

Fife Local Economic Profiles 2023-2024

These profiles provide a summary of business support, strategic investment and employability activity carried out by Fife Council's Business & Employability Services in 2023/24.

They also provide an overview of the characteristics and performance of Fife's business base and labour market. The profiles are based on a range of publicly-available socio-economic data. Whilst many of the data have a time lag, the figures presented are the most up-to-date available at the time of writing.

Unless otherwise stated, the data are broken down to the areas covered by each of Fife Council's seven [Local Area Committees](#).

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Levenmouth Business Park



Forth Green Freeport's Rosyth waterfront vision



Fife fitout specialist Deanestor

Supporting Local Businesses

Supporting new business start-ups and their early survival

Business Gateway Fife supported a total of 614 new business start-ups during 2023/24, 111 more than the previous year and the highest number supported since 2019/20 (Figure 2). It is expected that this support will have helped create 812 new jobs (Figure 1).

Helping small and medium-sized local businesses to grow, accelerate their transition to net zero emissions and adopt digital technologies

Over 2,800 existing businesses received support from Business Gateway Fife's business advisory services; this support focused on addressing the challenges posed by the increased costs of doing business. (Figure 1).

274 businesses received financial support; support which is estimated to have supported 1,276 jobs (Figure 3).

Funding from the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund was used to deliver a SME (Small & Medium-Sized Enterprises) Development Grants Scheme aimed at supporting the growth ambitions of local businesses. Grants up to £20k to support net zero and digital development ambitions were awarded to 105 businesses through a Business Efficiency Grant Scheme.

During 2023/24, the Trade Development Programme supported 273 businesses to attend and exhibit at 63 major trade shows, events and workshops.

The first Fife Food & Drink Week was held in March 2024. The week of events showcased local food producers and suppliers across the Kingdom and supported the 2024-29 Food4Fife Food Strategy's Food Economy Pillar.

A Skills & Training Needs in Fife survey was carried out with Fife College in February 2024 to help align the training provision on offer with businesses' evolving needs.

Developing and strengthening local supply chains and optimising the level of public sector expenditure retained within Fife's economy

Over 690 attendees participated in 22 events at the 15th Annual Fife Business Week in November 2024. The week included the flagship Meet the Buyer event featuring a 'Construction Zone' connecting local businesses with major buyers and a 'Hydrogen Opportunities for Fife Businesses' session.

In September 2023 an inaugural 'Fit for Defence Programme' was delivered in partnership with Make UK Defence, providing targeted support to eight Fife-based businesses.

A new 'Build Fife Programme' took place for the first time over 8-weeks in February and March 2024. Delivered in partnership with Hub East Central Scotland and Tier 1 construction contractors, the programme provided 12 companies with skills and knowledge for trading in the construction sector.

The Alibaba Trade programme was also delivered for the first time in early 2024, giving six Fife businesses the opportunity to engage with Alibaba, the world's largest business-to-business e-commerce platform.

Attracting and supporting inward investment

Investment prospectuses were produced for Levenmouth, Dunfermline and Kirkcaldy.

The City of Dunfermline's investment potential was showcased to national and international investors and developers at Scottish Cities Week in London in January 2024; in May Fife's top investment opportunities were showcased at the UK Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum (UKREiiF) in Leeds as part of the Scottish Cities Alliance.

Figure 1: Businesses Supported by Business Gateway Fife (BGF) 2023/24

	Cowdenbeath Area	Dunfermline	Glenrothes Area	Kirkcaldy Area	Levenmouth	North East Fife	South & West Fife	Fife
No. of businesses receiving Expert Help	9	20	25	18	8	16	17	113
No. of businesses accessing business growth services	270	444	418	519	227	576	354	2,808
No. of Business Gateway-supported start-ups	73	96	88	115	64	92	80	614*
No. of jobs created from BGF start-up support	83	116	147	155	89	112	98	812*
Turnover generated	£2,149,500	£3,582,000	£3,681,300	£3,968,500	£2,081,000	£2,356,500	£2,626,500	£20,595,300*

Source: Business Gateway Fife.

Note: * include 6 start-ups with an address outwith Fife which together created 12 jobs and generated turnover of £150,000.

Figure 2: Number of Start-Ups supported by Business Gateway Fife (BGF) 2019/20 - 2023/24

	Cowdenbeath Area	Dunfermline	Glenrothes Area	Kirkcaldy Area	Levenmouth	North East Fife	South & West Fife	Fife*
2019/21	51	96	103	121	44	111	88	615
2020/21	60	73	93	85	36	101	70	518
2021/22	80	102	80	125	51	93	72	603
2022/23	51	70	59	116	47	85	68	503
2023/24	73	96	88	115	64	92	80	614

Source: Business Gateway Fife.

Note: * include start-ups with an address outwith Fife.

Figure 3: Financial Support Given to Businesses in Fife 2023/24

	Cowdenbeath Area	Dunfermline	Glenrothes Area	Kirkcaldy Area	Levenmouth	North East Fife	South & West Fife	Fife
No. of businesses supported	33	41	47	48	16	53	36	274
Value of financial support approved	£28,134	£89,748	£84,257	£80,434	£19,554	£74,648	£73,716	£450,490
Jobs created as a result of financial support	82	252	212	245	45	208	232	1,276

Source: Fife Council Economic Development.

Note: includes support given to businesses by the Fife Investment Fund (Fife Council funded) and the SME Development Grant and Start-up Grant Schemes (funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund)

Fife's Business Base

Number and Size of Businesses

Figure 4: Number of Enterprises 2024: Scottish Parliamentary Constituency Areas (SPCAs), Fife & Scotland

	Cowdenbeath SPCA	Dunfermline SPCA	Kirkcaldy SPCA	Mid Fife & Glenrothes SPCA	North East Fife SPCA	Fife	Scotland
Number of Enterprises March 2024	1,505	1,845	1,650	1,565	2,390	8,950	172,255
Percentage of Fife Total	16.8%	20.6%	18.4%	17.5%	26.7%	-	-
Change 2020-2024	-425	-175	-255	-65	-20	-950	-5,440
Percentage Change 2020-2024	-22.0%	-8.7%	-13.4%	-4.0%	-0.8%	-9.6%	-3.1%
Change 2023-24	0	-20	+20	-5	-25	-30	+905
Percentage Change 2023-2024	0%	-1.1%	+1.2%	-0.3%	-1.0%	-0.3%	+0.5%

Change in Number of Businesses 2020-2024:

Between March 2020 and March 2024, the number of enterprises in Fife fell by 950 businesses or -9.6% (Figure 4). This followed a period of sustained growth between 2015 and 2020.

Cowdenbeath SPCA saw the largest fall between 2020 and 2024 (-425 businesses or -22.0%) and North East Fife the smallest fall (-0.8%).

Micro-businesses (those employing 0-9 employees) were the only type of business to reduce in number. All areas, apart from Mid Fife & Glenrothes, saw an increase in the number of larger businesses (Figure 5).

Source: ONS UK Business Counts, 2024.

Note: The number of enterprises registered for VAT and/or PAYE that were live on 8 March 2024. Does not therefore include unregistered enterprises (sole traders and partnerships) who are not VAT and/or PAYE registered. As all numbers are rounded to the nearest zero or 5, all zeros are not necessarily true zeros, numbers below 10 should be viewed with caution and the Fife totals may not equal the sum of the five Fife SPCA figures.

Figure 5: Change in the number of enterprises by Scottish Parliamentary Constituency Area (SPCA) and Size 2020-2024

	Cowdenbeath SPCA		Dunfermline SPCA		Kirkcaldy SPCA		Mid Fife & Glenrothes SPCA		North East Fife SPCA		Fife	
	2024	Change 2020-24	2024	Change 2020-24	2024	Change 2020-24	2024	Change 2020-24	2024	Change 2020-24	2024	Change 2020-24
Micro (0 to 9 employees)	1,325	-435	1,640	-185	1,400	-260	1,340	-60	2,090	-30	7,790	-980
Small (10 to 49 employees)	150	10	170	10	210	0	185	0	255	5	975	25
Medium (50 to 249 employees)	25	0	30	0	35	5	30	-5	35	5	155	5
Large (250+ employees)	5	0	10	5	5	0	10	0	10	0	35	0

Businesses by Size:

Kirkcaldy and the Mid-Fife and Glenrothes Scottish Parliamentary Constituency Areas have the highest proportions of small, medium, and large businesses (Figure 6).

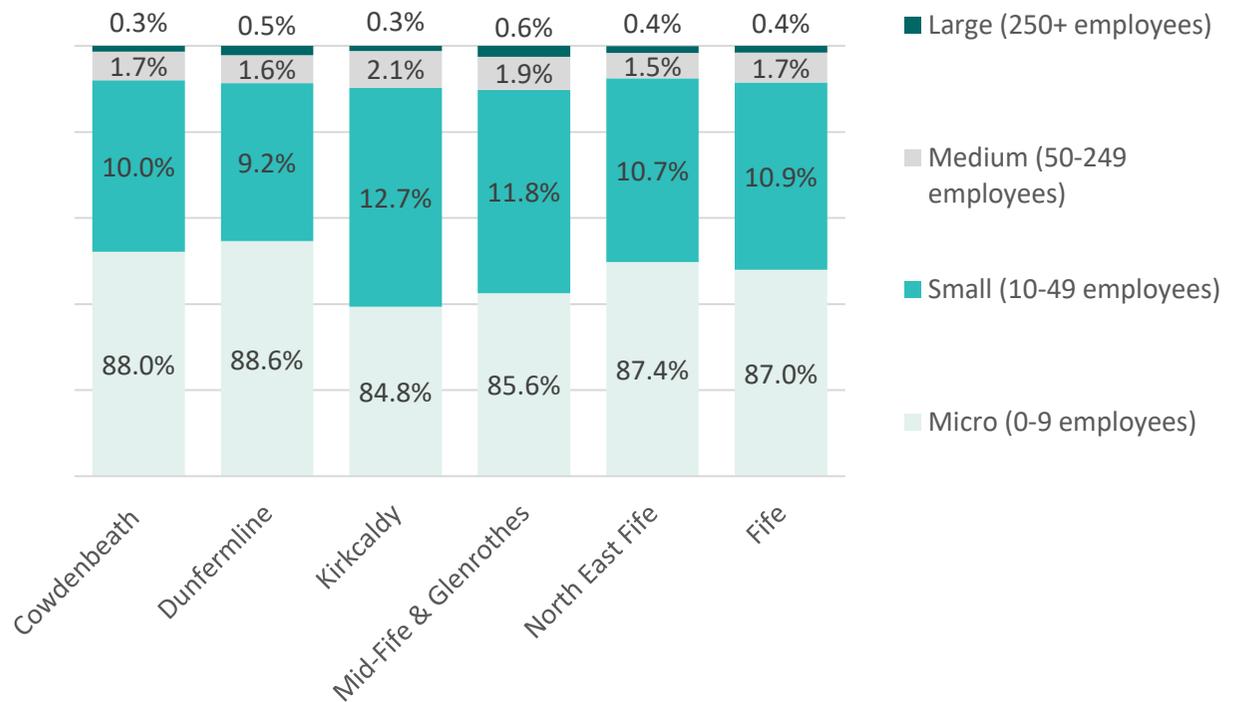
Dunfermline SPCA has the highest proportion of micro businesses (88.6%) followed by Cowdenbeath (88.0%) and North East Fife (87.4%).

Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath SPCAs have the lowest proportion of large businesses.

Source: UK Business Counts, 2024.

Note: The number of VAT and/or PAYE registered enterprises that were live on 8 March 2024. Does not therefore include unregistered enterprises (sole traders and partnerships) who are not VAT and/or PAYE registered. As all numbers are rounded to the nearest zero or 5, all zeros are not necessarily true zeros, numbers below 10 should be viewed with caution and the Fife totals may not equal the sum of the five Fife SPCA figures.

Figure 6: Proportion of businesses by size, Fife, 2024



Business Births

In 2023, both the number of new business start-ups and the business start-up rate in Fife fell for a second year.

A total of 990 new businesses started up in 2023, 30 or 2.9% fewer than in 2022 when there were 1,020 new business registrations.

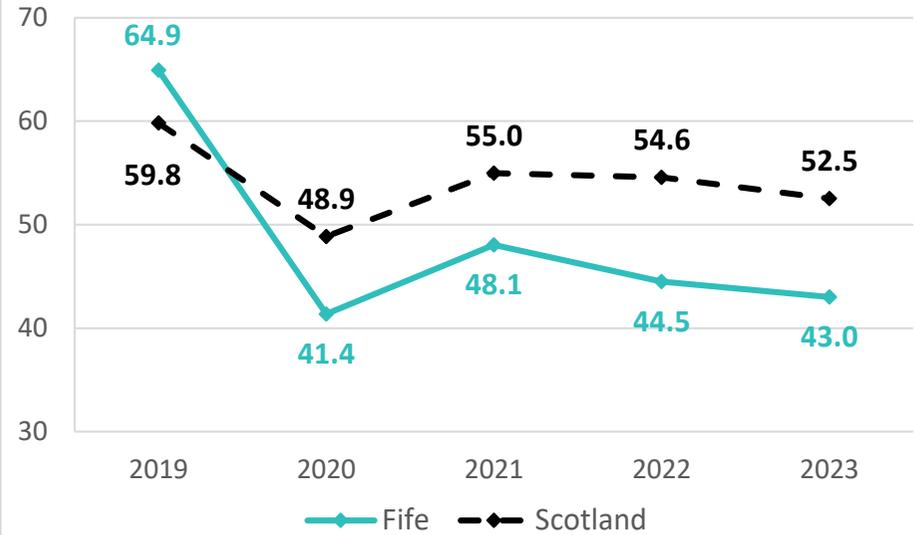
In Scotland as a whole, the number of business births fell at a slightly greater rate (-3.2%) between 2022 and 2023.

As a result, the gap between Fife's start-up rate and that for Scotland as a whole narrowed slightly after increasing in 2022. (Figure 7).

Source: ONS Business Demography, UK (2023).

Note: These figures do not include unregistered enterprises (sole traders and partnerships who are not VAT and/or PAYE registered). They should be viewed with caution as they include registered holding companies and duplicate bank accounts.

Figure 7: New business start-ups per 10,000 working age adults (16-64) 2019-2023



Business Survival Rates

Figure 8: Survival of New Start Businesses 2023

	Percentage of businesses surviving 1 year (born 2022)	Percentage of businesses surviving 2 years (born 2021)	Percentage of businesses surviving 3 years (born 2020)
Fife	92.6%	69.5%	54.2%
Scotland	92.5%	72.7%	56.0%

Whilst the proportion of new businesses in Fife surviving their first year of operation was the same as in Scotland as a whole, the proportions surviving a second and third year were below the Scottish rates.

In 2023, the 3-year survival rate of businesses in Fife (54.2%) was higher than in 2022 (44.8%) but lower than in 2020 (58.7%). Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, Fife's 3-year business survival rates were higher than the national rates.

Source: ONS Business Demography, UK 2023.

Note: These figures do not include unregistered enterprises (sole traders and partnerships who are not VAT and/or PAYE registered).

Business Densities

In 2024, Fife had a business stock rate, or business density, of 288 registered businesses per 10,000 resident adults (aged 16+) compared with 377 businesses per 10,000 adults in Scotland as a whole (Figure 9)

The North East Fife Scottish Parliamentary Constituency Area (SPCA) is the only part of Fife with an overall business density above the Fife rate. It has a much higher density of micro and small businesses than the rest of Fife.

The Dunfermline SPCA has the second highest density of micro businesses and Kirkcaldy and Mid-Fife and Glenrothes have the second highest density of small businesses in Fife.

Cowdenbeath SPCA has the lowest business density in Fife, followed by Kirkcaldy. Cowdenbeath would need a 50% increase in the number of registered businesses (758 additional businesses) and Kirkcaldy would need a 47% increase (783 businesses) to reach the Scottish business density. The Cowdenbeath SPCA has the lowest rate of micro and small businesses in Fife.

Source: ONS Business Counts 2024 and National Records for Scotland Mid-2021 Population Estimates.

Note: These figures do not include unregistered enterprises (sole traders and partnerships who are not VAT and/or PAYE registered).

Figure 9: Number of registered businesses per 10,000 resident adults by enterprise size

Area	Micro (0-9 employees)	Small (10-49 employees)	Medium (50-249 employees)	Large (250+ employees)	All sizes
Cowdenbeath SPCA	221	25	4	1	251
Dunfermline SPCA	253	26	5	2	285
Kirkcaldy SPCA	217	33	5	1	256
Mid-Fife & Glenrothes SPCA	234	32	5	2	273
NE Fife SPCA	324	40	5	2	370
Fife	250	31	5	1	288
Scotland	330	39	6	2	377

Distribution of Employment

Figure 10: Number of Jobs in Fife 2019-2023

	Cowdenbeath Area	City of Dunfermline	Glenrothes Area	Kirkcaldy Area	Levenmouth	North East Fife	South & West Fife	Fife*
September 2019	8,000	30,000	25,000	22,000	10,000	24,000	16,000	138,000
September 2020	8,000	28,000	25,000	23,000	9,000	23,000	15,000	133,000
September 2021	9,000	31,000	24,000	24,000	10,000	25,000	15,000	142,000
September 2022	9,000	32,000	22,000	25,000	10,000	25,000	15,000	140,000
September 2023	9,000	29,000	22,000	25,000	10,000	25,000	15,000	138,000
% change 2019-2023	+12.5%	-3.3%	-12.0%	+13.6%	0.0%	+4.2%	-6.3%	0.0%

Change in Number of Jobs:

The number of jobs in Fife fell between 2022 and 2023, although employment in Fife in September 2023 was the same as before the pandemic in 2019.

The Kirkcaldy Area saw the largest proportionate increase in employment between 2019 and 2023 followed by the Cowdenbeath Area; over the same period, the Glenrothes Area, Dunfermline and South and West Fife saw job numbers fall. (Figure 10).

Between 2022 and 2023, job numbers fell in Dunfermline, but remained the same in all other parts of Fife.

Employment by Sector:

North East Fife has the largest share of Fife's jobs in Accommodation & Food Services, Arts, Entertainment & Recreation and Education (40.9%, 35.7% and 33.3% of Fife's jobs in these sectors respectively) (Figure 11 below).

50% of all employment in Public Administration & Defence Activities in Fife is located in the Glenrothes Area along with 25% of Fife's Manufacturing jobs.

41.5% of Fife's jobs in Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing* are located in Levenmouth.

75% of all employment in Financial & Insurance activities in Fife is located in Dunfermline, along with 64.3% of Fife's jobs in the Information & Communication sector and 50% of jobs in Transport & Storage.

Over a third (36.4%) of people in Fife working in the Human Health & Social Work Activities sector are employed in the Kirkcaldy Area.

Source: ONS Business Register & Employment Survey 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023. Note: * The Fife totals include farm agriculture while the committee area figures exclude farm agriculture. Employment estimates include employees plus the number of working owners who receive a share of the profits but are not paid via PAYE.

Figure 11: Employment by Sector, Fife 2023

Sector	Cowdenbeath Area	Dunfermline	Glenrothes Area	Kirkcaldy Area	Levenmouth	North East Fife	South & West Fife	Fife
A : Agriculture, forestry and fishing*	25	40	25	50	400	300	125	965
B : Mining and quarrying	0	0	10	20	0	125	30	125
C : Manufacturing	1,250	1,750	3,500	1,250	1,750	1,250	3,000	13,000
D : Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning	20	0	150	0	10	20	20	400
E : Water supply; sewerage, waste management	50	225	150	100	50	75	125	600
F : Construction	700	1,250	800	1,250	400	1,250	900	8,000
G : Wholesale and retail trade; vehicle repair	1,500	4,000	3,000	4,500	1,250	4,500	2,250	21,000
H : Transportation and storage	700	3,500	600	400	900	600	700	7,000
I : Accommodation and food service activities	450	2,000	1,000	1,750	700	4,500	900	11,000
J : Information and communication	50	2,250	125	350	20	175	600	4,000
K : Financial and insurance activities	10	2,250	125	175	35	75	400	3,000
L : Real estate activities	100	250	400	150	75	350	100	1,250
M : Professional, scientific and technical acts	225	2,000	600	900	350	1,000	1,500	6,000
N : Administrative and support service acts	300	1,500	600	1,000	250	900	800	7,000
O : Public admin, defence, social security	900	600	5,000	1,750	175	500	800	10,000
P : Education	1,250	2,250	1,500	2,250	1,000	5,000	1,250	14,000
Q : Human health and social work activities	1,250	4,500	2,250	8,000	2,000	2,500	1,000	20,000
R : Arts, entertainment and recreation	250	600	300	600	200	1,250	300	4,000
S : Other service activities	200	700	1,000	500	150	800	300	3,500
Total Employment*	9,000	29,000	22,000	25,000	10,000	25,000	15,000	135,000

Source: ONS Business Register & Employment Survey 2023.

Note: * excludes farm agriculture. Employment estimates include employees plus the number of working owners who receive a share of the profits but are not paid via PAYE. They do not however include those who are self-employed operating below the VAT threshold with no employees. The level of rounding applied varies by estimate, so zeros may not be true zeros and the data may not add up to the totals shown.

