.uk/FifeCSPlan2023](https://www.fife.gov.uk/FifeCSPlan2023)
- The most recent Annual Report on the work within the Children's Services Plan  
[www.fife.gov.uk/CSReport25](https://www.fife.gov.uk/CSReport25)

If you would like any further information about this report or the work of the Fife Partnership please at **our.fife.scot** or email: **fife.partnership@fife.gov.uk**



## Alternative Formats

Information about Fife Council can be made available in large print, braille, audio CD/tape and Gaelic on request by calling **03451 55 55 00**



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中文語言熱線電話:

03451 55 55 88

Polskojęzyczna linia telefoniczna:

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# Fife Partnership Board

[www.fife.gov.uk/committee/fifepartnership](http://www.fife.gov.uk/committee/fifepartnership)

Agenda Item No. 5

5<sup>th</sup> August 2025

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## Children's Services Annual Report 2024/25

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**Report by:** Donald Macleod, Executive Director, Education Directorate, Fife Council  
(Chair of the Fife Children's Services Partnership)

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### Purpose

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The purpose of this report is review progress in delivering the Fife Children's Services Plan – as outlined in the Annual Report 2024/25 – and to invite discussion on the planned work to more closely align the work of the Children's Services Partnership with wider work across Fife Partnership to tackle poverty.

### Recommendations

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That Fife Partnership Board provide feedback on:

1. The proposed next steps to more closely align the work of Children in Fife with wider work across Fife Partnership to tackle poverty (as outlined in section 2).
2. The key themes that are emerging as a potential focus for children's services planning in Fife over the period 2026-29 (as outlined in section 3).

### Resource Implications

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The paper outlines the work being undertaken by the Fife Children's Services Partnership to ensure that outcomes for children and young people in Fife improve as a result of better collective working within current budgets.

### Consultation

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Work to progress the Fife Children's Services Plan is informed by an ongoing process of consultation and engagement with leaders and representatives of staff from across the children's services partnership, together with feedback from children, young people and families gathered through a range of sources.



**#Keeping  
The Promise  
in Fife**

# 1.0 Background: the Children's Services Plan & Annual Report

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- 1.1 The Fife Children's Services Plan is an overarching strategic plan, whose purpose is to safeguard, support and promote the wellbeing of all children. A link to the plan can be found in Appendix 1.
- 1.2 Development of the Children's Services Plan and annual reporting on delivery of the plan are both statutory requirements on Children's Services Planning Partnerships (CSPPs), under the terms of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.
- 1.3 The Fife Children's Services Plan plays a key role in supporting work by the wider partnership to tackle child poverty. Work within the plan contributes to Part C of the national Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan: *Supporting the Next Generation to Thrive* by breaking the cycle of inter-generational poverty.
- 1.4 The Fife Children's Annual Report 2024/25 reviews work undertaken by the Fife CSPP (Children in Fife) over the past year to deliver the Children's Services Plan. This work includes:
  - Work undertaken to address current improvement priorities (see section 2 of the Annual Report, pp. 7-23).
  - The Partnership's implementation of GIRFEC and delivery of the Promise (see section 3 of the Annual Report, pp. 24-29).
  - Ongoing work to improve the strategic approach of the Children in Fife partnership (see section 4 of the Annual Report, pp. 30-31).A link to the report can be found in Appendix 2.
- 1.5 The report is presented together with the Annual Poverty Report (agenda item 4) in order to provide a wider context for the work being undertaken to improve outcomes for disadvantaged and vulnerable children in Fife, many of whom are affected by child poverty.

## 2.0 Next steps: updating the plan

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- 2.1 Children's Services Plans are required to run for defined three-year planning periods; the current planning period ends in March 2026. Work has begun on developing the next Fife Children's Services Plan, which will support improvement in partnership working for the period April 2026 - March 2029.
- 2.2 Initial work has been undertaken to develop a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, to inform the choice of improvement priorities and actions for the new plan. This work is being progressed by a working group involving strategic leads and data officers from across the Children's Services Partnership, as well as representatives from the Council's Research Team.
- 2.3 The scope and aims of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment have been designed to ensure that the evidence-base for the Fife Children's Services Plan 2026-29 can be informed by – and can inform – the evidence being developed for updating the Plan for Fife in 2027.

- 2.4 Work to strengthen the alignment of the Children's Services Plan as a key element in delivering the Plan for Fife is also being progressed. This includes governance and reporting arrangements.

## 3.0 Key areas for improvement

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### 3.1 Improving our ways of working

3.1.1 As noted above, section 4 of the Fife Children's Services Annual Report identifies key areas for longer-term improvement to help strengthen the **strategic approach** of Children in Fife. These include:

- Ensuring that expertise in *quality improvement (QI) approaches* is used to better identify and support issues of strategic or system-level importance, with a view to achieving a greater and more structured scale and spread of improvement.
- Improving our *strategic planning*, to ensure that improvement actions are more clearly supported by a well formulated and testable proposition (i.e., a theory of change) with appropriate measures to evidence the short-, medium- and longer-term impacts of improvement work. Work to strengthen the understanding and use of rigorous QI approaches will help to achieve this goal.

3.1.2 Work supported by the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund (reviewed on p. 18 of the Annual Report) has helped to identify key areas for improvement in partnership working at an **operational level**, including more effective local area working. These will be key drivers for ongoing work on Whole Family Wellbeing (further details can be found on page 19 of the Annual Report). They are:

- Improving early help and support for families in Fife's seven areas.
- Strengthening workforce confidence and skills for partnership working, as well as the culture and leadership of the Children's Services Partnership.
- Reviewing the strategic commissioning of whole family support services.
- Further improving data, performance management and the use of quality improvement methodology.

### 3.2 Emerging themes for improving outcomes

3.2.1 Evidence from children's services partners is being gathered and analysed via the ongoing Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for children and young people. This is highlighting a number of challenges that have also emerged as key themes in recent partnership meetings and development sessions. These include the need to:

- Strengthen support for early development (pre-school and into primary education), including language, social and emotional development of children. Evidence shows that poverty and other forms of disadvantage can have a significant and adverse impact on child development. These effects have been particularly pronounced for specific cohorts of children (e.g. those who were toddlers during the Covid lockdown period).
- Increase the confidence and resilience of children and young people. Evidence clearly demonstrates that there are ongoing challenges relating to mental health, emotional wellbeing, confidence and resilience. These challenges reflect longer-term trends seen across the wider post-industrial world.

- Improve parental confidence, skills and resilience. Children in Fife has developed a range of evidence-based family support programmes over a number of years, to help improve parenting confidence and skills. Use of the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund supported a review of these following the Covid pandemic (which limited the opportunity to provide these in-person programmes). The review of strategic commissioning for family support services will play a key role in establishing more holistic approach for the future.

3.2.2 The emerging themes noted above are likely to be reflected in the improvement priorities and actions contained within the Fife Children's Services Plan 2026-29.

## 4.0 Conclusions

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- 4.1 Section 1 of this paper has provided an overview of ongoing work within Fife's Children's Services Planning Partnership (Children in Fife), as reported within the Annual Report. This work plays a key role in *Supporting the Next Generation to Thrive*, as a means of tackling child poverty.
- 4.2 Section 2 of this paper has provided a summary of proposed next steps, to help more closely align the work of Children in Fife with wider work across Fife Partnership to tackle poverty.
- 4.3 Section 3 of this paper has summarised key themes emerging from Children in Fife partnership meetings and development sessions, and via the ongoing Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. These are likely to figure prominently in the improvement priorities and actions contained within the Fife Children's Services Plan 2026-29.
- 4.4 Feedback is invited from the Board on:
- The proposed next steps (as outlined in section 2).
  - The key themes that are emerging as a potential focus for children's services planning in Fife over the period 2026-29 (as outlined in section 3).

## Appendices

**Appendix 1:** Fife Children's Services Plan 2023-26:

<https://www.fife.gov.uk/FifeCSPlan2023>

**Appendix 2:** Fife Children's Services Annual Report 2024/25:

<https://www.fife.gov.uk/CSReport25>

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# Children's Services Annual Report

2024-25

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# Fife Children's Services Annual Report 2024-25

## Introduction

Fife's Children's Services Partnership involves a range of partners who provide services for children and young people. We promote, support and safeguard the wellbeing of our children and young people, by working collaboratively to provide early and preventative support for all.

This Annual Report reviews the progress that we have made in implementing the *Fife Children's Services Plan 2023-26* during the past year. It describes a wide range of work involving staff and services across the Fife Children's Services Partnership. A significant part of this work is contributing to improved day-to-day support for children, young people and families (described in section 2 of this report). Further work is helping to strengthen the way that we collectively act to meet the needs of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable (described in section 3 of this report). Work is also ongoing to strengthen our longer-term strategic approach (described in section 4), to ensure that improvement work across the partnership has a wider impact on the lives of all children, young people and families in future years.

Collectively, this work is helping us to work towards achieving our vision: **"making Fife a place where every child and young person matters"**.

June 2025



**Donald Macleod**  
**Chair, Children in Fife**  
*Executive Director, Education*  
*Fife Council*

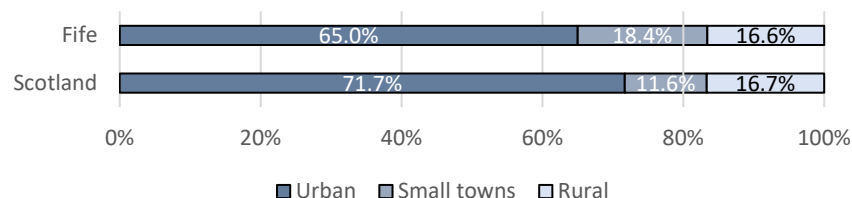


**Lisa Cooper**  
**Vice-Chair, Children in Fife**  
*Head of Primary & Preventative*  
*Care Services, Fife Health and*  
*Social Care Partnership*

# Our context: the communities, children and young people of Fife

## The geography of Fife

Fife has a mix of urban areas, small towns, and rural areas – the overall balance of each classification broadly resembles the geography of Scotland.



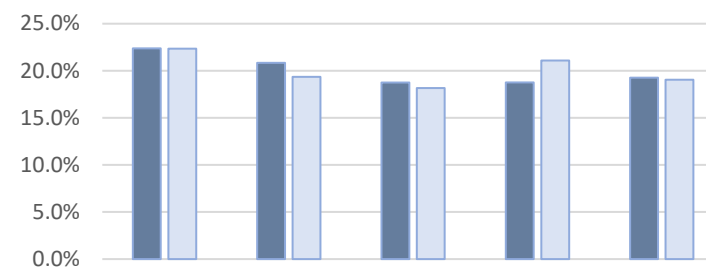
However, Fife's main urban areas (Kirkcaldy, Dunfermline, Glenrothes and the Levenmouth area) are smaller in scale and are more dispersed than Scotland's largest four cities, which are classified as large urban areas.

Area	Large urban	Other urban	Accessible small towns	Remote small towns	Accessible rural	Remote rural
Fife	0.0%	65.0%	18.4%	0.0%	16.6%	0.0%
Scotland	40.8%	30.9%	9.7%	1.9%	12.1%	4.6%

## Area deprivation in Fife (SIMD)

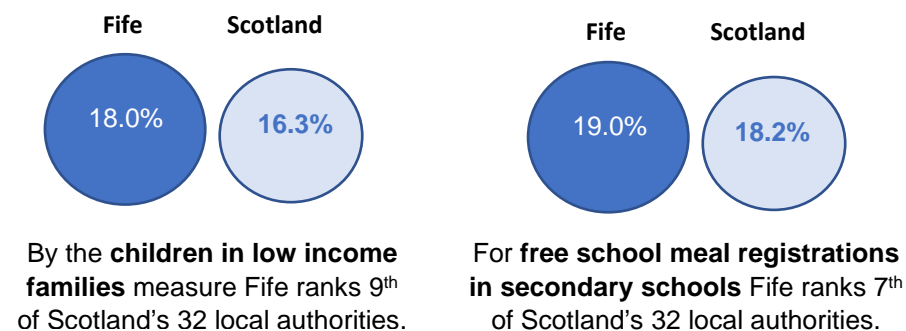
The table below shows the geographical distribution of school pupils in Fife and Scotland, based on the SIMD Quintile where they live.

SIMD Quintile 1 areas (SIMD Q1) are the most deprived in Scotland. SIMD Quintile 5 areas (SIMD Q5) are the least deprived. The profiles of Fife and Scotland are very similar.



		SIMD Q1	SIMD Q2	SIMD Q3	SIMD Q4	SIMD Q5
Fife		22.4	20.8	18.8	18.8	19.3
Scotland		22.4	19.4	18.2	21.1	19.0

## Measures of child and household poverty



There are 69,642 children and young people aged 0-17 years in Fife; of these, 48,674 attend a Fife school. The table below shows some of the support needs & characteristics of these pupils.

Group	Number	%
With an additional support need	18,259	37.8
Living in SIMD Quintile 1	10,892	22.3
Speaking English as an Additional Language (not fluent)	3,376	6.9
Minority Ethnic	3,694	7.6
Assessed as having a disability	1,004	2.1
<b>All school pupils</b>	<b>48,674</b>	<b>100.0</b>

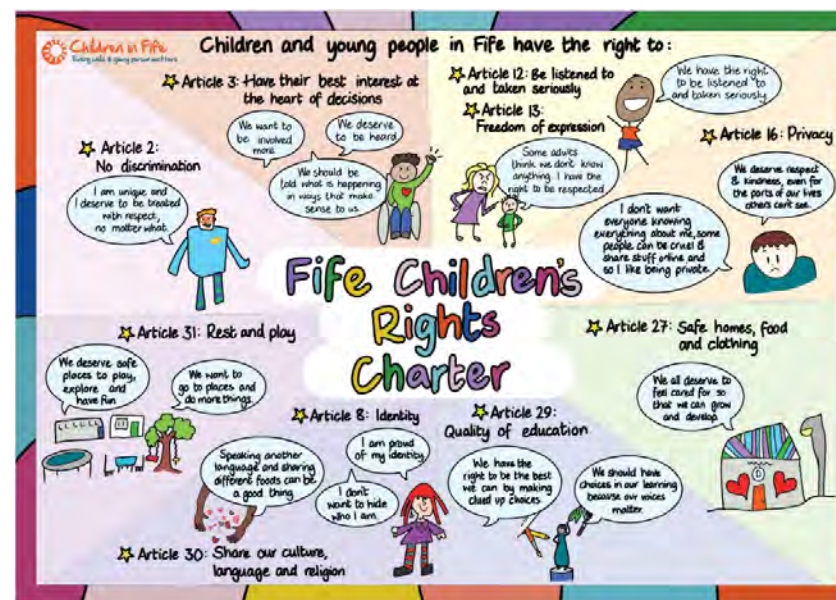
# Section 1 – Some notable achievements in 2024-25

## Improving Health & Wellbeing

- We have progressed work for our new pathway **supporting young people's mental and emotional wellbeing**. Legal and data-sharing issues are being addressed to enable the next phase, including a pilot starting in August 2025. (see p15)
- We have introduced new psychological support programmes in Nurture Centres which are helping to ensure more people are accessing the **Child Healthy Weight** service. The service is working with dental health teams to reinforce key messages about nutrition and its impact on both weight and oral health.
- We have trained Personal and Social Education (PSE) teachers to develop their confidence and knowledge in delivering **alcohol awareness** sessions with pupils. They then then introduced sessions to over 250 pupils in S2. Alongside this substance use awareness-raising workshops for parents were trialled and will now be rolled out across Fife. (see p22)

## Improving Engagement

- We have introduced a refreshed **Participation and Engagement Framework** to ensure a more consistent and coordinated approach to involving children and young people, reducing duplication and building on existing efforts (see p.19).
- We co-developed a **Children's Rights Charter** for Fife with children and young people, which will guide how we promote and uphold their rights across the partnership (see p.20).
- Together, the framework and charter strengthen our commitment to meaningful participation, ensuring young people are actively involved in shaping decisions that affect them. This will help **to better meet criterion 10 of the Statutory Guidance for Children's Services Planning**.



## Better supporting families

- We have continued work to develop a more integrated, preventative approach by our Children's Services Partnership. This approach will be supported by new area-based **Early Help and Support** Teams within the Children & Families Social Work Service. The Early Help and Support model has been developed following a range of improvement work and data analysis and will provide a link with the ongoing development of a *No Wrong Doors* model for community support by the wider Fife Partnership (see p.18).
- We have delivered and reviewed an initial programme of partnership-wide practice development as part of whole family wellbeing developments. This has highlighted the potential for area-based **Communities of Practice** to engage local leaders with the ongoing development of partnership practice and area-based approaches. We will pilot area-based Communities of Practice during 2025-26 (see p.18).

## Improving Equity & Equality

- Embedding of The **Fife Neurodevelopmental Pathway** continues. This is a multi-agency, single point of access assessment pathway, which is helping to strengthen support for children where there are concerns about neurodevelopment (see p.22).
- We have reviewed and refreshed our approach to **Supporting the Next Generation to Thrive**, by reducing barriers to positive life chances faced by disadvantaged and vulnerable young people. A consolidated Poverty and Equalities group has been formed and has begun work – with the Children's Services Data Group – to develop a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment to inform the Fife Children's Services Plan 2026-29 (see p.22).
- We have supported the work of the *Tackling Poverty and Preventing Crisis Board* within the wider Fife Partnership, to ensure that the overarching **Plan for Fife** can achieve maximum impact across Fife's local communities (see p.23).

## Improving our overarching approach to meeting need

- We have refreshed and relaunched our **Children in Fife website** (<https://children.fife.scot/>), to ensure that practitioners and staff across the partnership have clear and easily accessible guidance on using the Child Wellbeing Pathway and other core partnership approaches (see p.23)
- We have refreshed the Fife Corporate Parenting Plan 2024 – 2027, to strengthen our delivery of The Promise and work toward the 24-30 call to Action. The Plan identifies 7 priority areas to help expose and address challenges the faced by those in the care community (pp. 26-27).

Section 2 –  
Our progress  
with  
improvement  
in 2024-25

## Our approach to improvement

The following page provides an overview of the priorities for improvement identified in the Fife Children's Services Plan 2023-26.

There are four main areas of improvement:

- **Health & Wellbeing**
- **Supporting Families**
- **Engagement of our Children, Young People and Families**
- **Equity and Equality**

This improvement work is overseen by Children in Fife, the Governance Group for Fife Children's Services Partnership. The group receives regular updates from the strategic lead groups for each priority.

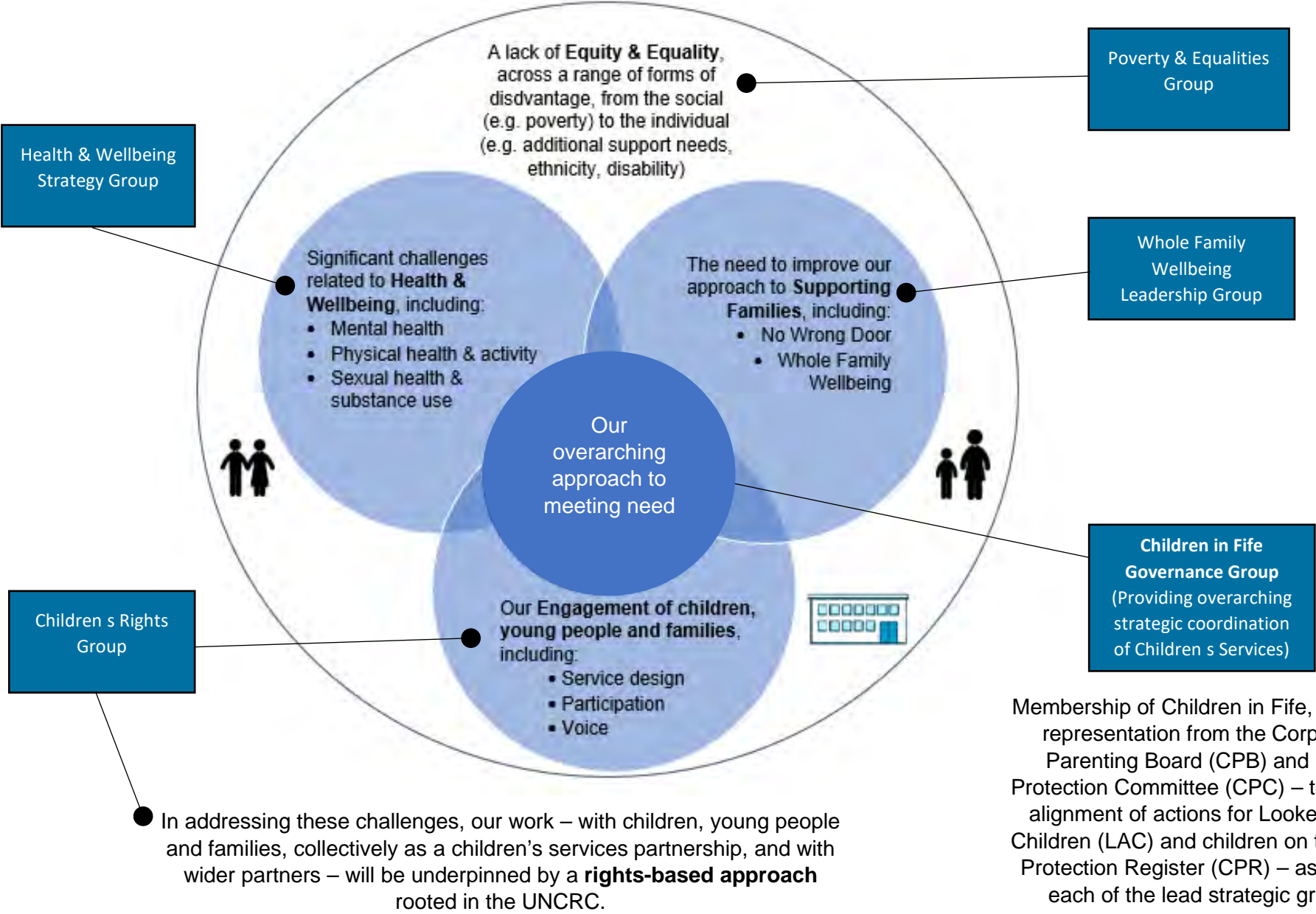
This section provides an update on work undertaken for these four improvement priorities.

Children in Fife oversees the partnership's wider approach to prevention and early intervention, its implementation of GIRFEC and Delivery of the Promise. Children in Fife ensures that our **overarching approach** to children's services meets the needs of all children and young people, including children and young people at risk of harm, in need of care, or in need of protection.

Section 3 of this Annual Report provides a review of this work.



Work to oversee implementation of the Fife Children’s Services Plan 2023-26 is being led by the following strategic groups:



Membership of Children in Fife, includes representation from the Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) and Child Protection Committee (CPC) – to ensure alignment of actions for Looked After Children (LAC) and children on the Child Protection Register (CPR) – as well as each of the lead strategic groups

# Our progress in improving Health and Wellbeing

## Context

The **Health & Wellbeing Strategy Group** oversees implementation of the improvement plan for Health and Wellbeing.

