

SOUTH & WEST FIFE LOCAL STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT

2022

About this document:

We are looking for your input for how we might improve this assessment, including the strategic map which we hope to improve over time.

The Local Strategic Assessment provides an overview of how a Local Area is doing. It collates and updates a wide range of information to give key input for the refresh of Local Community Plans.

It is intended to inform and support local conversations about the issues that need to be addressed in the Area, in terms of both People and Place.

Feedback on this document can be provided directly to the Community Manager for the Area or by email to research.enquiries@fife.gov.uk



1. Overview

The Local Strategic Assessment provides an overview of how a Local Area is doing. It collates and updates a wide range of information to give key input for the refresh of Local Community Plans.

In the last two years, our communities have experienced unprecedented change and responded in remarkable ways. The pandemic has highlighted the need for a greater focus on place and the role communities can play in developing joint responses and solutions to the Plan4Fife's 2021-2024 Recovery and Renewal Priorities of tackling poverty, building future economic success, and addressing climate change, all of which can be supported by an overarching approach of community wealth building.

The Plan 4 South & West Fife Area 2019-2022 set out how public, private and voluntary organisations needed to work together with our communities to deliver the ambitions of the Plan4Fife.

Our Vision

We want South West Fife to be a place where residents are proud to say they live there, where tourists are keen to visit, and businesses want to invest in and grow. This means creating an area that people enjoy living in, with good access to services, amenities and opportunities to prosper. We want to make the best use of our assets and facilities, our natural heritage, and the great potential that we have in the community spirit that exists within the area.

Plan 4 South & West Fife Area, 2019-2022

The purpose of this document is to inform discussions about the priorities and actions that need to be addressed in a refreshed Local Community Plan for the Area covering the period 2022 to 2025.

People and Place Leadership groups have been established across Fife's seven local community planning areas, building on models established during the pandemic response. These groups will have a key role to play in providing effective local leadership and collaboration to ensure plans and strategies are aligned to deliver agreed priorities and ambitions.



Culross, Picture Credit - Andrew Beveridge

REPORT CONTACT:
Fife Council Research Team
Fife House, Glenrothes.

Contact Research.enquiries@fife.gov.uk

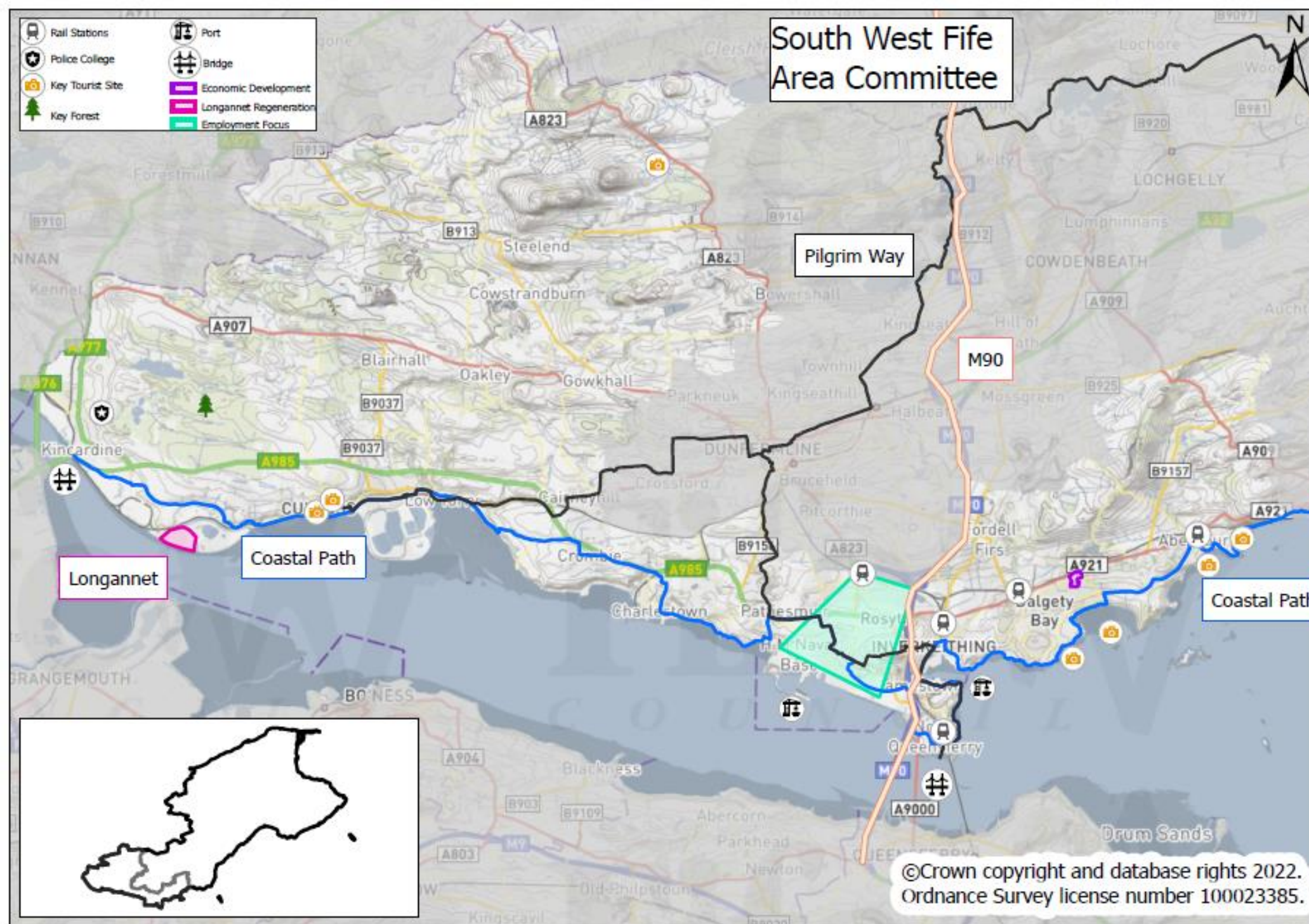


Figure 1.1 Strategic Overview of South and West Fife Area

The South and West Fife area borders the major conurbation of Dunfermline to the west and south. It stretches from Kincardine at the Clackmannanshire/Falkirk borders in the west, to Aberdour in the east. In the south of the area are the main towns of Inverkeithing, Rosyth, and Dalgety Bay, while the West Fife villages make up the main settlements in the west. The area is characteristic of a history of declining heavy industry, such as coal mining and the dockyard at Rosyth, with the Kincardine and Forth Bridgeheads providing links to opportunities outwith the area.

2. Local Assessment Findings

3. Profile

South and West Fife is the 4th largest populated area in Fife, with 49,971 people in 23,491 households, and a similar population split to Fife. The Area has higher levels of owner occupation (68%) and lower levels of social rented accommodation (19%) than Fife.

The Area has the highest rate of those economically inactive (35.1%), and the 2nd lowest employment rate (62.8%). However, the claimant rate is relatively low (3.4%). Levels of employment (7%) and income deprivation (8.1%) are below Fife. Compared with Fife, there are similar amounts of 16-19 year olds participating in education (73.2%), but slightly more in employment (18%).