Creating Thriving Places : Investing in Premises & Infrastructure

Remediation of Vacant & Derelict Land

Figure 12: Extent of Vacant & Derelict Land in Fife 2024

Area Committee	Proportion of Fife's total Vacant & Derelict Land	Total Amount of Vacant & Derelict Land (ha)	Change in amount of Vacant & Derelict Land 2023-24 (ha)
Cowdenbeath	8.3%	58.5	+1.3
Dunfermline	1.5%	10.3	+1.1
Glenrothes	17.0%	119.8	-7.7
Kirkcaldy	5.7%	40.1	-1.1
Levenmouth	10.4%	73	-0.1
North East Fife	7.9%	55.5	-4
South and West Fife	49.2%	345.7	0
Total Fife	100%	702.9	-10.5

Source: Fife Council Vacant & Derelict Land Audit 2024

In 2024, there were 200 vacant & derelict land sites across Fife amounting to 703 hectares (Figure 12). Over the last 12 months, 5 sites representing 12.85 hectares of land have been brought back into use.

Derelict land has a broader impact than vacant land both in terms of total area (594 ha) and in the number of individual sites (151).

South & West Fife contains the largest proportion of vacant & derelict land (49.2% of Fife's total) and the Dunfermline Area the lowest (1.5%).

Since 2015/16, Fife Council has been one of five local authorities to receive funding from the Scottish Government's Vacant & Derelict Land Fund; in 2023/24, Fife was awarded £1.621 million from the fund.

Figure 13 below details a selection of current, proposed and completed projects supported by the Vacant & Derelict Land Fund.

Figure 13: Projects in Fife supported by the Vacant and Derelict Land Fund (VDLF)

Area Committee	Project
Cowdenbeath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ground stabilisation in support of Industrial estate regeneration at The Avenue, Lochgelly to support and unlock Fi3P investment*. • Demolitions, ground remediation and stabilisation in advance of proposed mixed-use affordable housing alongside commercial development in town centre sites in Cowdenbeath and Lochgelly (in partnership with Kingdom Housing). On the Cowdenbeath site it is intended that this will unlock support from the Fi3 Programme*.
Glenrothes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industrial estate regeneration at Queensway Industrial Estate with Phase 1 now complete and all new units let. Further VDLF investment now in place to support a work on units on Flemington Road which will be complemented by Fi3P investment*.
Kirkcaldy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regeneration of buildings on entry to the Ravenscraig Walled Garden which are now leased to Rural Skills Scotland and the Kirkcaldy Community Gardens and Allotments Group. This work is due to complete in Spring/early Summer 2025. • The proposed acquisition and remediation of a former Waste Transfer Site with Heads of Terms now agreed.
Levenmouth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making the former Flax Mill at Silverburn Country Park wind and watertight in advance of the ongoing redevelopment works. • Site remediation and preparation works for Cesscon Decom Ltd’s oil and gas decommissioning facility at Energy Park Fife. • Industrial estate regeneration at Levenmouth Business Park (Muiridge) and ground investigation at Mountfleurie Industrial Estate to assess ground stability in advance of potential extension of the estate. • Ground investigations and remediation projects in support of the SEPA-led ‘Leven Programme’ one of which won a national (UK-wide) Brownfield Award for Best Preparatory Work in October 2022. • The proposed acquisition/leasing and stabilisation of ground at Chemiss Road /School Road in Methilhill in support of community-led nature-based learning provision for local young people.
North East Fife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ground remediation/preparation works to the east of the Eden Campus in Guardbridge for the installation of a solar photovoltaic array which was officially opened in May 2022. • Demolitions, ground investigations and preparation in advance of a mixed-use affordable housing and commercial development at the Bonnygate/Inner Court in Cupar in partnership with Kingdom Housing Association. • Ground de-contamination and preparation work at the site of the former Abertay Steelworks in Tayport. Ownership of the site was taken over by the local Community Trust and now hosts a new-build Community Hub, called the Larick Centre. • VDLF investment to match that provided by the Fife Council Capital Programme in support of early restoration and repair at the Dutch Village, Craigtoun Country Park with Listed Building Consent for these works secured in November 2024.

Figure 13: Projects in Fife supported by the Vacant and Derelict Land Fund (VDLF) (continued)

Area Committee	Project
South & West Fife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industrial estate regeneration at Hillend in Dalgety Bay to support Fi3P investment*. • Acquisition and ground remediation/preparation of a site in Rosyth in support of a partnership project involving the Polish Consulate in Edinburgh, Babcock International and others to commemorate the Polish Navy submarine, ORP Orzel, which was lost on patrol while operating out of Rosyth in World War II.
All Fife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for the implementation of the Climate Fife Plan and its associated Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SECAP). This has included commissioning the Coal Authority to produce an Opportunity Map for Fife (with associated report) to assess potential locations for the use of mine water in geothermal district heat schemes. Support is also being given to the Fife Community Climate Action Network to assess the potential for community renewables (mainly ground-mounted solar PV) activity on a number of specified sites across Fife with the results of this expected in Spring/early Summer of 2025.

Source: Fife Council

Note: * Investment from the Fife Industrial Innovation Investment Programme (Fi3P) funded by the Edinburgh & South-East Scotland City Region Deal – see Figure 34 and the section below.

The **Fife Industrial Innovation Investment Programme (Fi3P)** is a £58 million ten-year programme delivered by Fife Council with grant funding from the Edinburgh and South-East Scotland City Region Deal. The programme is delivering new industrial, office and business space and serviced employment sites within existing business clusters in Mid and South Fife adjacent to growth corridors (M90 and A92) (Figure 14). The Fi3P started in April 2019 and is being delivered in 3 tranches; Tranche 1 was completed in March 2022. Tranche 2 is underway and will complete in March 2025. The Business Case for Tranche 3 has been approved and work will start in April 2025.

Investment in the Council's **Business Property Portfolio** in 2023/24 delivered a full internal refurbishment of Iona House in Kirkcaldy, new flooring at Kirkcaldy Business Incubator and new roofs at Fife Food Centre in Glenrothes and Dunfermline Business Centre. At the end of 2023/24, units in the Business Property Portfolio were 95% occupied and brought in £2.97m in annual rent income.

The **University of St Andrews' Eden Campus** in Guardbridge has completed the current phase of investment being funded as part of the **Tay Cities Region Deal**. Discussions are ongoing between the University and Fife Council to develop an Enterprise Hub which will provide space for innovative start-up businesses in the Campus.

The **Forth Green Freeport (FGF)**, which became operational in June 2024, is set to attract new businesses and jobs into Burntisland, Rosyth, Grangemouth and Leith by means of financial and tax incentives, simplified customs processes and place-based investment. In September, the FGF's Final Business Case was submitted to the Scottish and UK Governments. Once it is approved, seed capital will be released to deliver a number of priority projects designed to address areas of underdevelopment and outdated infrastructure. These first projects include an integrated energy system at Babcock's Rosyth site and the creation of the AGIC Skills and Innovation Centre in Rosyth.

The **Levenmouth Reconnected Programme**, a £10 million fund managed by Fife Council to maximise the economic and social opportunities presented by the recently reopened Levenmouth Rail Link, has awarded circa £5million to a range of local projects. The remainder of the fund is in the process of being allocated. Funded projects have improved bus services around Levenmouth, developed new industrial units, improved greenspace and community participation in the local environment, helped young people learn trade skills, contributed towards the restoration of Silverburn Flaxmill, developed a new pumptrack and skatepark and helped a number of small businesses improve shop fronts and a range of local charities with their projects.

All funding for **Fife's UK Shared Prosperity Investment Plan** (£13.4m over the three years of the programme) is committed with delivery underway and to be completed by March 2025. The Plan is supporting 4 priorities: Communities & Place, Supporting Local Businesses, People & Skills, and Multiply and the projected outputs and outcomes that support the objectives of the Fife Partnership's Plan4Fife 2017-27 and Reform & Recovery Update 2021-24 are on track to be delivered.

The three-year **River Leven Regeneration Programme** was awarded £19.4m from the UK Levelling Up Fund for the regeneration of Riverside Park in Glenrothes (£4.98m) and Leven Connectivity Project (Active Travel and River Park Routes) (£14.43m). Delivery of the Active Travel Network providing links to the new railway stations at Leven and Cameron Bridge is scheduled to commence in Spring 2025 which will also see the completion of the regeneration of Glenrothes Riverside Park.

Figure 14: Edinburgh & South East Scotland City Region Deal Fife Industrial Innovation Investment Programme (Fi3P) Investment Status

Area Committee	Tranche 2 Sites	Status at November 2024	Tranche 3 (2025-29) Sites	Expected Completion
Cowdenbeath	The Avenue, Lochgelly.	Site servicing completed and conditional legal agreement in place for disposal of site.	-	-
	Creation of flexible business accommodation, Cowdenbeath	Work has commenced on site	-	-
Dunfermline	Fife Interchange North	New business units due for completion Q4 2024/25 and conditional legal agreement in place for disposal of site.	-	-
Glenrothes	Refurbishment of business units on Flemington Road	Works onsite Q4 2024/25	Glenrothes new build (site selection still to be confirmed).	2028/29
Kirkcaldy	New business units at John Smith Business Park	Works onsite Q4 2024/25	John Smith Business Park	2028/29
	-	-	Refurbishment of town centre offices into flexible business accommodation	2027/28
	-	-	Dunnikier Business Park	2028/29
Levenmouth	Levenmouth Business Park	7 new business units completed, 6 of which are let; phase 2 works onsite Q4 2024/25	-	-
South & West Fife	Ridge Way, Hillend & Donibristle Industrial Estate, Dalgety Bay	Site servicing completed; conditional legal agreement in place for disposal of site.	-	-
	West Way, Hillend & Donibristle Industrial Estate, Dalgety Bay	8 new business units completed: all units fully let.	-	-

Figure 15: Grants awarded to businesses through the Town Centre Building Improvement Grant Scheme 2023/24

	Cowdenbeath Area	Dunfermline	Glenrothes Area	Kirkcaldy Area	Levenmouth	North East Fife	South & West Fife	Fife
Number of grants awarded	2	6	2	5	3	8	0	26
Value of grants awarded	£17,290	£58,182	£17,400	£42,447	£26,219	£73,052	£0	£234,590
Total value of grant funding claimed (as of 30 Sept 2024)	£17,290	£38,182	£17,389	£32,447	£26,219	£46,210	£0	£177,737

Source: Fife Council Business & Employability Service.