The group includes lead members from the 3 key partnership groups that oversee work relating to health and wellbeing. It:

- Owns: the action plan for the improvement theme of Health & Wellbeing
- Provides a link to the work of the Fife Alcohol & Drugs Partnership (ADP) and the Health and Social Care Partnership
- Promotes: within the UNCRC relating to health and wellbeing

The table below provides an update on progress in implementing the improvement plan for Health and Wellbeing, as set out in the Fife Children's Services Plan 2023-26:

What is the key issue/challenge?	What do we need to do to address this?	Summary of progress made during period April 2024 - March 2025	Evidence of progress and impact as at March 2025	Next steps for year 2025-26
Multi-agency approaches to ensure access to mental health supports and services for all children, young people and their families	Improved accessibility to mental health supports for children, young people and their families, ensuring they receive the right support at the right time from the right service	A targeted pilot of the Single Point of Access (SPA) model was initiated in Auchmuty and Balwearie High Schools to streamline access to mental health services. This included the implementation of dummy case testing to evaluate system functionality and user experience. Feedback from school staff and multi-agency partners has been actively gathered and used to refine the SPA model. Additionally, the WYSA mental health support app was successfully extended to two more schools, broadening digital access to early intervention tools for young people.	Preliminary evaluation of the SPA pilot indicates improved coordination between education and health services, with early signs of reduced referral delays. Stakeholder feedback has highlighted increased clarity in referral pathways and enhanced confidence among staff in navigating mental health support systems. The expansion of the WYSA app has resulted in increased student engagement with self-help resources, with usage analytics showing a steady rise in logins and session completions. These	The next phase will focus on finalising the SPA model based on pilot feedback and preparing for a phased rollout across additional schools and early years settings. This will include the development of standardised referral protocols and training for frontline staff. Legal and technical frameworks for data sharing will be completed to support seamless multi-agency collaboration. Further evaluation of the WYSA app's impact will inform decisions on broader deployment. A communications strategy will be implemented to ensure all

			developments reflect a growing alignment between service delivery and the needs of children, young people, and families.	stakeholders are informed and engaged in the SPA expansion.
	Professional Development and capacity building opportunities are in place for all staff supporting children, young people and their families' mental health, focusing on early intervention approaches	A comprehensive approach to workforce development was initiated to strengthen early intervention capabilities across services supporting children, young people, and families. A draft workforce survey was developed to assess current training needs and inform future capacity-building efforts. Planning and scheduling for Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood (RSHP) training were completed, with delivery set for February 2025. Additionally, the Our Minds Matter (OMM) Framework was refreshed to reflect current best practices and prepared for dissemination across multi-agency partners. These initiatives were designed to ensure that staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to respond effectively to emerging mental health needs.	Initial feedback from the draft workforce survey revealed that 62% of education staff identified a need for further RSHP training, highlighting a clear demand for enhanced professional learning. The relaunch of the OMM Framework has led to increased awareness and uptake among practitioners, contributing to more consistent and informed approaches to mental health support. Furthermore, there has been a noticeable improvement in multi-agency collaboration, with partners reporting greater alignment in early intervention strategies and shared understanding of referral pathways.	The next phase will involve finalising and distributing the workforce survey, followed by a detailed analysis of the results to shape a responsive and targeted training programme. Expansion of RSHP and broader mental health training will be prioritised, with a focus on accessibility and relevance across sectors. The OMM Framework will be embedded through a structured programme of workshops, peer learning sessions, and reflective practice opportunities. These efforts will be supported by a coordinated communication strategy to ensure consistent messaging and sustained engagement across all partner agencies.  Scottish Government New Health Visitor Action Plan 2025-2035 has been developed focussing on early detection and prevention, supporting

				<p>families from earliest stages across Fife.</p> <p>The rollout of ICON across NHS Fife is underway, aiming to improve the recognition and response to head trauma in children, thereby enhancing safeguarding and early intervention efforts across the region.</p>
	<p>Improved multi-agency data to inform the mental health needs of young people and their families in Fife, ensuring that we respond appropriately</p>	<p>Significant progress has been made in enhancing the quality and integration of multi-agency data to better understand and respond to the mental health needs of children, young people, and their families in Fife. CAMHS and selected trial schools have collaborated on a data cleansing initiative to improve the accuracy and consistency of existing datasets. Concurrently, efforts have been made to align data collection methodologies across services, laying the groundwork for a more unified and responsive system. Strategic discussions have commenced to explore the legal and technical frameworks required for cross-system data sharing, with a view to enabling real-time insights and coordinated service delivery.</p>	<p>Early outcomes from the data alignment work have led to a clearer understanding of referral patterns, service utilisation, and existing gaps in provision. Stakeholders have reported improved visibility of trends and emerging needs, which has already informed adjustments to local service planning. The identification of data compatibility issues at an early stage has allowed for proactive resolution, ensuring that future systems will be more robust and interoperable. Engagement from both education and health partners has been strong, demonstrating a shared commitment to evidence-informed practice and collaborative problem-solving.</p>	<p>The next phase will focus on finalising data sharing agreements that comply with legal and ethical standards, enabling secure and efficient exchange of information across agencies. An integrated data dashboard will be developed and piloted to support real-time monitoring and strategic decision-making. Insights derived from the dashboard will be used to inform targeted interventions, resource allocation, and service redesign. Ongoing stakeholder engagement will ensure that the system remains responsive to the evolving needs of children, young people, and families, and that data is used ethically and effectively to drive continuous improvement.</p>

<p>Children &amp; young people's physical wellbeing and participation in physical activity &amp; sport has been negatively impacted by the covid- 19 pandemic.</p> <p>The Scottish Parent Survey reported a consistent decline in children's activity levels, socialisation &amp; free play with other children, with the greatest impact on those most vulnerable and / or disadvantaged.</p>	<p>Increase access to sport &amp; physical activity for our most vulnerable and / or disadvantaged Children &amp; Young People.</p> <p>Enable Children, Young People &amp; families to understand the importance of leading an active lifestyle, healthier diet and healthy weight.</p>	<p>A multi-faceted programme of work was implemented to address the decline in physical activity and wellbeing among children and young people, particularly those most vulnerable or disadvantaged. Key developments included the establishment of a stakeholder group and communication plan to coordinate efforts across sectors. The HENRY (Health, Exercise, Nutrition for the Really Young) training and train-the-trainer model were successfully rolled out, enhancing workforce capacity to support healthy lifestyle behaviours. The FifeLovesLife app was actively promoted to disseminate key health messages, while targeted projects—such as increasing female participation in sport at S1 and S2 levels—were initiated in response to insights from the Scottish Parent Survey. A suite of training options under the Prevention and Early Intervention programme was delivered to both professionals and community partners, alongside a focused campaign to raise awareness of health literacy and empower individuals to make informed health choices.</p>	<p>The “Active for Life” project reached completion, with a summary report pending publication. A system-based approach to physical activity is progressing, with a stakeholder event scheduled for October 2025 to consolidate learning and plan next steps. A mapping exercise identified available activities for children with Additional Support Needs (ASN), highlighting areas of good practice and gaps in provision. The HENRY train-the-trainer programme received positive evaluations, and the MINS Group began rolling out the “Connecting with Parents” psychological support model across nurture groups, resulting in increased referrals to Community Health and Wellbeing (CHW) services. Evaluation and audit of the Prevention and Early Intervention training programme are underway, and a Health Literacy action plan has been developed to guide future work. These initiatives collectively demonstrate a strengthened infrastructure for promoting physical wellbeing and inclusive access to activity.</p>	<p>The next phase will focus on addressing locality-level gaps in provision for children with ASN, using data gathered from the stakeholder event to inform planning. The PSE (Personal and Social Education) module on Physical Activity and Healthy Diet, piloted in one high school, will be evaluated for potential rollout across all secondary schools. The impact of the HENRY approach will be formally assessed, and findings will inform future delivery. Workforce training needs identified through the survey will shape the next iteration of the training programme. A coordinated communication strategy will be implemented to ensure consistent, evidence-based messaging across all platforms. Collaboration with Health Promotion (HP) teams will continue to raise awareness of the Prevention and Early Intervention training programme and embed it within local delivery frameworks.</p>
<p>Increasing the level of confidence,</p>	<p>Develop and deliver a workforce development</p>	<p>A comprehensive review and expansion of workforce development</p>	<p>Evaluation data indicates strong uptake and positive</p>	<p>The next phase will focus on embedding shared learning</p>

competence and knowledge of the workforce to engage with children and young people about Healthy Relationships and Substance Use (including parental substance use)	programme for staff working with children and families.	initiatives were undertaken to enhance the capacity of staff working with children and families in the areas of Healthy Relationships and Substance Use. The training catalogue for 2025–26 was updated to include a broader range of TURAS modules and clinical courses, ensuring alignment with current best practices and emerging needs. The Young Person's Drop-In Clinic marked its first year of operation, engaging 486 attendees and serving as a key access point for early intervention and support. Targeted outreach efforts were initiated, particularly with care-experienced young people and through school-based engagement in North East Fife, to ensure inclusive access to support and learning opportunities.	reception of the expanded training offer. Of the young people who accessed the Drop-In Clinic, 100% reported they would recommend the service to peers, highlighting its relevance and accessibility. A workforce survey yielded 85 responses, identifying specific training gaps in areas such as learning disabilities (LD), neurodiversity, and LGBTQI inclusion. These insights have informed the refinement of training content and delivery methods. School outreach activities have begun to foster stronger connections between education and health services, with early feedback suggesting improved staff confidence in addressing sensitive topics with young people.	opportunities between Social Work and Sexual Health teams to promote integrated practice. The Speakeasy model for parent and carer training will be expanded to support intergenerational learning and communication. Outreach efforts will continue, with a focus on evaluating the impact of new training strategies and engagement models. A continuous improvement approach will be adopted, using feedback and outcome data to refine training content, delivery formats, and support mechanisms. Emphasis will also be placed on ensuring that training is inclusive, trauma-informed, and responsive to the diverse needs of the workforce and the communities they serve.
Increasing the confidence, competence and knowledge of parents and carers to engage with children and young people about Healthy Relationships and Substance Use.	Develop and deliver resources, information, support and training to parents and carers.	A suite of targeted resources and training opportunities was developed and disseminated to support parents and carers in navigating conversations around healthy relationships, sexual health, and substance use. Key initiatives included the wide distribution of the Chat.scot resource, which offers structured, age-appropriate guidance for initiating and sustaining meaningful dialogue with children and young people. The TURAS Sexual Health	There has been a marked increase in the uptake and visibility of the Chat.scot resource among parent networks and community partners, indicating strong engagement and relevance. Early user feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with many parents reporting increased confidence in initiating conversations with their children on topics	The next phase will focus on evaluating the reach, accessibility, and effectiveness of current resources through structured parent/carer feedback and engagement metrics. Training opportunities will be expanded using the Speakeasy model and other evidence-based approaches to support diverse learning needs. New materials will be developed to address the

		Module was actively promoted to enhance parental understanding and confidence in addressing sensitive topics. These tools were strategically integrated into broader Health and Wellbeing (HWB) communication campaigns to ensure consistency of messaging across services and platforms. Multi-agency collaboration underpinned the delivery of these initiatives, ensuring alignment with school-based education and community engagement efforts.	previously considered challenging. The integration of these resources into school and community settings has fostered a more cohesive approach to health education. Multi-agency partners have expressed strong support for the continued dissemination of these tools, recognising their value in complementing formal education and reinforcing key messages at home.	specific needs of care-experienced families, neurodiverse children, and other underrepresented groups. Strengthening partnerships with schools, community organisations, and health services will be a priority to embed parent/carer engagement into local delivery plans and ensure a sustainable, inclusive approach to family-based health education.
Ensuring safety health and wellbeing of children and young people who experience alcohol or drug related hospital admissions	Ensuring safety health and wellbeing of children and young people who experience alcohol or drug related hospital admissions	A multi-pronged approach was implemented to enhance the support available to children and young people affected by substance use, with a focus on early intervention, education, and coordinated care. A direct referral pathway was developed in collaboration with Clued Up and Children's Wellbeing Liaison Nurses (CWLN), enabling streamlined access to community-based services through a QR code system. This was complemented by the piloting of a revised education model in three secondary schools, which included teacher Continuing Professional Development (CPD), pupil-focused sessions, and parent/carer workshops. These efforts were aligned with national strategy and tailored to local needs. Additionally, over 1,400 pupils participated in the Smoke Factor and Smoke Free Class programmes, and the Young People	Initial data from the hospital liaison pathway indicates an average of three referrals per month, with a 71% engagement rate—most of whom were previously unknown to services. This demonstrates the pathway's effectiveness in reaching vulnerable young people at critical moments. Referrals were received from all seven localities, with a notable proportion involving 18-year-olds and school-aged children, highlighting the broad reach of the initiative. The educational pilot reached over 250 pupils and received positive feedback from both staff and students, with teachers reporting increased confidence in delivering substance use education.	The focus for the coming year will be on evaluating the long-term outcomes for young people referred through the hospital liaison pathway, including wellbeing indicators and progress toward personal goals. The planning group will continue to meet bi-monthly to monitor implementation, address emerging challenges, and ensure the pathway remains responsive and effective. Consideration will be given to expanding the model to include young adults over 18, while maintaining a person-centred, choice-based approach. The educational model will be refined based on pilot feedback, with potential for wider rollout. Continued collaboration with Clued Up, CWLN, and education partners



		<p>Tobacco and Vaping Interest Group (YPTViG) was launched to strengthen youth-led prevention and cessation initiatives.</p>	<p>Furthermore, 65% of pupils demonstrated improved understanding of the risks associated with substance use. The creation of an e-referral pathway and alignment with national campaigns further enhanced the accessibility and visibility of support services.</p>	<p>will be essential to embed these practices sustainably and ensure that all young people affected by substance use receive timely, compassionate, and coordinated support.</p> <p>A Vulnerable Young Persons Protocol for those aged 16 or 17, (or a young person under the age of 26 who has a statutory entitlement to after-care services) has been developed by the Guidance Implementation Workforce Development Group in conjunction with colleagues in Adult Support and Protection to meet the requirements of the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2021, updated 2023). This multi-agency protocol aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a clear mechanism for practitioners to refer children and young people exposed to vulnerable and dangerous situations to the appropriate risk management process</li> <li>• Support practitioners to select the most appropriate pathway to safeguard the child or young person.</li> </ul>
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Understanding and responding to children and young people who are Care experienced or in need of additional support in relation to Healthy Relationships and Substance use (Including parental/ carer substance use)	Explore the needs of care experienced receiving additional support in relation to healthy relationships and substance use.	<p>Initial planning has commenced to better understand and address the unique needs of care-experienced children and young people, particularly in the context of healthy relationships and substance use, including parental or carer substance use. A targeted engagement strategy is being developed to ensure that the voices of care-experienced young people are central to service design. Early collaboration between Social Work and Sexual Health Services has led to the development of shared learning sessions aimed at fostering a more integrated and trauma-informed approach. These sessions are intended to build mutual understanding, improve referral pathways, and ensure that support is both accessible and relevant to the lived experiences of this group.</p> <p>There is increased support offered to care experience children and young people by the School Nursing service with an initial health needs assessment offered within 28 days of becoming looked after and an annual health and wellbeing assessment now offered with ongoing direct access to the service which provides the opportunity of identifying unmet needs and providing targeted support. Family Nurse partnership has extended their programme offer to affirm the importance of tailoring services to the specific needs of care-experienced young people, and there</p>	While still in the early stages, the initiative has demonstrated a strong commitment to co-production and inclusive practice. Stakeholder feedback has affirmed the importance of tailoring services to the specific needs of care-experienced young people, and there is growing momentum among partners to embed this approach. The groundwork laid through inter-agency collaboration has created a foundation for more responsive and coordinated support. The engagement strategy has been positively received, with early indications of increased interest from both practitioners and young people in shaping future service delivery.	The next phase will focus on delivering a structured programme of shared professional learning, informed by the insights gathered during the engagement phase. Findings will be used to co-design targeted interventions and adapt existing services to better meet the needs of care-experienced young people. Mechanisms will be established to monitor uptake, satisfaction, and outcomes, ensuring that services are both effective and equitable. Continued emphasis will be placed on building trusting relationships, reducing stigma, and ensuring that all young people—regardless of background—have access to safe, supportive, and empowering environments in which to learn about and discuss healthy relationships and substance use.
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		<p>is growing momentum among partners to embed this approach. The groundwork laid through inter-agency collaboration has created a foundation for more responsive and coordinated support. The engagement strategy has been positively received, with early indications of increased interest from both practitioners and young people in shaping future service delivery. engagement phase. Findings will be used to co-design targeted interventions and adapt existing services to better meet the needs of care-experienced young people. Mechanisms will be established to monitor uptake, satisfaction, and outcomes, ensuring that services are both effective and equitable. Continued emphasis will be placed on building trusting relationships, reducing stigma, and ensuring that all young people—regardless of background—have access to safe, supportive, and empowering environments in which to learn about and discuss healthy relationships and substance use.</p> <p>include all care experienced first time mothers under 26 years old which provides the opportunity of identifying unmet needs and providing targeted support</p>		
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# Our Progress in better Supporting Families

## Context

The Whole Family Wellbeing Fund is being used in Fife as the basis for improving support for families. This work is overseen by the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund Leadership Group, which includes representation from partners within Fife Children's Services Partnership.

### *The first Whole Family Wellbeing Review (2023-24)*

Initially, the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund supported a range of projects developed by partners, to support improvement across all aspects of Whole Family Wellbeing. These projects sought to strengthen and extend the impact of existing approaches, or to support improvement work to address specific, known gaps or challenges in current practice, support or provision.

An initial review of Whole Family Wellbeing Fund improvement work was undertaken during 2023-24. This sought to assess how well our approach met the key criterion for Whole Family Wellbeing Funding: **to support transformational change across the system to deliver whole family support which is sustainable and focused on earlier intervention and support**. An overview of this initial Whole Family Wellbeing Review – including its findings and recommendations – can be found in the *Fife Children's Services Annual Report 2023-24*.

### *The second Whole Family Wellbeing Review (2024-25)*

A second round of review meetings has been undertaken during 2024-25, to further review progress with ongoing projects in Fife supported by the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund. This cycle of review meetings has sought: to ensure that learning and good practice achieved from initial WFW funded projects are integrated into our services; and, to support ongoing improvement in the partnership's ways of working.

### *Key developments during 2024-25*

The following page outlines the updated drivers that have been adopted during 2024-25 as a focus for further improvement of family support in Fife. Appendix 1 to this Annual Report provides a more detailed overview of the work progressed within projects funded by the Whole Family Wellbeing Review over the past year.

The initial Whole Family Wellbeing Review also highlighted a number of key recommendations to improve wider children's services partnership working, which were accepted by Children in Fife. Progress made with improvement actions to address these recommendations during 2024-25 can be found in section 4 of this report.

### **The updated drivers for WFW**

The comprehensive review undertaken of all funded work during 2024-25 supported an evidence base which has informed 4 main priorities for WFW in 2025-26. These are:

#### ***Early help and support***

Evaluation of evidence group work and earlier support to families at a community level has informed this priority resulting in a large-scale review of the Children & Families Social Work and Family Support Teams. This has culminated in the development of 7 Early Help and Support Teams, in the 7 localities across Fife with a focus on driving forward early help and support as part of an integrated approach. The need to deliver responsive and agile services to households, children, young people and families is also at the centre of the No Wrong Door developments ensuring a seamless pathway to access support. The WFW driver of better access and availability of support is central to early help and support developments, and this will be a key priority for 2025-26.

#### ***Workforce development, culture and leadership***

A confident and competent workforce delivering effective services through a shared set of values and principles is a key priority supporting a learning organisation approach in Fife. The Practice development sessions delivered across the 7 localities have been subject to an independent evaluation which has supported thinking in terms of next steps to further develop a collaborative approach to delivery of support to families. A *Community of Practice* model is being proposed which will focus on early help and support, engage local leaders to identify and support learning needs and further develop practice, ultimately to improve the experience and outcomes for CYP&F.

#### ***Commissioning of whole family support services***

The importance of a whole system approach is central to WFW, and this considers the approach to commissioning based on best practice frameworks. Strategic commissioning of whole family support will be subject to a review in 2025 to ensure services are aligned and in place to enhance the redesigned model in the C&F Social Work Service and across the wider system. This will be an opportunity to review impact, review key performance indicators and support the objective of an effective and sustainable model.

#### ***Data, Performance and use of quality improvement methodology***

Measuring the impact of support across the system is essential to ensure the right services and in place and delivery mechanisms effective. Work is underway to capture a high-level system view to support further analysis as well as the development of a dashboard for early help and support. The importance of applying rigour through the use of a range of quality improvement tools has been identified as a priority for 2025-26.

# Our Progress in improving Engagement

## Context

The **Children's Rights Group** oversees implementation of the improvement plan for Engagement. It is a partnership group that oversees work to promote children's rights and the partnership's approach to participation and engagement.

The table below provides an update on progress in implementing the improvement plan for Engagement, as set out in the Fife Children's Services Plan 2023-26:

What is the key issue/challenge?	What do we need to do to address this?	Summary of progress made during period, including evidence of progress April 2024 - March 2025	Next steps for year 2025-26
Develop a consistent approach to participation and engagement with children and young people.	Jointly agree the principles of effective engagement and participation.  Create an overview of engagement and participation across services.	Update Children's Services Participation and Engagement framework in line with new legislative requirements.  Begun to map existing groups/services that engage with children and young people across Fife in progress.	Support the workforce to embed Children Services participation and engagement framework into practice.  Participation and Engagement subgroup to complete mapping of ways of engaging with children and young people across Fife.  Streamline Participation & Engagement activity and minimise duplication in order to build on existing work and avoid overburdening our children and young people.
Ensure that there are active and meaningful engagement of children and young people in decisions that affect them and the planning and delivery of services across Fife.	Support the framework devised by young people during the Children's Services Plan 2021-23	In line with above action, refreshed Participation and Engagement Framework has been created to support the impact and outcome of participation and engagement approaches.	Support the workforce to embed Children Services participation and engagement framework into practice.

Ensuring that we work with – and support – young people in a rights-based way.	<p>Raise awareness of UNCRC across wider partnership services</p> <p><i>(Delivery Group: Workforce Development Subgroup)</i></p>	<p>We carried out a workforce questionnaire.</p> <p>We have created a Children's Rights section in Children in Fife website, to be populated with relevant materials.</p> <p>Multiagency training sessions on the effective engagement of children and young people delivered.</p>	<p>Ensure Children's Rights section of Children in Fife website is up to date and relevant.</p> <p>We will support workforce development to embed effective engagement with children and young people into everyday practice.</p>
	<p>Promote a rights-based approach through the introduction of a Children's Rights Charter.</p> <p><i>(Delivery Group: To be agreed)</i></p>	<p>We engaged with children and young people to support the development of a children's rights Charter in Fife (supported by Corra funding).</p> <p>Children's Rights charter visual created.</p>	<p>Agree a unified approach to upholding and promoting children's rights across the partnership.</p> <p>Create an accreditation framework to measure maturity of participation and engagement in single agencies, based on the P+E Framework + CRWIAs.</p>
	<p>Develop Guidance for creating child friendly complaints processes.</p> <p><i>(Delivery Group: Child Friendly Complaints Subgroup)</i></p>	<p>We have developed a set of good practice guidelines and overarching principles to support child-friendly complaints handling.</p> <p>Several individual agencies have already implemented their own child-friendly complaints processes. Within Education, consultation is underway to design and streamline a consistent approach.</p>	<p>Continue building understanding of child-friendly complaints by learning from best practice and embedding it into everyday culture.</p> <p>Work in partnership with compliance teams to ensure consistent and effective approaches across all services.</p>
	<p>Ensure that we fulfil our requirement to report progress to the Scottish Government.</p> <p><i>(Delivery Group: Children's Right Strategic Oversight Group).</i></p>	<p>Evidence of impact and progress is being gathered continuously to support regular reporting on Children's Rights in Fife.</p>	<p>Ensure all partnership reporting obligations to the Scottish Government are met in 2026.</p> <p>Continue to develop and expand the use of EQIAs and CRWIAs to demonstrate how children's rights are being embedded across the partnership.</p>



# Our Progress in improving Equity and Equality

## Context

A review of groups was undertaken during 2024-25 to better focus work across the partnership addressing disadvantage and inequality. This has resulted in the consolidation of a number of existing groups into a **Poverty and Equalities** Group.

The Poverty and Equalities Group will provide support and challenge to the Children's Services Data Group during the development of the **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)** for the Fife Children's Services Plan 2026-29. This will help to ensure that:

- The JSNA gathers and analyses current evidence about all forms of disadvantage and vulnerability for children. This will be a key element in *improving the evidence base relating to poverty and crisis*, as it affects children and young people in Fife.
- The impact of work across the partnership to support all relevant national policies is understood and evidenced, and links to outcomes and measures within the National Performance Framework are appropriately and explicitly made.
- Ongoing developments to improve data for the Fife Children's Services Partnership support the ability to identify, track and monitor outcomes for – and the impact of improvement work with – all key groups of disadvantaged and vulnerable children.

The Poverty and Equalities Group will maintain a strategic overview of work across the Children's Services Partnership to *Support the Next Generation to Thrive*, by reducing barriers to positive life chances faced by disadvantaged and vulnerable young people. This work aligns with Part C of the national tackling child poverty delivery plan, *Best Start, Bright Futures*.

## Supporting the next generation to thrive (Part C)

Embedding of The **Fife Neurodevelopmental Pathway** has continued over the past year. This is a multi-agency, single point of access assessment pathway, which is helping to strengthen support for children where there are concerns about neurodevelopment.

As part of its work to *Support the Next Generation to Thrive*, the Poverty and Equalities Group will also:

- Ensure that the impact of improvement work to better *Support the Next Generation to Thrive* is clearly set out and reported on within the Local Child Poverty Action Report for Fife.
- Support the work of the *Tackling Poverty and Preventing Crisis Board* within the wider Fife Partnership, to ensure that the overarching **Plan for Fife** can achieve maximum impact across Fife's local communities.

As part of its work to support the *Tackling Poverty and Preventing Crisis Board* within the wider Fife Partnership, the Children's Services Partnership also supports work to address Parts A and B of the national tackling child poverty delivery plan, *Best Start, Bright Futures*. A summary of this work is given below. A fuller account will be included in the *Fife Local Child Poverty Report 2024-25*.

### *Providing the opportunities and integrated support parents need to enter, sustain and progress in work (Part A)*

- The **Early Adopter Community (EAC) Project** in Levenmouth is expanding childcare support. Methilhill Community Children's Initiative launched additional after-school club places in November 2024.

### *Maximising the support available for families to live dignified lives and meet their basic needs (Part B)*

- **Support & Connect** continues to assist families referred by Education, Social Work, and Family Support. **Boosting Budgets** supported 55 families, delivering 104 sessions, with a total financial gain of £103,249.27.
- The **Cost of the School Day (CoSD)** initiative is embedded in all schools' improvement plans. Schools are addressing poverty-related challenges through income maximisation, dignified food access, and support for school trips.
- Efforts to address **homelessness among school-aged learners** continues to progress, with strong collaboration between housing and education. A pilot project in Dunfermline aims to improve schools' awareness of homeless families.
- The first **Fife Education Welfare Network** meeting was held in January with 70 attendees, including Poverty Leads and Welfare Support staff. The network provides a central resource for school staff to access welfare and benefits support, share best practices, and build local connections.

### *Next Steps*

A review is ongoing – with the wider Fife Partnership – of arrangements to improve the alignment and governance of Children's Services Planning, as a key element of the Plan for Fife (Fife's Local Outcomes Improvement Plan). The work of the Poverty and Equalities group will support a clearer, more comprehensive description of the collective contribution of children's, adults and community-based services to improving outcomes for children, young people and families in Fife. This will help to **better meet criterion 6 of the Statutory Guidance for Children's Services Planning**.

# Section 3 –our overarching approach to meeting need

## Our approach to implementing GIRFEC



The Child Wellbeing Pathway is Fife's multi-agency process in place across the Children's Services Partnership to support implementation of Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC). The Pathway was refreshed in 2023-24 to take account of new national GIRFEC guidance and also national Child Protection Guidance.

What is the key issue/ challenge?	What do we need to do to address this?	Summary of progress made during period April 2024 - March 2025	Evidence of progress and impact in 2024-25	Next steps for year 2025-26
Ensuring that the Child Wellbeing Pathway provides an effective basis for our GIRFEC approach	Ensure all staff have clear guidance on the use of the Child Wellbeing Pathway	The Children's Services Partnership has refreshed and relaunched its Children in Fife website ( <a href="https://children.fife.scot/">https://children.fife.scot/</a> ). The website and CWP were an initial focus for a revised communications strategy, implemented during 2024/25.	<p>The Animate evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirmed the importance of multi-agency workforce development opportunities. These were found to provide opportunities to break down barriers, understand roles and remits and promote collaborative working.</li> <li>• Proposed the establishment of a <i>Community of Practice</i> within each local area, providing an opportunity: to strengthen partnership connections at a local level; and, to improve understanding of roles and remits across partners.</li> <li>• Reaffirmed the need for clear leadership across all partners, to convey a clear message to the workforce about the importance of partnership working.</li> </ul>	<p>A model of local area <i>Communities of Practice</i> will be developed during the period 2025-27. This will support better local area working and identify the Practice Development needs of teams across Fife's seven local areas.</p> <p>A "proof of concept" Whole System Framework is being designed, to better describe core partnership processes and to provide a basis for understanding the journey of children through key processes and services. This will be reviewed in 2025-26, with the aim of launching a pilot version to support implementation of the Fife Children's Services Plan 2026-29.</p>
	Workforce development on use of the Child Wellbeing Pathway	Multi-agency Practice Development Sessions have been delivered over the course of 2024-25. A review was commissioned from external consultants (Animate), to assess the impact of the sessions.		
	Ensure that we are recording use of the CWP and are able to monitor the journey of children	Better understanding the journey of children and young people through partnership services is a key focus for ongoing work to develop a Whole System Framework for the Children's Services Partnership.		

# Our approach to Delivering the Promise

Work on Delivering the Promise in Fife is overseen by Children in Fife, the governance group for the Fife Children's Services Partnership. The table below provides a summary overview of progress in addressing the key actions identified to strengthen Fife's approach in the Fife Children's Services Plan 2023-26. The following pages provide a more detailed review of ongoing work.