4. Place

In the South and West Fife Area in 2022, a consistent picture emerges in relation to local people's perception of place, compared to the results of previous Place Surveys.

Natural Space, and Feeling Safe continue to be identified as needing the least improvement in the South and West Fife Area. Public Transport improvements within the area appear to have been maintained.

Influence and Sense of Control, and Care and Maintenance are identified as being in need of the most improvement within the South and West Fife Area.

5. People

A study to explore the impact of COVID-19 for residents, including vulnerable and disadvantaged people, found that social isolation and its subsequent impact on mental health; food poverty; financial strains; lack of employment opportunities; and digital literacy were particular issues for the Area. Although the COVID pandemic brought difficulties for residents, a sense of learning from the experience, and optimism about the future also emerged. Positive findings included the gratitude people had for the services they had received from the Council, community staff and third sector during the pandemic: in particular for support with food.

Strong social connections are seen as a cornerstone of mental health and wellbeing and community resilience. Many residents would be willing to work with others on something to improve their neighbourhood and the majority of people report regularly stopping and talking with others in their neighbourhood.

Technology has become a necessity for keeping connected, working remotely and accessing vital information. Personal use of the internet in the Area is lower than Fife. While levels of internet use continue to grow, people can still be digitally excluded because they lack the skills to be able to confidently and safely navigate the digital world.

6. Community

In 2022, cost of living has replaced NHS / Hospitals / Healthcare as the main issue facing all Areas of Fife. Crime / antisocial behaviour and funding for public services, are also seen as main issues for South and West Fife.

The majority of local people in South and West Fife Area would like more involvement in decisions that the Council makes that affect their local area. 39% report that they provide some kind of unpaid (voluntary) help to a group or organisation.

South and West Fife Area has the highest levels of all areas of Fife of local people believing the Council does its best with the money that is available, provides high quality services, and is good at letting local people know about the kind of services that it provides. Within the area, fewer people believe that the Council is good at listening to local people's views before it takes decisions.

7. Local Outcomes

44% of communities in the South and West Fife Area are doing better than expected compared to similar communities elsewhere in Scotland, compared to 50% of communities for Fife as a whole.

The neighbourhood with the poorest outcomes in the South and West Fife Area continues to be Inverkeithing East. Rosyth Central and Oakley Comrie and Blairhall are among those with the poorest outcomes. Areas with better life outcomes continue to include Crossford, Charleston and Limekilns, Dalgety Bay, and Cairneyhill and Crombie.

8. Horizons

The extent of uncertainty that Fife's communities will need to face in the coming years is unprecedented. The impact of wider events (i.e. pandemic, Brexit) will continue to be felt at a very local level. South and West Fife is expected to see the second largest decrease (around -3,400 people / -7%) in its population of the seven Fife Areas.

Reductions in healthy life expectancy are expected impact on people's quality of life. While much of the coronavirus pandemic has heavily influenced people's health, and their broader wellbeing, it has also had a major impact on people's jobs, and businesses and industries, with many facing a much less certain future than even a few years ago.

Rising living costs are adding to the pressures felt by individual households. It is unclear when this situation will stabilise, and how this will impact on widening inequalities within Fife's communities. There is a need to anticipate and plan for the more pressing implications of climate change and how it will affect peoples' lives.

3. Profile

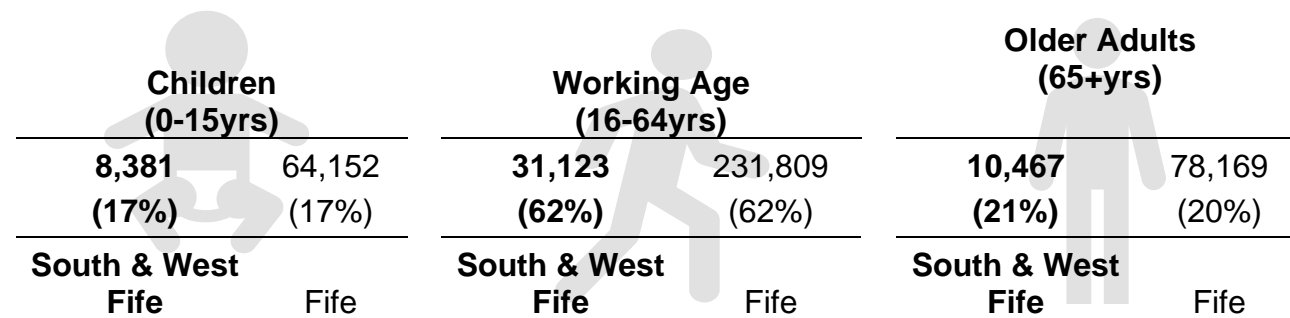
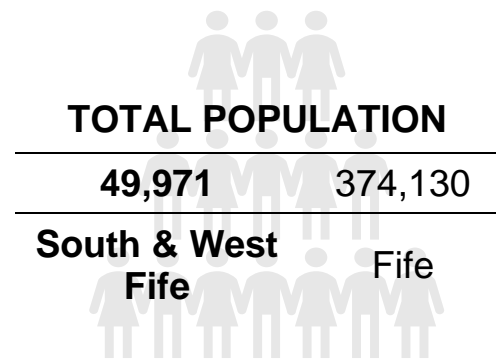


Figure 3.1 – Mid-year 2020 Population Estimates (Source: [National Records of Scotland](#))

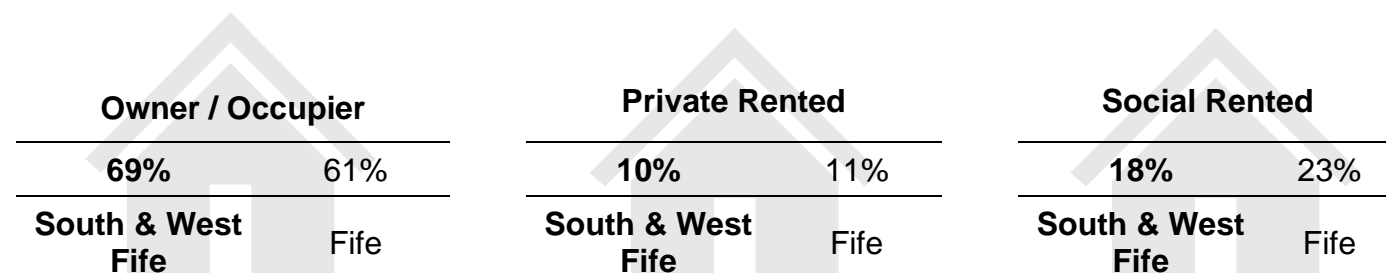
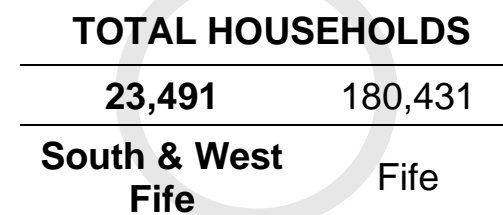


Figure 3.2 – Housing Tenure 2021 (Source: Fife Council Housing Tenure Database)