Town Centre Activity:

Fife's £1.9m allocation for 2023/24 from the Scottish Government's **Place-Based Investment Programme** supported the following projects:

- The creation of a multifunctional community space at Volunteer's Green and Adam Smith Theatre Outdoor Space in Kirkcaldy.
- Public realm improvements on Leven High Street.
- Detailed designs for converting the Co-op gap site in Dunfermline into a City Square with work to progress during 2025/26.
- Fife-wide Town Centre Building Improvement Grant Scheme (see Figure 15 and below).
- Reconfiguring and refurbishing the Enterprise Hub Fife in Glenrothes.

The 5-year **Inverkeithing** regeneration programme is due to be completed in Spring 2025. The National Lottery Heritage Fund and Historic Environment Scotland approved the Round 1 applications for the **Buckhaven** Area Heritage Regeneration Scheme.

Fife Council continues to operate the **Town Centre Building Improvement Grant Scheme**, supporting 15-20 town centre businesses each year with grants of up to £10,000 for shopfronts, building improvements, energy efficiency and upper floor conversions (Figure 15).

In response to the specific challenges faced by **town centre and independent retail businesses**, a free business support programme was delivered.

Fife Council's town centre capital investment continues to be used to lever additional external funding. Recent investment includes improvements to Glenrothes bus station and pedestrian area at the Kino cinema, the completion of the Adam Smith Theatre refurbishment, the delivery of a place making project in Leven between the railway and bus stations and protective works at St Margaret's House in Dunfermline. The second phase of public realm improvements at Kirkcaldy waterfront and Volunteer's Green are now complete. Complex and protracted land acquisitions at Bonnygate Inner Court in Cupar are now complete with demolitions and site investigations beginning in October 2024, with delivery expected to start during Spring 2025.

Figure 16: Town and city centre vacancy rates April 2024

Area Committee	Town/City	% of Vacant Units	% of Vacant Floor Space
Cowdenbeath Area	Cowdenbeath	16.0%	14.1%
	Lochgelly	22.0%	24.8%
Dunfermline Area	Dunfermline	21.3%	25.5%
Glenrothes Area	Glenrothes	19.3%	22.7%
Kirkcaldy Area	Kirkcaldy	26.8%	27.7%
	Burntisland	10.0%	10.6%
Levenmouth	Leven	15.9%	12.1%
North East Fife	Anstruther	14.0%	14.8%
	Cupar	15.8%	16.1%
	St Andrews	6.7%	9.2%
South & West Fife Area	Inverkeithing	10.9%	9.7%
	Kincardine	24.0%	48.4%

St Andrews, Burntisland and Inverkeithing have the lowest vacancy rates of Fife’s main town centres (Figure 16).

The highest vacancy rates are found in Kirkcaldy, Dunfermline, Lochgelly and Kincardine.

Dunfermline saw the proportion of vacant floorspace increase significantly between 2020 and 2024 (Figure 17), while Cowdenbeath, Kirkcaldy, Burntisland and Inverkeithing saw rates decrease.

Source: Experian Goad Town Centre Reports for Fife Council.

Note: these vacancy rates are not comparable with those shown in previous profiles due to methodology changes.

Figure 17: Percentage of vacant retail floorspace 2020-2024

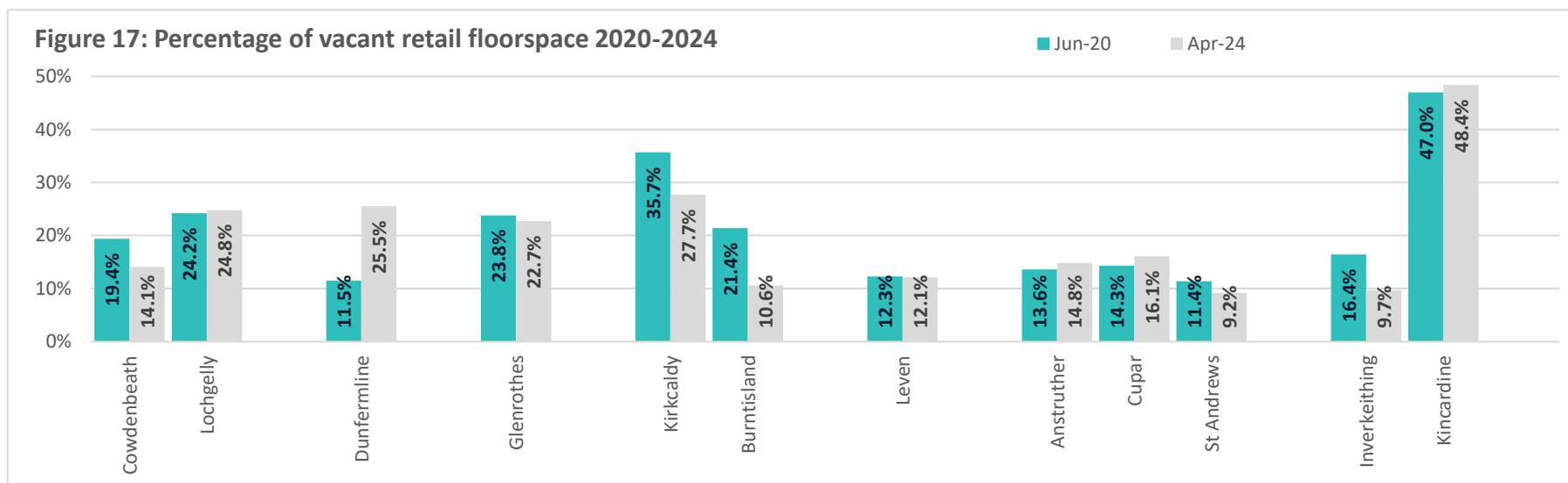


Figure 18: Volume and Value of Visitors, Jan-Dec 2023

STEAM* Indicators	St Andrews	Dunfermline Area	Kirkcaldy and Mid Fife	NE Fife (exc. St Andrews)	Fife
Visitor numbers	775,800	956,700	852,900	621,300	3.21m
% change in visitor numbers 2022-2023	+10.7%	+20.0%	+24.5%	+18.8%	+18.5%
% change in visitor numbers 2019-2023	+14.0%	+17.2%	+16.1%	+10.2%	+14.5%
Economic impact (direct, indirect & induced)	£157m	£124m	£115m	£166m	£513m
% change in economic impact 2022-2023**	-5.0%	-0.5%	+5.3%	+49.8%	+0.4%
% change in economic impact 2019-2023**	+15.2%	+8.7%	+3.1%	+79.7%	+12.7%
Number of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) jobs supported by visitor expenditure	1,407	1,373	1,301	1,540	5,621
% change in number of FTE jobs 2022-2023	-2.2%	+0.4%	+5.0%	+3.0%	+1.4%
% change in number of FTE jobs 2019-2023	+3.5%	-2.1%	-2.5%	+10.7%	+2.4%

Source: Fife STEAM Reports 2023 - FINAL, Global Tourism Solutions (UK) Ltd.

Notes:

*STEAM is a tourism economic modelling tool owned by Global Tourism Solutions (GTS) UK Ltd and is used by most visitor destination areas in the UK. 'Visitors' include staying visitors (tourists staying overnight for at least one night) and day visitors visiting the area on a non-routine and non-regular leisure day trip from a home or holiday base.

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The areas relate to Fife's Local Tourist Associations (LTAs) as follows: St Andrews=St Andrews LTA; NE Fife=Cupar & North Fife and East Neuk LTAs; Kirkcaldy & Mid Fife=Levenmouth and Heartlands of Fife LTAs; Dunfermline Area=Dunfermline & West Fife LTA.

Figures are not available at a lower level than these four areas.

Volume and Value of Visitors (Figure 18 above):

Tourism was one of the sectors worst affected by the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and 2020 saw visitor numbers to Fife fall dramatically due to travel and social distancing restrictions.

In 2021 the sector started to recover and in 2023 visitor numbers to Fife and their economic impact were higher than before the pandemic; in 2023, Fife received over 3 million visitors who brought in an estimated £512.5 million to the area's economy. Visitors spent an average 4.1 nights in the region, a longer length of stay than the national average.

Fife Tourism Activity:

A new **Welcome to Fife Tourism Strategy** was launched in December 2023.

Over 150 people attended the biennial **Welcome to Fife tourism conference** held in February 2024 at the newly refurbished Adam Smith Theatre.

Fife's biggest ever consumer marketing campaign promoting the Kingdom as an autumn/winter short break destination took place from October 2023 to February 2024. Targeting people in Scotland and North England, the campaign, **The Kingdom, where it all begins**, promoted Fife to an audience of over 8 million and inspired more than 46,000 people to visit the welcometofife.com website to find out more.

Fife Council continues to support a Fife-wide programme of **cultural events** that for 2024 included: Fife Food & Drink Week; The Bruce Festival in Dunfermline; Pittenweem Arts Festival; The Euro Fanzone at Dunfermline Football Club; Fife Fest; and Fife Outdoor Activities Week.

A **Dunfermline City Tourism Action Plan** was published in October 2023 to develop and promote Dunfermline as a city break destination. Progress to date includes a dedicated marketing campaign, travel trade training for businesses, an improved visitor website, and representation at VisitScotland Connect, putting the City in contact with over 40 tour operators.

A tourism action plan was also developed for **Levenmouth**, promoting the area as a new destination to visit by train.

Further tourism interpretation and directional signage was added to the 5-mile circular **Forth Bridges Trail**, work partly funded by the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund. The Forth Bridges website and multi-channel social media programme continue to promote visits to the Forth Bridges area.