What is the key issue/ challenge?	What do we need to do to address this?	Summary of progress made during period April 2024 - March 2025	Evidence of progress and impact in 2024-25	Next steps for year 2025-26
Keeping The Promise in Fife	<p>Ongoing role of Promise in Fife Lead Officer, to provide a strategic lead for The Promise and to coordinate with other aspects of children's services.</p> <p>Awareness of the Promise and its importance to the work of all in Fife Partnership – as corporate parents</p>	<p>A lead office for the Promise role remains active in Fife and agreed until March 2026.</p> <p>The lead officer has taken a lead in developing a more coordinated approach to the Promise across the Children's Services Partnership and the Fife Corporate Parenting Board.</p> <p>Corporate Parenting Plan developed.</p>	<p>New Lead Officer appointed in April 2025</p> <p>Corporate Parenting Plan has identified 7 key areas of focus for the period 2024 - 2027</p>	<p>Embedding the Children's Right Charter across the Partnership.</p> <p>Develop systems for participation and co-design to ensure change will have been influenced by voices of care experienced young people.</p> <p>Route map development and action taken in relation to The Promise Scotland 24 – 30 plan.</p> <p>Establishment of a communication Strategy for The Promise.</p>
	Data for the Promise, Corporate Parenting Board	The Promise Lead Officer has undertaken initial work to collate and improve the reporting of key data for care experienced young people in Fife.	Children in Fife and the Fife Corporate Parenting Board are receiving regular and structured updates on key data.	Further development of Data streams that show the whole person capturing experiences of children, young people and families.

## Fife Corporate Parenting Board

The work of Fife Corporate Parenting Board (FCPB) is to oversee 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.

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.

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.

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. The school nursing service have developed a self-referral tool for young people aged 12- 19 through a QR code. The redesign of Children and Families Social work to Early help and support teams and Enhanced teams which aim to deliver services that are accessible at the right time, build capacity and resilience in families, are co-produced, reduce the need for crisis intervention, are budget efficient and have a skilled and confident workforce with a “can do” approach.

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 Next Turn in Children, Families and Justice social work services.

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.

## Strategic aims

The Children & Families Belonging to Fife (B2F) strategy and our Children's Services Plan are strongly aligned to the key building blocks of The Promise and continue to be successful in addressing the balance of care.

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.

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.

## Corporate Parenting Plan

To deliver on the FCPB framework, the Board has developed a new Corporate Parenting Plan 2024 – 2027. 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.



## Voice of the Child

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. Work is underway through the Children's Rights Participation and Engagement Subgroup to map all existing channels of participation to hear the voices of young people.

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.

The Children's Rights agenda and implementation of UNCRC in Fife within Fife with 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. 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.

The FCPB continues to develop a 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.

## Section 4 – improving our strategic approach

The initial review of Whole Family Wellbeing, undertaken in 2023-24, highlighted a number of areas for improvement that were relevant to wider partnership working across children's services. Improvement actions were identified by Children in Fife to address these issues, which were outlined in Section 4 of the *Fife Children's Services Annual Report 2023-24*. This section of the report summarises the steps taken during 2024-25 to implement immediate improvement actions. It also outlines the planned next steps to progress longer term improvement actions during 2025-26.

### Immediate improvement actions taken during 2024-25

A **Lead Performance Analyst for Children's Services** has been recruited – with support from the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund – to provide the capacity needed to improve the partnership's use of data. The additional capacity and skills provided by this post have been instrumental to enable work undertaken during 2024-25 to:

- Scope, plan and begin initial evidence gathering for a *Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)* of children's services. This will inform the choice of improvement priorities and measures of impact for the Fife Children's Services Plan 2026-29. The scope of the JSNA includes: a clear mapping of evidence relating to national policies and related outcomes within the National Performance Framework (**to better meet criterion 2 of the Statutory Guidance for Children's Services Planning**); an overview of how resources are being used to meet current needs and address improvement priorities across the Children's Services Partnership (**to meet criterion 12 of the Statutory Guidance**).
- Improve *core data processes*, including the gathering and reporting of data. This work will be further developed during 2025-26, as further work is undertaken with members of the Children's Services Data Group to finalise the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.
- Undertake scoping and initial development work for a "*whole system*" framework of Fife children's services. This work has established a number of systems maps for core partnership processes and services. These will be used to develop and pilot a whole-system framework during 2025-26, which will be used to support implementation of the Fife Children's Services Plan 2026-29.

Support from the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund has also enabled the establishment of a post of **Policy Officer for Children's Services**. This post will build on the model provided by the Whole Family Wellbeing Review, to strengthen the capacity available for structured, strategic self-evaluation of improvement actions across all aspects of Children's Services. Recruitment to this post is currently in progress.



## Longer-term improvement actions

Work has progressed during 2024-25 to improve the partnership's **approach to strategic improvement** with the aim of:

- Ensuring that expertise in **quality improvement** approaches is used to better identify and support issues of strategic or system-level importance, with a view to structured scale and spread of improvement.
- Improving our **strategic planning**, to ensure that improvement actions are more clearly supported by a well formulated and testable proposition (i.e., a theory of change) with appropriate measures to evidence the short-, medium- and longer-term impact of improvement work.

## Developing a more strategic use of Quality Improvement methodology

During the past year a pilot programme has been run by the Fife CYPIC group, supported by a faculty of four ScIL trained improvement leaders from across the partnership. The programme was targeted at inter-agency partnership work, in order to identify and support improvement work with the potential to achieve a strategic impact. The successful project teams undertook a QI training programme, which concluded in June 2025. The projects addressed a range of challenges, but reflected themes strongly linked with the key challenges facing the partnership (including the impact of poverty, improving the wellbeing of young people, and strengthening the voice of children and young people in service design).

It is intended to run a second cohort of the programme later in 2025-26, to identify and support improvement projects that have the potential to make a significant contribution to the improvement priorities in the *Fife Children's Services Plan 2026-29*, leading to scale and spread of improvement. These will be identified by the strategic leads developing the improvement actions for the 2026-29 Plan.

## Improving our strategic planning

An action plan has been agreed by the Children in Fife Governance Group to: develop a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Fife Children's Services; and, update the Fife Children's Services Plan for 2026-29. A key element of this planned work is a more rigorous cycle of strategic self-evaluation during 2025-26 – supported through the capacity provided by the Policy Officer for Children's Services – which will provide an enhanced level of support and challenge for strategic leads for the partnership's current improvement priorities. This will aim to ensure that:

- Learning from current improvement planning can be used to improve the strategic approach to – and system level impact achieved by – the *Fife Children's Services Plan 2026-29*.
- Improvement actions in the 2026-29 Plan are more clearly supported by a well formulated and testable proposition (i.e., a theory of change) with appropriate measures to evidence the short-, medium- and longer-term impact of improvement work.







# Section 5 – Outcomes for Children and Young People

The **Fife Wellbeing Indicator Set** provides an overview of key outcomes for children and young people in Fife. The table below provides a 5-year trend view of current outcomes. Baseline data for the current children's services plan is highlighted in orange.

Measure		Fife							Benchmark <i>(national unless stated otherwise)</i>						Trend vs benchmark
		2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	5 year trend	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	
	Context														
FWI 1	Children in Low Income Family Measure (CILIF) - relative poverty (aged under 16)	19.4%	22.2%	18.5%	19.1%	19.7%	18.0%		16.8%	19.5%	16.8%	16.9%	17.8%	16.3%	
FWI 2	Percentage of P5-S6 children who agree that their local area is a good place to live	Source: Fife Health & Wellbeing Survey <i>(baseline survey undertaken March 2022/April 2023)</i>				60.9%	62.3%		Source: National HWB Census 2021-22			64.5%	N/A	N/A	
	Safe														
FWI 3	Children on the Child Protection Register per 10,000 aged 0-17	31.8	22.9	23.9	21.4	13.9	21.0		28.0	28.8	23.2	22.3	20.8	18.7	
	(Number on CPR)	(205 CPR)	(147 CPR)	(152 CPR)	(136 CPR)	(97 CPR)	(130 CPR)		(2580 CPR)	(2641 CPR)	(2119 CPR)	(2031 CPR)	(2094 CPR)	(2129 CPR)	
FWI 4	LAC per 1,000 CYP aged 0-17	13.0	12.8	11.4	10.4	10.6	10.4		13.9	14.1	12.9	12.3	12.1	11.7	
	(Number of LAC)	(935 LAC)	(919 LAC)	(817 LAC)	(748 LAC)	(740 LAC)	(727 LAC)		(14262 LAC)	(14458 LAC)	(13255 LAC)	(12596 LAC)	(12206 LAC)	(11844 LAC)	
FWI 5	Measures of system success, relating to the impact of scaffolding to support prevention	To be developed							To be developed						

	Healthy														
FWI 6	% of pregnancies where women reported being current smokers at ante-natal	18.0%	19.5%	18.8%	16.6%	15.6%	13.7%		15.2%	14.6%	13.9%	13.1%	11.9%	11.0%	
FWI 7	Average Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing (WEMWBS) Score for S2-S6 children	Source: Fife Health & Wellbeing Survey (baseline survey undertaken March 2022April 2023)				43.8	N/A		Source: National HWB Census 2021-22			45.3	N/A	N/A	
FWI 8	Referral to CAMHS as a rate per 1000 people aged 0 to 17 years	34.2	40.9	38.1	46.9	39.9	39.8		34.7	33.9	28.1	36.7	37.6	36.2	
FWI 9	% babies being exclusively breastfed at 6-8 weeks	29.6%	30.6%	30.7%	30.9%	29.5%	30.9%		31.9%	31.6%	32.0%	32.2%	32.0%	32.9%	
FWI 10	% P1 year children with healthy weight	77.9%	75.7%	N/A	77.3%	77.1%	74.7%		76.6%	76%	N/A	75%	77%	77%	
FWI 11	% P1 year children free from obvious dental decay	69.8%	73.2%	N/A	70.9%	69.6%	72.3%		71.6%	72.4%	N/A	73.1%	73.8%	73.9%	
FWI12a	% of S4 pupils who have ever taken illegal drugs, drugs formerly known as legal highs, solvents or prescription drugs that were not prescribed to them	Source: Fife Health & Wellbeing Survey (baseline survey undertaken March 2022April 2023)				11.0%	N/A	-	Source: National HWB Census 2021-22			10.0%	N/A	N/A	
FWI12b	% of S2 pupils who drink alcohol about once-a-week	Source: Fife Health & Wellbeing Survey (baseline survey undertaken March 2022April 2023)				4.4%	N/A	-	Source: National HWB Census 2021-22			2.3%	N/A	N/A	
FWI13a	% of school counselling referrals with the primary reason of: Anxiety	Baseline 2024						29%	-	No benchmark available					
FWI13b	% of school counselling referrals with the primary reason of: School Stress	Baseline 2024						65%	-	No benchmark available					
FWI13c	% of school counselling referrals with the primary reason of: Home Stress	Baseline 2024						63%	-	No benchmark available					

Measure		Fife							Benchmark (national unless stated otherwise)						Trend vs benchmark
		2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	5 year trend	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	
	Active														
FWI14	% of primary & secondary pupils engaging in physical extra-curricular activity	N/A	N/A	N/A	28%	N/A	39%		No benchmark available						
FWI15	Percentage of P1-S6 children participating in community activities (participation in at least one from list)	Source: Fife Health & Wellbeing Survey (baseline survey undertaken March 2022 April 2023)				81%	N/A		Source: National HWB Census 2021-22			81%	N/A	N/A	
	Achieving														
FWI16	Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 children achieving expected CfE levels in literacy	74.2%	N/A	64.6%	68.4%	70.3%	71.1%		72.3%	N/A	66.9%	70.5%	72.7%	73.0%	
FWI17	Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 children achieving expected CfE levels in numeracy	80.2%	N/A	71.3%	74.8%	77.0%	77.3%		79.1%	N/A	74.7%	77.9%	79.6%	80.3%	
FWI18	Percentage of all school leavers in positive destination on leaving school	94.4%	91.9%	93.9%	94.8%	95.3%	95.6%		95.0%	93.3%	95.5%	95.7%	95.9%	95.7%	
	Nurtured														
FWI19	% Early Learning and Childcare settings achieving Care Inspectorate grades of good or better	93.8%	97.5%	98.0%	94.6%	91.0%	91.2%		N/A	N/A	N/A	87.7%	88.5%	88.3%	
FWI20	Data on take up by eligible 2-year-olds of places in Early Learning and Childcare settings	Source: Care Inspectorate Early Learning & Childcare Statistics. Eligible 2-year-olds calculated from 2023.				56%	65.80%		Source: Care Inspectorate Early Learning & Childcare Statistics. Eligible 2-year-olds calculated from 2023.				52.0%	59%	

	Respected and responsible														
FWI21	Self Confidence - % of P5 to S1 pupils who feel confident often or all of the time.	Source: Fife Health & Wellbeing Survey (baseline survey undertaken March 2022April 2023)				48.1%	N/A		Source: National HWB Census 2021-22			50.4%	N/A	N/A	
FWI22	Child voice/rights	To be developed							N/A						
	Included														
FWI23	% of P5-S6 pupils who spend 3 or more hours of their free time on weekdays using electronic devices such as computers, tablets (like iPad) or smart phones	Source: Fife Health & Wellbeing Survey (baseline survey undertaken March 2022April 2023)				66%	N/A		Source: National HWB Census 2021-22			64.1%	N/A	N/A	
FWI24	Number of children in temporary accommodation at 31 March	N/A	343	313	388	533	387		Data source: Service Data Work to be undertaken to scope benchmark						
FWI25	Number of children involved in homeless applications	N/A	1222	1182	1203	1368	1148		Data source: Service Data Work to be undertaken to scope benchmark						



## Section 6. How Our Plan Is Supporting National Policy

The Children & Young People Act 2014 sets out a requirement to deliver services aimed at promoting, supporting and safeguarding the wellbeing of children, young people and their families.

The Act is underpinned by the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**, which were incorporated into Scottish law by the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024. The UNCRC was developed in 1992 and is the most widely adopted human rights treaty globally. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child reports periodically on signatories to determine their progress towards realising rights. Incorporation into domestic law brings stronger accountability in domestic law where breaches may have occurred. It means that public bodies must act compatibly with the UNCRC and give children (those under the age of 18) or those acting on their behalf the right to seek legal redress, and the Children's Commissioner additional powers to act where rights may have been breached.



The policy framework of **Getting It Right For Every Child** is now well embedded across the Fife partnership supported by key local policy frameworks such as the Getting in Right in Fife framework and the Child Wellbeing Pathway which promotes early & proportionate intervention to address wellbeing needs and concerns across the spectrum of need and continuum of support – whether universal, additional or intensive.

The Independent Care review, commissioned in 2017, led to a root and branch review of Scotland's care system resulting in the publication of **The Promise** in 2020. The five foundations of the Promise are central to the new Children's Services plan, reflect the key principles of the Belonging to Fife Strategy and weave across our priorities. They will help to transform our systems, practice and culture, ensuring that:

**Voice:** children are listened to and meaningfully and appropriately involved in decision-making about their care.

**Family:** where children are safe in their families and feel loved they must stay there – and families must be given support together to nurture that love and overcome the difficulties they face.

**Care:** where living with their family is not possible, children must stay with their brothers and sisters where safe to do so and belong to a loving home, staying there for as long as needed.

**People:** children that we care for must be actively supported to develop relationships with people in the workforce and wider community, who in turn must be supported to be compassionate.

**Scaffolding:** children, families and the workforce must be supported by a system that is there when it is needed. The 'scaffolding' of help, support and accountability must be ready and responsive when it is required.



# How Our Plan Supports Strategic Planning of Children's Services

	Main focus of monitoring for outcomes (SHANARRI)	Contribution to key statutory responsibilities and national policy delivery	Statutory Planning & Reporting Responsibility	Main links to wider partnership planning and delivery of related services
<b>Health and Wellbeing Strategy Group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy</li> <li>• Active</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Health Promotion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All health-related planning and reporting responsibilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health &amp; Social Care Partnership</li> <li>• Alcohol and Drugs Partnership</li> </ul>
<b>Equity and Equality Coordination Group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieving</li> <li>• Included</li> <li>• Nurtured</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Poverty</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Child Poverty Action Reporting</li> <li>• Protected Characteristics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan 4 Fife (Tackling Poverty and Crisis Prevention)</li> <li>• Strategic Equity Fund</li> </ul>
<b>Supporting Families Strategy Group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Included</li> <li>• Nurtured</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early Intervention</li> <li>• Whole Family Wellbeing</li> <li>• Family Support</li> <li>• Commissioning Strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole Family Wellbeing Fund</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan 4 Fife (No Wrong Door)</li> <li>• Best Value</li> </ul>
<b>Children in Fife</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe</li> <li>• Nurtured</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevention</li> <li>• GIRFEC</li> <li>• The Promise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children's Services Planning and Reporting</li> <li>• Joint Inspection of Children's Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fife Partnership</li> <li>• Corporate Parenting Board</li> <li>• Child Protection Committee</li> <li>• Chief Officers Public Safety Group (COPS)</li> </ul>
<b>Children's Rights Oversight Group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respected</li> <li>• Responsible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children's Rights</li> <li>• UNCRC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children's Rights Reporting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotion of children's rights across wider partnership services</li> </ul>
<b>Children's Services Data Group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving the range of data available across SHANARRI for key risk groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring alignment with the National Performance Framework</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting a regular cycle of reporting on progress for each improvement priority</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reporting of outcomes for wider strategic planning (e.g., Plan 4 Fife)</li> </ul>

# How Our Plan Promotes Children's Rights

Each key strategic group has oversight of children's rights related to that improvement priority. In addition, the Children's Rights Oversight Group oversees the Partnership's collective responsibility for delivery of the UNCRC.

## Health and Wellbeing Strategy Group

**Article 24:** Every child has the right to the best possible health.

**Article 31:** Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities

**Article 33:** Governments must protect children from taking, making, carrying or selling harmful drugs

**Article 34:** The government should protect children from sexual exploitation



## Equity and Equality Coordination Group

**Article 2:** All children have all these rights, no matter who they are.

**Article 23:** Every child with a disability should enjoy the best possible life in society

**Article 26:** Governments should provide money or other support to help children from poor families.

**Article 28:** Every child has the right to an education.



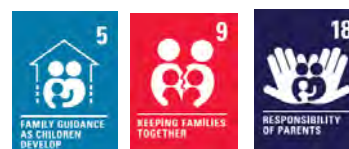
## Supporting Families Strategy Group

**Article 5:** Governments should let families and communities guide

their children so that, as they grow up, they learn to use their rights in the best way.

**Article 9:** Children should not be separated from their parents unless they are not being properly looked after.

**Article 18:** Parents are the main people responsible for bringing up a child.



## Children in Fife

**Article 3:** When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children.

**Article 19:** Governments must protect children from violence, abuse and being neglected

**Article 22:** Children who move from their home country to another country as refugees should get help and protection

**Article 36:** Children have the right to be protected from all other kinds of exploitation.



## Children's Rights Oversight Group

Oversight of the UNCRC



**Article 4:** Governments must do all they can to make sure that every child in their countries can enjoy all rights.



## Article 12:

Children have the right to give their opinions freely on issues that affect them.



## Article 42:

Governments should ensure that everyone knows about children's rights.



# Appendix 1 – Report on the use of the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund

The Whole Family Wellbeing Fund is being used in Fife as the basis for improving support for families. This work is overseen by the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund Leadership Group, which includes representation from partners within Fife Children's Services Partnership.

The Whole Family Wellbeing Fund Leadership Group produce an Annual Report, which sets out in detail how funding for whole family support has been used to improve support for families in Fife across a range of different projects.

A copy of the report for year 3 of the Fund, covering work progressed during 2024-25, is available at:

<https://www.fife.gov.uk/WFWF25>

Whole Family Wellbeing Funding (WFWF) Programme – Year 3  
Guidance & Template for reporting progress as part of annual Children's Services Plans (CSP) reports 2024-2025

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SECTION 1: Activities, WFWF Logic Model Outcomes, and Estimated Budget Allocated


*For all responses, please include clear descriptions of activities, groups involved, sources of evidence.*


**Activity 1:**

Question 1: Activity title and description:

**Family & Parenting Support- Evidence based programmes**  
*This activity is based on the early years Family Nurture Approach (FNA) evaluation and focused on re-engagement with parenting and family learning approaches in early years, primary and secondary school aged children/ young people. This involved coordinating and establishing a framework for training and delivery of evidence-based programmes. Mapping of current family support resources was completed with consideration of the wider 'offer' across the partnership from pre- birth- 18 yrs. Fife has strong evaluative evidence from the FNA with improved outcomes in respect to early literacy and family wellbeing. This work was led by a seconded team, most staff had substantive posts in the Children & Families, Family Support Service. The aim of this activity was to improve access to a range of evidence-based group work across the continuum leading to better outcomes for children, young people and families.*

*The Children & Families service redesign has been informed by this programme of work and has culminated in a new operating model from April 2025 comprising Early Help & Support and Enhanced Children & Families Teams in all 7 localities of Fife. The previous Family Support Service has now been fully integrated into the EH&S Teams and delivery of evidence-based group work will be driven by the 7 Teams in each locality in Fife. Data from the Psychology of Parenting Programme has evidenced good retention rates for Incredible Years groups and improvement in Strength & Difficulties questionnaires. Feedback from parents has also been highly positive.*

 File data update  
Jan - Jul 2024.pdf

 File data update  
Aug - Dec 2024.pdf

Question 2:

a) Which WFWF Logic Model outcome(s) does this activity contribute to? Please indicate the relevant early, intermediate, and long-term outcomes (see updated Logic Model on pgs. 10-13).

b) For each outcome above, what specific qualitative or quantitative evidence from this financial year (2024-2025) shows how these outcomes are progressing? In your response, please describe how this has happened (processes/ mechanisms) and who has been involved (i.e. CSPP staff roles and, where applicable, the types of families receiving support – particularly the six priority family types of the Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan).

*-Better collective awareness of available support – mapping completed and shared across the CSPP*

1

## Appendix 2 – Further Information

### Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD)

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation is the Scottish Government's standard approach to measuring relative levels of disadvantage across Scotland. It provides information about a range of resources and opportunities available to communities at a local level. These relate to: income, employment, education, health, access to services, crime and housing.



SIMD is calculated for defined local, geographical areas called data zones. There are 6,976 datazones across Scotland.

Each of these datazones fall within five families, called quintiles, according to the overall level of multiple deprivation recorded by SIMD for that area. SIMD Quintile 1 (often abbreviated to **SIMD Q1**) refers to the most deprived areas, as measured by SIMD.

Further information can be found at: <https://www.gov.scot/collections/scottish-index-of-multiple-deprivation-2020/>

### United Nations on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

The UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 gained Royal Assent on 16 January 2024 and will be in force from 16 July 2024. The UNCRC was developed in 1992 and is the most widely adopted human rights treaty globally. The UN reports periodically on signatories to determine progress towards realising rights.



Incorporation brings stronger accountability in domestic law where breaches may have occurred. Incorporation means that public bodies must act compatibly with the UNCRC, and gives children, defined as those under the age of 18, or those acting on their behalf the right to seek legal redress, and the Children's Commissioner additional powers to intervene or bring proceedings where rights may have been breached.

Further information can be found at: <https://www.gov.scot/policies/human-rights/childrens-rights/>



## Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA)

The Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (**CRWIA**) is the approach that officials use to provide evidence that proper consideration has been given to the impact that any policy or strategy will have on children and young people up to the age of 18.

Further information can be found at: <https://www.gov.scot/collections/childrens-rights-and-wellbeing-impact-assessments-guidance/>

## GIRFEC

Scotland's national approach for supporting children, is called Getting it right for every child (**GIRFEC**). It supports families by making sure children and young people can receive the right help, at the right time, from the right people. The aim is to help them to grow up feeling loved, safe and respected so that they can realise their full potential.



GIRFEC helps the different agencies, services and teams who form part of the Fife Children's Services Partnership work better together.

Further information can be found at: <https://www.gov.scot/policies/girfec/>

## The Promise

In 2017, the Scottish Government launched an Independent Review of Scotland's Care System (Children and Young People) to help Scotland deliver the 'world's best care system'.



The Promise is responsible for driving the work of change demanded by the findings of the Independent Care Review, following their publication in 2020. It works with all kinds of organisations to support shifts in policy, practice and culture so Scotland can *#KeepThePromise* it made to care experienced infants, children, young people, adults and their families - that every child grows up loved, safe and respected, able to realise their full potential.

Further information can be found at: <https://thepromise.scot/>





## NHS Fife

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Fife Partnership Board Meeting</b>
<b>Meeting date:</b>	<b>5<sup>th</sup> August 2025</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>The Director of Public Health Annual Report 2024</b>
<b>Responsible Executive:</b>	<b>Dr Joy Tomlinson, Director of Public Health</b>
<b>Report Author:</b>	<b>Lucy Denvir, Consultant in Public Health</b> <b>Jo-Anne Valentine, Public Health Manager</b>

### Executive Summary:

- This report covers the Director of Public Health Annual Report 2024 which has been published recently on NHS Fife website.
- The report was consulted on, and written in collaboration with, a wide range of partners and was approved by NHS Fife Board on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2025.
- The subject area of the report focuses on eating well and physical activity in the context of healthy places and spaces. Our staff are part of our community and these subject areas are therefore important for staff health and well-being.
- The report subject areas align well with both national and local direction and priorities including Scotland's Population Health Framework (PHF) which was jointly published by Scottish Government and COSLA on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2025.
- There is a wealth of partnership work at both strategic and operational level already in progress to address these subject areas.
- The recommendations of the report cover the importance of whole systems approaches, a life course approach and links to spatial planning.

The Fife Partnership Board (FPB) is offered the report for information and is invited to feedback any comments.

## 1 Purpose

**This report is presented for:**

- Discussion

**This report relates to:**

- National Health & Wellbeing Outcomes / Care & Wellbeing Portfolio
- NHS Board Strategic Priorities to Improve Health and Well-being

**This report aligns to the following NHS Scotland quality ambition(s):**

- Effective
- Person Centred

## 2 Report summary

### 2.1 Situation

This report covers the Director of Public Health Annual Report for 2024. The FPB is asked to support the themes of healthy eating and physical activity in the context of healthy places and spaces. The FPB is also asked to consider and offer support for areas indicated in the recommendations.

The recommendations broadly relate to three key areas:

- The importance of whole systems approaches in addressing healthy eating and physical activity
- The importance of a life course approach in addressing these areas. This is of particular pertinence in the context of the ageing population and maintaining well-being and independence in later life.
- Utilising spatial planning to address these issues and create healthier places and spaces

### 2.2 Background

The Director of Public Health Annual Report represents the independent professional advocacy and advice of the DPH for improving the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities within our local population.

The content of the DPH report has been developed in consultation and collaboration with key multiagency partners. The final report is currently being widely disseminated and is publicly available following publication. The purpose of now bringing this to the FPB is to raise awareness and seek support for the principles and recommendations contained in the report.

The subject area of this years' DPH report is Eating Well and Physical Activity in the context of Healthy Places and Spaces. This topic aligns with the priority areas set out

within Scotland's Population Health Framework (PHF), *to embed prevention in our systems and improve healthy weight.*

Last year the report focused on the area aligned to national Public Health Priority 2 'A Scotland where we flourish in our early years'. This year the report is aligned to Public Health Priority 6 PHP 6 'A Scotland where we eat well, have a healthy weight and are physically active'. However, in its content the report also acknowledges these areas are closely linked to the places we live, work and play in so is also aligned to Public Health Priority 1 'A Scotland where we live in vibrant, healthy and safe places and communities'.