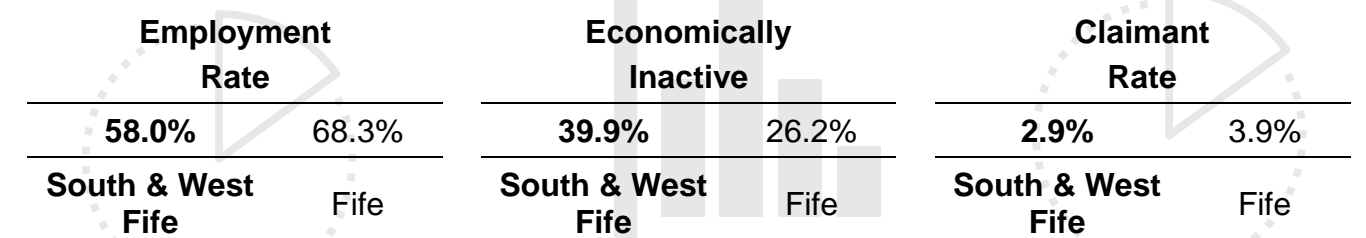


Figure 3.3 – Employment and Economically inactive for Jan – Dec 2021; Claimant Rate for April 2022 (Source: NOMIS / [Fife Local Economic Profiles](#))

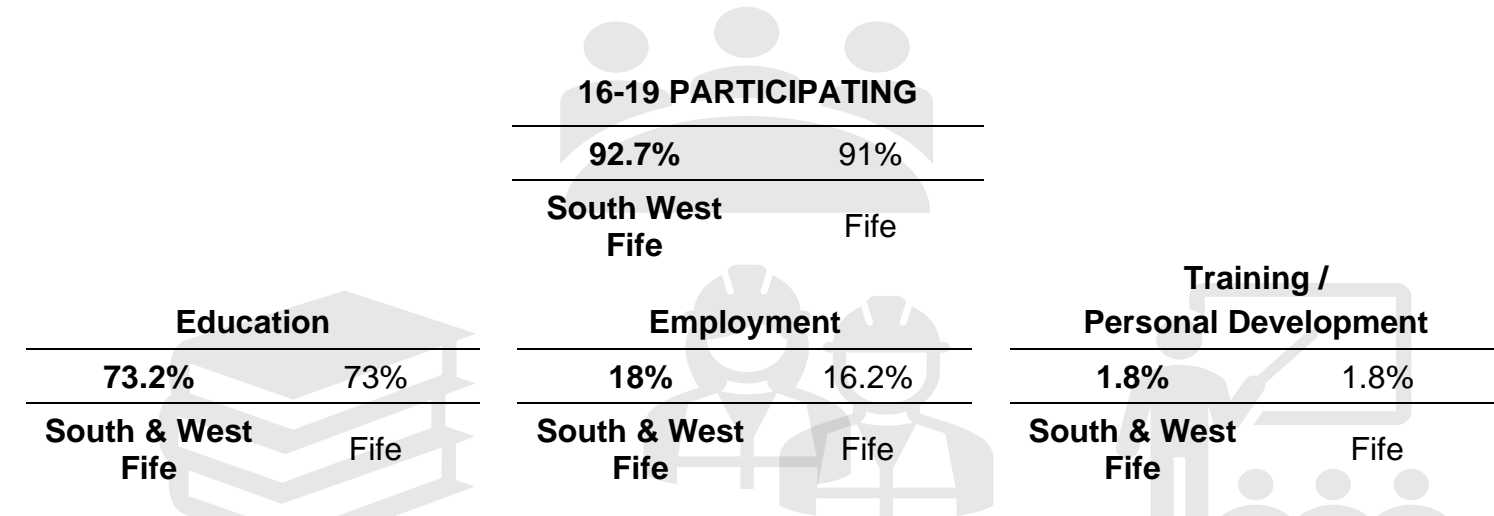


Figure 3.4 - Annual Participation Measure (16-19 year olds) 2021 (Source: [Skills Development Scotland](#))

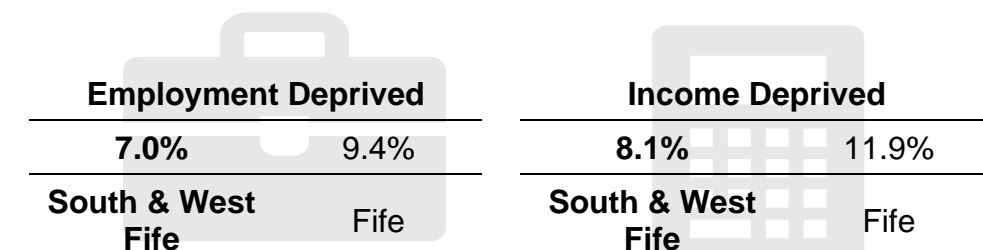


Figure 3.5 – Employment and Income Deprivation rates (Source: SIMD 2020/ [ScotPHO](#))

Additional information can be found via the KnowFife Hub (<https://know.fife.scot>).

4. Place

Place is an important element of Local Community Planning. Using the national Place Standard tool, local people were asked to consider aspects of the physical and social environment where they live and to paint a picture of the place and what needed to improve. Through comparing the results of Place Surveys in 2016, 2018 and 2022 we can get a picture of how the Area is changing, and use this snapshot as a background benchmark for any local use of the Place Standard within local communities across the Area.

In the South and West Fife Area in 2022, a consistent picture emerges in relation to local people's perception of place, compared to the results of previous Place Surveys.

Natural Space, and Feeling Safe continue to be identified as needing the least improvement in the South and West Fife Area. Public Transport improvements within the area appear to have been maintained. Influence and Sense of Control, and Care and Maintenance as in need of the most improvement within the South and West Fife Area.