Delivering Skills, Training & Fair Employment

Figure 19: Participants* on programmes commissioned by the Opportunities Fife Partnership (excluding those delivered by Fife Council) 2023/24

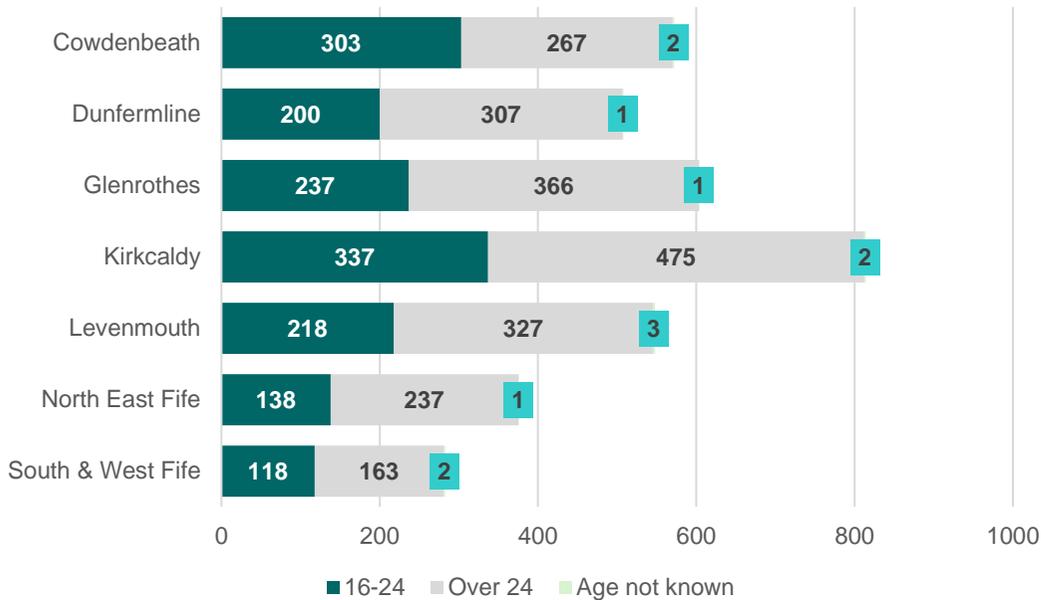
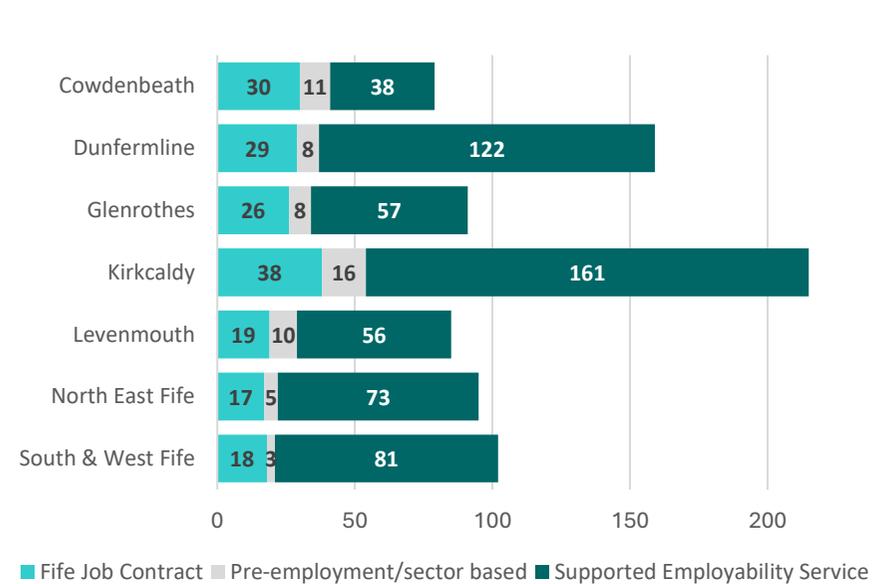


Figure 20: Participants* on programmes delivered by Fife Council Employability & Employer Engagement Team 2023/24



In 2023/24, there were **3,705 participants*** on employability programmes commissioned by the **Opportunities Fife Partnership** (Figure 19).

The largest number of participants were resident in the Kirkcaldy Area (814) followed by the Glenrothes Area (604), Cowdenbeath Area (572) and Levenmouth (548).

41.9% of participants were aged between 16-24 years. The areas with the highest proportion of participants aged 16-24 years were the Cowdenbeath Area (53.0%), South & West Fife (41.7%) and the Kirkcaldy Area (41.4%).

Over the same period, there were 826 participants on employability programmes delivered by Fife Council’s Employability and Employer Engagement Team (Figure 20). The largest number of participants were resident in the Kirkcaldy Area (215) followed by Dunfermline (159).

Source: Fife Council

Note: * the number of participants on employability programmes is higher than the total number of people due to individuals participating in more than one programme. These figures exclude participants on Modern and Foundation Apprenticeships.

Targeting enhanced employability support to those most disadvantaged and furthest from the labour market

Of the 628 people who participated in employability programmes run by the council's Employability and Employer Engagement Team, 413, or 65.8%, went on to employment.

82 Modern Apprenticeships (MAs) were supported across various council services and a further 257 Fife residents were supported to undertake MAs with other employers.

Pre-employment training academies were delivered to help people experiencing barriers to employment including a Community Improvement Squad Academy in Levenmouth, Lochore Meadows Green Skills Academy and Babcock Production Service Operators (PSO) Academy.

Matrix, Employability's sheltered workshop, continued to provide meaningful employment, training and development opportunities to individuals with disabilities and long-term health conditions. The team of 35 has completed several projects for customers including NHS Fife, NHS Glasgow, Edinburgh Council and HMP Grampian delivering: upholstery for theatre seating, hospital and clinic seating, refurbishment of Occupational Therapy equipment and private sales. Matrix was integral to the successful opening of the Methil Care Village in October 2023, providing the furniture and soft furnishings for this development.

A new progressive recruitment approach – the Life Chances Model - was piloted in 2023/24. The approach, which focuses on giving people experiencing barriers to employment access to hard-to-fill, entry-level positions within the council has now been fully integrated in the council's recruitment strategy.

The Edinburgh & SE Scotland City Region Deal Intensive Family Support Service targets significant pockets of persistent, entrenched worklessness and poverty by taking a whole family approach to tackle intergenerational disadvantage. In 2023/24, this service supported 185 individuals from 98 families in Fife's most disadvantaged areas. Of those supported, 82 people entered education and 13 found employment.

Ensuring school and college leavers have the skills, knowledge and opportunities to move on to positive destinations

A programme of 82 different Culture of Enterprise activities was delivered to Fife's schools, providing a total of 2,177 instances of pupil engagement (see section below).

198 Foundation Apprenticeships were supported.

Encouraging the adoption of inclusive employment and fair work practices

The 22nd Fife Business Diversity Awards took place in November 2024. Organised by the Supported Employment Service, the awards showcase the achievements of individuals and employers in ensuring that people from all backgrounds are able to fulfil their work ambitions.

Fife Council's Culture of Enterprise Programme

Figure 21: Participation in Fife Council's Culture of Enterprise (CoE) Programme, 2023/24

	Cowdenbeath Area	Dunfermline	Glenrothes Area	Kirkcaldy Area	Levenmouth	North East Fife	South & West Fife	Fife
Number of different CoE activities in which schools participated	8	17	11	22	12	19	13	102
Instances of pupil engagement with CoE activities	198	554	485	528	386	467	397	3,015

The **Culture of Enterprise Programme** led by Fife Council's Economic Development Team delivers programmes of activity in Fife's primary and secondary schools designed to support young people in developing abilities and confidence for lifelong enterprising contributions in their learning, life and work.

Teams from eleven primary and secondary schools pitched a range of social enterprise ideas in the 2024 **Dragon's Den** competition.

Two Fife College students have been named the recipients of the **Adam Smith 300 Enterprise Scholarship**.

Race to Zero, the digital replacement for The Enterprise Game, was rolled out in 2023 across 17 high schools and received 590 downloads.

Defence company **Babcock International Group** welcomed more than 300 primary school pupils to its annual Festival of Engineering at Rosyth, helping them explore the skills needed for a career in science, technology, engineering or maths.

Second year students from 4 of Fife's high schools participated in **Raytheon's 2024 RTX Quadcopter Challenge**.

A new project for primary school pupils, **4toFortune**, was launched challenging teams of four students to turn £4 into as much as they can within 4 weeks.

Source: Fife Council – Economic Development.

Note: Figures for previous years are not shown due to the introduction of a new way of recording instances of pupil engagement.

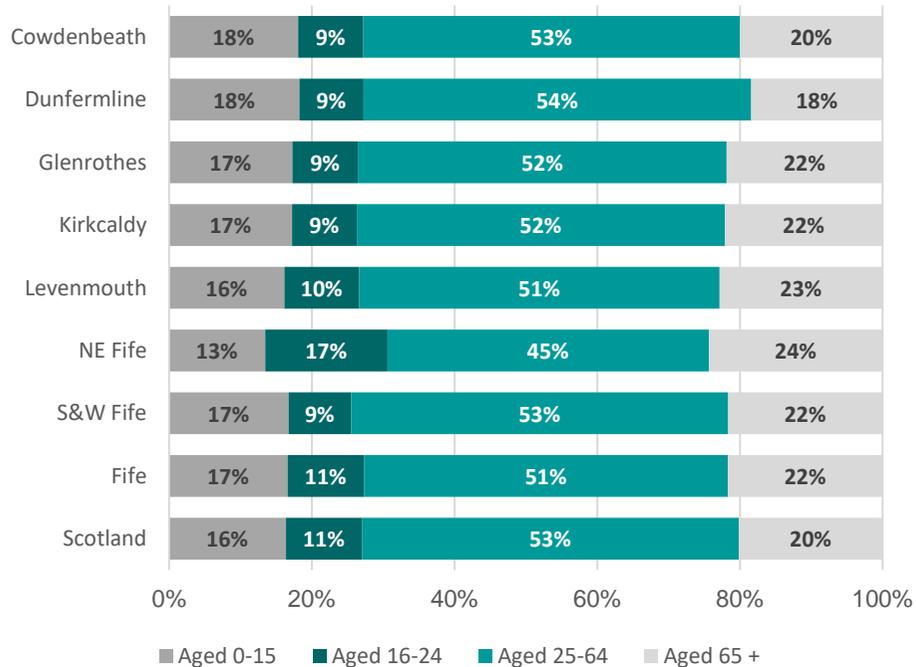
Fife's Labour Market

Population

Figure 22: Mid-2022 Population Estimates - Fife & Local Area Committee Geographies

Cowdenbeath Area	City of Dunfermline	Glenrothes Area	Kirkcaldy Area	Levenmouth	North East Fife	South & West Fife	Fife
41,579	60,767	48,461	60,276	38,599	72,191	49,517	371,390

Figure 23: Population Structure - Local Committee Areas, Fife, Scotland Mid-2022



Around 371,390 people live in Fife, 6.8% of Scotland's population (Figure 22). Looking at the population structure of Fife and its committee areas (Figure 23):

- Fife has a smaller proportion of its population of working age (aged 16-64 years) than Scotland as a whole – 61.7% of its population are of working age compared with 63.5% of Scotland's population.
- Kirkcaldy has the smallest proportion of people of working age (60.7%) in Fife.
- Dunfermline has the lowest proportion of people aged over 65 (18.4%) while North East Fife has the highest (24.3%).
- Dunfermline has the largest proportion of people who are of working age (63.3%) and the highest proportion of children (18.2%).
- North East Fife has the lowest proportion of children (13.5%) but the largest proportion of people aged 16-24 years (17.1%) and the lowest proportion aged 25-64 years (45.1%).

Source: Mid-2022 Electoral Ward Population Estimates, National Records of Scotland.