## 2.3 Assessment

The Scottish Government and COSLA published Scotland's Population Health Framework on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2025. Two of the key drivers for population health that it sets out to address are 'Places and Communities' and 'Healthy Living.' The content of the DPH Annual Report for Fife 2024 therefore aligns with these national population health priorities.

Food and eating have a strong and complex social, environmental and cultural context and meaning. Food and physical activity are both influenced by a huge range factors such as the environment and are closely linked to poverty, deprivation and food insecurity. The national direction acknowledges the current context of access to ultra processed foods that are high in fat / sugar / salt. The impact and burden of non-communicable disease in Scotland and Fife has links to poor diet and inactivity such as obesity and Type II Diabetes. The deterioration in the health of the population will impact on healthcare and the emerging medical and therapeutic options present potential pressures and challenges. As our population ages tackling these issues and enabling our population to live independent and healthier lives into old age will become increasingly important.

Nationally we have seen the publication of National Planning Framework 4. The importance links between spatial planning and public health have become clear. We have seen the development and publication of the Place and Well-being Outcomes and Indicators as a result of this increased awareness. Local development of the LDP 'Fife's Place Plan' provides a key opportunity for partners to influence spatial planning for healthier communities.

Locally Fife has a strong history of partnership working through the 'Plan 4 Fife'. As we emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic partners took the opportunity to review recovery and renewal priorities. In 2021-2022 a series of Leadership Summits and conversations were conducted. Health and Well-being was one theme of these discussions. A key area partners agreed that there was real scope and potential to collaborate on to improve health was physical activity. Partners also agreed that this needed to be set in a context of social connection in our communities and places. The themes of this years' DPH Annual report are a natural progression of this partnership collaboration. As a result of this the Communities and Well-being Partnership has already identified physical activity as a key area to prioritise for added value partnership collaboration. Work has already begun to develop a whole systems approach to physical activity.

There is a wealth of other partnership activity at both strategic and operational level that is already addressing these areas. For example:

- Food4Fife Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029
- Local Transport Strategy for Fife 2023-2023
- LDP 'Fife's Place Plan'
- NHS Fife Greenspace Strategy
- Fife College whole setting approach to health and well-being
- NHS Fife Child Healthy Weight Service
- Fife Sport and Leisure Trust – Musculoskeletal programme
- ADP project with Active Communities
- EATS Rosyth
- Cafe Inc – addressing holiday hunger
- 'Bums off Seats'
- Lynebank Hospital greenspace development
- River Leven Programme 'Growing with the flow'

The report is structured in two sections. Firstly, addressing healthy eating, the report uses the framework identified in the Obesity Action Scotland and University of Edinburgh report 'Local Levers for Diet and Healthy Weight' 2023. This outlines seven areas:

- protect, promote and support breastfeeding and healthy diets for children
- improve uptake of school meals
- strengthening public food procurement and provision standard
- utilising planning to improve food environments
- work with the out of home sector to reduce calories on the menu
- restrict food advertising
- promote and support physical activity

The section on physical activity uses the areas identified by Public Health Scotland's Systems Based Approach to Physical Activity 2022.

- active places of learning
- active places and spaces
- active workplaces
- sport and active recreation
- active travel
- active health and social care systems
- active systems

- communications and public education

In summary the content and structure of the report aligns with both national and local direction. The report also follows a structure that is based on an evidence led approach to addressing the identified issues.

The report finishes offering some more specific recommendations for focused action. These can be found on pages 52-54 of the report. Along with this an indication is provided of where there are current existing strategic alignments and mechanisms whereby these recommendations can be progressed.

This report provides the following Level of Assurance: Moderate, there is extensive evidence about the benefits of healthy eating and physical activity. The barriers to making changes are understood. Achieving sustainable change in these areas in future will be challenging given the complexity of drivers.

	Significant	Moderate	Limited	None
Level		X		
Descriptor	There is robust assurance that the system of control achieves, or will achieve, the purpose that it is designed to deliver. There may be an insignificant amount of residual risk or none at all.	There is sufficient assurance that controls upon which the organisation relies to manage the risk(s) are suitably designed and effectively applied. There remains a moderate amount of residual risk.	There is some assurance from the systems of control in place to manage the risk(s), but there remains a significant amount of residual risk, which requires further action to be taken.	No assurance can be taken from the information that has been provided. There remains a significant amount of residual risk

### 2.3.1 Quality, Patient and Value-Based Health & Care

The content of the report relates to key areas of healthy living and healthy places. These are fundamental to principles of realistic medicine in relation to preventing ill health, promoting independence and contributing to the future sustainability of health and social care services.

### 2.3.2 Workforce

Our workforce is part of our population and communities so the report is relevant for them. In relation to the key areas of healthy eating and physical activity the report also addresses a whole systems approach through key settings including workplaces. There are opportunities to address many of these issues through Community Wealth Building approaches and the Anchor programmes of work.

### 2.3.3 Financial

The subject areas of the report address key areas of population health and well-being, healthy living and independence. Prevention is a key aspect of existing strategies and plans listed above. Prevention opportunities are increasingly important in the light of our ageing population and increased pressures on health and social care service capacity and resources.

### **2.3.4 Risk Assessment / Management**

The subject area of this years' DPH report highlights eating well and being physically active as key areas. These are crucial areas to address both in terms of widening inequalities in health. They are also important in efforts to mitigate the potential risk presented to healthcare resources of increased demand for obesity related medical treatments.

### **2.3.5 Equality and Human Rights, including children's rights, health inequalities and Anchor Institution ambitions**

The broad recommendations of the report include how NHS Fife both as an organisation and a community planning partner can contribute to healthy eating, physical activity and healthy places and spaces through its' role as an employer and an Anchor Institution. Food procurement is one example of this.

### **2.3.6 Climate Emergency & Sustainability Impact**

The DPH report in addressing healthy eating, physical activity and healthy places and spaces will contribute to NHS Fife's climate emergency and sustainability impact. Work such as that addressing our greenspace and active travel plans is already being progressed.

### **2.3.7 Communication, involvement, engagement and consultation**

A wide range of community planning partners at operational level have contributed to the content of the report. The report acknowledges and celebrates the broad range of activities across partners and communities that contribute to this agenda.

### **2.3.8 Route to the Meeting**

The key points identified within report have previously been presented at the following groups:

- NHS Fife Public Health and Wellbeing Committee
- Plan for Fife Leadership Group

The report was endorsed by NHS Fife Board on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2025

## **2.4 Recommendation**

This paper is provided to members of the FPB for:

- **Discussion**

The FPB is invited to note and offer comment for DPH Annual Report 2024. In particular the FPB is asked to consider their support for recommendations which cover broad areas of:

- Food and physical activity need to be addressed taking a whole systems approach and key settings such as workplaces provide great opportunities for this.

- Addressing issues of food and physical activity are important through the whole life course. This is particularly important in the context of our ageing population and maintaining independence and well-being in later life.
- Food and physical activity are inextricably linked to the places and spaces we live, work and play in. Spatial planning and the LDP 'Fife's Place Plan' provides a key opportunity for partners to contribute to making healthier places and communities

### 3 List of appendices

The following appendices are included with this report:

- DPH Annual Report 2024 (As at 20250512)

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# Healthy Eating, Active Living for Everyone

Director of Public Health  
Annual Report 2024





## Acknowledgements

I am grateful to my colleagues within our Public Health Department and our colleagues and partners within Health Promotion Service, Fife Health and Social Care Partnership, Fife Council and the third sector for their significant contributions to this report. We are all part of the Fife public health team, and it is good to see examples of this work throughout the report.

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Published March 2025

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[www.nhsfife.org](http://www.nhsfife.org)

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# Introduction



This report will review what we know about eating healthily and keeping physically active in the Fife context. It will explore, highlight and celebrate the work and progress of partners and communities to address these issues and in particular the potential for place-based approaches to planning and collaborative working to create healthy places and spaces. In each Director of Public Health Report, there is an opportunity to look at the health of the population in Fife and topics where there are new emerging pressures. This report takes as its central theme healthy weight and physical activity. It sets out the opportunities to improve health and wellbeing across the population through preventive actions.

Six national public health priorities were identified in 2018 by the Scottish Government and COSLA.<sup>1</sup> In 2020-21 the Director of Public Health report provided an overview of these Priorities and the actions for each.<sup>2</sup> Last year the Director of Public Health Report for Fife 2023 explored one of these national priorities in detail, 'Children and young people in Fife – the building blocks for health' was aligned with public health priority (PHP) 2 'A Scotland where we flourish in our early years'.<sup>3</sup> The report this year focuses on a different building block for health, PHP 6 'A Scotland where we eat well, have a healthy weight and are physically active'. The importance of having a healthy, balanced diet and being physically active, through all ages and stages in life is well recognised and having a healthy diet and staying physically active supports both physical and mental health.

The public health priorities for Scotland also include PHP 1 'A Scotland where we live in vibrant, healthy and safe places and communities'.<sup>4</sup> How we move and what we eat are fundamental to the sustainability of both human and environmental health. As such healthier food and more movement are part of wider place-making to create healthier environments and circumstances in our communities.

**Dr Joy Tomlinson,**  
**Director of Public Health**

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<sup>1</sup> [Public Health Priorities for Scotland](#)

<sup>2</sup> [NHS Fife Director of Public Health Report 2020-2021](#)

<sup>3</sup> [NHS Fife Director of Public Health Annual Report 2023](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Public Health Priorities for Scotland](#) PHP 1

# Executive Summary

Encouraging our population to eat well and move more are priorities for Fife and Scotland as a whole. Evidence from the Scottish Burden of Disease Study shows us that the health of Fife's population would be improved if everyone were to eat a healthier diet and stay as active as possible. Having a healthy weight and eating a healthy diet significantly reduces the risk of many chronic diseases and poorer health outcomes.

For healthy eating, individual decisions about what we eat are influenced by a range of factors, including our own family and community, affordability and accessibility, and skills and capacity to prepare healthy food.

The early years and childhood establish foundations for healthy eating throughout life. Actions that support and promote breastfeeding where possible and sensitively support all families regardless of feeding method are important in getting a healthy start in life. Providing information and practical techniques can help with healthy food choices and supporting lifelong healthy eating habits. In Fife examples of this include work by Fife Council to encourage uptake of healthy school lunches, and the Café Inc programme providing nutritious meals during school holidays.

There are opportunities to improve the quality and nutrition of food provided through catering and procurement across public and private sectors. Work underway as part of the Food4Fife strategy demonstrates Fife's commitment to do this. The new National Planning Framework 4 provides levers to support a healthy food environment and addressing risks to community wellbeing. There are also opportunities to work supportively with food businesses to encourage healthier approaches.

Movement is essential for life and staying physically active contributes to preventing ill-health and managing disease. Supporting everybody to stay as physically active as possible is something which organisations and people living in Fife can influence and change.

Schools have an important role to play by creating active places of learning so that being physically active is a normal part of our children's lives at playtime, in lessons, afterschool activities and in travel to and from school.

For adults, workplaces can support physical activity. Workplace policies which encourage people to stay active and enable active travel to and from work make a real difference. Wider regional and national travel and transport policies have a significant role in helping people stay active.

Across the lifespan, participation in sports and recreational activities can increase physical activity and support wider wellbeing through social connection. There is significant benefit in encouraging people to make use of outdoor spaces to stay active. In Fife there are a range of high-quality outdoor spaces that partners have developed and maintained and ongoing work such as the Leven Programme, which is supporting use of local natural spaces. Work to address barriers, such as costs and accessibility, will enable all Fifers to benefit.

Health and social care services also have an important role to encourage physical activity and healthy eating. These services engage with a large proportion of our population and can provide information and support about keeping active.

Healthy eating and physical activity are vital for health, however, there remain significant structural barriers for people living in Fife to access a healthy diet and stay physically active as part of their everyday lives. There is a significant opportunity to increase healthy eating and physical activity levels and improve the overall health outcomes of the population in Fife.

# Background

## The National Approach

Focusing on healthy weight and physical activity is in line with national direction. Scotland has stalling improvements in health. Some health indicators are worsening, and health inequalities are widening. The Scottish Government and COSLA are currently developing a 10-year framework for population health.<sup>5</sup> This will have four main drivers within an overall prevention focused system:

- Social and economic factors
- Places and communities
- Healthy living
- Equitable health and care

Increasingly, links are being made between public health and spatial planning. In 2021, the Improvement Service and Public Health Scotland published the briefing 'Place and Wellbeing - Integrating Land Use Planning and Public Health in Scotland' since when there have been further developments of the Place Standard Tool and the Place and Wellbeing Outcomes and Indicators.<sup>6,7,8</sup> The National Planning Framework 4 has also been published.<sup>9</sup> This all provides a firm foundation for partners in Fife to work together on the Local Development Plan (LDP) which presents a significant opportunity to improve health and wellbeing including through the influence local development and the use of land can have on how we move and eat.<sup>10</sup>

In 2022 the Scottish Government passed the Good Food Nation (Scotland) Bill as part of its aspiration to make Scotland a place where people from every walk of life take pride and pleasure in, and benefit from, the food they produce, buy, cook, serve and eat each day.<sup>11</sup> The Act placed a duty on public bodies to produce a Plan including outcomes for health and wellbeing, economic development, education, child poverty and the environment.

Scottish Government's 2024 National Framework for Physical Activity provides a framework for action to improve levels of physical activity at both national and local level which is firmly founded on evidence-based international guidance from the World Health Organization and other global partners as to the approach which is needed to deliver sustainable change.<sup>12</sup>

It recognises that plans and strategies across transport, education, planning and the environment have as great an impact as do those in health or sport in helping to improve the health and wellbeing through increasing levels of physical activity. The document recognises that local delivery is critical to success.

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<sup>5</sup> [Written question and answer: S6W-34287 | Scottish Parliament Website](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Improvement Service 2024: Place and wellbeing: integrating land use planning and public health in Scotland](#)

<sup>7</sup> [The Place Standard tool is a way of assessing places. | Our Place](#)

<sup>8</sup> [Place and Wellbeing Outcomes | Improvement Service](#)

<sup>9</sup> [Scottish Government 2024: National Planning Framework 4](#)

<sup>10</sup> [Local development plan \(FIFEplan\) | Fife Council](#)

<sup>11</sup> [Good Food Nation](#)

<sup>12</sup> [Physical Activity For Health: Scotland's National Framework](#)

## Our Local Fife Approach

Fife has a strong history of partnership working and developed a single 'Plan for Fife' in 2017. As we emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic the plan was reviewed to take into account refreshed priorities for Recovery and Renewal.<sup>13</sup> As part of this a series of 'Leadership Summits' took place during 2021-2022 to allow partners in Fife to engage in focused redesign conversations on key themes, one of which was Health and Wellbeing. Partners agreed that there was real scope and potential to collaborate to improve health through physical activity and food. Partners also agreed that this needed to be set in a context of social connection in our communities and places.

These leadership conversations helped set a local context in which work already underway in a number of areas could gain momentum and flourish. This includes examples such as the 'Food 4 Fife' Strategy 2024, the 'Local Transport Strategy for Fife 2023' and the report 'Our Place – Living in Fife 2023'.<sup>14,15,16</sup>

In 2023 Obesity Action Scotland and The University of Edinburgh published 'Local Levers for Diet and Healthy Weight'.<sup>17</sup> This report will utilise the evidence-based opportunities highlighted by that research as a framework for exploring healthy eating in Fife. It will also use the strategic outcomes outlined in 'A Systems-Based Approach to Physical Activity in Scotland' as a framework for exploring physical activity.<sup>18</sup>

Using guidance offered by the evidence base can help us take an overview of what we are doing and identify areas where moving the focus of our efforts may offer the best opportunities for adding value through collaboration between partners and with communities.

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<sup>13</sup> [OurFife: Recovery and renewal - Plan for Fife 2021-24](#)

<sup>14</sup> [OurFife: Food4Fife](#)

<sup>15</sup> [Fife Council: Local Transport Strategy for Fife](#)

<sup>16</sup> [KnowFife: Our Place: Living in Fife 2023](#)

<sup>17</sup> [Obesity Action Scotland: Local Levers for diet and healthy weight](#)

<sup>18</sup> [Public Health Scotland: A systems-based approach to physical activity in Scotland 2022](#)





**Healthy Eating**



## What We Know

Having a healthy weight and eating a healthy diet can significantly reduce the risk of many chronic diseases and poorer health outcomes. An unhealthy diet, high in salt, sugar and fat, is internationally recognised as one of five main modifiable risk factors for poor health and non-communicable (or chronic) diseases.<sup>19</sup> These include oral health problems, Type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease and cancer.

Obesity, defined as a body-mass index (BMI) equal to or greater than 30, is a risk factor for poor health and many NCDs but is also categorised by the WHO as a ‘complex chronic disease’ caused by interactions of a range of factors including those which are environmental, economic, biological, commercial and social.<sup>20</sup>

Just under one third (32%) of adults in Scotland were living with obesity in 2023 and a further 34% were living with overweight.<sup>21</sup> This was the highest level of obesity reported in the Scottish Health Survey and significantly higher than the 24% reported in 2003. Younger adults (16-24) in Scotland were most likely to have a healthy weight and those age 45-54 were most likely to be living with obesity. Rates of adults living with obesity in the most deprived areas in Scotland have been consistently higher than those in the least deprived areas, in 2023 36% of adults in the most deprived areas were living with obesity compared to 25% in the least deprived areas. Data on adult healthy weight and living with overweight and obesity has not been available for Fife since the COVID-19 pandemic, due to its impact on survey data collection, but prior to this time 32% of adults in Fife in 2016-19 were living with obesity compared to 29% in Scotland.<sup>22</sup>

Among children in Primary 1 in Fife 74.7% were a healthy weight in 2023/24. In the past 10 years levels of healthy weight have fluctuated between 74.7% and 77.9% (Figure 1). The 2023/24 figure was the lowest figure in this time period and was slightly lower than Scotland (76.5%).<sup>23</sup> The percentage of children at risk of obesity in Fife in 2023/24 was 11.2%, this is higher than the figure for Scotland (10.5%). Persistent inequalities are also seen in child healthy weight (Figure 1). For the 10 years shown in Figure 1 a higher percentage of children in the least deprived areas had a healthy weight, 79.5% compared to 71.3% in most deprived areas in 2023/24.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> [Non Communicable Diseases | NCD Alliance](#)

<sup>20</sup> [WHO Obesity and overweight Factsheet](#)

<sup>21</sup> [9 Obesity - The Scottish Health Survey 2023 - volume 1: main report - gov.scot](#)

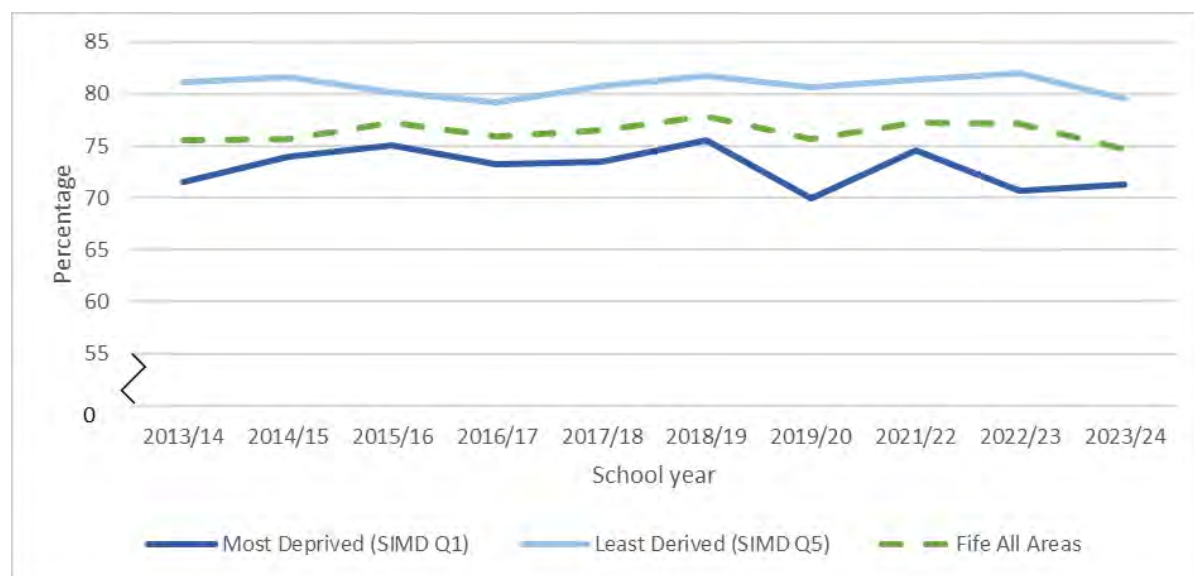
<sup>22</sup> [Scottish Health Survey Dashboard - Rank BMI Obesity 2016-19](#)

<sup>23</sup> [Public Health Scotland: Primary 1 Body Mass Index \(BMI\) statistics Scotland - School year 2023-2024](#) (Data Table 3)

<sup>24</sup> [Public Health Scotland: Primary 1 Body Mass Index \(BMI\) statistics Scotland - School year 2023 to 2024](#) (Data Tables 9 and 10)



**Figure 1: Percentage of healthy weight children in P1 in Fife by Most and Least Deprived SIMD quintile; school year 2013/14 to 2023/24**



Source: PHS (no data available for 2020/21)

Oral health is a fundamental aspect of overall health and wellbeing. A healthy, balanced, low-sugar diet can prevent caries and simultaneously support general health.<sup>25</sup> Dental decay and periodontal disease are very common and largely preventable and are therefore considered widespread public health issues. Dental decay is linked to other diseases, including Type 2 diabetes and obesity, through the common risk factor of diet.

Poor oral health has impacts across the life course. Decay, periodontal diseases, and head and neck cancers are associated with significant morbidity, and mortality for cancers.<sup>26</sup> The national oral health improvement programmes emphasise prevention across the life course and are designed to improve and support oral health “from the cradle to the grave”. Working collaboratively across health and social care can optimise preventive efforts for both oral and general health and promote efficient use of resources.

<sup>25</sup> [Scottish Dental Clinical Effectiveness Programme - Prevention and Management of Dental Caries in Children](#)

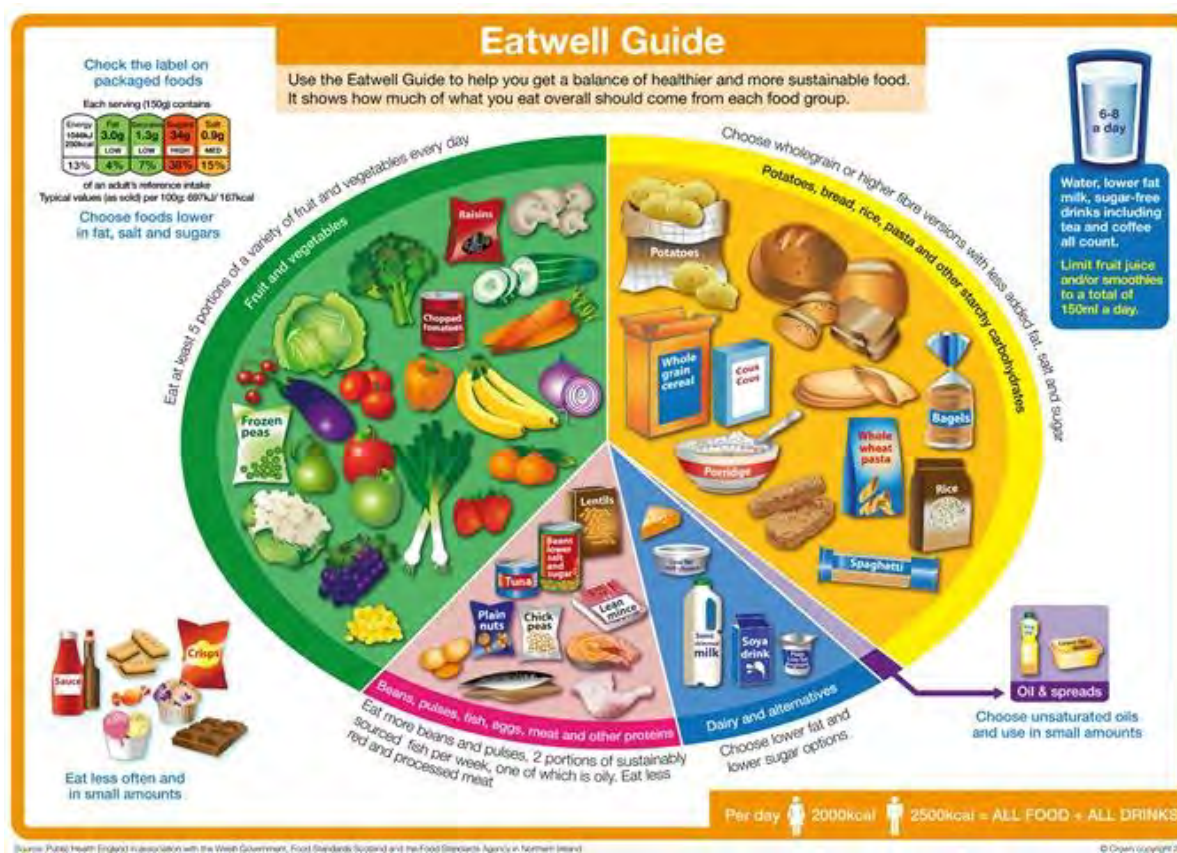
<sup>26</sup> [Oral Health Improvement – Scottish Dental](#)

# What We Eat

NHS Scotland uses the Eatwell Guide which outlines the recommendations for eating a healthy balanced diet. The guide shows the different types of foods and drinks people should consume – and in what proportions – every day or over a week (Figure 2).<sup>27</sup>

Food and eating have strong and complex social, environmental and cultural contexts and meaning. Throughout our lives food is vital for living and growing. From maternal and infant nutrition, school meals and into our adult life and then later lives we have different nutritional needs at different stages. What we eat is influenced by a wide range of issues, including access to affordable healthy food. The food environment we live in now means we have less of a relationship with our food, where it comes from and how it is grown, prepared and cooked.

**Figure 2:** Graphic showing an ideal healthy balanced diet plate split by food types



Source: Eatwell Guide

For some people living in Fife there is food insecurity (the inability to feed oneself and family in socially acceptable ways) influenced by poverty and deprivation with reduced access to healthy, affordable food. Information on levels of food insecurity across Scotland is collected from the Scottish Health Survey.<sup>28</sup> The survey asks whether respondents have been worried about running out of food in the last 12 months. Levels are currently at the highest level since recording began in 2017 (8%) following a sharp increase between 2021 (9%) and 2023 (14%).

<sup>27</sup> [Food and nutrition - Healthy living | NHS inform](#)

<sup>28</sup> [Scottish Health Survey Dashboard](#) (Tab = Trend, Topic = Diet, Indicator = Food insecurity)

Increases have been seen across all age groups, but adults aged 16-44 (20%) were more likely to have experienced food insecurity in 2023 than other age groups. 11% of adults reported that they had eaten less due to lack of money or resources, an increase from the 6-7% reported between 2017 and 2021. In 2023 the proportion of adults (8%) who had run out of food due to lack of money or resources was double the proportion in 2021 (3%).