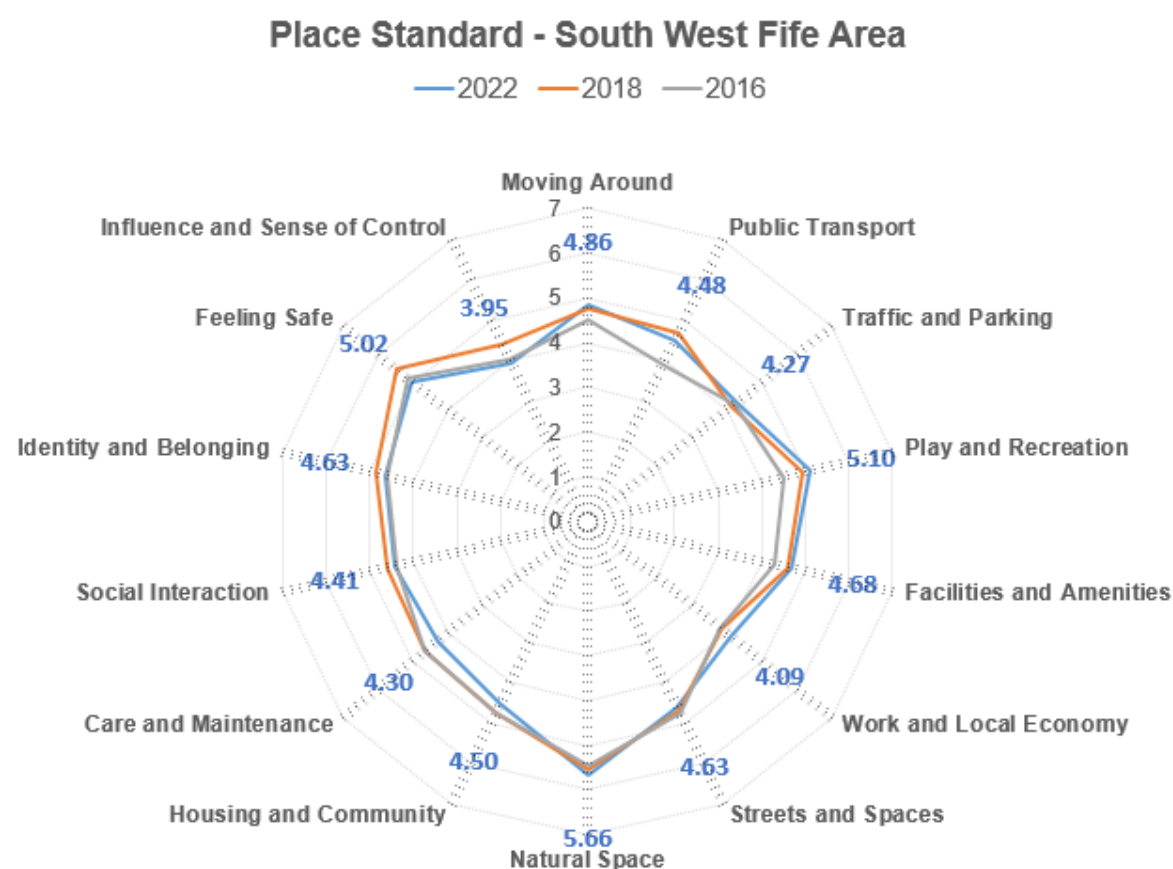


Figure 4.1 – Community perceptions of where improvement is needed in the area using the Place Standard, and how it has changed between 2016 and 2018. The outer part of the diagram (score 7) means little room for improvement, while the inner part (score 1) represents most need for improvement (Fife People's Panel, Survey 29, 2018)

Note: given sampling variability and variation within each area we cannot at this stage say with any certainty if change between 2016 and 2018 has been significant.

Compared to other areas of Fife, South and West Fife as a place is viewed positively in the main by local residents. Natural Space and Feeling Safe, the areas needing least improvement in the area, are also identified as needing least improvement across the majority of other areas across Fife.

Areas that are identified as in need of most improvement in South and West Fife Area - Work and Local Economy, Traffic and Parking, and Influence and Sense of Control – are also viewed as being in need of improvement across other areas of Fife. Lack of communication and consultation with locals gives a sense of lack of influence on decisions for the area, such as with new housing development.

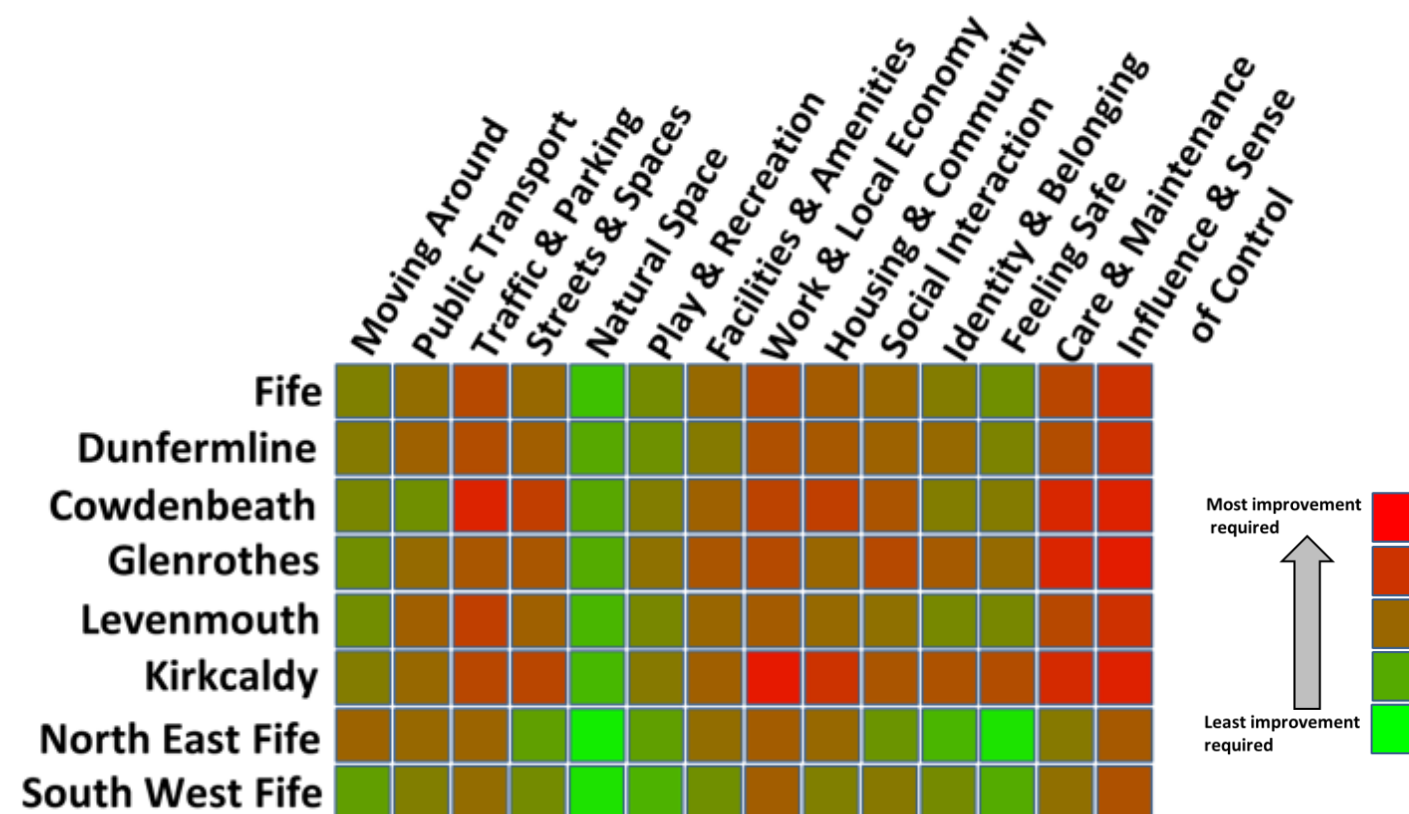


Figure 4.2 – Colour shaded diagram of how different aspects of Place are viewed across Fife (Place Standard, Fife People's Panel, Survey 34, 2022)

5. People

Simply looking at where people live only gives part of the picture. During 2020, Fife Council commissioned a study to explore the impact of COVID-19 for residents, including vulnerable and disadvantaged people in Dunfermline and South & West Fife Areas. The research was written during the “second wave” of the pandemic in Scotland.

This used Narrative Inquiry to focus on the past (experiences prior to COVID-19); the present (experience of COVID-19); and the future (what will it be like post the virus?). The research questions were:

- What has been the experience of residents during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- What are the key issues these people face?
- What will the needs be of these residents, post COVID-19?
- What are the implications for Fife Council, in particular the Community Team in the Area?