Employment Rate

Figure 24: Employment Rates, 2023/24

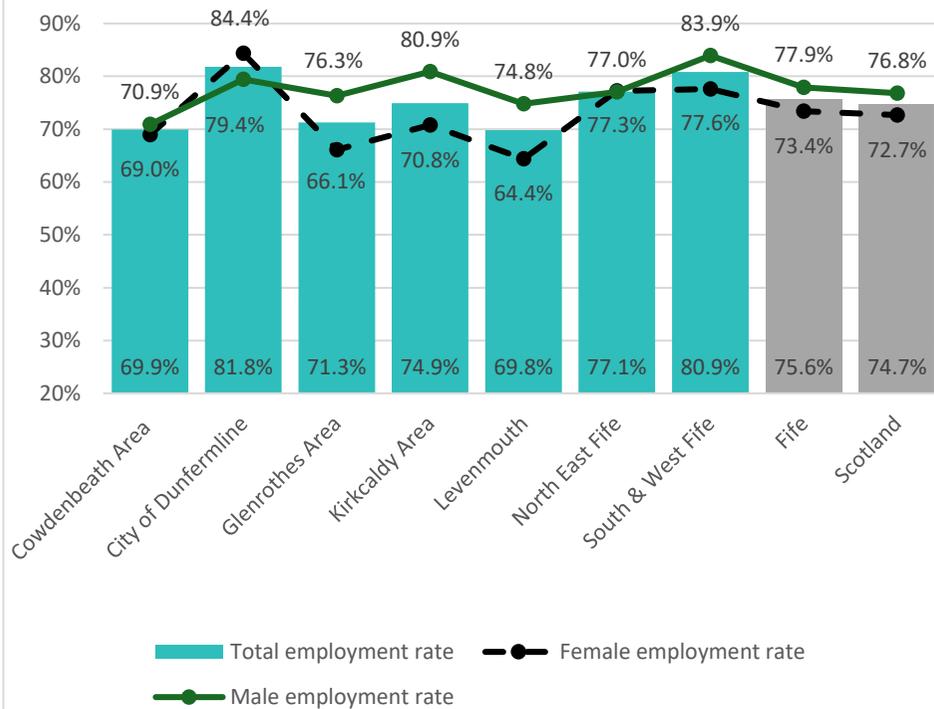
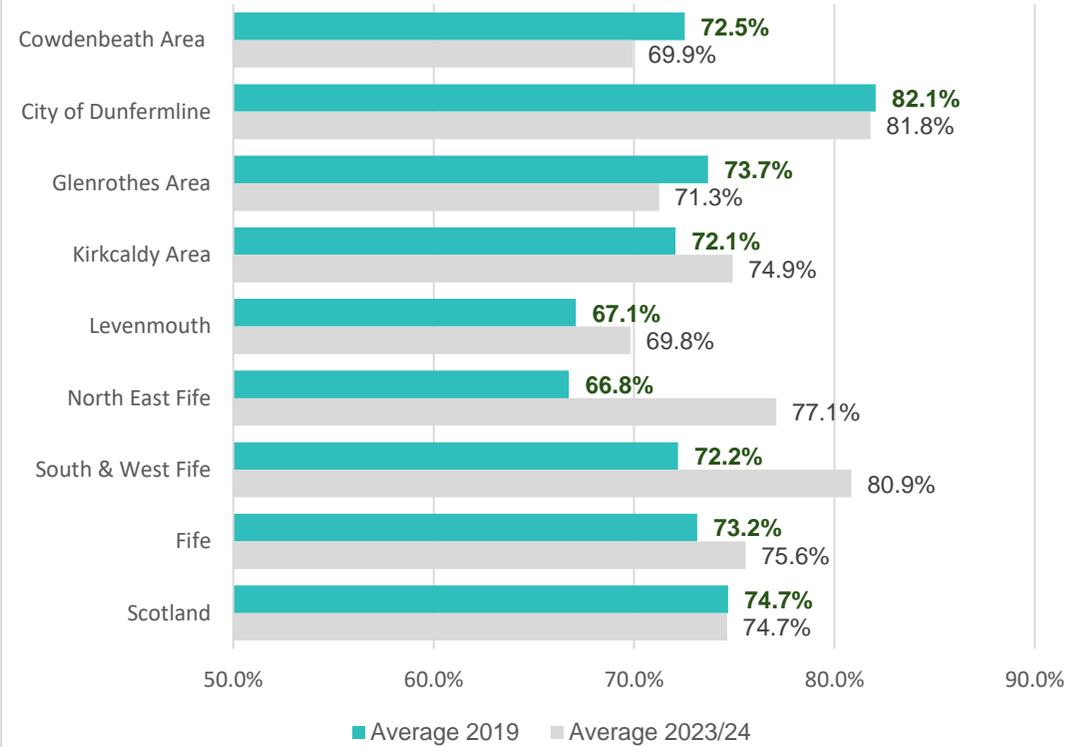


Figure 25: Employment Rate Change 2019-2023/24



Latest Employment Rates*:

Dunfermline’s average employment rate (81.8%) in 2023/24 was the highest in Fife (Figure 24) followed by South & West Fife (80.9%).

The average employment rates in Levenmouth and the Cowdenbeath and Glenrothes Areas were lower than both the Fife and Scottish rates.

Levenmouth and the Cowdenbeath Area had the lowest employment rates of all the committee areas in Fife (69.8% and 69.9% respectively).

Dunfermline was also the only part of Fife where the female employment rate was higher than the male employment rate (Figure 24).

Source: ONS Annual Population Survey, 2019 and 2023/24 Average Rates.

Note: *employment rate = the percentage of the working age populations (aged 16-64) who are in employment. As these employment estimates are obtained from a national survey, they are based on a sample rather than the entire population which means they are subject to uncertainty. In addition, rates for committee areas should be viewed with caution due to small sample sizes at this geographic level. Because of this, averages of the rates for 2019 and 2022/23 are given.

Employment Rate Change:

In the Kirkcaldy Area, Levenmouth, North East Fife and South & West Fife, employment rates in 2023/24 were above the pre-pandemic 2019 levels (Figure 25).

In Dunfermline and the Cowdenbeath and Glenrothes Areas, average employment rates in 2023/24 were lower than in 2019.

North East Fife and South & West Fife saw the greatest increases in employment rates.

Source: ONS Annual Population Survey, 2019 and 2023/24 Average Rates.

Note: As these employment estimates are obtained from a national survey, they are based on a sample rather than the entire population which means they are subject to uncertainty. In addition, rates for committee areas should be viewed with caution due to small sample sizes at this geographic level. Because of this, averages of the rates for 2019 and 2022/23 are given.

Unemployment

Figure 26: Unemployment in Fife, Scotland and Great Britain

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Fife (estimated number of people)	7,100	8,700	6,600	6,100	6,400
Fife (%)	4.1%	5.1%	3.9%	3.4%	3.4%
Scotland (%)	3.4%	4.7%	3.4%	3.2%	3.5%
Great Britain (%)	3.9%	5.0%	3.8%	3.8%	3.7%

The latest unemployment figures for Fife are for the 12 months to June 2024.

Between 2019/20 and 2020/21 Fife's unemployment rate increased from 4.1% to 5.1% as an estimated additional 1,600 people became unemployed during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Fife's unemployment rate fell in the following two years and the latest rate is at a record low (3.4%) and for the first time since 2017 is lower than the Scottish rate (3.5%).

Source: ONS Annual Population Survey, model-based estimates of unemployment, 12 months to June 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024.

Note: Numbers and percentages are for those aged 16 and over who are without a job but who are looking for and available to start work. The unemployment rate is the proportion of the economically active population who are unemployed. Unemployment figures are not shown below the Fife level as sample sizes are too small for reliable estimates.

Economic Inactivity

Figure 27: percentage of the working age population who are economically inactive - Fife & Scotland

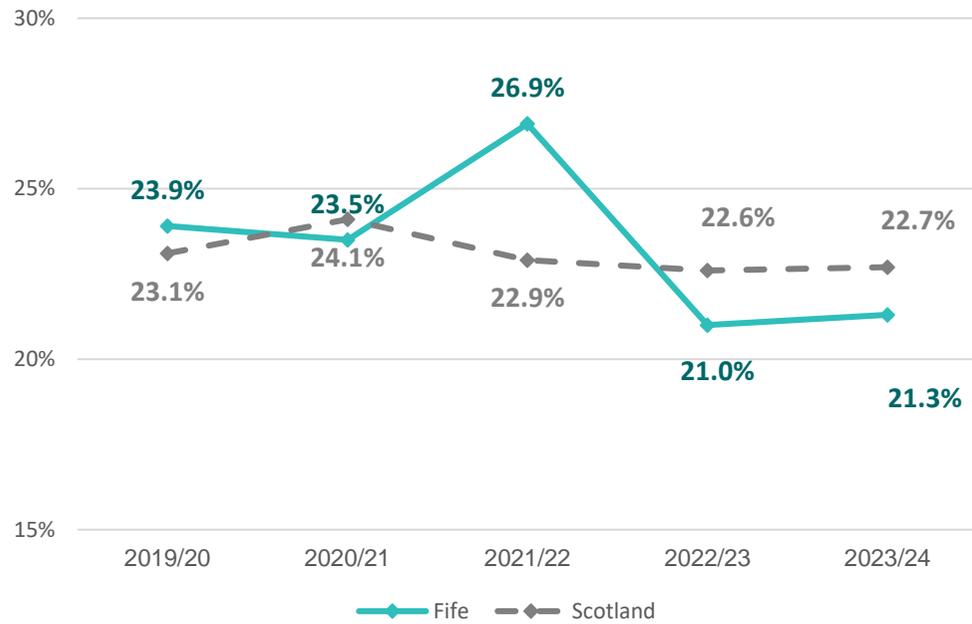


Figure 28: Estimated number of people in Fife economically inactive due to long-term ill health



A fifth (21.3%) of Fife’s working aged population (people aged 16-64) was economically inactive in the 12 months to June 2024 - that is they were neither in employment nor actively seeking a job. This represents an estimated 48,400 people.

Fife’s inactivity rate was lower than the Scottish rate (22.7%) for the same period, and also lower than the record high rate recorded in Fife in 2021/22 (26.9%), the highest rate recorded in the times-series of this data (which goes back to 1999). It was also lower than prior to the Covid-19 pandemic in 2019/20 (23.9%) (Figure 27).

Long term ill-health is the reason a third of those who are economically inactive in Fife (an estimated 16,000 people) gave for not being in employment or seeking a job. Other reasons included being a student (14.9%), looking after the family/home (15.1%) and being retired (18.9%).

Source: ONS Annual Populations Survey, July – June 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24.

Note: Those who are economically inactive are people aged 16 and over without a job who have not sought work in the last four weeks and/or who are not available to start work in the next two weeks, ie they are neither employed nor unemployed.