Across the UK the cost of foods that are part of a healthy balanced diet has increased in the last few years with fruits and vegetables having the greatest cost per 1,000 calories at £11.79. In 2023 more healthy foods were on average greater than double the price of less healthy foods.<sup>29</sup> Food insecure households in the UK were more likely to cut back on purchasing healthy foods, 60% reported cutting back on fruit and 44% reported cutting back on vegetables.<sup>30</sup>

There can be an imbalance between what we need to eat and our actual consumption. Across Scotland we eat a diet that is too high in calories, fat, salt and sugar and too low in the foods that are the main components of the Eatwell Guide.<sup>31</sup> Food Standards Scotland and the Faculty of Public Health have both recently issued position statements acknowledging the role ultra processed foods, which are often cheap and widely available, may play in this as ultra processed foods could account for about half of the energy intake of adults in the UK.<sup>32</sup>

**Across Scotland (22%, 2021) and Fife (21%, 2016-2019) around a fifth of adults' report consuming 5 portions of fruit and vegetables daily.<sup>33</sup>**

The Scottish Health Survey provides information about what adults and children in Scotland eat, particularly levels of fruit and vegetable consumption. The proportion of adults eating the recommended 5 or more portions daily has varied little in more than 10 years.

Figures from 2021 also showed that of adults across Scotland just under half (48%) met the Scottish Dietary Goal for total fat to be no more than 35% of food energy, just over a fifth (22%) met the goal that free sugars account for no more than 5% of total dietary energy and 6% of adults met the goal of consuming 30g of fibre per day.<sup>34</sup>

In 2023, just under a fifth of children (18%) aged 2-15 across Scotland ate five or more portions of fruit and vegetables per day.<sup>35</sup> The 2023 figure was similar to the figures of 20% and 21% reported in 2021 and 2022 but remains higher than figures between 2009 and 2019 (12 to 16%). Younger children were more likely to have eaten five or more portions than older children in 2023, 22% of those aged 2-7 compared with 15% among children aged 8-15.

The proportion of children that did not consume any fruit or vegetables increased with age from 4% amongst those aged 2-4 years and 5-7 years, to 10% amongst 8-10 years old and up to 14% amongst those aged 13-15 years.

In 2021/22 a fifth of children ate biscuits once a day, a significant fall from the 42% in 2008/9. An even greater reduction was seen in the consumption of non-diet soft drinks once a day or more, from 38% in 2008/2009 to 5% in 2021/2022. Fewer children are now eating 2-3 slices of high fibre bread a day and tuna fish once a week (22%) but consumption of oily fish (19%) and white fish (52%) once a week has risen.

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<sup>29</sup> [The Broken Plate 2023 | Food Foundation](#)

<sup>30</sup> [Food Insecurity Tracking | Food Foundation](#)

<sup>31</sup> [Food Standards Scotland: Position paper: Processed and ultra-processed foods](#)

<sup>32</sup> [Faculty of Public Health position paper: ultra processed foods](#)

<sup>33</sup> [Scottish Health Survey Dashboard](#)

<sup>34</sup> [Scottish dietary goals: March 2016 - gov.scot](#)

<sup>35</sup> [The Scottish Health Survey 2023 - volume 1: main report](#) Chapter 5: Diet and Food insecurity

## Barriers to Healthy Eating

Whilst affordability and food insecurity are two of the main the main barriers to healthy eating other barriers to eating healthily include hidden factors such as having the time and confidence and skills to cook from scratch, lack of resources for energy to cook and the means to travel to shops that offer a wide range of foods.<sup>36</sup>

Food choice is key to improving nutrition, good nutrition is key to reducing risk of diet related disease such as obesity, heart disease, stroke, and cancer. Lack of confidence and poor cooking skills and lack of food knowledge contributes to the lower fruit and vegetable intake and higher intake of high fat, high sugar foods processed foods by people in Fife. Improved access to affordable healthy food is crucial to making improvements in what people eat.

Improving confidence and cooking skills and increasing food and health knowledge could therefore be effective strategies to promote healthy eating and reduce prevalence of these diseases. In Fife, we support increasing skills and knowledge of community partners through delivery of Food Champion training (REHIS registered 3-day course). The 3-day training aims to increase participants' confidence, knowledge and understanding of how to plan, deliver and evaluate practical food orientated initiatives and cooking workshops. It gives participants a better understanding of the relationship between food and health, as well as the key messages which helps and encourages people to make changes to their own eating habits and those they work with. To support and encourage the sharing of information around food and eating well, the training also includes key facilitation skills, a mentoring aspect and practical tips and templates to improve programme delivery and development at a local level.



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<sup>36</sup> [The Scottish Diet it needs to change, Food Standards Scotland 2018](#)



## Case Study – Fife College

Fife College takes the health of its students very seriously and maintains that the importance of student's relationship to healthy food, nutrition, and fitness levels, will connect discernibly with their academic and personal success.

Many courses and departments at Fife College centre their studies around this philosophy and the Sports and Fitness department, and Culinary Arts department are not the only facets of the academic contingent to align their curriculum with these philosophies.

Young adults from the ages of 16-24 are particularly vulnerable to developing obesity, especially if they have been obese or overweight in childhood. There is an increase in prevalence of obesity in accordance with an increase in deprivation. In addition, there is an increase in prevalence for obesity for those with learning disabilities. Many of the Fife College social care programmes and supported programmes introduce parts of the course structure in educating students on nutrition, and fitness and wellbeing within their programmes.

The Student Experience department has many activities and resources that highlight the valuable nature of these areas too.

New Wellbeing Hubs have been created and established on the college's Kirkcaldy and Dunfermline campuses allowing the Health & Wellbeing team to accommodate space for many appointments including Nutrition drop-ins, and other ad-hoc activities based on the Health & Wellbeing calendar of events and monthly topics.

Talks during Welcome sessions centre around student support including access to Health & Wellbeing resources on Food, Nutrition and fitness.

The college has extended its hours for the Breakfast Club and Free Lunches for students so that students can eat twice a day for free on all campuses.

There are many events through the year including a Health & Wellbeing Festival and Get Ready for Xmas event which offers students lots of free drinks and snacks from hospitality students, and from Fife College food trucks, as well as many fitness exercises to try and to join in with.



Other meaningful resources include an Autumn Eats Guide which introduces lots of comforting recipes, Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner, that can be made at home and on a budget.

The Health and Wellbeing team have introduced a walking route within Dunfermline Campus to encourage students as well as staff to increase their daily steps. Fife College Wellbeing and Fitness co-ordinator has produced Fitness and Nutrition Diaries, Student gym inductions, individual fitness programmes, fitness classes for staff and students and a "Mindfulness and Movement" booklet about health for mind and body. The gym facilities and fitness classes are free of charge for students and staff to use.

# Food4Fife Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029

The strategy's vision is to create a sustainable food culture for a healthy Fife.<sup>37</sup> Using a 6-pillar food system framework (developed by Sustainable Food Places), the strategy supports work across boundaries and disciplines to address key challenges for food in Fife.

**Figure 3: Food4Fife 6 pillar food systems framework**



## Local Levers for Diet and Healthy Weight

Obesity Action Scotland's 2023 report Local Levers for Diet and Healthy Weight presented seven 'top evidenced-backed opportunities' for obesity prevention.<sup>38</sup>

The local levers include:

- protect and support breastfeeding and healthy diets for children
- improve uptake of school meals
- strengthening public food procurement and provision standards
- utilising planning to improve food environments
- work with the out of home sector to reduce calories on the menu
- restrict food advertising
- promote and support physical activity

There are close connections between the Local Levers and the 6 pillars of the Food4Fife Strategy, particularly the Healthy Food for All, Community Food and the Catering and Procurement pillars. The following sections of this report will look at the first six of these local levers in terms of why they are important in Fife and associated actions that have been implemented by local partner organisations. The seventh Local Lever, promote and support physical activity, will be addressed within the Active Living for Everyone section of the report.

<sup>37</sup> [OurFife: Food4Fife](#)

<sup>38</sup> [Obesity Action Scotland: Local Levers for diet and healthy weight](#)

# Protect and Support Breastfeeding and Healthy Diets for Children

## Why is this important?

Improving nutrition of infants and in early childhood is key for ensuring a healthy weight as they grow into adults. This involves the protection, promotion and support for breastfeeding as well as the appropriate and timely introduction of complementary foods and ensuring a wide and varied healthy diet throughout early childhood. The food consumed by children in their early years has a lifelong effect on the food choices they make as they grow older and into adulthood and consequently on health outcomes.

## Background

Scotland has invested money to support breastfeeding initiatives over the last few years. As a result, the rate of any breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks in NHS Fife has increased from 33.7% in 2012 to 44.6% in 2024.<sup>39</sup> There continues to be a sharp drop in the number of women who start breastfeeding to those who continue to do so at 6-8 weeks, and having timely, skilled support is key to ensuring women get advice and support where needed. As described earlier in this report approximately one fifth of children in Scotland eat the recommended 5 portions of fruit and vegetables per day and approximately 10% of children are at risk from obesity by the time they are in P1.

## Modifiable factors/local actions

NHS Fife has been “Baby Friendly” since 2014. The service includes access to breastfeeding support and advice from midwives, health visitors (or family nurses), the breastfeeding support team or infant feeding advisors.<sup>40</sup> Families can also get help with cost of living through Best Start grants and Best Start foods to help make sure infants and young children have access to food. There were 3,855 Best Start grants and Best Start foods applications made from Fife residents in 2023/24.<sup>41</sup>

The small team of skilled and experienced Breastfeeding Support Workers in Fife is vital to increase breastfeeding rates. Early, specialised and personalised breastfeeding assistance in the home is essential for establishing breastfeeding. Breastfeeding groups will hopefully help in the normalisation of breastfeeding within the bottle-feeding culture of Fife and provide social support groups for mums to access continued breastfeeding peer support throughout their breastfeeding journey. Breastfeeding peer support training courses have recently run in person and online to enable 24 mums to complete training and to continue to volunteer to support the running of new and existing breastfeeding groups in Fife.

Antenatal parent education infant feeding sessions recommenced in 2024, after a prolonged hiatus following the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes breastfeeding advice as well as information on when to offer solids and signs of readiness, how to access best start foods and safe formula feeding.

Baby bites is an informative interactive weaning session for parents and carers and their baby of around 6 months.<sup>42</sup> The Baby bites programme has been rolled out to every nurture centre in Fife and will extend into nurseries across Fife.

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<sup>39</sup> [Public Health Scotland: Infant feeding statistics - Financial year 2023 to 2024](#)

<sup>40</sup> [Fife Breastfeeding Resources Links](#)

<sup>41</sup> [Social Security Scotland - Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods: high level statistics to 30 September 2024](#)

<sup>42</sup> [Baby bites - interactive weaning sessions | NHS Fife](#)

Fife's Child Healthy Weight Service, known as Fife Loves Life, supports families to eat well and be physically active.<sup>43</sup> The service, which includes self-referral, provides family focused sessions to support being active as a family and working together to make small healthy behavioural changes. The Child Healthy Weight Service will aim to identify and target areas with the worst health outcomes and highest areas of deprivation to deliver a targeted approach.

The Fife Loves Life app also provides a lot of information to support children, young people, and their families. There are a range of topic specific optional workshops for parents and carers and young people to attend as part of the Child Healthy Weight programme which include information and techniques to overcome difficulties and barriers to making changes to eating and activity habits and support the promotion of positive mental health.

Groups for parents and carers of Primary School aged children include supporting healthy choices (positive parenting), supporting your child to eat different foods (fussy eating) and parenting tweens which focuses on children transitioning from childhood to adolescence.

Groups for young people include making healthy choices, wellbeing, best of me (which focuses on ways to increase self-esteem) and emotional eating. All children and young people who take part are offered support from Child Healthy Weight Physiotherapy. Free Fife Sport and Leisure gym and swim passes, for those eligible, are available at all leisure centres throughout Fife.

The NHS Fife Child Healthy Weight Toolkit provides professional guidance designed to promote consistent use of the local child healthy weight care pathway and supports professionals to have conversations with families around diet, activity and other healthy living changes.

Key messages around healthy eating, keeping active, sleep hygiene and positive mental health are included in a short Personal and Social Education (PSE) School Module. The module is designed for young people in their first year of Secondary School.

HENRY (Health, Exercise and Nutrition for the Really Young) Core Training focuses on strengths-based, solution-focused, empathic communication with families around health, exercise and nutrition and is delivered to health and education professionals working with young families.



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<sup>43</sup> [Child Healthy Weight Service \(Fife Loves Life\) | NHS Fife](#)



## Case Study – Health Promotion and Food

Sharing Healthy Eating information is key to influencing food choice. Health Promotion recognises that to elicit engagement on health topics, there is a need to provide information in various formats and adapt key messages to suit specific target groups.

For example, Health Promotion worked with community food workers to trial a resource developed to engage families with young children on key elements of a healthy lunchbox. To engage both children and parents and have a message to take away, the pack included an information sheet of key messages as well as activity sheets for the children to engage in the learning. The sessions included budget friendly healthy snacks for tasting and recipes ideas to try at home

Feedback was very positive with parents commenting on the ease and simplicity of message, surprise that children enjoyed the healthy offering and commenting that they would change the food choice to include the healthy snacks in future.



# Improve Uptake of School Meals

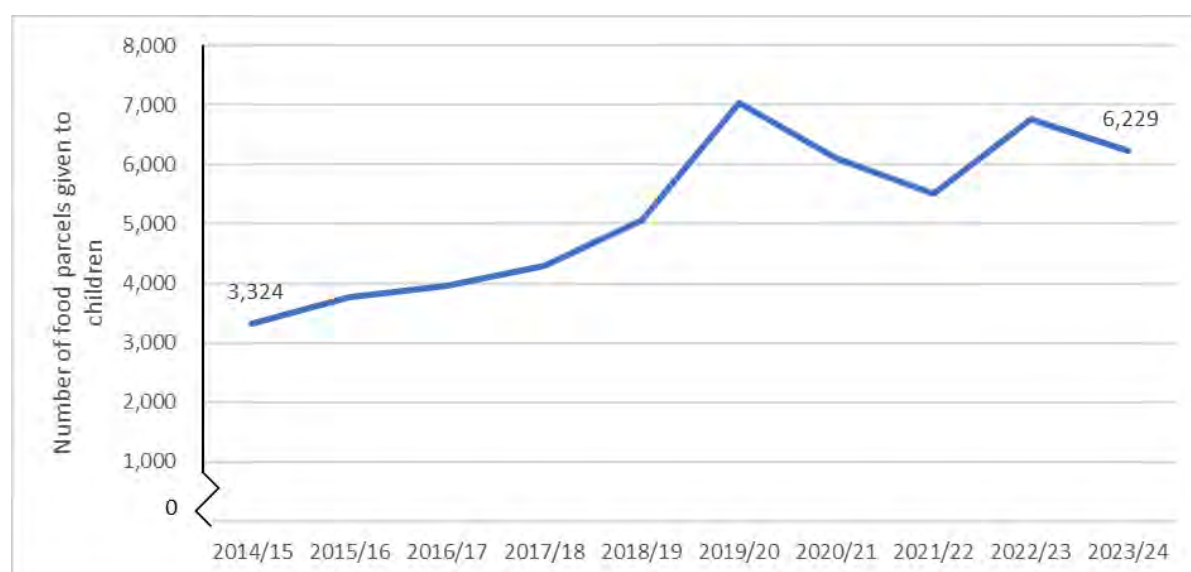
## Why is this important?

School meals can improve children's dietary habits in a way that is equitable across all groups of children. Schools play a significant role in children's lives as they spend approximately 40% of their time and consume 30% of their meals within the school environment. Free school meals for those who are eligible, play a crucial part in reducing child poverty and food insecurity. Free school meals within primary schools provide a dignified response to food insecurity with all children having access to and eating the same food. Healthy school meals contribute to positive behaviour and improved attention and attainment as well as reduced absenteeism. As already detailed in this report, 11% of children in P1 in Fife are at risk of obesity with fruit and vegetable consumption decreasing as children age.

The adverse effects of food insecurity, inadequate nutrition, and childhood obesity are well-documented, with potential repercussions on physical health, mental wellbeing, and social aspects of life. As a result, ensuring food security for all children with nutritious school meals is of utmost importance.

Some schools in Fife are providing a breakfast service for pupils who arrive in school hungry. The Health and Wellbeing Census Scotland (2021/22) reported that 8% of P7 to S6 pupils went to bed hungry often or always and 18% of pupils in P5 to S6 never ate breakfast on a school day.<sup>44</sup> Across the UK 20.0% of households with children reported experiencing food insecurity compared with 12.7% of households without children.<sup>45</sup> The Trussell Trust published end of year statistics for foodbank use throughout the UK.<sup>46</sup> In Fife for the financial year 2023/24 6,229 parcels were given out to children.

**Figure 4:** Number of food parcels given to children in Fife by financial year



Source: The Trussell Trust

<sup>44</sup> [Health and Wellbeing Census Scotland 2021- 2022 - gov.scot](https://www.gov.scot/publications/health-and-wellbeing-census-scotland-2021-22/pages/100.aspx)

<sup>45</sup> [Food Insecurity Tracking | Food Foundation](https://www.foodfoundation.org.uk/food-insecurity-tracking/)

<sup>46</sup> [End of year stats | Trussell Trust](https://www.trusselltrust.org/foodbank-use-statistics/) EYS 2023-24 raw data (A family of 2 adults and 2 children attending the foodbank is recorded as 4 parcels, 2 adult and 2 children.)

## Background

The nutritional quality of a child's diet during their formative years has far-reaching consequences, influencing subsequent development, educational accomplishments, health outcomes, and overall wellbeing. Dietary patterns have a lasting impact on adult eating habits and the risk of non-communicable diseases. Children in the UK typically consume foods high in saturated fat and sugar and low in fibre, with a diet that contains fewer fruits and vegetables than those of children in other countries.<sup>47</sup>

The Scottish Government mandates all food served in schools at lunch, breakfast, morning breaks and tuck shops comply with stringent regulations to ensure pupils receive healthy and nutritious food. The regulations severely restrict the inclusion of salt, sugar, foods high in fat, and low-quality reformed or reconstituted foods.<sup>48</sup>

Meals cooked from scratch with fresh ingredients high in nutritional value constitute healthy meals. This helps meals to be nutritionally dense rather than calorie dense. Children should eat regular balanced diets that contain protein, starchy carbohydrates, vegetables and fruits. The Eatwell Guide recommends eating at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables daily. Making food look exciting, colourful and fun encourages healthy eating in children. In Council supported nurseries all food served also complies with regulations which helps to improve the acceptance of better food to these young children and their families.

## Modifiable factors/local actions

School meals enable children to access affordable nutritious meals, especially with the current high inflation on essential food products. The responsibility of nurturing the next generation is a shared endeavour. Parents, teachers, health professionals, catering staff, and policymakers must join forces to achieve nutritional excellence in and improve uptake of school lunches. Children can flourish academically, physically, and emotionally when they are healthy and happy.

The provision of school meals is an integral part of the Plan for Fife objectives of improving health and wellbeing and minimising the impact of poverty, by delivering food that is high in nutritional value. In the longer term as part of implementing the Food4Fife Strategy, Fife Council aims to use local seasonal food in meal planning that also supports the local economy. Having a pleasant dining experience, a protected lunch time, implementing a staggered lunchtime system and involving pupils in the development of menus all contribute to encouraging children to have a school meal.<sup>49</sup> Early indications are that Primary 1-5 universal free school meals have been well received in Fife with approximately 75+% uptake. Fife Council is committed to ensuring that parents and carers are aware that children can access free school meals in a dignified and discreet way with an objective of increasing the take up of healthy meals. In terms of free school meals, as well as the nutritional value of the meals, financially taking a free school meal can save a family approximately £475 per child per year.

Fife Council are also focusing on influencing the eating habits of high school pupils by encouraging that cohort to eat nutritious school food rather than off-site low nutrition 'fast food' and confectionery. This is challenging, however, sales of school meals in high schools increased between July 2022 and July 2024, perhaps demonstrating there are encouraging signs that pupils are changing eating habits.

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<sup>47</sup> [Household availability of ultra-processed foods and obesity in nineteen European countries](#)

<sup>48</sup> [Healthy Eating in Schools: guidance 2020](#)

<sup>49</sup> [Better Eating, Better Learning](#)



The holiday periods can be a challenging time for many children, young people, and families in the seven local areas of Fife. Café Inc has ensured that over 109,000 nutritious meals were given to children young people and their families over the seven-week 2024 summer holidays and helped to ensure that fewer children and young people miss out on healthy and nutritious meals during the school break. Across the seven locality areas in Fife there were 65 venues for families to access.

Café Inc is Fife Council's holiday hunger programme, and the aims of the project are to provide children, young people and their parent/carer(s) with a nutritious meal during school holidays.<sup>50</sup> The project is universal and is underpinned by the dignity principles.<sup>51</sup>

The Café Inc team also conducted a piece of research over summer and received 128 responses. The key findings were:

- 66% of respondents were not in receipt of free school meals
- 50% were in receipt of Universal Credit
- If Café Inc was not available, 40% of respondents would have fed their children but skipped a meal themselves.

In addition to the survey findings, several powerful stories were collected, showcasing the social and economic impact of Café Inc. These stories highlight how the programme not only provides meals but also serves as an important social lifeline for families who are struggling to make ends meet. These stories demonstrate the real-world impact of the programme, offering insights into how it alleviates stress, builds community connections, and improves the wellbeing of participants.



<sup>50</sup> [Café Inc | Fife Council](#)

<sup>51</sup> [Nourish Scotland: Guidance Notes on Dignity in Practice - Summary of Findings](#)

## Case study – EATS Educates food education initiative in Rosyth Primary Schools



EATS Educates is an ambitious new food education project from EATS Rosyth, to develop a whole system approach to eating fresh fruit and vegetables with children and their families.

Delivered in all four primary schools in Rosyth, the curriculum-focused programme enables children to engage in growing, harvesting, tasting, and cooking fresh fruits and vegetables. The project involves creating and enhancing growing areas at each of the schools, including raised beds, fruit trees and sensory gardens. These new greenspaces benefit both people and wildlife, by improving access to organic fresh fruit and vegetables, enriching biodiversity and increasing climate awareness.

The project commenced in June 2024. So far this has involved construction of 12 new raised beds, improvements and restoration to over 80m<sup>2</sup> of existing growing spaces, such as brick planters and beds, and gathering feedback from over 750 parents, teachers and pupils on food education and growing. During the summer holidays, pupils and parents were invited to open days in EATS Rosyth's Centenary Orchard, where they took part in activities on growing topics, including harvesting vegetables, making fresh fruit smoothies and beekeeping and honey tasting. As part of the Fife Climate Week in September, pupils attended special 'Apple Days', where they tasted fresh apples, which they picked directly from the Orchard trees, pressed apple juice, cooked apple sauce and learnt about apple preservation techniques.

Creating dietary change is complex and multifaceted. Emphasis must be placed on the food environment, especially the availability and accessibility of healthy foods. Almost one in five children in Fife are now living in absolute poverty, with food insecurity increasing along with associated risks of poor nutritional outcomes and health inequalities including obesity. The benefits for improving children's access to and consumption of fruit and vegetables in Fife are clear. EATS Educates aims to involve children and their families so that they have the opportunity not only to learn, but also gain practical experience and life skills to support lifelong change. The pilot project has been funded for two years by Fife Council and has ambitions to culminate in a transferable education programme which will be rolled out in settings across South & West Fife and beyond.

[www.eatsrosyth.org.uk](http://www.eatsrosyth.org.uk)

# Public Food Procurement and Provision Standard

## Why is this important?

Between Fife Council, NHS Fife and the University of St Andrews, annual spend on food procurement amounts to approximately £15 million each year. Many of the meals provided are for population groups that are vulnerable and for whom nutritional standards are important. Public bodies also have the ability to influence consumption of healthy versus non-healthy meals in non-vulnerable groups across the population. A piece of research in 2021 where 159 adults took part in an online choice experiment found when three-quarters of product options were healthy, 58% of participants selected a healthy option compared to just 41% of participants selecting a healthy option when only 50% of product options were healthy.<sup>52</sup>

Catering and procurement provide unique powerful levers for promoting good food. There is potential to transform catering across a wide range of settings from nurseries, schools and colleges through hospitals and care homes, workplace canteens and smaller scale catering outlets. As well as improving the eating habits of people across Fife there is the ability to create large scale demand for healthy, sustainable and local food. Improving consumption of food grown locally or within the UK and that is easily accessible locally also helps to reduce carbon impact. Collaboration between catering, procurement and menu teams, suppliers and growers, and distribution contractors is key to enabling change.

There is a close link between this local lever and the local lever work with the Out of Home Sector to reduce calories on the menu and with the Food4Fife strategy catering and procurement pillar.

## Background

This local lever recommends that all facilities owned and/or operated by local authorities and health boards including for example leisure centres and NHS premises providing non-patient food and drink should consider:

- Offer price promotions on healthier options
- Reduce the calorie content of foods on offer, either through reformulation or smaller portions, and consider a mandatory calorie cap per item sold
- Provide free drinking water
- Increase the proportion of healthy food and drink on offer to at least 75%.

## Modifiable factors/local actions

Collaboration between catering, procurement and menu teams as well as with suppliers, growers and distribution contractors are key to enabling change. As part of the Food4Fife Strategy, a Fife wide procurement group including Fife Council, Fife College, NHS Fife and the University of St Andrews have been working together on ways to achieve this.

At the same time, it is important to take into consideration the taste of healthy food and drink on offer to ensure that these do not negatively impact uptake of meals in these settings.

Bringing local food into our public buildings including schools, hospitals and learning institutions can support local community wealth building. This area is closely linked to the Local Levers of Increasing School Meal Uptake and Working with the Out of Home Sector to reduce calories on the menu where actions considered in those levers include facilities owned and/or operated by local authorities and health boards.

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<sup>52</sup> Allan et al, 2021, Nutr Health, 27(3): 321-327, link: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33769109/>

# Utilising Planning to Improve Food Environments

## Why is this important?

The food environment is an important part of how a place can support or undermine our health and wellbeing. This includes access to out of home food consumption including takeaways, temporarily or permanently sited catering vans, hospitality venues, and drive-through sites. A Food Standards Scotland survey published in 2023 indicates that one in 6 adults in Scotland eat out at least once a week.<sup>53</sup>

For many people their local food environment is comprised of more unhealthy outlets, such as hot food takeaways, than outlets offering healthy and affordable options. Research in 2018 into outlets in Glasgow selling potentially health-damaging products and services, such as fast food, were usually clustered in more deprived areas, leading to greater exposure in these areas and further exacerbating inequalities.<sup>54</sup>

The food environment encompasses more than just the out of home sector but includes all food available to people in their surroundings. Connection to healthy food and drink outlets and to opportunities for community food growing and allotments are examples of positive attributes within a place that can facilitate and engage communities with a healthy diet.

