

The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) has published an update to statistics on the number (and proportion) of children living in low income families across Great Britain by local area. The local estimates are broken down by Local Authority, Ward, and Westminster Parliamentary Constituency.

Fife picture

Latest figures show a reduction in child poverty in Scotland as a result of Scottish Child Payment (SCP). 18.0% of children in Fife (11,038 aged under 16) are now living in relative poverty before housing costs. 8,925 children (14.6%) are living in absolute poverty before housing costs. While both remain above the Scottish rates of 16.3% and 13.2% respectively, 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) in 2023/24.

Table 1 – Number and Percentage of Children aged under 16 living in Relative and Absolute Poverty (Before Housing Costs), in Fife and Scotland, FYE 2024 (Source: [DWP](#))

	Relative Poverty		Absolute Poverty	
	Number	%	Number	%
Fife	11,038	18.0%	8,925	14.6%
Scotland	145,804	16.3%	118,341	13.2%

The Children in Low Income Families methodology was adapted with the release of the March 2025 data set (see technical note for details). Figure 1, below, shows a comparison between figures released previously, and the updated figures which take account of the introduction of Scottish Child Payment.

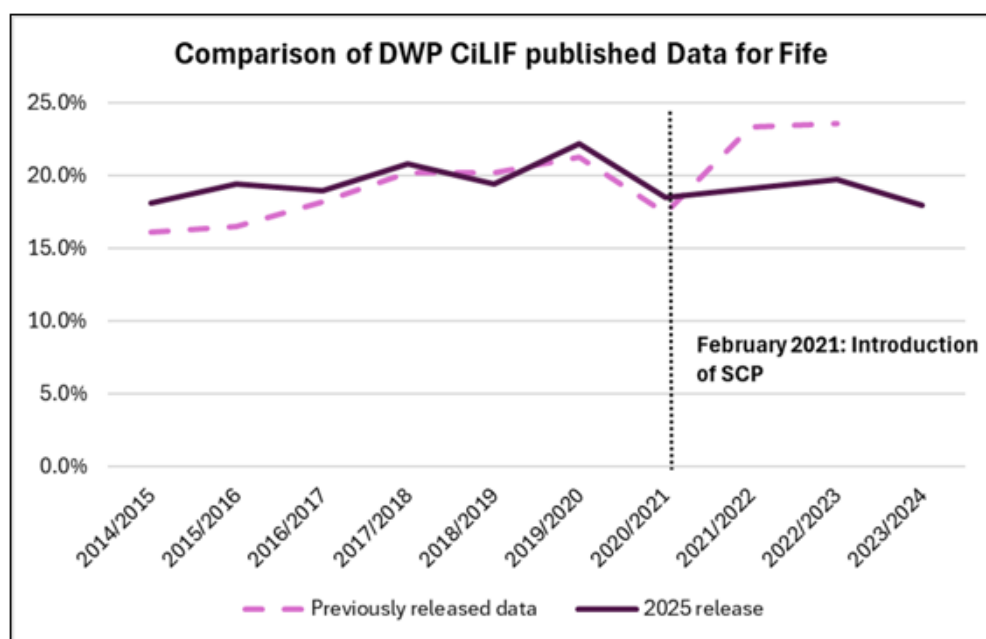


Figure 1. Percentage of children in relative low income households per year, comparing previously published data with and without the inclusion of Scottish Child Payments (SCP)

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 FYE 2023, before taking account of Scottish Child Payment, 23.6% of Fife children (15,024) were in relative poverty. Updates to the methodology, including SCP, indicate that 2,906 children in Fife were lifted out of poverty in FYE 2023 (a difference of 3.9 pp for Fife, compared to 3.5 pp for Scotland).