Figure 29: Proportion of the working age population who were economically inactive (economic inactivity rate) 2023/24

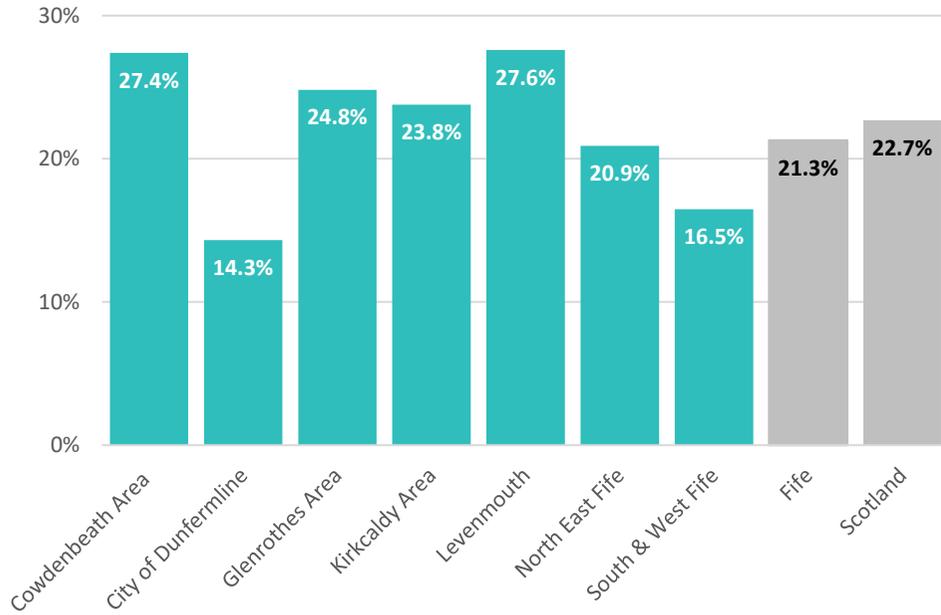
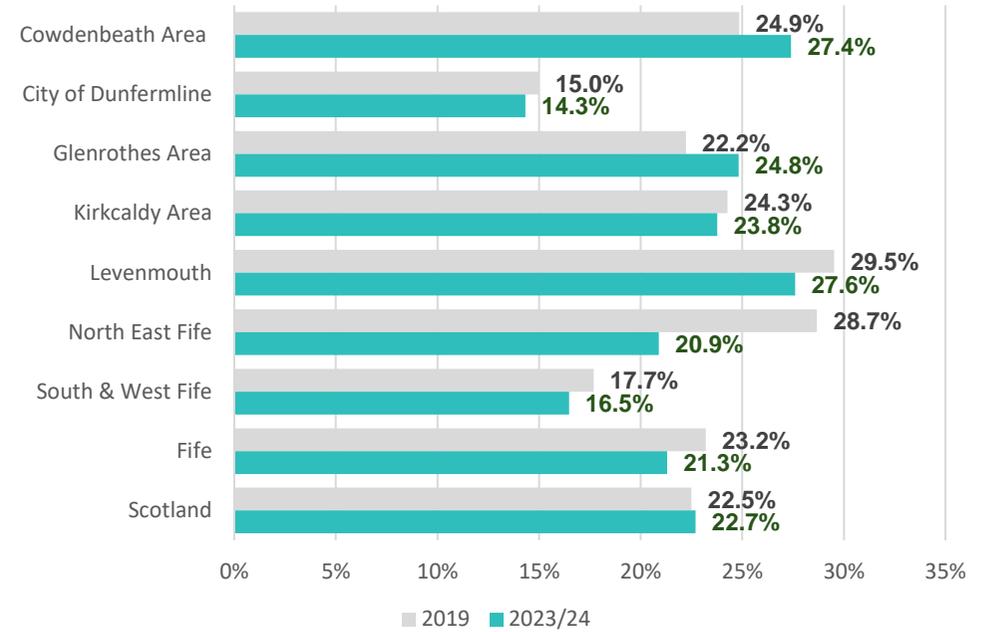


Figure 30: Change in economic inactivity rates 2019-2023.24



Between 2019 and 2023/24, the Glenrothes and Cowdenbeath Areas saw increases in the proportion of their populations who were economically inactive. In all other parts of Fife inactivity rates fell (Figure 30).

Dunfermline, South & West Fife and North East Fife are the only areas whose latest economic inactivity rate is lower than both the Fife and Scottish rates (Figure 29). Dunfermline has the lowest rate of inactivity in Fife.

Levenmouth has the highest economic inactivity rate (27.6%) followed by the Cowdenbeath Area (27.4%).

Due to small sample sizes at committee area levels, all these figures should be viewed with caution.

Source: ONS Annual Populations Survey, 2019 and 2023/24

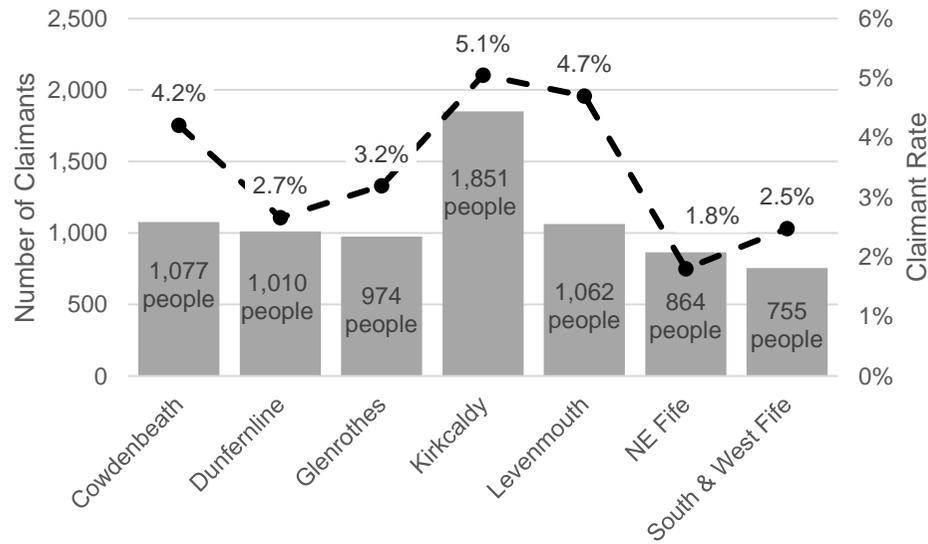
Note: Those who are economically inactive are people aged 16 and over without a job who have not sought work in the last four weeks and/or who are not available to start work in the next two weeks, ie they are neither employed nor unemployed. Economic inactivity rates for committee areas should be viewed with caution due to small sample sizes at this geographic level. Because of this, for the committee areas, averages of the rates for 2019 and 2022/23 are given; the rates for Fife and Scotland are for Jan-Dec 2019 and the 12 months to June 2024.

People Claiming Out-of-work Benefits

Figure 31: Claimant count and rate change 2019 to 2023/2024

Committee Area	2019 Average		2023/24 Average		Difference	
	Claimant Rate	Claimant Count	Claimant Rate	Claimant Count	Claimant Rate	Claimant Count
Cowdenbeath	5.1%	1,328	4.2%	1,077	-0.9%	-251
Dunfermline	3.3%	1,213	2.7%	1,010	-0.6%	-203
Glenrothes	3.6%	1,108	3.2%	974	-0.4%	-134
Kirkcaldy	5.5%	2,002	5.1%	1,851	-0.4%	-151
Levenmouth	6.4%	1,450	4.7%	1,062	-1.7%	-388
North East Fife	1.7%	762	1.8%	864	+0.1%	+102
South & West Fife	2.7%	836	2.5%	755	-0.2%	-81
All Fife	3.8%	8,753	3.3%	7,592	-0.5%	-1,162
Scotland	3.1%	108,093	3.1%	109,290	0.0%	+1,198

Figure 32: The average number and rate of out-of-work benefit claimants,



North East Fife and South & West Fife have the lowest rates and numbers of people claiming out-of-work benefits of all the area committees (Figure 32).

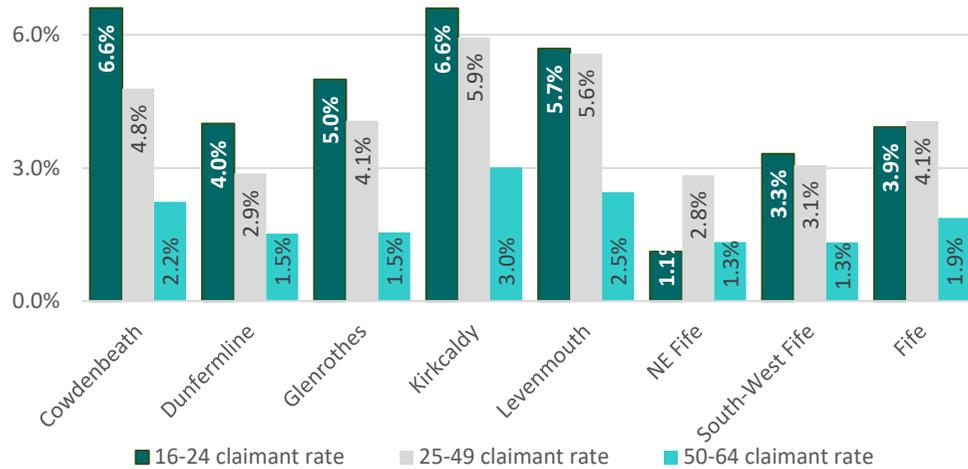
The Kirkcaldy Area, Levenmouth and the Cowdenbeath Area have the highest claimant rates and numbers; this has been the case for some time.

All claimant rates in Fife increased significantly in 2020 following the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic and remained considerably higher than pre-pandemic levels until they started to fall in April 2021.

In all parts of Fife, apart from in North East Fife, the average number of claimants and claimant rates for 2023/24 were lower than in 2019 (Figure 31); in Scotland the number of claimants rose.

Source: ONS Claimant Count, Oct 23-Nov 24. Note: The claimant rate is the percentage of working age (16-64yrs) residents claiming out-of-work benefits.

Figure 33: Claimant rates by age – 2023/24



In all parts of Fife with the exception of North East Fife, 16-24 year olds have the highest rate of people claiming out-of-work benefits of the three main age groups.

In the Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath Areas, the 16-24 age group’s claimant rate is the highest rate of all age groups in Fife.

The Kirkcaldy Area has the highest claimant rates for all three age groups.

North East Fife has the lowest claimant rates for all age groups and has particularly low rates in its 16-24 and 50-64 age groups.

Source: ONS Claimant Count, Nov 2023- Oct 2024 average rates

Qualifications of Working Age Population

Figure 34: Qualifications - Fife & Scotland 2023	Fife	Scotland
% of working age population with RQF 4+ (HNC, Advanced Higher)	52.5%	55.1%
% of working age population with no formal qualifications (RQF)	6.0%	8.2%

Just over half of Fife’s working age population has a qualification equal to or higher than an HNC or Advanced Higher.