## Background

The National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) intends to drive spatial planning that improves health and wellbeing and reduces health inequality in our communities.<sup>55</sup> In principle development proposals that would have an adverse effect on the health and wellbeing of communities, particularly in disadvantaged areas, should not be supported. Development proposals that will have positive effects on health should be supported.

NPF4 includes applying and promoting a town centre first approach and covers retail and non-retail outlets. This could include, for example, proposals that incorporate opportunities for exercise, community food growing or allotments. Consideration should also be given to clusters of outlets that may be affecting community wellbeing.

## Modifiable factors/local actions

The built environment influences people's access to both healthy and unhealthy foods and planning is an upstream tool that can be used to influence the built food environment over the long term. Planning policy can support the creation of healthy places and facilities and support easy access to healthy food.

As part of the Local Development Plan (LDP) process it would be helpful to further understand the distribution of different types of food outlets and food growing in different communities across Fife. This can be used to map and inform planning of food related retail and non-retail spaces. The LDP preparation and evidence gathering stages can be used as a tool to help identify clusters where the balance of healthy food related retail and non-retail spaces may be affecting community health and wellbeing. This can help implementation of NPF Policies on Health and Safety, Commercial Centres and Retail. The Food4Fife Strategy and associated action plans include projects to map food grown commercially as well as community growing spaces.

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<sup>53</sup> [Consumer attitudes towards the diet and food environment in Scotland research report - June 2023](#)

<sup>54</sup> Macdonald, L., Olsen, J.R., Shortt, N.K. and Ellaway, A. 2018. [Do 'environmental bads' such as alcohol, fast food, tobacco, and gambling outlets cluster and co-locate in more deprived areas in Glasgow City, Scotland? - ScienceDirect](#). *Health & Place*, 51: 224-231.

<sup>55</sup> [Scottish Government 2024: National Planning Framework 4](#)



# Reduction in Calories on Eating Out of Home Sector Menus

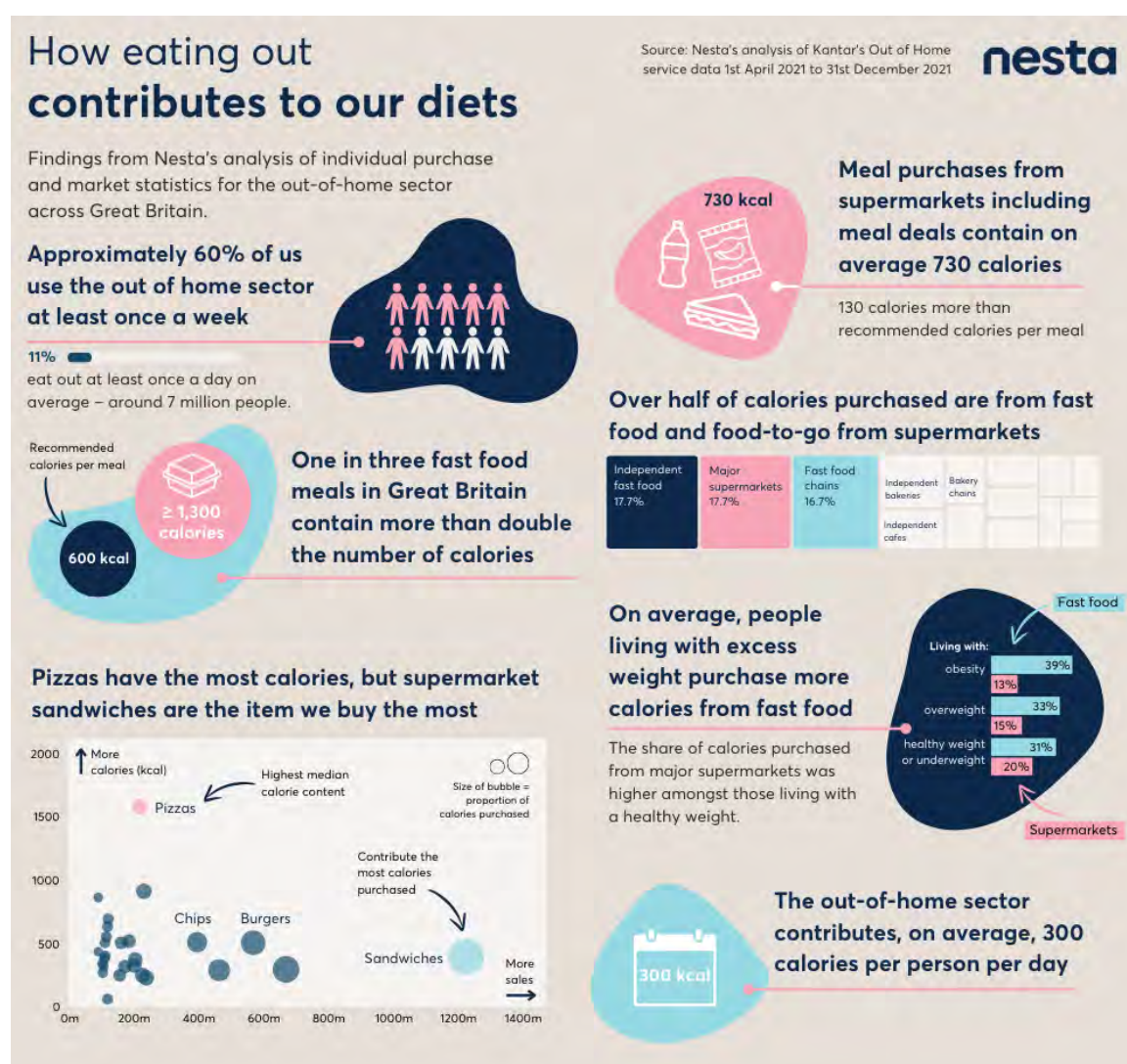
## Why is this important?

In 2021, people in Scotland took 3 out of home trips per week on average, with one in 6 adults eating out at least once a week.<sup>56</sup> Taste, ease, and convenience are main reasons for eating out of home. Portion sizes tend to be bigger resulting in greater caloric intake when eating out of home as compared to eating at home. Takeaways and full-service restaurants have lots of scope for calorie reduction and helping communities achieve a healthy weight.

## Background

The infographic below highlights findings from analysis carried out by Nesta in 2021 into individual purchase and market statistics for the out of home sector across Great Britain.

**Figure 5: Infographic showing Nesta analysis of purchase and market statistics of the out of home sector in 2021**



<sup>56</sup> [Testing the calories of the UK's favourite takeaway foods | Nesta](#)



Nesta also lab tested 600 of the ten most popular meals from independent takeaways in Great Britain.<sup>57</sup> The findings lend weight to the viability of portion size reduction as a way of reducing calorie intake. Key findings included:

- calorie content of 'regular' or 'medium' meals ranged widely
- across all types of food, meals contained an average of 1,289 calories
- 99% of meals exceeded the recommended calorie intake of 600 kcal per meal, 57% exceeded double the average recommended intake per meal, and 2% exceeded the recommended daily intake of 2,250 kcal
- more expensive meals had a higher number of calories, even after adjusting for differences in portion size (in grams).

## Modifiable factors/local actions

There is a place for working with the out of home sector to understand retailers' knowledge of calories on their menus, and knowledge of portion size. Exploratory work between Public Health, Health Promotion and Fife Council Protective Services has begun into a possible pilot in one area of Fife.

There is a close link between this area and the lever relating to utilising planning to improve food environments as well as to public food procurement and provision standards.



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<sup>57</sup> [Testing the calories of the UK's favourite takeaway foods | Nesta](#)

# Food Advertising

## Why is this important?

Advertised food and drinks are generally less healthy than those recommended as part of a healthy diet.<sup>58</sup> An Obesity Action Scotland policy statement on food advertising reported that:

- one third of total food and drink marketing spend in the UK is spent on advertising unhealthy products compared to just 1% spent on advertising fruit and vegetables
- Children and adults from more deprived backgrounds are up to 50% more likely to be exposed to unhealthy food advertising than less deprived groups.
- For every four minutes of TV food and drink advertising exposure, children consume approximately 60 calories more than children exposed to non-food adverts. The effect of TV adverts on dietary intake is also shown to be greater for children already living with overweight or obesity
- Exposure to unhealthy food advertising causes increased overall calorie intake in children and results in a higher chance of them preferring the advertised product when making food choices. UK survey showed that young people report seeing adverts for unhealthy products at least twice per day.

## Background

Restrictions on food advertising of foods high in fat, sugar and salt (HFSS) are likely to come into effect during 2025. These restrictions only cover TV and online advertising but do not include outdoor advertising so will not include advertising in public spaces, such as billboards, and on public transport. In some parts of England local authorities have been prohibiting HFSS product advertising for all advertising generated by themselves and advertising sponsorship by third parties on council owned spaces, assets and events.

In 2021, Obesity Action Scotland and East of Scotland Partnership published a report that looked at the influence local authorities in Scotland have in restricting outdoor advertisements of products high in fat, sugar and salt.<sup>59</sup> The findings indicated that local authorities would prefer national level policy on HFSS outdoor advertising as opposed to localised action. The report also highlighted a demand for more knowledge sharing to guide policy decisions. The same report also gathered information on the scale of local authority owned and/or controlled advertising spaces across four local authorities in Scotland, including Fife. The table below shows results for Fife.

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<sup>58</sup> [Obesity Action Scotland: Advertising Position Paper](#)

<sup>59</sup> [Obesity Action Scotland: Outdoor Advertising Report 2021](#)

**Table 1: Local authority owned and/or controlled advertising space in Fife**

	Billboards	Bus shelters	Taxis	Public transport	Events/ sponsorship
Fife	None	6 owned by Fife, 153 owned by Clear Channel	Only signage relating to taxi business is allowed	None	Roundabouts – mainly for local business sponsorship

Source: Obesity Action Scotland

## Modifiable factors/local actions

The Local Levers report recommends that community planning partner organisations restrict advertising of products high in fat, sugar or salt (HFSS) in their own premises, on their vehicles and on any public advertising spaces they own or manage.<sup>60</sup> These spaces in buildings, on fleet vehicles or other public spaces could be used for promotion of healthy foods. Community Planning Partner organisations could also restrict HFSS product advertising by third parties on spaces, assets and at events owned or led by them.



<sup>60</sup> [Obesity Action Scotland: Local Levers for diet and healthy weight](#)



# Active Living for Everyone





## What We Know

In this report we use the UK Chief Medical Officer's definition of physical activity: any form of activity performed by the human body, inclusive of both incidental and deliberate bodily movement.<sup>61</sup> This includes:

- everyday activities: active travel like walking, cycling or wheeling, heavy housework, gardening, DIY, occupational activity
- active recreation: recreational walking, cycling, active play or dance
- sport: sport walking and cycling, swimming, formal and informal sport, structured competitive activity, exercise and fitness training and individual outdoor pursuits.

Physical activity impacts our physical and mental health and wellbeing. Regular physical activity and movement can help to reverse some of the age-related decline in physical function, improve wellbeing, help maintain independent living and create opportunities to increase social connections. However, as people get older physical activity levels typically decline and sedentary behaviour increases. Along with low levels of physical activity this can combine to increase levels of morbidity. Sedentary behaviour has increased in the years since COVID-19 pandemic, with changes to working environments contributing to declining levels of physical activity.



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<sup>61</sup> [UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines](#)

## Physical Activity and Inactivity

There is a substantial evidence base showing the role that physical activity can play in the prevention and management of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs).<sup>62</sup> NCDs include conditions such as cancers, cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory diseases, diabetes and mental health and neurological conditions.<sup>63</sup> Noncommunicable diseases currently account for more than two thirds of deaths and are the leading causes of ill health in Fife and across Scotland.<sup>64</sup>

Physical inactivity is recognised by the World Health Organisation as one of the 5 leading risk factors of noncommunicable diseases.<sup>65</sup> A Scottish Burden of Disease (SBoD) study examining the burden of physical inactivity on disease in Scotland reported that almost 3,200 deaths in 2022 were estimated to be attributable to physical inactivity, defined as activity at levels lower than current guidelines.<sup>66</sup> In Fife this figure was 253 deaths representing 5.5% of all deaths. A third of these deaths, in both Fife and Scotland, were from cancer or cardiovascular disease. Mortality rates attributable to physical inactivity were higher in Fife than the Scottish average and the sixth highest of all health boards. Estimates indicate substantial regional inequalities within Scotland in the burden of disease attributable to physical inactivity.

Of the deaths attributed to physical inactivity across Scotland, the majority (80%) occurred in those in the very low activity category, less than 30 mins per week of moderate physical activity. The finding that more than 80% of these deaths are due to those with very low levels of activity (less than 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity a week) emphasises that these individuals are an important focus for intervention, along with broader system-wide policy actions that impact on the population.

**64% of adults in Fife met the guidelines for moderate or vigorous physical activity (MVPA) in 2019-2023 in data collected by the Scottish Health Survey.**

This was similar to the 65% reported for Scotland. The proportion of adults meeting the MVPA guidelines in Fife has fluctuated between 60% and 65% since 2012-15. Around a fifth of adults reported very low weekly activity levels, less than 30 minutes of moderate activity or less than 15 minutes of vigorous activity or an equivalent combination of these. This has been a consistent finding since 2012-15 and was 20% in 2019-23.<sup>67</sup> A higher proportion of men have consistently reported meeting the MVPA guideline than women, 69% compared to 59% in Fife in 2019-23.<sup>68</sup>

Across Scotland in 2023, younger adults were more likely than older adults to have met the MVPA guidelines with the proportion of adults meeting the guideline decreasing with age from the age of 35 years onwards. 74% of adults aged 16-24 years and 71% of adults aged 25-34 years met the guidelines compared to 36% of adults aged 75 years and over.<sup>69</sup> Almost half of all adults (45%) aged 75 years and over and 30% of adults aged 65-74 years reported very low levels of activity.

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<sup>62</sup> [The burden of disease attributed to physical inactivity](#) page 7

<sup>63</sup> [World Health Organisation: Noncommunicable diseases](#)

<sup>64</sup> [The burden of disease attributed to physical inactivity](#) page 6

<sup>65</sup> [World Health Organisation: Noncommunicable diseases](#)

<sup>66</sup> [The burden of disease attributed to physical inactivity](#)

<sup>67</sup> [Scottish Health Survey Dashboard](#) (query as previous footnote)

<sup>68</sup> [Scottish Health Survey Dashboard](#) (Tab = Trend, Topic = Physical Activity, Indicator = summary activity levels, breakdown = Age)

<sup>69</sup> [Scottish Health Survey Dashboard](#) (query as previous footnote)



In 2023, 72% of those living in the least deprived areas in Scotland met MVPA guidelines compared with 50% of those living in the most deprived areas. Inequalities in meeting MVPA guidelines have been consistently seen since 2012.

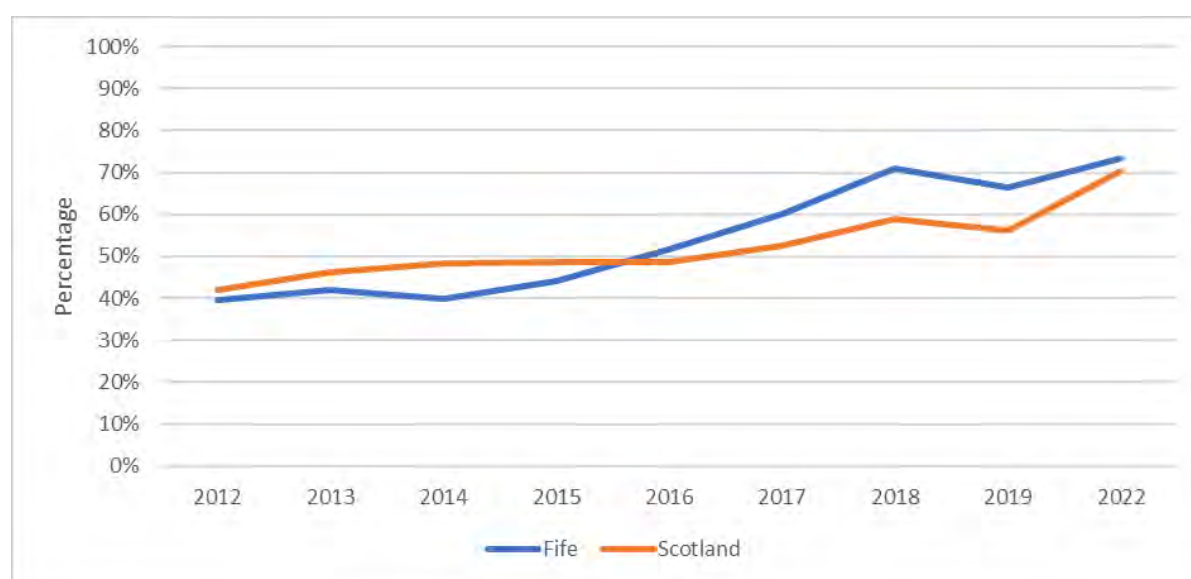
On average adults in Scotland spent 5.7 hours sitting on a weekday and 6.5 hours sitting at the weekend in 2023, excluding time spent at work, college or at school.<sup>70</sup> There was little difference in the average sedentary time reported by men and women with sedentary time greatest in those aged 65 and over. Sedentary time among children aged 5-15 in Scotland was lower, 3.7 hours on a weekday and 5.1 hours at weekends.

72% of children aged 5-15 in Scotland reported undertaking at least 60 minutes of activity, including school-based activity, on average per day in the previous week in 2023. This fell to 62% if school-based activities were excluded. 17% of children achieved at least 30 but less than 60 minutes per day on average and 12% achieved less than 30 minutes. Fewer girls reported undertaking at least 60 minutes of activity on average per day than boys and were more likely to report less than 30 minutes.<sup>71</sup>

## Access to outdoors

73% of adults in Fife reported visiting the outdoors at least once a week in data collected by the Scottish Household Survey in 2022.<sup>72</sup> This was slightly higher than the 70% reported nationally. The proportion of adults reporting visits to the outdoors at least once a week has increased over time in both Fife and Scotland where approximately 40% reported this in 2013 and 50% in 2016.

**Figure 6: Percentage of adults visiting the outdoors at least once a week in Fife and Scotland, 2012 to 2022**



Source: Scottish Household Survey, 2022

7% of adults in Fife reported that they did not visit the outdoors at all. Almost a fifth of adults living in the most deprived areas reported they did not visit the outdoors at all (19%) compared to none of the adults living in the least deprived areas.

<sup>70</sup> [The Scottish Health Survey 2023 - volume 1: main report - gov.scot](#) Section 6: Physical Activity

<sup>71</sup> [The Scottish Health Survey 2023 - volume 1: main report - gov.scot](#) Section 6: Physical Activity

<sup>72</sup> [Scottish Household Survey 2022: Key Findings Section 7: Environment](#)

Across Scotland reports of accessing the outdoors at least once a week were lower among adults aged 60 to 74 (67%) and aged 75 and over (50%) compared to adults aged 16 to 59 (74%). Reports of not accessing the outdoors at all were highest among those aged 75 and over (22%).

Across Fife, more than three quarters of adults (77%) reported that they lived within 5-minute walking distance to green or blue space in the Scottish Household Survey 2022.<sup>73</sup> Since 2013 the proportion of adults reporting this annually has been higher than 70%. Over this time period less than 10% of adults in Fife have reported annually that they lived an 11-minute walk or more to green or blue space and this was 8% in 2022.

Fewer adults living in the most deprived areas (73%) in Fife reported living within a 5-minute walk to green or blue space than adults living in the least deprived areas (82%) but there was less difference in the proportions living 11 minutes or more walking distance, 7% in most deprived areas compared to 6% in the least deprived areas.<sup>74</sup>

## Case Study – Move for Your Mood

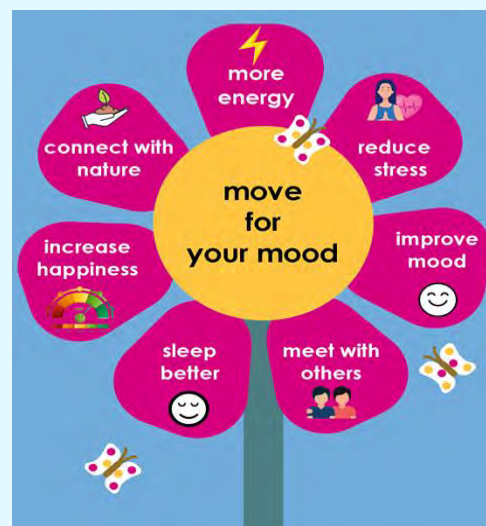
To support Mental Health Awareness Week in May 2024 Health Promotion and Active Communities Team partnered to encourage people to 'Move for Your Mood'. This means finding ways you can build movement into your day, and understanding how this benefits your mental health and wellbeing.

A range of resources were developed to support the campaign message. This included leaflets, bookmarks and posters, as well as interactive resources such as fortune tellers that can be downloaded and were very popular. During Mental Health Awareness Week sessions ran on MS Team to highlight all this, pop up stands took place in community venues across Fife and Bums of Seats community walks took place. Lots of community groups, care homes and schools got involved and moved for their mood.

Using language about movement is an inclusive way of describing how people can be more active and helps us understand what is possible instead of focusing on barriers to physical activity.

The Move for Your Mood campaign message:

Moving for Your mood means finding ways you can build movement into your day, and getting to know how it makes you feel. Any way you decide to get moving counts. Whether it's stretching while making a cup of tea, meeting friends, or doing chores around the house, it all helps us move more!



<sup>73</sup> [Scottish Household Survey 2022: Key Findings Section 7: Environment](#)

<sup>74</sup> The most and least deprived areas in Fife are those datazones within the most deprived and least deprived quintile as defined by: [Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020 - gov.scot](#)

## System-based approaches to Physical Activity in Fife

Public Health Scotland's 2022 System-based Approach to Physical Activity in Scotland provides a framework for taking a systems approach to improving physical activity. Taking a systems approach is about more than working in partnership, but means using systems thinking, methods and practice to better understand public health challenges and identify collective actions.

The framework has eight themes, six of which will be explored within the Fife context in the following sections. The themes of the framework are:

- Active places of learning
- Active places and spaces
- Active workplace
- Sport and active recreation
- Active travel
- Active health and social care systems
- Active systems
- Communications and public education.



## Active Places of Learning

### Why is this important?

From earliest years, through school age and into further and higher education children and young people spend a large proportion of their lives within learning institutions. As we highlighted in last year's DPH annual report, Children and Young People in Fife, movement is essential for life.

It provides the building blocks for development, physical and mental health as well as social and academic progress. Taking part in activity increases confidence, self-esteem, as well as reduces stress, the effects of depression and improves our physical health. Places of learning are key places to embedding normalisation of physical activity throughout the school day.

### Background

Physical activity guidelines for children state that they should engage in moderate to vigorous activity for at least 60 minutes each day.<sup>75</sup> Around 70% of children aged 5-15 in Scotland reported undertaking at least 60 minutes of activity, including school-based activity, on average per day. However, boys are more likely than girls to meet the recommendation. Participating in sport and physical activities such as walking, ball sports, dance or yoga creates an opportunity to develop skills. This can lead to lifelong participation in a range of activities. Tackling inequalities and barriers to activity from an early age can help to increase activity levels, create good habits and improve life chances into adulthood.

A whole of school approach, as recommended in '8 Investments that work for physical activity (ISPAH)' includes not just having PE classes, but also active playtime, active classrooms, extra-curricular activities and active travel. It also recommended as important that this involves not just students and teachers, but parents, carers, and the wider community.<sup>76</sup>



<sup>75</sup> [6 Physical Activity - The Scottish Health Survey 2023 - volume 1: main report - gov.scot](#)

<sup>76</sup> [English-Eight-Investments-That-Work-FINAL.pdf](#)



## Modifiable factors/local actions

Fife Council Active Schools and Active Communities along with Fife Sports and Leisure Trust work, through provision of activity and interventions, to tackle barriers to participation. Recurring barriers to activity such as costs, facilities and perceptions continue to challenge all initiatives and projects. Fife Council Education Service 2023 survey of school aged children has contributed to ongoing work to understand the needs of families with planning programmes.

There are examples across Fife of activities with different age groups:

- The Fife Council 50 Things app, aimed at families, promotes active learning in the early years.
- The Play Away training programme delivered via the Prevention and Early Intervention Training Programme enables people working across Fife to increase their knowledge, skills and confidence in facilitating groups using early years play away resources.
- The Play Practice team offers outdoor learning opportunities with a focus on being physically active outwith schools.
- Learning to ride a bike or learning to swim are life skills that all children need to acquire. The Bikeability programme to teach children cycling skills is a long-standing programme that is offered annually to all Fife schools. Whilst children can use their own bikes there are also bikes that can be loaned to schools for the duration of the programme.
- The Outdoor Education Team deliver Bikeability sessions at Fife Cycle Park with a variety of groups including those with additional support needs and supporting some targeted work with schools.
- Youth 1<sup>st</sup>'s B:active programme promotes physical activity and health and wellbeing for young people, youth workers and volunteers. The project has a dedicated member of staff promotes and co-ordinates training and sessions for Youth 1<sup>st</sup> member groups. As well as sports tasters and games sessions the programme includes Climate Action Fife sessions and Young STEM Leader and B:active Leader awards for young people.
- In the academic year 2023-24, Active Schools provided extracurricular activities which 19,246 pupils took part in through a range of universal and targeted provisions within Fife schools.



# An Active Workplace

## Why is this important?

We spend a large proportion of our lives in the workplace, with many spending almost a third of each day at work.<sup>77</sup> Good work is one of the key building blocks of health. Being physically active throughout the day is good for our physical and mental health and wellbeing. An active workplace leads to more positive social interactions, boosts productivity and can reduce absenteeism.

## Background

Changes in the way that we work mean that many of us now do jobs that are largely sedentary and require little movement, which don't require us to be on our feet or to be physically active throughout the day. In recent years, post COVID-19 pandemic, increases in home working have made our working lives more sedentary and reduced travelling time that might have involved walking or active travel. Sitting for prolonged periods of time can increase risk of chronic health problems such as heart disease, diabetes and some cancers, as well as having a detrimental effect on our mental health.<sup>78</sup>

Adult recommendations for physical activity are for adults to be moderately physically active for 150 minutes per week.<sup>79</sup> Currently 64% of adults in Fife achieve this (69% men, 59% women).

The workplace can be an important place for increasing physical activity for workers of all ages and the people they come into contact with. Workplaces need to increase physical activity in the workplace and protect the health of employees. Local public services can help facilitate active workplaces.

## Modifiable factors/local actions

Workplace policies can be designed to provide benefits for both employees and employers. Policies need to encourage positive changes in behaviour and increase everyday incidental physical activity both within workplaces and for those who work from home. The design of workplaces can discourage sedentary behaviour and link to other policies such as active travel.

The Workplace Team in the Health Promotion Service (HPS) of Fife Health and Social Care Partnership actively promote a range of initiatives to Fife workplaces to encourage good and fair work.<sup>80</sup> This includes encouraging the implementation of policies and procedures in relation to reducing sedentary behaviour and promotion of active workplace initiatives, including promotion of the Healthy Working Lives programme in Fife on behalf of Public Health Scotland. Advice, toolkits, regular training and promotional events for employers and workers is also provided. Walking is the simplest activity to encourage and promote in the workplace. It fits easily in and around the working day and taking part in workplace walking challenges introduce a fun and sociable element.