How Fife compares

Poverty affects children in every part of Scotland, with an estimated 26.4% of children living in relative poverty in Glasgow compared to 8.0% of children in East Renfrewshire (see **Figure 2**):

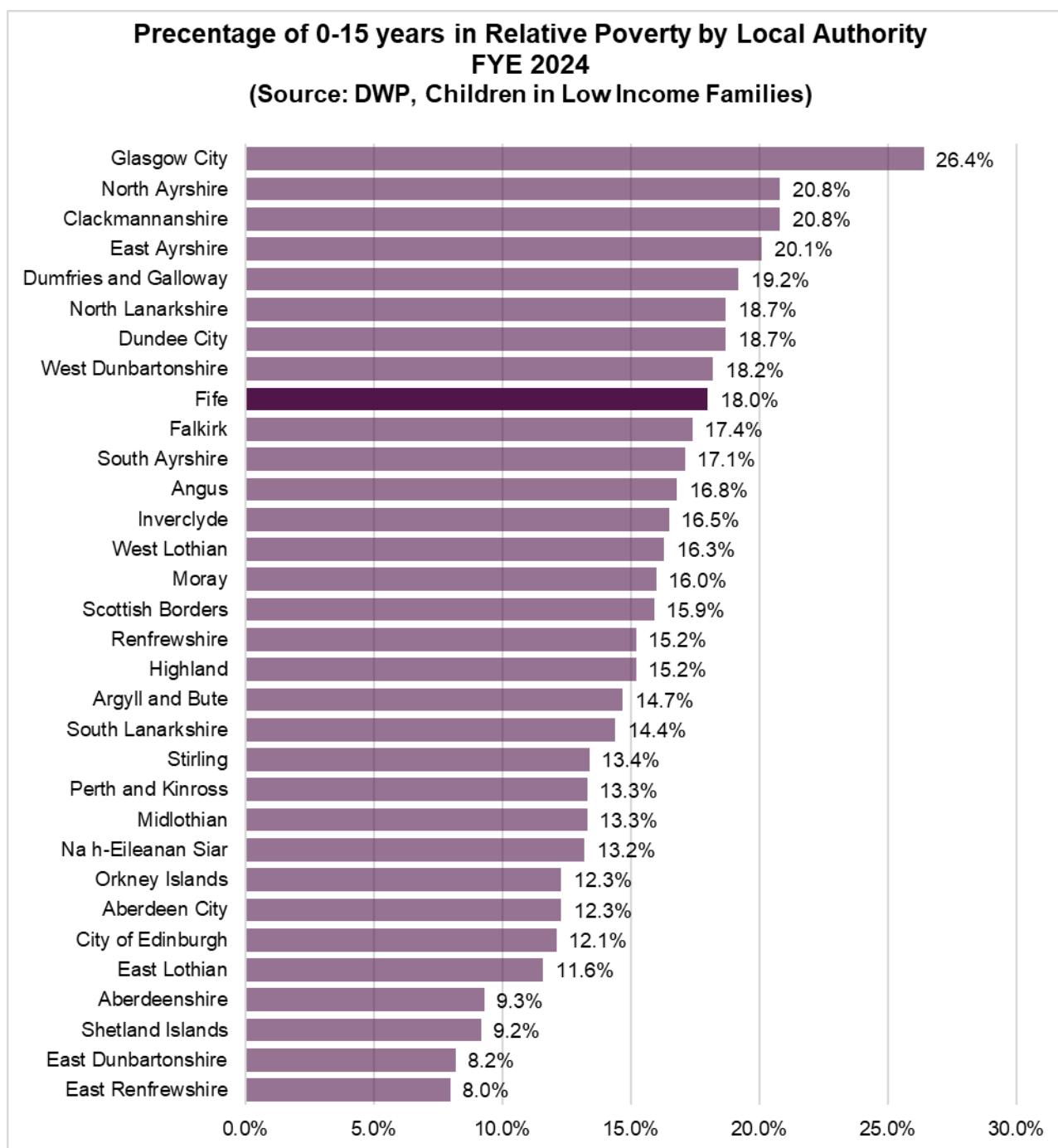


Figure 2: Children living in Relative Poverty (Before Housing Costs), by Local Authority, FYE 2024 (Source: [DWP](#))