The report for Dunfermline and South & West Areas highlighted ‘A shared community commitment’. A number of themes emerged through conversations with residents including: Mood (with people experiencing complex competing emotions that were in the main overwhelmingly negative); Relationships (which were particularly difficult during lockdown and exacerbated both by proximity and social isolation); Finances (difficulties with finances were not seen as something new for some, but a major new difficulty for others); Food (a major theme emerged of residents relying on food banks); and concerns about the Future (with an overwhelming sense of gloom, but with some hope of positives). Future services focussed on food security, mental well-being and employment.

Positive findings included the gratitude people had for the services they had received from the Council, community staff and third sector during the pandemic: in particular for support with food.

Findings were explored with groups with local knowledge and experience of providing services in the area during the pandemic. Community groups mentioned a wide range of issues that they saw as particularly challenging for individuals and groups during Covid19. Those identified included social isolation and its subsequent impact on mental health; food poverty; financial strains; lack of employment opportunities; digital literacy, or lack thereof.

There was a sense that a shared experience (of the pandemic) had brought the community closer together and the future could be more positive. Focusing on key aspects such as food poverty, isolation and mental health seemed to be key.

Community organisations were asked how they and the Council could contribute to a ‘good future’. The theme of dependency on support was raised. There was a strong sense that community organisations want communities to own their own future and be involved in providing this support.

The implications of the coronavirus pandemic are likely to affect life outcomes for people for some time after it ends. The need for support post-lockdown will be very strong, particularly in the Kirkcaldy and Levenmouth areas, both for those with pre-existing conditions and those affected by COVID-19. This will be seen through increased or changed demand for services and poorer outcomes across a range of indicators. In particular, this is expected to impact on health, jobs, poverty, and inequalities. The challenge will be to move from crisis support to prevention.

MOOD

“It got harder as time went on specially with my mental health. My mental health is really bad. It’s because of Covid I’d still be like...you’re in the house all the time.” (Woman)

RELATIONSHIPS

“My son, M, was with me and that was quite hard. It was quite hard we were going up the wall. So quite a lot of fireworks going on...For him hellish, hellish quite hard.” (Woman)

It’s just been like keeping your distance, seeing people you know and passing them by and that. I think it will change the village I think it will change a lot of areas. Poverty and things like that.” (Woman)

FINANCES

“I’ve saved money, I’ve not been anywhere. I’ve not had to put petrol in my car.” (Woman)

“Usually I can cope but I’ve been spending it on drink...I’ve got a social worker I’ve got a housing support worker (inaudible)...I have got support it’s all through the phone. I’d rather dae it face to face.” (Man)

FOOD

“The Tower Pantry that’s been a God send for the whole village. So, you’re mainly looking forward to that, to see what you get. That’s a highlight. So that’s helped a lot.” (Woman)

FUTURE

“It’ll never be the same again, you can’t go out and shop. I went up to Dunfermline the other day I didn’t know what I was doing there. You cannae go up and look at clothes, you cannae go up and should look at shops. You cannae do things; you’re up there to do something then you’re back. The socialising side of things is gone I think ...It might get back to normal if they get a vaccine but I’m very wary, very wary. Some people just don’t seem to care eh?” (Woman)

Figure 5.1 – Example of residents’ comments gathered through the Narrative Inquiry Process

Strong social connections are seen as a cornerstone of mental health and wellbeing and community resilience. In early 2022, we asked local people about neighbourhood connections, and compared this with what people said in 2016. While feelings of belonging and planning to remain in the area have reduced, improvements have been seen in neighbourhood help and support. Many people would be willing to work together with others on something to improve their neighbourhood, and believe that other people in the area are likely to pull together to improve their neighbourhood. Many people plan to remain a resident of their neighbourhood for a number of years, with the majority of people regularly stopping and talking with others in their neighbourhood. There is a good sense of belonging with many valuing the friendships and connections they have with other people in their neighbourhood.

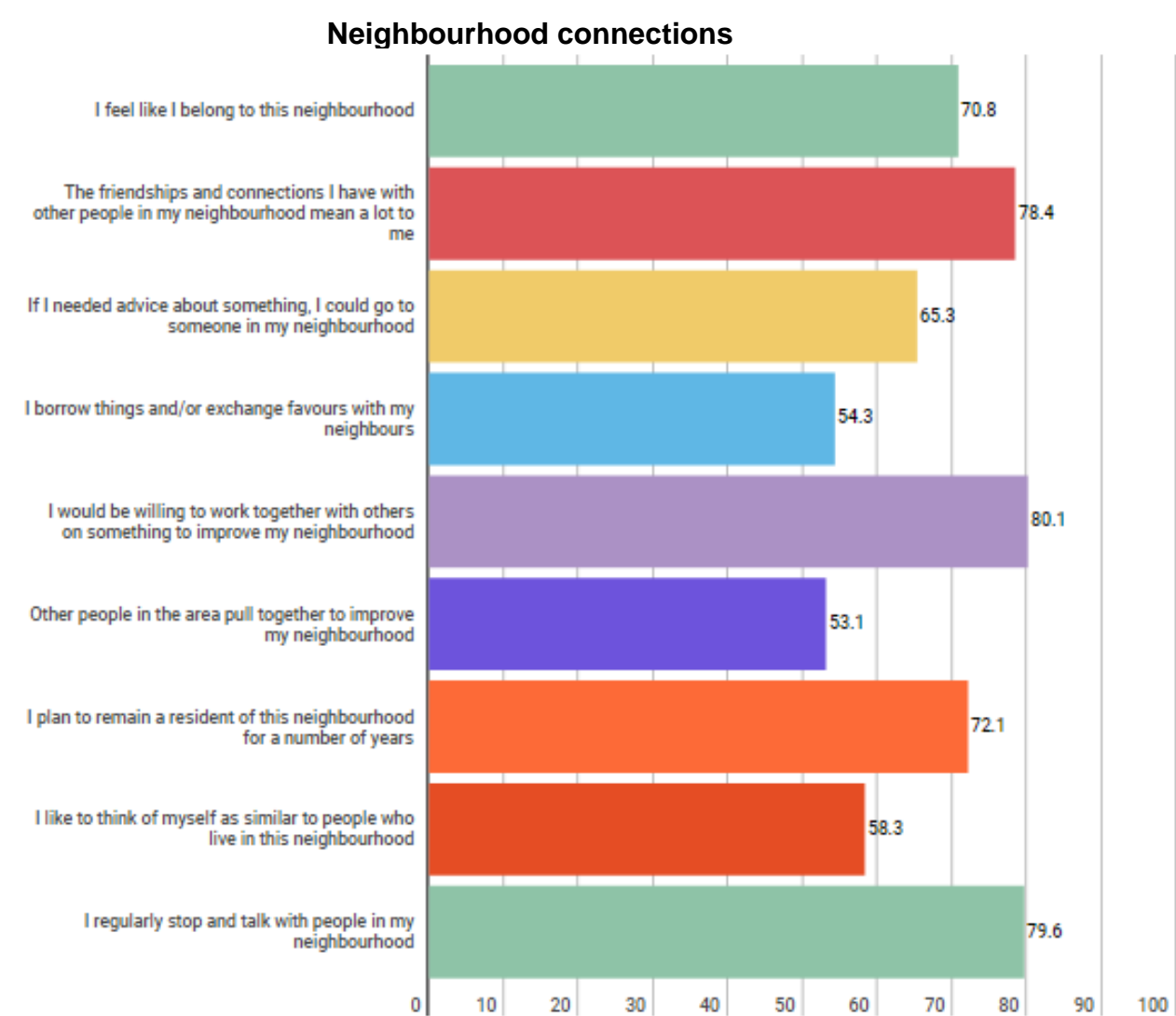


Figure 5.2 – Perceptions of neighbourhood connections (Fife People’s Panel, Survey 35, 2022)

Over the last couple of years, while people have been encouraged to stay at home to stay safe, technology has become a necessity for keeping connected, working remotely and accessing vital information. Personal use of the internet in the Area is 92.2% compared to 93.9% for Fife. The main uses of the internet are to search for information, send and receive emails, and buy goods or services. While levels of internet use continue to grow, people can still be digitally excluded because they lack the skills to be able to confidently and safely navigate the digital world.