Fife has a smaller proportion of its working age population with no formal qualifications (6.0%) than Scotland as a whole (8.2%).

The ONS has changed the way it collects qualifications data, so comparisons cannot be made with previous years. Reliable figures are also not available for separate age groups or below the Fife geographic area due to small sample sizes.

Source: ONS Annual Population Survey, Jan-Dec 2023

Note: Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) level 4 = SCQF Level 6 (HNC, Advanced Higher or equivalent). No qualifications = no formal qualifications held.

School Leaver Destinations and Attainment

Figure 35: 2022/23 School Leaver Destinations and Attainment

	Fife	Scotland
Percentage of school leavers achieving a positive initial destination*	95.3%	95.9%
Percentage of school leavers achieving a positive follow-up destination*	91.4%	92.8%
Percentage of school leavers achieving 1+ SCQF Level 5 or better	79.3%	84.8%
Percentage of school leavers achieving 1+ SCQF Level 6 (Higher) or better	50.6%	57.9%

95.3% of Fife's 2022/23 school leavers achieved a positive initial destination*.

This was higher than the year before, when 94.8% of leavers achieved a positive initial destination and the highest proportion in the time-series of this dataset (which goes back to 2009/10).

The gap with the Scottish rate also narrowed.

The proportion of leavers in a positive destination in April 2024, 9 months after the end of the school year fell from 92.1% (the highest proportion in the time-series of this dataset) to 91.4%.

The percentages of 2022/23 school leavers achieving at least one Higher was lower than the previous year and Fife's attainment figures remain lower than those for Scotland as a whole.

Source: Scottish Government, Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations and Summary Statistics for Follow-up Leaver Destinations, No 5: 2023 Editions.

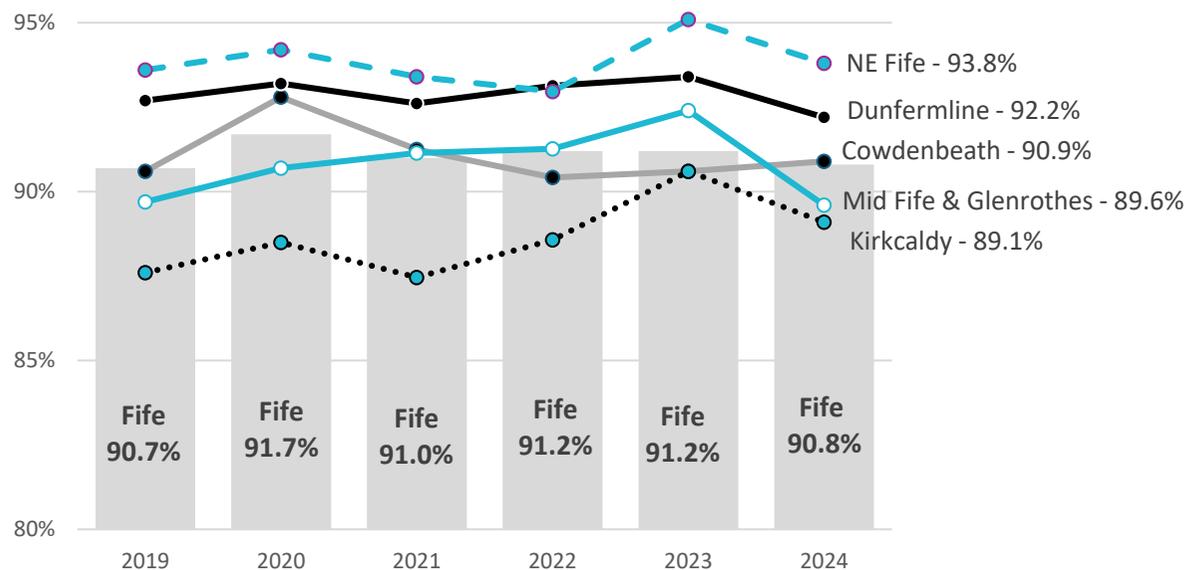
Note: * A young person is deemed to be in a positive destination when they are actively engaged with an organisation for the purpose of learning, training or work (work includes volunteering).

Annual Participation Measure for 16-19 Year Olds

Figure 36: Percentage of 16–19 year olds participating in education, training or employment 2018-2023 - Fife and Scotland

Year	Fife					Scotland				
	16-19 year olds	16-year olds	17-year olds	18-year olds	19-year olds	16-19 year olds	16-year olds	17-year olds	18-year olds	19-year olds
2019	90.7%	99.1%	93.6%	88.2%	82.2%	91.6%	99.0%	94.8%	89.1%	83.9%
2020	91.7%	98.6%	94.5%	89.6%	84.1%	92.1%	99.0%	95.0%	90.4%	84.1%
2021	91.0%	99.0%	92.6%	87.1%	85.0%	92.2%	99.1%	94.3%	89.4%	85.4%
2022	91.2%	99.0%	94.4%	88.7%	82.1%	92.4%	99.3%	95.7%	89.8%	84.2%
2023	91.2%	99.1%	95.0%	87.6%	82.6%	92.6%	99.1%	95.7%	90.8%	84.6%
2024	90.8%	99.0%	94.3%	88.1%	81.3%	92.7%	99.1%	95.5%	90.4%	85.3%

Figure 37: Percentage of 16-19 year olds participating in education, training or employment 2018-2023 by Scottish Parliamentary Constituency Areas (SPCAs) 16:



In 2024, Fife saw the proportion of its 16-19 year olds participating in education, training or employment fall from 91.2% in 2023 to 90.8%. (Figure 36).

The only age-group to see an increase in participation between 2019 and 2024 was the 17-year-old age group (Figure 36).

Fife's participation rates are lower than the Scottish rates. In 2024 the gap widened across all age groups apart from 18-year-olds.

All parts of Fife saw participation fall between 2023 and 2024 apart from the Cowdenbeath Scottish Parliamentary Constituency Area (SPCA). The participation rates in the Mid-Fife & Glenrothes and Kirkcaldy SPCAs are below the rates for Fife as a whole (Figure 37).

Source: Skills Development Scotland, Annual Participation Measure of 16–19-year-olds in Scotland, 2024.

Figure 38: Median Weekly Earnings, April 2024: UK Parliamentary Constituency Areas (UKPCAs), Fife, Scotland

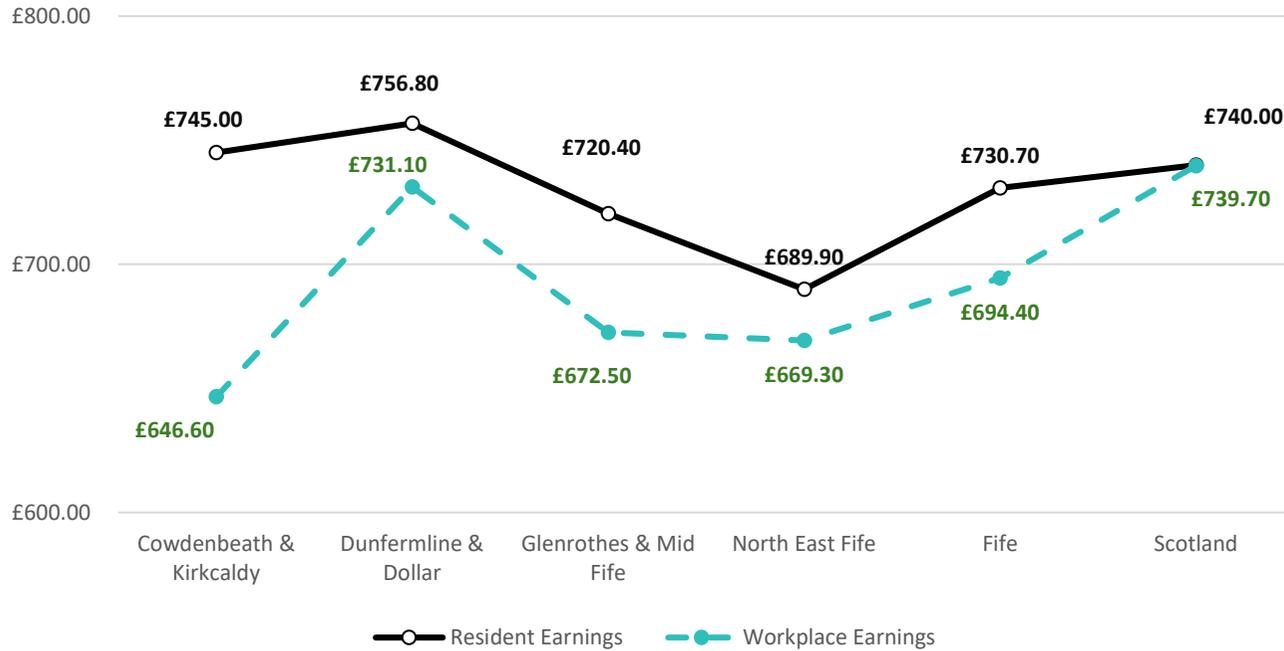


Figure 39: Percentage of employee jobs with hourly pay below Living Wage Foundation Rates

Area/UKPCA	Apr-23	Apr-24
Cowdenbeath & Kirkcaldy	13.8%	15.1%
Dunfermline & Dollar	N/A	N/A
Glenrothes & Mid Fife	N/A	12.7%
North East Fife	14.4%	18.2%
Fife	11.8%	13.1%
Scotland	10.2%	11.4%

Resident earnings represent the average earnings of people who live in the area, but do not necessarily work in the area. Workplace earnings are the average earnings of those who work in the area, but do not necessarily live there.

Dunfermline & Dollar and Cowdenbeath & Kirkcaldy UK PCAs were the only parts of Fife where resident earnings were above Scottish average earnings (Figure 38). Workplace earnings were below Scottish averages in all parts of Fife.

The Dunfermline & Dollar PCA had both the highest resident and workplace earnings and North East Fife had the lowest.

The largest gap between resident and workplace earnings was in the Cowdenbeath and Kirkcaldy PCA (a difference of £98.40).

After falling to its lowest level in 2023, the proportion employee jobs with hourly pay below the real living wage rose between 2023 and 2024 in both Fife and Scotland. Rates in Fife are still higher than the Scottish rate (11.4%) (Figure 39).

Source: ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings.

Notes: Estimates below the Fife level should be viewed with caution due to small sample sizes. As the data is based on PAYE it does not include the self-employed. Median weekly earnings = the median gross weekly pay for full-time workers. The estimates in Figure 21 for Fife’s UK Parliamentary Constituency Areas are considered to be ‘acceptable’ rather than precise; those shown as N/A are considered unreliable for practical purposes.

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