A breakdown of the latest figures by local authority area is given in **Table 2:**

Table 2 – Number and Percentage of Children aged under 16 living in Relative and Absolute Poverty (Before Housing Costs), by Local Authority Area, FYE 2024 (Source: DWP)

Local Authority	Relative Poverty		Absolute Poverty	
	Number	%	Number	%
Aberdeen City	4,543	12.3%	3,633	9.8%
Aberdeenshire	4,462	9.3%	3,627	7.5%
Angus	3,041	16.8%	2,436	13.4%
Argyll and Bute	1,813	14.7%	1,446	11.7%
City of Edinburgh	9,190	12.1%	7,434	9.8%
Clackmannanshire	1,814	20.8%	1,537	17.6%
Dumfries and Galloway	4,194	19.2%	3,396	15.5%
Dundee City	4,476	18.7%	3,546	14.8%
East Ayrshire	4,082	20.1%	3,247	16.0%
East Dunbartonshire	1,580	8.2%	1,254	6.5%
East Lothian	2,341	11.6%	1,838	9.1%
East Renfrewshire	1,575	8.0%	1,314	6.7%
Falkirk	4,668	17.4%	3,807	14.2%
Fife	11,038	18.0%	8,925	14.6%
Glasgow City	25,690	26.4%	21,277	21.9%
Highland	5,602	15.2%	4,514	12.2%
Inverclyde	1,991	16.5%	1,587	13.1%
Midlothian	2,461	13.3%	1,967	10.6%
Moray	2,477	16.0%	2,091	13.5%
Na h-Eileanan Siar	511	13.2%	418	10.8%
North Ayrshire	4,391	20.8%	3,513	16.7%
North Lanarkshire	11,211	18.7%	9,157	15.3%
Orkney Islands	426	12.3%	360	10.4%
Perth and Kinross	3,196	13.3%	2,562	10.7%
Renfrewshire	4,613	15.2%	3,672	12.1%
Scottish Borders	2,852	15.9%	2,282	12.7%
Shetland Islands	374	9.2%	306	7.5%
South Ayrshire	2,879	17.1%	2,309	13.7%
South Lanarkshire	8,069	14.4%	6,618	11.9%
Stirling	1,964	13.4%	1,574	10.7%
West Dunbartonshire	2,734	18.2%	2,251	15.0%
West Lothian	5,546	16.3%	4,457	13.1%
Scotland	145,804	16.3%	118,341	13.2%

Across Fife

Child poverty is highest in the Glenrothes and Mid Fife Constituency, and lowest in the Dunfermline and Dollar Constituency (see **Table 3**):

Table 3 – Number and Percentage of Children aged under 16 living in Relative and Absolute Poverty (Before Housing Costs), by Westminster Parliamentary Constituency, FYE 2024 (Source: DWP)

Westminster Parliamentary Constituency	Relative Poverty		Absolute Poverty	
	Number	%	Number	%
Cowdenbeath and Kirkcaldy	3,135	19.7%	2,619	16.4%
Dunfermline and Dollar	2,385	13.9%	1,920	11.2%
Glenrothes and Mid Fife	3,771	23.1%	3,011	18.4%
North East Fife	1,792	14.0%	1,413	11.0%
Fife	11,038	18.0%	8,925	14.6%
Scotland	145,804	16.3%	118,341	13.2%

Note: Boundary changes for Fife's Westminster Parliamentary Constituencies now reflect those from 2024.