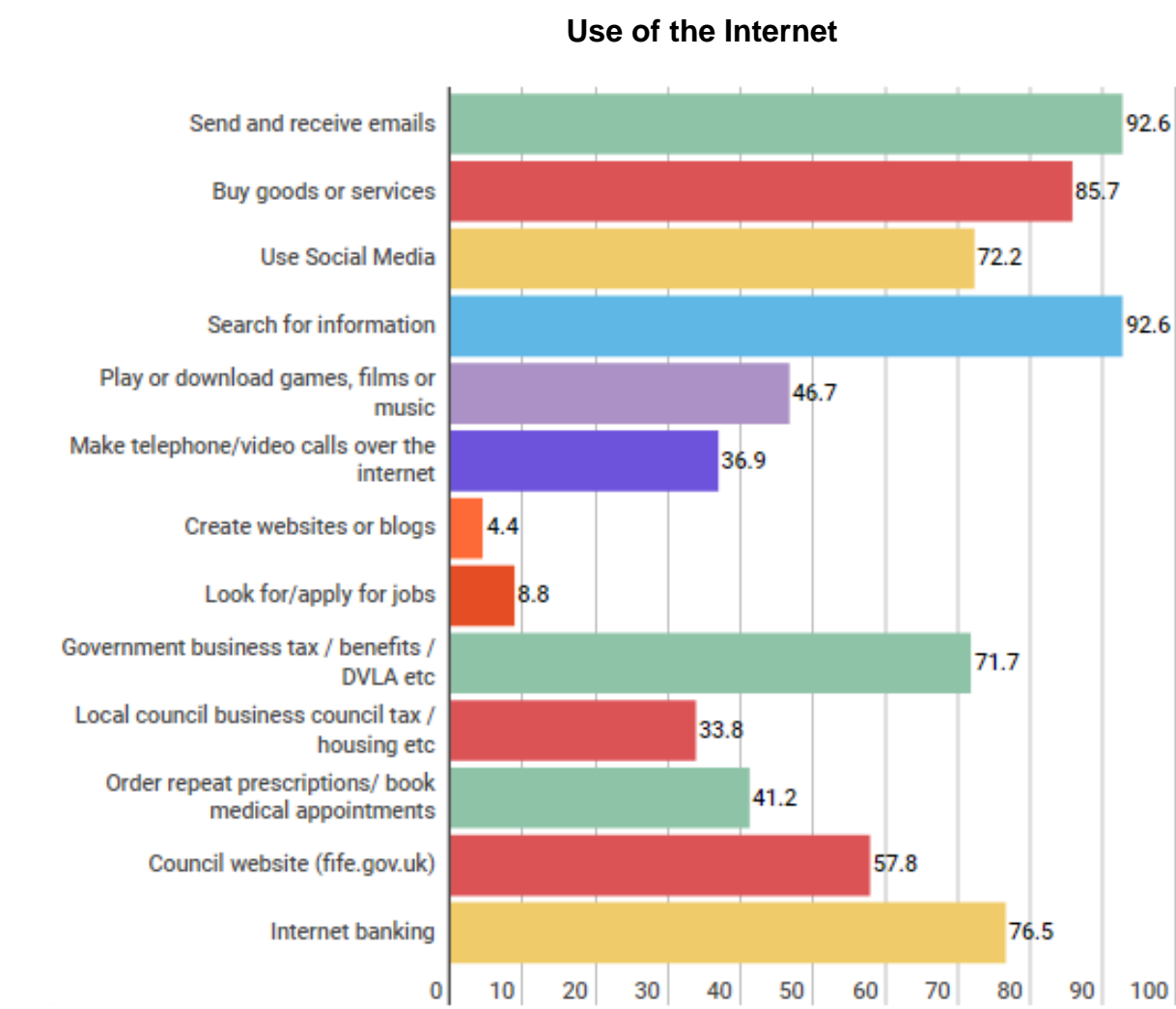


Figure 5.3 – Use of the Internet (Fife People’s Panel, Survey 35, 2022)

6. Community

Insights into how communities are faring are a critical input when considering local places. As with all areas of Fife, the majority of local people in South and West Fife Area would like more involvement in decisions that the Council makes that affect their local area. 21.9% of people in South and West Fife Area feel that they can influence decisions that affect their local area (compared to 13.7% for Fife).

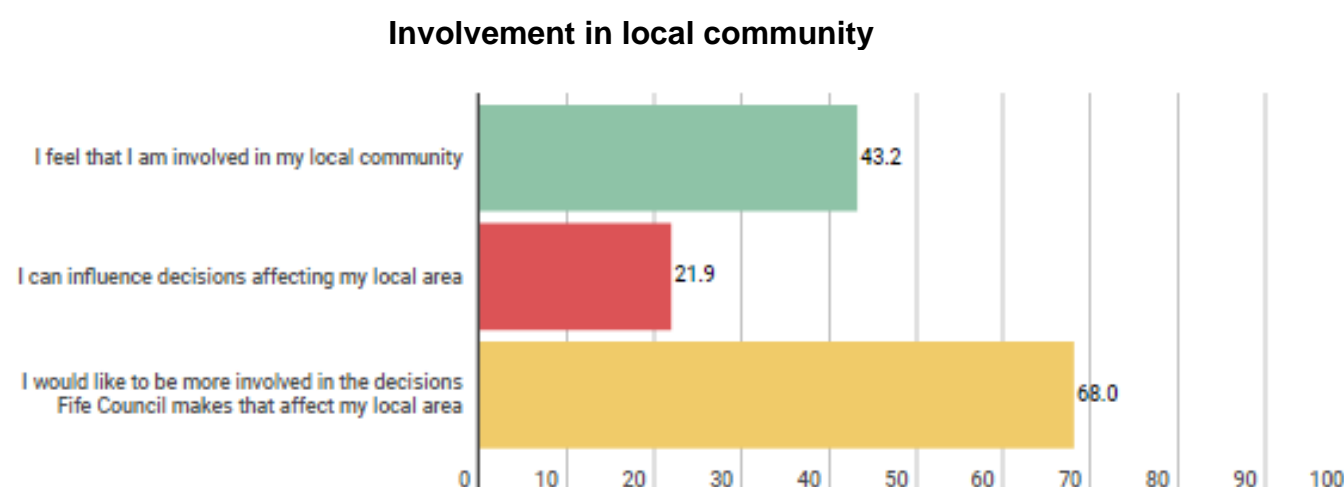


Figure 6.1– Involvement in local community (Fife People’s Panel, Survey 35, 2022)

We asked local people about a range of issues, particularly whether they saw this as a major issue, a minor issue, or not an issue in their local area.