As large employers in Fife, public sector employers including Fife Council and NHS Fife can be exemplars of both policy and practice. Various services and departments such as human resources, estates and facilities, unions and professional organisations, managers and staff can work with specialist services, such as occupational health services to help tackle existing health conditions and health promotion service to provide preventative information and training to staff to enhance self-care.

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<sup>77</sup> [Time use in the UK - Office for National Statistics](#)

<sup>78</sup> [The Acute Metabolic and Vascular Impact of Interrupting Prolonged Sitting: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis](#): Pub Med

<sup>79</sup> [6 Physical Activity - The Scottish Health Survey 2023 - volume 1: main report - gov.scot](#)

<sup>80</sup> [Workplace Team | NHS Fife](#)



## Case Study – Annual Walking Challenge

Fife Council's Active Communities team organise an annual walking challenge for people living and working in Fife, encouraging people to walk or wheel everyday over a month.

In 2024 the challenge was to walk or wheel the distance of Fife's Pilgrim Way which is 70 miles.

A total of 262 people participated, either individually or as part of a team, from workplaces and community groups across Fife. They walked or wheeled a combined 9,815 miles.

70% of participants said they had increased their daily walking or wheeling and 97% said they would continue to walk or wheel every day.



# Sports and Recreation

## Why is this important?

Participating in sports and other recreational activities is important not just for physical health and wellbeing but has an important link to cultural and social outcomes. Play and participation in sport is important for social development of children and continues into adult life.

In adult life continuing to be involved in sport and recreation is a way of encouraging people to keep doing something as they age. Volunteering in sports activities has positive physical and mental health outcomes. Participation in sports has been shown to have positive links to Sustainable Development Goals beyond health including social, economic, development, peace and sustainability goals.<sup>81</sup>

## Background

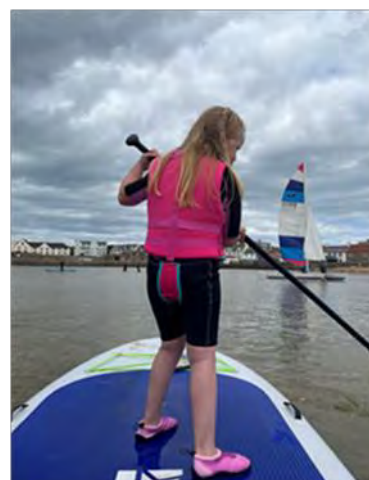
Children and adults from more deprived areas tend to be less involved in organised sports clubs but more active via incidental play and walking than children from less deprived areas who participate more in organised clubs and sports activities. Barriers to participation include access, costs and confidence to participate.

## Modifiable factors/local actions

Active Fifers is a collaborative strategic approach between Fife Council and Fife Sports and Leisure Trust working towards increasing participation in physical activity, sport and leisure. The process enabled both organisations to work together in a different way: listening differently to users, trying new things, empowering frontline staff to be more innovative and creative to support and encourage more people to be more active more often.

Building in agility and flexibility to always stay relevant, focusing in on a few key important sub-goals (awareness, under 18's, social connectedness and concessions) has helped Active Fife to achieve bigger and better outcomes and provided a strong platform for the development of area groups to continue to focus increasing participation.

These area groups are able to design and promote a more joined up approach to programming, ensuring that we make best use of available venues and spaces and ensure that we maximise the workforce resource to impact the lives of the residents of Fife, of all ages and levels of fitness and health, by working well together and being focused in our actions.



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<sup>81</sup> Sustainable Development Goals, [Sustainable Development Goals](#)



## Case Study – Bums Off Seats

Health Walks are low level, accessible, short, recreational group walks that are free to attend. Bums off Seats is a Fife wide health walk programme delivered by Fife Council's Active Communities Team.

The main reasons for people joining a walk include, to meet new people, to feel healthier, manage weight and preferring walking to other forms of exercise.

They currently offer 21 weekly Bums Off Seats health walks which are delivered by 59 trained volunteer walk leaders.

Between June 2023-June 2024, 769 walks took place across Fife with around 366 new participants joining a walk for the first time.



## Fife Social Work Programme

Fife Sports and Leisure Trust are working in partnership with the Fife Justice Social Work Service to provide supervised gym sessions for service users. Physical activity brings many physical and mental health benefits and plays a key part in therapies that address the emotional and psychological issues that often underpin offending behaviours. This initiative, funded by the Fife Justice Social Work Service, makes physical activity accessible and supports the rehabilitation of service users.

## Active for Leisure

The Fife Sports and Leisure Trust Active for Leisure programme, funded by Fife Council Community Recovery Fund, removes barrier for families and individuals facing disadvantage and enables them to make physical activity part of their daily life. Working with local partners families and individuals can be referred and are offered the opportunity to access both junior and adult activities and the health and wellbeing programme. The programme has seen an increase in referrals from health visitors and social work.

## Active Places and Spaces

### Why is this important?

Place is more than just the physical environment and geographic area around us. As individuals and as different communities we have relationships with the places we live, work, learn and socialise in. The nature of a place has a profound effect on our health and wellbeing. This includes how our places and the spaces within them can promote, or present barriers to, being more physically active. Places and spaces need to be designed and maintained to enable people to be physically active in their community.

## Background

There are many ways specific environments such as workplaces and places of learning can promote and address barriers to being physically active. There are also key systems and services including transport and sport and leisure that have a key role to play. These are addressed in other sections of this report. However, there are other aspects of place such as our natural green and blue spaces, streets, houses and areas for play and recreation. These all need to be cared for, safe and accessible for everyone in our communities. People need to be able to get to and between such spaces easily. Such spaces need to be attractive and welcoming environments for everyone. If that can be achieved then people will be more likely to go out and spend time enjoying being active in those spaces, engaging with and building a relationship with their place and community. Nationally in Scotland there are notable policy frameworks that support this approach.

The Scottish Place and Wellbeing Collaborative have developed a set of Place and Wellbeing Outcomes, underpinned by sustainability and equality.<sup>82</sup>

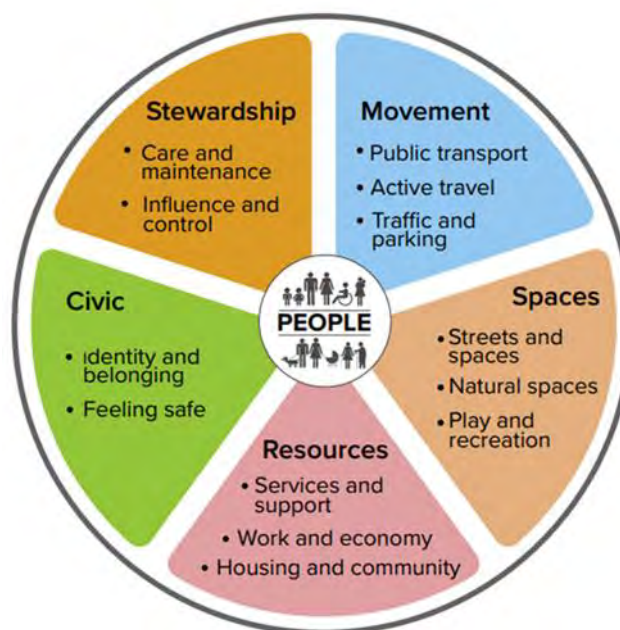
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<sup>82</sup> [Place and Wellbeing Outcomes | Improvement Service](#)

Fife Council Research and Insight Team working with the People's Panel recently produced the report 'Our Place: Living in Fife 2023' published in February 2024.<sup>83</sup> The work used the Place Standard Tool and the Place and Wellbeing Outcomes. This provided some valuable indicators of how people in Fife feel about various aspects of their place.

The Scottish Government National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) sets out key principles for development of sustainable, liveable and productive places in Scotland. Local Authorities including Fife Council are in the process of producing Local Development Plans in line with these principles and in partnership with community planning partners.<sup>84</sup>

Figure 7: Place and wellbeing outcomes graphic



## Modifiable factors/local actions

Partner organisations, both public and voluntary sector, can consider their own places. The physical spaces we have access to are an asset for health and wellbeing. We need to look at these spaces through a lens of how they can make it as easy as possible for people to maximise any opportunity to be active both indoors and outdoors.

Fife Council is currently working through the process of producing 'Fife's Place Plan' which is our Local Development Plan (LDP).<sup>85</sup> Based on the principles set out in the NPF4 this sets out how places will change in the future through how and where developments happen or not. This has a significant potential to influence place-making through spatial planning. LDPs are developed in partnership and the first step is evidence gathering and production of an evidence report. This provides the basis and rationale for the subsequent development of the local approach to planning. The draft evidence report is available and will continue to be developed in partnership.

There are local examples of collaborative work in progress in Fife that can make a valuable contribution to this agenda.

<sup>83</sup> [Our-Place-Fife-2023.pdf](#)

<sup>84</sup> [Scottish Government 2024: National Planning Framework 4](#)

<sup>85</sup> [Fife LDP Evidence Report 2024](#)



## NHS Fife's Greenspace Strategy

NHS Fife Greenspace Strategy 2030 was developed in 2023.<sup>86</sup> The aim of this is to use our greenspace estate to take a holistic approach to tackling the interlinked challenges of climate, nature and health emergencies. One of the six key themes in the strategy is improving health and wellbeing for patients, staff and local residents.

### Case Study – Lynebank Hospital



Lynebank Hospital has been identified as a site with massive potential to support the success of the Greenspace Strategy which addresses many of the Public Health Priorities. To hear how staff, visitors and patients would like to see the greenspace around Lynebank developed in line with the strategy, Health Promotion conducted a consultation to collect their views. As a result of this consultation process, Health Promotion also held a Lynebank Greenspace Workshop to bring together key stakeholders to discuss plans for the site.

One of the key priorities involves creating greenspaces at the site that will improve health and wellbeing. Ideas for the site put forward by clinical psychology colleagues include making full use of the enhanced grounds and running nature connection sessions. They would use quiet areas to practice mindfulness exercises with patients (and colleagues). Patients would enjoy tending to a sensory garden. When working with families, a relaxing outdoor space for sessions would be less intimidating for young children. They would also introduce eco-therapy with residents, in a place to be at peace and listen to the sounds of nature. We would also like to encourage an increase in physical activity, outdoor meetings, staff taking screen breaks and having lunch when often breaks are not factored into their working day.

The results from the consultation process focused heavily on wellbeing in general and how improvements to the environment in which we work, live and rest can have a positive impact on both mental and physical health and wellbeing.



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<sup>86</sup> [NHS Fife Greenspace strategy - Draft 2 May 23](#)



## The Leven Programme ‘Growing with the Flow’

The Leven Programme is a 10-year regeneration project led by the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA). It has a large number of partner and stakeholder organisations invested in a number of projects along the River Leven.<sup>87</sup> One goal is to connect people with the local environment. One of the key project themes is health and wellbeing. A particular project under this theme is development of a Levenmouth Green Health Partnership (GHP). This project is led by Fife Health and Social Care partnership (HSCP) and Fife Coast and Countryside Trust. The Green Health Partnership will utilise and build on existing social referral networks with local providers to improve pathways. The aim is to support people to engage with their natural spaces and places both as part of their everyday lives and to help address healthcare needs.



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<sup>87</sup> [The Leven Programme](#)

## Active Travel and Transportation

### Why is this important?

Travelling beyond our homes is a part of everyday activity, whether for work or for meeting friends and family and for everyday activities like shopping. Travelling even for short distances is something that we all have to do on most days.

Being able to move out with the home is a social determinant of health. Social isolation is compounded for those who cannot leave their homes to carry out normal daily activities.

### Background

In recent decades more and more of us travel by car rather than by public transport or by walking or cycling for every journey that we make. This has resulted in an overall decline in how active we are in our everyday lives. The links between urban design, transport and health and wellbeing are well recognised. Having active travel plans across organisations can support physical activity of staff as well as that of people who use services.

At the 2022 Census, 30% of people aged 16 and over living in Fife who were in work, worked from home.<sup>88</sup> The number of people working from home in Fife, and across Scotland, has trebled since the 2011 Census when the figure in Fife was 10%. This increase was as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic but for many has become an established way of working. Of those living in Fife who travelled to work (115,483 persons), 16% travelled 20km or more, 35% travelled 5-19km and 28% of people travelled less than 5 km.

The most common method of travelling to work was to drive a car or a van, reported by 73% of people living in Fife who travelled to work at the 2022 Census. This was a small increase from 70% in 2011 Census. At the 2022 Census an additional 6% of people who travelled to work were a passenger in a car or a van and 9% travelled by bus or train. Travelling to work on foot was reported by 9,500 persons living in Fife or 8% of people who travelled to work and 1.1% of people who travelled to work did so by bicycle.

### Modifiable factors/local actions

Shorter trips can often be made by foot or by bike, linking into public transport, but this relies on our public transport systems having capacity to meet people's needs. Fife Council's Local Transport Strategy for Fife 2023-2033 sets out the council's vision and priorities for transport in Fife over the next 10 years.<sup>89</sup> This strategy includes ambitions relating to active travel including the objective to increase the proportion of trips that are walked, wheeled or cycled to 30% by 2033, from a baseline of 23% in 2019. Action one in the Local Transport Strategy is to produce an Active travel Strategy for Fife, this strategy focuses on how active travel can be improved and made more accessible for all. This includes both infrastructure and behaviour change elements. The draft strategy has engaged a wide range of stakeholders, with the aim of the strategy being approved in early 2025.

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<sup>88</sup> [Scotland's Census](#)

<sup>89</sup> [Local Transport Strategy for Fife | Fife Council](#)



Figures from NHS Fife's 2024 travel survey of employees reported that just over three-quarters of respondents (77%) travelled to work in a single occupancy vehicle with 11% taking public transport and a further 6% actively travelling to work (walking, running and cycling). More needs to be done to increase accessibility to public transport and to more active forms of travel and to encourage a move away from driving to work.

Within NHS Fife action to encourage cycling has included a year-round cycle-to-work scheme, an e-bike scheme, cycling training for staff, bike maintenance events and cycling information days and cycling champions via the NHS Fife Active Travel Group. NHS Fife are in the process of finalising an Active and Sustainable Travel Plan which provides the basis to implement the necessary behaviour change elements (Information, Engagement, Facilities, and Policies) associated with supporting and encouraging active and sustainable travel choices.



## Active Health and Social Care Services

### Why is this important?

Physical activity is an important part of prevention, treatment, and recovery of many illnesses, diseases and conditions. Physical activity is an important part in the treatment to control diabetes, and in rehabilitation from respiratory conditions, stroke and coronary heart disease interventions and in mental health conditions.<sup>90</sup> There is growing evidence that movement and meaningful activity can improve quality of life and wellbeing of older adults and those experiencing care. Staff supporting older adults in communities and care settings are key to enabling older adults find ways to continue being active in a way that is meaningful to them.

### Background

Health and social care professionals come into contact with large proportions of the population on a daily basis and interact with people who either have or are at risk of having chronic diseases. Healthcare based interventions that target physical activity or combine physical activity with other factors are effective and mostly cost effective. The benefits of physical activity for their patient groups needs to be included within training of health and social professionals.

### Modifiable factors/local actions

#### NHS National Physical Activity Pathway

The NHS National Physical Activity Pathway consists of a set of steps that healthcare professionals can take to encourage people in their care to be more active.<sup>91</sup> The pathway targets adults who are inactive, or not active enough to benefit their health. It can be used in both primary and secondary care settings and can be integrated into existing clinical pathways. The pathway provides health benefits to every adult that becomes more active.

Resources exist to help health and social care professionals with the knowledge and skills to raise the issue of physical activity and to screen adults for current levels of physical activity. Health and social care professionals can then gauge readiness to change and provide person-centred advice to engage, motivate and support people to introduce physical activity into daily lives.

NHS Fife and Fife Health and Social Care Partnership work with Fife Sports and Leisure Trust and Fife Council's Active Communities to deliver physical activity programmes and projects across different population groups and with groups who have different needs. This includes working with social care providers to incorporate physical activity into the daily lives of those living within care settings.

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<sup>90</sup> [Pulmonary rehabilitation | NHS Fife](#)

<sup>91</sup> [NPAP overview - NHS Physical Activity Pathway \(NPAP\) - Food and physical activity - Improving Scotland's health - Population health - Public Health Scotland](#)

## Moving More for Health

Being active and moving more has lots of positive benefits for health and wellbeing. Staff from across the Health and Social Care Partnership can play a key role in raising awareness of the health benefits of physical activity.

To explore this topic Health Promotion and Active Communities led a workshop for HSCP Community Led Support Workers in April 2024. This workshop aimed to raise awareness of the health benefits of physical activity, and to discuss opportunities for physical activity in Fife. It also looked at what counts as physical activity and some of the common misconceptions around this.

Feedback from the workshop was very positive with participants reporting that the training was impacting positively on their practice and how they think about physical activity. The workshop has now been adapted and a new training session called Moving More for Health and Wellbeing has been developed. This course is available as part of the Health Promotion Prevention and Early Intervention Training Programme. The training could also be delivered to teams and services on an ad hoc basis.

The training will support participants to understand the benefits of movement and physical activity for health and wellbeing and provide information and knowledge to enable them to support people to be more active. It will allow participants:

- To reflect on the ways we are active and explore perceptions of physical activity
- To raise awareness of the health benefits of physical activity and how moving more can benefit health and wellbeing
- To identify barriers to physical activity and ways of overcoming these
- To explore ways of bringing movement and activity into our day and raising it with the people we support
- To signpost opportunities, services and training in Fife to support physical activity.

## Meaningful Activity Network

Fife Council's Active Communities team and Fife Health and Social Care Partnership Care Homes occupational therapy team along with staff who have a role in supporting older adults in care homes and care settings are part of a Meaningful Activity Network. The aim of the network is to allow staff to explore ways of supporting people experiencing care to live active, engaging and meaningful lives to improve wellbeing and positively impact quality of life. The network provides a supportive space for staff working with older adults in care or community settings to be able to share good practice, learn together and collaboratively solve problems.

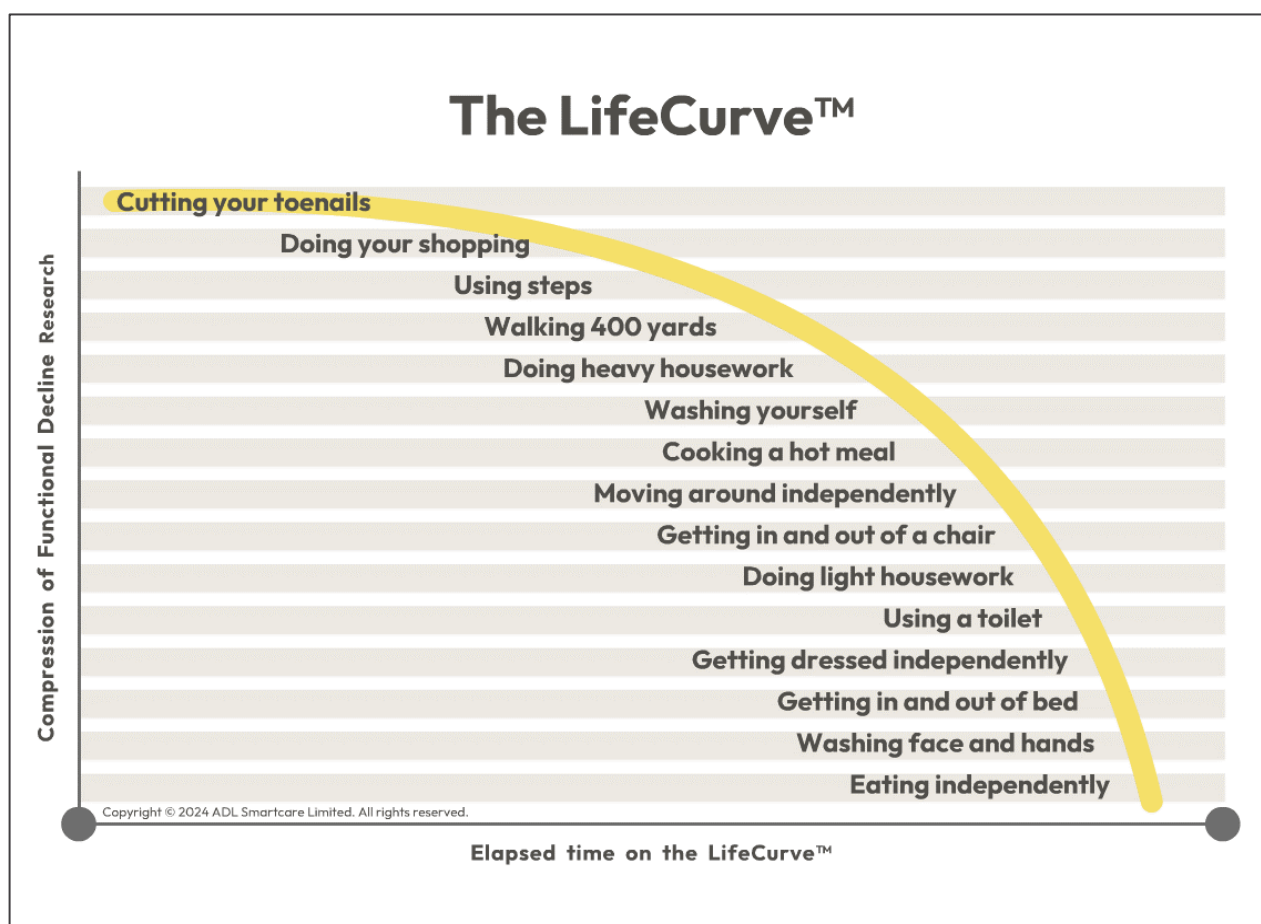
## Move More Programme

Fife Sports and Leisure Trust have relaunched a cancer specific rehabilitation programme. Informed by feedback from participants and people using the Maggie's Centre Fife, Fife Sports and Leisure Trust have invested and trained 3 health and wellbeing advisors to deliver the Active Move programme. This programme provides support for people living with a cancer diagnosis to increase physical activity before, during and after cancer treatment.

## The Life Curve™

The LifeCurve™ is an example of a tool that can be used with patients and service users to aid understanding of how keeping more physically active as we age aids our ability to carry out everyday tasks.<sup>92</sup> It provides a common language on how individuals are ageing which can be understood by the public, professionals and organisations, regardless of their level of experience in ageing or their profession. Research has shown that people lose the functional ability to complete activities of daily living in a specific order. Using activities of daily living along with fitness and strength markers enables a person to position themselves on the LifeCurve™ to see how they are ageing. In developing the LifeCurve™ research showed that intervening with people and increasing their healthy life expectancy does not increase their overall life expectancy, but rather reduces the time they have with greater care needs.<sup>93</sup>

**Figure 8:** Graphic showing The LifeCurve™



<sup>92</sup> [Smart Life in Fife: LifeCurve Assessment](#)

<sup>93</sup> [The Scottish national LifeCurve™ survey: costs of functional decline, opportunities to achieve early intervention to support well-being in later life, and meaningfulness of the LifeCurve™ - ePrints - Newcastle University](#) Abstract only



## Community Engagement for Musculoskeletal (MSK) Waiting Lists

An example of partnership working across health and partnership services is a successful community engagement event held for people currently waiting to see either physiotherapy or podiatry with the purpose of supporting them to self-manage musculoskeletal conditions and signpost them to community resources that can provide further help. One hundred people on the waiting list for either hip or knee problems were given an appointment from the event. The event was a collaboration between Fife Sports and Leisure Trust, Podiatry and Physiotherapy Services, as well as Health Promotion Service and other services from the H&SCP and third sector including Versus Arthritis. The event was a pilot to test this approach with useful feedback from attendees and staff.

## Health and Transport

NHS Fife has partnered with SEStran 'Transport to Health' programme of work to support staff and patients look at active travel options when attending work and/or appointments. This is supported by NHS Fife's work towards the NHS Scotland Annual Delivery Plan 2023/24, Priority 6 – Health Inequalities, action 6.6 which is to support Patients have access to all information on any relevant patient transport (including community Transport) and travel reimbursement entitlement. These actions are reflected in the NHS Fife Population Health & Wellbeing Strategy - Delivery Plan 2023/24.

Since March 2023 NHS Facilities and FHSCP Health Promotion Service have designed and promoted a New NHS Fife Travel Expenses Leaflet and Posters across primary care, community services and NHS acute. This resource supports patients understand how to reclaim travel expenses in hope that it supports patients attend appointments. This resource is promoted through the Health Promotion Poverty Awareness Training, and through local anti-poverty groups across Fife.

To complement the Travel expenses resources a new Community Transport Services Leaflet and Poster has been developed in partnership with a range of Community Transport Services to raise awareness of dedicated patient transport available across Fife.<sup>94</sup>



<sup>94</sup> [How to get to our main hospitals | NHS Fife](#)

# Summary and Recommendations

The themes of this years' report fit well with our national and local direction as we address the challenges of health and inequalities in Fife. How we eat and how we move in the context of the places where we live, work and play are crucial influences on our health and wellbeing. In addition, there are inequalities in how these fundamental determinants of health are experienced by individuals and communities.

When we look at the seven 'local levers for diet and healthy weight' there are some areas where we have data, and we have seen some improvements in the Fife context. We are seeing improvements in breastfeeding but this needs to be maintained. Healthy weight at P1 has stalled so we need to find ways of reinvigorating this work. Provision of healthy and nutritious meals throughout school age is important. We have seen encouraging improvements in uptake of school meals through both primary and secondary school which also needs to be maintained. What we are learning about the challenges for some families of feeding their children healthy nutritious meals throughout the school holidays is concerning. Partners could consider further collaboration to address this aspect of eating well.

Other local levers include food procurement, food environments, work with the out of home sector and food advertising. There are good examples of work in these areas. However, a relatively untapped opportunity exists to address some of these areas. The links between public health and spatial planning are increasingly recognised. The ongoing work on Fife's Local Development Plan, 'Fife's Place Plan', provides a means of influencing how our healthier places and communities can develop. Examples could include exploring and addressing the clustering of retail related to unhealthy commodities in some of our most deprived communities.

If we consider physical activity there are key settings where a whole systems approach is possible with particular populations. Examples include places of learning and places of work. Sport and active recreation, active travel and active places and spaces are examples again of where the development of 'Fife's Place Plan' provides opportunities to influence healthier environments and communities. There are some great examples of work in all these areas. We need to make sure within all this we maintain a keen eye on inequalities and make sure access to services, systems and places is focused in populations and communities where it is most needed.

Organisations and partners across Fife have the opportunity to look at their own places and spaces through a physical activity lens. Community Planning structures also provide a significant opportunity for partners across Fife to work together and learn from each other about maximising physical activity in different settings. Collaboration and connection is a key part of this. Community planning partners' engagement with the LDP process provides a significant opportunity to influence spatial planning to create spaces and places that maximise the opportunity for people to be physically active.