At ward level, relative child poverty is highest in Kirkcaldy Central and Buckhaven, Methil and Wemyss Village, followed by Kirkcaldy East. It is lowest in Inverkeithing and Dalgety Bay and St Andrews (see **Table 4**):

Table 4 – Number and Percentage of Children aged under 16 living in Relative and Absolute Poverty (Before Housing Costs), by Ward for Fife, FYE 2024 (Source: DWP)

Ward	Relative Poverty		Absolute Poverty	
	Number	%	Number	%
Buckhaven, Methil and Wemyss Villages	892	28.5%	718	22.9%
Burntisland, Kinghorn and Western Kirkcaldy	397	16.7%	330	13.9%
Cowdenbeath	747	19.0%	613	15.6%
Cupar	291	13.7%	234	11.0%
Dunfermline Central	455	13.5%	361	10.8%
Dunfermline North	333	13.1%	279	10.9%
Dunfermline South	633	12.2%	502	9.7%
East Neuk and Landward	288	16.2%	244	13.7%
Glenrothes Central and Thornton	576	22.7%	459	18.1%
Glenrothes North, Leslie and Markinch	585	19.7%	451	15.2%
Glenrothes West and Kinglassie	620	21.5%	505	17.5%
Howe of Fife and Tay Coast	238	12.9%	186	10.1%
Inverkeithing and Dalgety Bay	285	10.3%	240	8.7%
Kirkcaldy Central	737	31.2%	617	26.1%
Kirkcaldy East	673	26.8%	543	21.6%
Kirkcaldy North	564	18.0%	481	15.4%
Leven, Kennoway and Largo	515	16.6%	378	12.2%
Lochgelly, Cardenden and Benarty	815	22.7%	663	18.5%
Rosyth	454	16.2%	379	13.5%
St Andrews	117	9.4%	86	6.9%
Tay Bridgehead	348	12.7%	274	10.0%
West Fife and Coastal Villages	477	17.6%	370	13.6%
Fife	11,038	18.0%	8,925	14.6%
Scotland	145,804	16.3%	118,341	13.2%

Note: Geographies have been allocated by DWP and reflect Westminster Parliamentary Constituencies in 2024 and electoral wards as of May 2022.

Technical Notes

The Children in Low Income Families methodology was adapted for the March 2025 publication and now includes imputed receipt of Scottish Child Payment (SCP) for eligible families as a form of income.

Scottish Child Payment began in February 2021 and is a payment to help low-income families towards the costs of looking after children. It was originally given to households with children under the age of six, but this was extended to include children under 16 years old from November 2022.

The imputation methodology assumes that every family eligible for SCP claims it i.e. that the take-up rate is 100%. This contrasts with the published [SCP take up rates](#) which show that for children aged under 6 in 2023/24 take up was 97% and 85% for children aged 6 to under 16.

Note: changes to the methodology mean that 2024 figures cannot be directly compared to what has been reported in previous years.

Since the last release, boundary changes for Fife's Westminster Parliamentary Constituencies now reflect those from 2024.

These statistics complement and should be viewed as a companion release to the Households Below Average Income (HBAI) survey on children in low income households which provides National and Regional estimates, but not local area estimates. As of the March 2025 release, these statistics are now calibrated to match 1-year Households Below Average Income (HBAI) survey totals, as opposed to previously used 3-years HBAI totals, to improve the accuracy and usefulness of the data.

While the data has undergone extensive quality assurance prior to publication, DWP recommend that users exercise additional caution when using the data, particularly when making comparisons with previous years and when comparing local areas across countries. Figures for the latest year are provisional and will be subject to revision in subsequent releases.

To be classed as low income in these statistics, a family must have claimed one or more of Universal Credit, Tax Credits or Housing Benefit at any point in the year.

Relative low income measures families (a single adult; married or cohabiting couple; or a Civil Partnership; and any dependent children) in low income (not households) in the reference year, whereas Absolute low income measures families in low income based on what low income looked like year ending 2011.

Income is Before Housing Costs (BHC) and is equivalised to adjust for family size and composition.

This is an annual release and the next release will be in Spring 2026.

More information is available at [Children in low income families: local area statistics 2014 to 2024 - GOV.UK](#)

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