The top five major issues for South and West Fife Area are:

- cost of living (including food, petrol prices),
- access to suitable housing,
- pensions and benefits,
- funding for public services, and
- NHS / Hospitals / Healthcare.

In 2022, cost of living has replaced NHS / Hospitals / Healthcare as the main issue facing all Areas of Fife. Crime / antisocial behaviour and funding for public services, are also seen as main issues for South and West Fife.

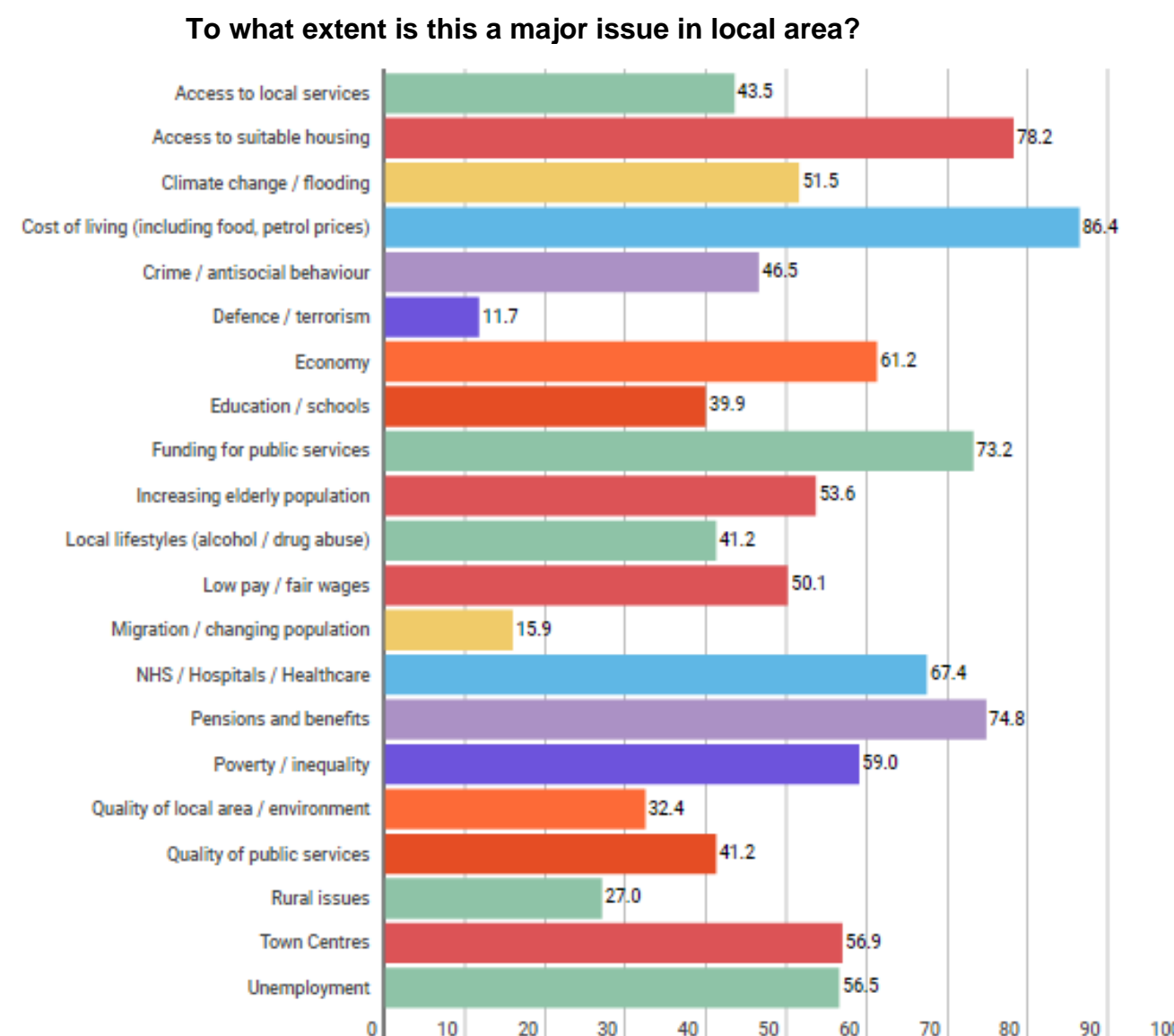


Figure 6.2 – Community perceptions of what is a major issue in the area (Fife People’s Panel, Survey 35, 2022)

Of those surveyed, 39% report that they provide some kind of unpaid (voluntary) help to a group or organisation. This compares with 46% of Fife as a whole. The most common areas in which unpaid (voluntary) help is given to groups and organisations are environmental protection, local community / neighbourhood groups, and older people’s groups.