Finally, for both eating well and physical activity in addition to a whole systems approach we need to consider where we can address these issues across the life course. The health and social care system may play a crucial role here particularly in view of our ageing population. The 'life curve' gives us a really useful insight into how maintaining basic movement and flexibility into older age can have a significant positive impact on independence, health and wellbeing. This will become increasingly important in the future.

# Healthy Eating

Local Lever	Recommendations	Strategic Alignment
<b>Protect and Support Breastfeeding and Healthy Diets for Children</b>	1. Continue to prioritise resource use for services that support breastfeeding and health diets for children, such as the Breastfeeding Support Workers, and Fife Loves Life.	Children's Services Plan
	2. Promote the NHS Fife Child Healthy Weight Toolkit to professionals who work with families to support consistent evidence-based communication about child diet and physical activity.	Children's Services Plan
	3. NHS Fife Child Healthy Weight Service to develop targeted approach to offering support from NHS Fife Child Healthy Weight Service in areas of deprivation and poor health outcomes.	Children's Services Plan
	4. Extend the Baby bites session into nurseries in all localities in Fife.	Children's Services Plan
<b>Improve uptake of school meals</b>	5. Work with stakeholders to explore best practice and evidence for how to further increase nutritional content and uptake of school lunches.	Children's Services Plan Food4Fife Strategy
	6. Work with stakeholders to explore how nutritional content and uptake of Café Inc can be promoted to families in receipt of free school meals.	Children's Services Plan Food4Fife Strategy
<b>Public Food Procurement and Provision Standards</b>	7. Public Sector organisations in Fife to explore the feasibility of promoting healthier options in catering provision by increasing the proportion of health food and drinks on offer to at least 75% in on-site catering outlets, providing price promotions on healthier items, reducing the calorie contents of food on offer, creating a mandatory calorie cap per item sold and providing free drinking water at catering outlets.	NHS Fife Anchor Strategy Food4Fife Strategy
<b>Utilising Planning/National Planning Framework 4 to Improve Food Environments</b>	8. NHS Fife and Fife Council to explore the feasibility of mapping food outlets and food growing as part of the local development plan process.	Fife's Place Plan (LDP2) Food4Fife Strategy

Local Lever	Recommendations	Strategic Alignment
<b>Reduction in Calories on Eating Out of Home Sector Menus</b>	9. NHS Fife, the Fife HSCP and Fife Council to explore the feasibility of a pilot to work with the out of home sector to explore understanding among retailers of the calories on their menus, and options to reduce these including portion size reduction.	Food4Fife Strategy
<b>Food Advertising</b>	10. NHS Fife and Fife Council to explore the feasibility of advertising healthy foods using existing sites or assets.	Fife's Place Plan (LDP2)
	11. NHS Fife and Fife Council to encourage community planning partner organisations to restrict advertising of products high in fat, sugar or salt in spaces and at events under their control.	Food4Fife Strategy
	12. Fife Council to explore roundabout sponsorship to exclude unhealthy food from advertising at these sites.	Fife's Place Plan (LDP2)
	13. NHS Fife and Fife Council to work collaboratively and with national partners to explore how NPF4 could be used locally to influence local planning decisions around unhealthy commodities.	Fife's Place Plan (LDP2)

# Active Living for Everyone

Systems Approach Theme	Recommendations	Strategy Alignment
<b>Active Places of Learning</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Fife adopt a “Whole of School Approach” in schools including to create active environments, policies and opportunities across all places of learning.</li> <li>2. Fife to prioritise suitable physical environments, dedicated time and resources to support structured and unstructured physical activity throughout the day.</li> </ol>	<p>Children’s Service Plan Plan for Fife ambitions</p> <p>Children’s Service Plan Plan for Fife ambitions</p>
<b>An Active Workplace</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Health Promotion Service to provide expert Public Health advice by implementing workplace health initiatives to support employees increase physical activity and reduce sedentary behaviour, particularly through increasing incidental physical activity during the working day.</li> <li>4. Health Promotion Service to co-ordinate the delivery of Moving More for Health and Wellbeing Training to increase understanding around the benefits of movement and physical activity for health and wellbeing, and to provide information and knowledge to support people to be more active.</li> </ol>	<p>Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy</p> <p>Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy</p>
<b>Sports and Recreation</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Through Active Fifers approach physical activity providers strengthen their understanding of barriers to participation in sport and recreation to develop programmes that prioritise the least active, while supporting those who are already active to remain so.</li> <li>6. Fife Council and Fife Sports and Leisure Trust physical activity providers to provide universally accessible programmes and mass participation events for people of all ages and abilities across our community settings and facilities.</li> </ol>	<p>Plan for Fife ambitions</p> <p>Plan for Fife ambitions</p>
<b>Active Places and Spaces</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Fife Council to strengthen access to good quality public and green spaces, green networks, recreational spaces (including blue), play and sports facilities through Fife’s Place Plan.</li> <li>8. Integrate urban design, transport planning and land-use policies to ensure increasing levels of physical activity is a priority within planning consideration.</li> </ol>	<p>Fife’s Place Plan (LDP2)</p> <p>Fife’s Place Plan (LDP2)</p>

Systems Approach Theme	Recommendations	Strategy Alignment
<b>Active Travel and Transportation</b>	9. Through implantation of the finalised Active Travel Strategy, Fife Council prioritise investment in walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure and actions that influence active travel behaviour to encourage modal shift.	Local Transport Strategy for Fife 2023-2033
	10. NHS Fife to finalise an Active and Sustainable Travel Plan to support an increase in active travel by staff and patients.	NHS Fife Active and Sustainable Travel Plan
<b>Active Health and Social Care Services</b>	11. NHS Fife and Fife Health and Social Care Partnership review and integrate the NHS Physical Pathway and develop programmes to support health care professionals to encourage patients to be more active.	Population Health and Wellbeing Strategy
	12. Develop partnerships between health and social care professionals and physical activity providers to embed the provision of appropriate physical activity opportunities and programmes for different patient groups.	Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy



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**fife.EqualityandHumanRights@nhs.scot** or phone **01592 729130**

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# Fife Partnership Board

[www.fife.gov.uk/committee/fifepartnership](http://www.fife.gov.uk/committee/fifepartnership)

Agenda Item No 7.

5 August 2025

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## Public Performance Report 2024/25

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**Report by:** Michael Enston, Executive Director – Communities

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### Purpose

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To provide a high-level review of progress against the Plan for Fife priorities and ambitions for the 2024/25 period.

### Recommendations

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That Fife Partnership Board

1. Consider the progress and challenges highlighted across the components that compromise this year's Public Performance Report (PPR) product.
2. Provide comment on the approach to reporting this year's PPR.
3. Provide comment and/or approve the content of this year's PPR to be published in the public domain.

### Resource Implications

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None

### Consultation

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Presentation of an annual review report, updated OurFife webpages highlighting case studies and evidence, and exploring different digital tools to create a video has been approved by the Plan for Fife Leadership Board. Each component of this year's PPR has been developed in consultation with Plan for Fife Delivery Board Programme Managers, and Partnership and Network Coordinators.



**#Keeping  
The Promise  
in Fife**

# 1.0 Background

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- 1.1. Annual reporting to Fife Partnership Board on performance against Fife's Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) is a requirement of the statutory duty of Community Planning.
- 1.2. Fife Partnership Board agreed and endorsed the decision to take a different approach to presenting the annual Public Performance Report for 2024/25, through exploring the use of digital tools and providing less focus on data and more focus on evidence of impact through use of case studies.
- 1.3. This year's 'review report', attached in Appendix 1, provides a focus on the indicators and does not include the State of Fife or Community Planning Outcomes Profile. These datasets were brought to Fife Partnership Board previously as part of Fife's Strategic Assessment.

# 2.0 Approach

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- 2.1. In addition to the assessment in the review report, an ongoing exercise to collate case studies and evidence to illustrate the range and extent of activities and achievements throughout 2024/25 is available as online content <https://our.fife.scot/plan4fife/progress>
- 2.2. This content does not replicate existing partner reports but is an additional mechanism to develop a wider picture of the Partnership's work and collaboration of partners to improve community outcomes.
- 2.3. Additionally, this year will present a new approach taken by Fife Partnership, exploring digital tools to showcase activity across partners in the form of a video. This video will highlight activity using real-life examples, videos and photos from key events and project milestones to show the impact of Partnership work and collaboration in communities.
- 2.4. The approach this year demonstrates the Partnership's commitment to continuous improvement to public reporting and demonstrating best value through reporting in a variety of formats and rather than a singular product.

# 3.0 Key Messages

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- 3.1. This year's review of priorities and ambitions, and with the added evidence of case studies highlighting impact, shows a mixed landscape of progress, and highlighting previous stubborn challenges that still exist.

Positively;

- The percentage of Fife's children living in low-income households has reduced from the previous year.
- The proportion of Fife pupils entering positive destinations continues to increase, while those most deprived have also shown an increase.
- Recorded crime levels show a reduction from the previous year.
- Fife's employment rate remains slightly higher than the Scottish rate, and an increase from the previous year.

Negatively;

- Both relative and absolute poverty levels remain higher than Scottish rates.
- Current rates of All Cause Premature Mortality for under 75s shows a continuing increase.
- Participation by both females and males in most physical activities continues to show a reduction in those taking part, with the latest year showing the lowest levels since 2015. Use of local authority sports and leisure facilities also shows a corresponding reduction, with the latest year having the lowest level since 2007/2008.
- Levenmouth, Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath areas continue to have a high number and rate of people claiming out-of-work benefits.
- The number of Crisis Grants continues to reduce, however, the amount of spend on Community Care Grants has increased three-fold since pandemic levels, which reflects the current economic situation and increased cost of household products and appliances.

3.2. These findings are a continuation, for the most part, from the previous year which highlighted significant inequalities between most and least deprived communities.

3.3. Positive relationships have been developed and built across partners over the last twelve months, resulting in a more comprehensive response from partnership coordinators and programme managers to showcase and highlight the impact of their work.

3.4. The range of content and impact of work undertaken has been largely supported through Partnership Coordinators and Programme Managers, with an aim to move away from simple metrics to measure impact and through using case studies and evidence as additional supporting information.

## 4.0 Next Steps

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4.1. Continue to base annual Public Performance Reports on activity around the Plan for Fife priorities and demonstrate the impact and evidence of Fife's approach to;

- Tackling the root causes of poverty and inequality
- Building the local economy and community wealth
- Addressing the impacts of climate change

4.2. Case studies and evidence will continue to be uploaded from partners and highlighted throughout the year via <https://our.fife.scot/plan4fife/progress>

## Appendices

### **Appendix 1: Plan for Fife Annual Review of Priorities and Ambitions 2025**

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# Fife Partnership Public Performance Report 2024-2025

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# Executive Summary

Building on the 2021-24 Recovery and Renewal Plan, the Fife Partnership Board in May 2024 committed to continuing its focus on key priorities for 2024-27, with an emphasis on refining delivery mechanisms. The core priorities remain tackling the root cause of poverty and inequality, strengthening the local economy and community wealth, and addressing climate change impacts. The established outcomes from the Recovery and Renewal Plan continue to guide the Delivery Boards through 2025.






This report highlights mixed progress across these priorities amid ongoing challenges including post-Covid recovery and the cost of living crisis. While some areas show improvement, others reveal persistent issues requiring sustained attention.

The report underscores the ongoing challenges faced by partners across Fife but also highlights opportunities arising from enhanced collaboration. This cooperative approach will be vital as the partnership advances into the final phase of delivering the current plan's ambitions.

This document is part of a suite of products providing information and updates on Fife's performance throughout 2024/25. The data used to develop this report was correct as at 19th May 2025.

For information on current and ongoing activity across Partners please visit [ourfife.scot/plan4fife/progress](https://ourfife.scot/plan4fife/progress)

## Key findings include:

 Opportunities for all	Despite levels of child poverty, educational attainment and positive destinations for school leavers—especially from deprived areas—have improved.
 Thriving places	Homelessness and temporary accommodation cases have decreased, though levels remain high; crime and anti-social behavior have declined; cultural and leisure participation has grown despite reduced physical activity.
 Inclusive growth & jobs	Employment rates have increased, exceeding Scottish averages, with unemployment falling below pre-Covid levels. Business survival rates have improved but lag behind Scotland overall. Visitor numbers and spending have surpassed pre-pandemic figures.
 Community led services	Crisis grant reliance has declined, while public engagement in local decision-making has risen.
 Addressing climate change	Carbon emissions continue to fall, though the overall carbon footprint has slightly increased but remains below pre-Covid levels.

# Economy and Community Wealth Building

## Progress 2024/25

- The Leading Economic Recovery Board and Community Wealth Building Support Group merged to form the new Economy & Community Wealth Building Board, strengthening the alignment of delivery of the Fife Economic Strategy with Community Wealth Building
- Business Gateway Fife (BGF) supported a total of 563 new business start-ups, 51 fewer start-ups than the previous year, but the highest number of any local authority area in Scotland by a significant margin (the next highest was Glasgow City with 434 starts). It is expected that this support will have helped create 682.5 full-time employment new jobs; 53% of starts supported were female-led businesses.
- Phase 1 of the regeneration of Riverside Park in Glenrothes was opened to the public in April.
- Over 6,300 people facing barriers to employment participated in employability programmes commissioned by the Opportunities Fife Partnership which ran throughout Fife with enhanced activity focused on Kirkcaldy, Levenmouth and Cowdenbeath. 2,400 or 38% of participants progressed into employment or self-employment.
- The Life Chances progressive approach to recruitment surpassed its target of 60 paid placements in 2024/25, providing opportunities for 77 individuals who received placements in Fife Council services, the third sector or NHS Fife. 23 have now moved into employment with Fife Council, 18 have had their placements extended, and 2 have gone into further / higher education.
- Completion of the Dunfermline Learning Campus and the creation of significant local economic growth through the project delivery and community benefits. The project delivered over £34m of Social, Local and Economic Value, including over £20m spend in local supply chain.

## Opportunities

- The Forth Green Freeport, which became fully operational in June 2024, offers significant employment and investment opportunities for Rosyth and Burntisland and surrounding areas.
- Opportunity to scale successful projects from learning and putting into practice what works. Local successes and shared learning across Scotland and beyond can lead to further opportunities to deliver the Community Wealth Building model at scale and increase impact.
- Community Wealth Building legislation introduced to Scottish Parliament in March 2025 will give added weight to community wealth building activity and the requirement for action plans and implementation locally, regionally and nationally, providing both opportunities and challenges for Fife.

## Challenges

- Leadership, behaviour and culture is required to fully embed Community Wealth Building in mainstream practice, backed up by measurable success and impact. Challenges remain in embedding CWB at scale due to established policy approaches, systems and processes
- Continued uncertainty around of funding of future UK and Scottish Government for economic development and employability programmes
- In 2024, the total number of businesses in Fife decreased for the fourth consecutive year although the number of small and medium sized companies increased.
- The economic inactivity rate in Fife decreased to 21.1% of the working age population, after reaching a record high of 26.9% in 2022. There are however still just under 48,000 people aged 16-64 who are economically inactive in the region, 42% of whom (an estimated 20,300 people), cited long-term ill-health as the reason for their inactivity.

# Tackling Poverty and Preventing Crisis

## Progress 2024/25

- The 2024/25 Cost-of-Living Programme was supported with £3.6 million of funding in the areas of fuel, food and cash support – mostly at the point of crisis.
- Fife added £2 million to the existing Scottish Welfare Fund allocation from the Scottish Government.
- There is a high number of repeat applications for cash help from the Scottish Welfare Fund.
- Further preventative measures focus on benefit maximisation campaigns and energy advice and fuel top-ups.
- The benefit take up campaigns are bringing significant financial gain for people -the campaign of the new Carers Support payment ran 2024/25 and brought in £1.9 million for unpaid carers in Fife.
- The 89 Warm and welcoming places have helped bring people together, reduce isolation and improve connectedness.
- The Low-Income Family Tracker (LIFT) has provided evidence of current and future need, helping to target for example, pensioners entitled but not claiming pension credit . Pension Credit gains for the last financial year only is over £2.2 million.

## Opportunities

- The implementation of the, 'No Wrong Door' approach is offering early advice and support to households to address issues related to housing, employment, income maximisation, fuel/ food poverty and family issues.
- Priority is being given to delivering the Scottish Welfare Fund differently with early support built in to ensure there is preventative action for those reaching financial crisis points.
- The benefit take up campaigns are bringing significant financial gain for people -the campaign of the new Carers Support payment ran 2024/25 and brought in £1.9 million for unpaid carers in Fife.

## Challenges

- The Tackling Poverty and Preventing Crisis Board has identified learning and lessons from the considerable resource investment in crisis support in recent years including the need for greater understanding on impact and fragmented funding investment and commissioning across partners.

# Addressing the Climate Emergency

## Progress 2024/25

- Grid assessments are being conducted at three priority locations to progress renewable energy and battery storage projects, supporting decarbonisation and potential heat network zones. This initiative will integrate with other models, including Fife Council's energy business model work, rather than functioning as a standalone project.
- To enhance climate resilience and improve our capacity to withstand and recover from climate impacts, we are currently evaluating our resilience maturity using the Adaptation Capability Framework. This tool will not only determine our maturity level but also identify strengths, weaknesses, and necessary measures for improvement.
- An Energy Vision Prospectus was carried out in Dunfermline and Rosyth Area to highlight a scenario for heat network and energy which best meets local needs. This area was chosen as there is already an existing heat network which can be expanded and has multiple new developments – both social and industrial – which would benefit from and/or contribute to this energy plan. It is hoped by summer 2025, that Fife Council will have developed a full heat network vision and Dunfermline & Rosyth Energy Plan.

## Opportunities

- Potential of combining energy projects with nature, landscape and community initiatives to leverage and attract more funding and enable larger scale projects.

## Challenges

- To effectively tackle the climate emergency, it is crucial to shift cultures to recognise it as a core issue. To do this will involve raising awareness, embedding climate related goals into strategic plans, a commitment from leadership, promoting more collaborative efforts to develop solutions and establishing systems to monitor, track and report on climate-related initiatives.

# Review of Ambitions Progress

This review of progress against the ambitions aligned with the Plan for Fife combines data against performance indicators which have been listed under each ambition.

## Opportunities for All



Ambition	Progress
<b>Fife has lower levels of poverty in line with national targets</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Median weekly earnings</li> <li>% of children living in low-income households</li> <li>Fuel poor and extreme fuel poor households</li> <li>% of children with health concerns at 27-30 months</li> <li>Number of children meeting developmental milestones</li> <li>Number of child protection re-registrations within 18 months</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The percentage of Fife's children living in low-income households has reduced from the previous year, although both relative and absolute poverty levels remain above the Scottish rates. Fife has also seen a slightly larger decrease in the rate of children living in relative poverty compared to Scotland.</li> <li>It should be noted that these new child poverty figures now take account of the introduction of the Scottish Child Payment, and are therefore not directly comparable with previous years' figures.</li> </ul>
<b>Educational Attainment continues to improve for all groups</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School attendance rates</li> <li>% of P1, P4 and P7 pupils achieving desired literacy and numeracy levels</li> <li>% of young people achieving SCQF level 5 literacy and numeracy levels by end of S4</li> <li>Pupils entering positive destination, and those from most deprived areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Numbers of young people achieving Literacy and Numeracy at SCQF level 5 has increased overall since 2018/19, although levels for the latest year have reduced from the previous year.</li> <li>The percentage of Primary 1, Primary 4 and Primary 7 pupils achieving expected Curriculum for Excellence (CFE) level in Literacy and Numeracy has increased over the last four years, although current levels are still below those of 2018/19.</li> <li>The proportion of Fife pupils entering positive destinations has increased from 2019/20, while those (most deprived) have also shown a slight increase from the previous year and remain above pre-Covid levels.</li> </ul>
<b>Fife has reduced levels of preventable ill health and premature mortality across all communities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Life expectancy in males and females</li> <li>All cause premature mortality rate in under 75s</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current rates of All Cause Premature Mortality for under 75s in Fife, show a continuing increase from 2018/19, with the Covid year showing the highest levels.</li> </ul>



# Review of Ambitions Progress

## Thriving Places



Ambition	Progress
<b>Everyone has access to affordable housing options</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of children experiencing homelessness or in temporary accommodation</li> <li>% occupancy in temporary accommodation</li> <li>Number of people rough sleeping</li> <li>Number of Housing Option Plans completed via the Fife Housing Register website</li> <li>Number of new affordable housing units delivered</li> <li>Cumulative number of new affordable housing units delivered</li> <li>Number of households homeless/potentially homeless</li> <li>Homeless allocations</li> <li>New tenancies sustained for more than one year by source of let</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>While the cumulative number of new affordable housing units delivered in Fife has shown year-on-year increases since 2018/19, the number of housing units delivered each year peaked in 2022/23, and since then the number has reduced year-on-year.</li> <li>The current number of Fife households that are homeless, potentially homeless, or have children that are homeless, has shown continued reductions since 2022/23, with reductions also seen in numbers of people in temporary accommodation since 2018/19.</li> <li>The proportion of homeless allocations in Fife has reduced from the previous year but remain above levels in 2018/19.</li> </ul>
<b>Fife's main town centres stand out as attractive places to live, work and visit</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retail vacancy rates (Kirkcaldy, Leven, Dunfermline, Glenrothes, Cowdenbeath and St. Andrews)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Between 2020 and 2024, retail vacancy rates fell in Leven, Cowdenbeath, Burntisland and St Andrews. Over the same period, Kincardine, Kirkcaldy, Glenrothes and Dunfermline continued to have high vacancy rates.</li> </ul>
<b>All our communities benefit from low levels of crime and anti-social behaviour</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recorded crimes by Police Scotland (Fife Division)</li> <li>Number of anti-social behaviour cases reported</li> <li>% of reported anti-social behaviour cases which were resolved</li> <li>Perception of prevalence of neighbourhood problems; vandalism, graffiti or other deliberate damage to property</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recorded crime levels show a reduction from the previous year, although levels are higher than in 2018/19.</li> <li>The proportion of anti-social behaviour cases resolved has continued to reduce since 2018/19 and are now at significantly lower levels. This is against a backdrop of reducing numbers of anti-social behaviour cases being reported in recent years.</li> <li>Prevalence of neighbourhood problems, e.g. vandalism, graffiti, etc, has reduced from the previous year, but remains above 2018/19 levels.</li> </ul>

# Review of Ambitions Progress

## Thriving Places



Ambition	Progress
<p><b>Every Community has access to high quality outdoor, cultural and leisure opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>⦿ Male and female participation in physical activity</li><li>⦿ Satisfaction rates in museums and galleries, parks and open spaces, and leisure facilities</li><li>⦿ Attendance at all outdoor sport and leisure facilities</li><li>⦿ OnFife Theatre visitor numbers</li><li>⦿ Visits to/usage of Council funded or part-funded museums</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Participation in physical activity by both females and males has reduced considerably from the previous year, and current numbers are significantly lower than levels seen in 2018/19.</li><li>● Attendance at outdoor sport and leisure facilities show continuous increases in numbers since 2018/19. Library visits have continued to increase year-on-year since the Covid period, although are currently lower than pre-Covid years.</li><li>● Visits to Fife’s theatres and museums have both shown increases since the post-Covid period, but museum visits remain below the levels seen before Covid.</li></ul>

# Review of Ambitions Progress

## Inclusive Growth and Jobs



### Ambition

### Progress

#### **Economic Activity and Employment in Fife is improving faster than the rest of Scotland**

- ⦿ New business start-ups supported by Business Gateway
- ⦿ New businesses surviving at least 3 years
- ⦿ Employment rate
- ⦿ Unemployment rate
- ⦿ Claimant count as a % of Working Age Population
- ⦿ Immediate available land as a % of total land allocated for employment purposes
- ⦿ Number of properties receiving Superfast Broadband
- ⦿ Number of businesses participating in Supplier Development Programme
- ⦿ Number of participants progressing from Fife Council funded/operated employability programmes into employment

- Fife's latest employment rate is slightly higher than that for Scotland as a whole, and is the same as the previous year, in contrast to Scotland which has seen a very slight decrease.
- Fife's unemployment rate is slightly higher than that for Scotland, but is lower than the previous year. Both Fife and Scotland's unemployment rates are now lower than prior to the Covid pandemic.
- Levenmouth and Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath areas continue to have a high number and rate of people claiming out-of-work benefits in Fife; this has been the case for some time.
- The proportion of new Fife businesses surviving for at least 3 years has been lower than at the Scottish level for the last few years. This is in contrast to the pre-Covid period, where Fife's survival rates were higher than Scottish rates. While Fife's business survival rates have improved in the most recent year, from the previous year, survival rates still remain below pre-Covid levels.

#### **Economic Activity and Employment in Mid-Fife is catching up with the rest of Fife and Scotland**

Economic Activity and Employment in Mid-Fife is catching up with the rest of Fife and Scotland. Differences between areas are tracked through Local Economic Profiles and Quarterly Labour Market Updates.

- Fife Council's town centre capital investment continues to be used to lever additional external funding. Recent investment includes the completion of the Adam Smith Theatre refurbishment in Kirkcaldy and the delivery of a place making project in Leven between the railway and bus stations. The second phase of public realm improvements at Kirkcaldy waterfront and Volunteer's Green are also now complete.

#### **Fife has year on year increase in visitor numbers and tourism spend**

- ⦿ Total number of visitors to Fife
- ⦿ Total full-time employment supported by Tourism in Fife
- ⦿ Economic impact of Tourism in Fife

- Visitor numbers to Fife continue to increase year-on-year and remain above pre-Covid levels.
- Tourism spending in Fife continues to increase post-Covid and remains above the level seen prior to Covid.

# Review of Ambitions Progress

## Community-Led Services



### Ambition

### Progress

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

- ⊙ Number of Crisis Grants
- ⊙ Spend on Crisis Grants
- ⊙ Number of Community Care Grants
- ⊙ Spend on Community Care Grants

- The number of crises grants continues to reduce from 2022/23 onwards, and spending on crises grants during this time has also reduced.
- While the number of community care grants has reduced by around one-third since Covid, the amount of spend has increased three-fold.

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

- ⊙ % of people agreeing they can influence decisions and in 20% most deprived

- The proportion of people saying that they can influence local decision-making has increased in recent years and is now at a higher level than pre-Covid.

## Addressing the Climate Emergency



### Ambition

### Progress

**Fife has lower levels of carbon emissions in line with national targets**

- ⊙ CO<sup>2</sup> emissions area wide within scope of LA per capita
- ⊙ Area Wide Emissions
- ⊙ Total Fife Council Carbon Footprint – tCO<sub>2</sub>e (tonnes of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent)

- Fife's carbon emissions continue to reduce year-on-year and are now at their lowest levels since 2018/19.
- Fife's carbon footprint, while increasing from the previous year, still remains below pre-Covid levels.

# Fife Partnership Public Performance Report 2024-25

If you would like any further information about this report or the work of the Fife Partnership please visit the Fife Council Community Portal at [our.fife.scot](https://our.fife.scot) or email: [fife.partnership@fife.gov.uk](mailto:fife.partnership@fife.gov.uk)



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