Unpaid (voluntary) help to groups and organisations

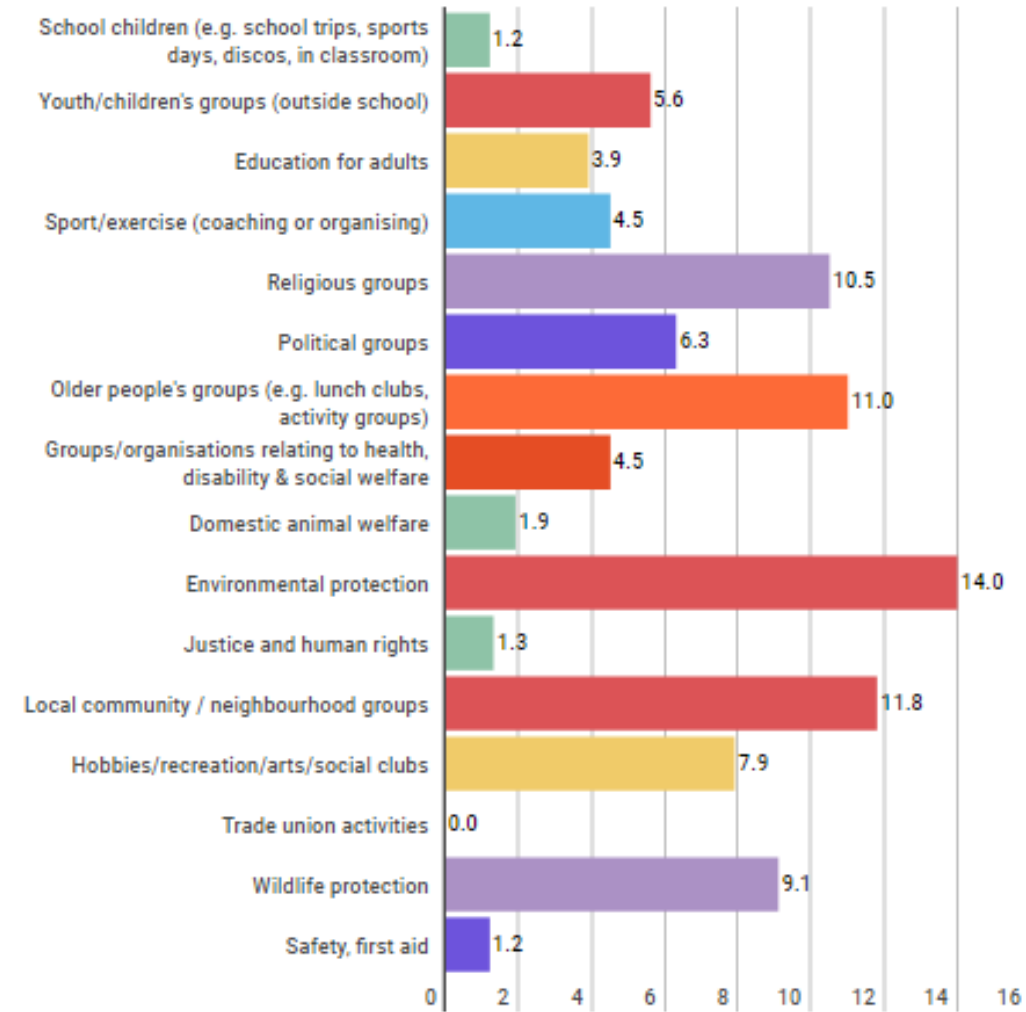


Figure 6.3 – Types of groups/organisations supported through unpaid (voluntary) help (Fife People’s Panel, Survey 35, 2022)

South and West Fife Area has the highest levels of all areas of Fife of local people believing the Council does its best with the money that is available, provides high quality services, and is good at letting local people know about the kind of services that it provides.

The perception is that the Council is less good at addressing the issues affecting quality of life in the local neighbourhood and designing services around the needs of those who use them.

Within the area, fewer people believe that the Council is good at listening to local people’s views before it takes decisions.

Views on local Council and services it provides

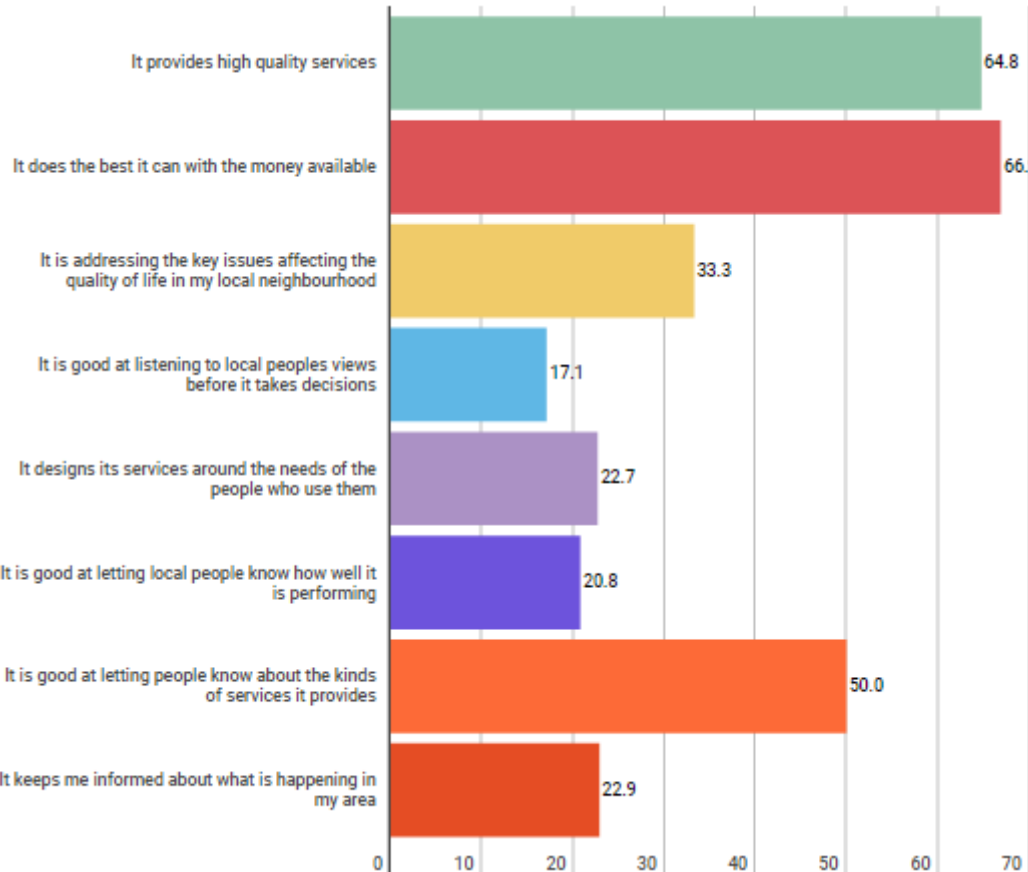


Figure 6.4 – Views on local Council and services it provides (Fife People’s Panel, Survey 35, 2022)

7. Local Outcomes

Local community planning requires a good understanding of differences within and between neighbourhoods. The table below shows the overall pattern of outcomes for neighbourhoods in the area, and whether local neighbourhoods are improving over time.

It identifies how different neighbourhoods within the area are faring in relation to key life outcomes. This includes outcomes across early years, older people, safer and stronger communities, health and wellbeing, employment and economy.

According to the Community Planning Outcome Profile Tool (Improvement Service, 2022), 44% of communities in the South and West Fife Area are doing better than expected compared to similar communities elsewhere in Scotland, compared to 50% of communities for Fife as a whole.

The neighbourhood with the poorest outcomes in the South and West Fife Area continues to be Inverkeithing East. Rosyth Central and Oakley Comrie and Blairhall are among those with the poorest outcomes. Areas with better life outcomes continue to include Crossford, Charleston and Limekilns, Dalgety Bay, and Cairneyhill and Crombie.

Kincardine continues to do worse than expected compared to similar neighbourhoods elsewhere in Scotland. Inverkeithing East, and Saline and Gowkhall are among those doing worse than expected.

Parts of Dalgety Bay, Aberdour and Auchtertool, and Crossford, Charlestown and Limekilns are doing better than expected compared to other similar communities elsewhere in Scotland.

Neighbourhoods showing the least improvement in life outcomes include Cairneyhill and Crombie, North Queensferry and Inverkeithing. The greatest improvement in life outcomes continues to be seen in Rosyth, and Aberdour and Auchtertool.

Inverkeithing East, Cairneyhill and Crombie, and Dalgety Bay East have improved less than expected compared to similar neighbourhoods elsewhere in Scotland, while all areas of Rosyth, and Valleyfield Culross and Torryburn have improved more than expected.



Figure 7.1 – How different neighbourhoods are doing on key life outcomes relative to other comparable areas (Improvement Service, Community Planning Outcomes Profile Tool 2022)

The map below (Figure 7.2) shows how local outcomes for neighbourhoods within the Area compare to other similar types of communities elsewhere in Scotland. While many neighbourhoods are performing about the same as other similar neighbourhoods elsewhere in Scotland in terms of local outcomes, some areas – including Dalgety Bay, Aberdour and Auchtertool - are doing better than other similar types of neighbourhoods. Areas doing less well compared to other similar communities elsewhere include Kincardine and Inverkeithing.

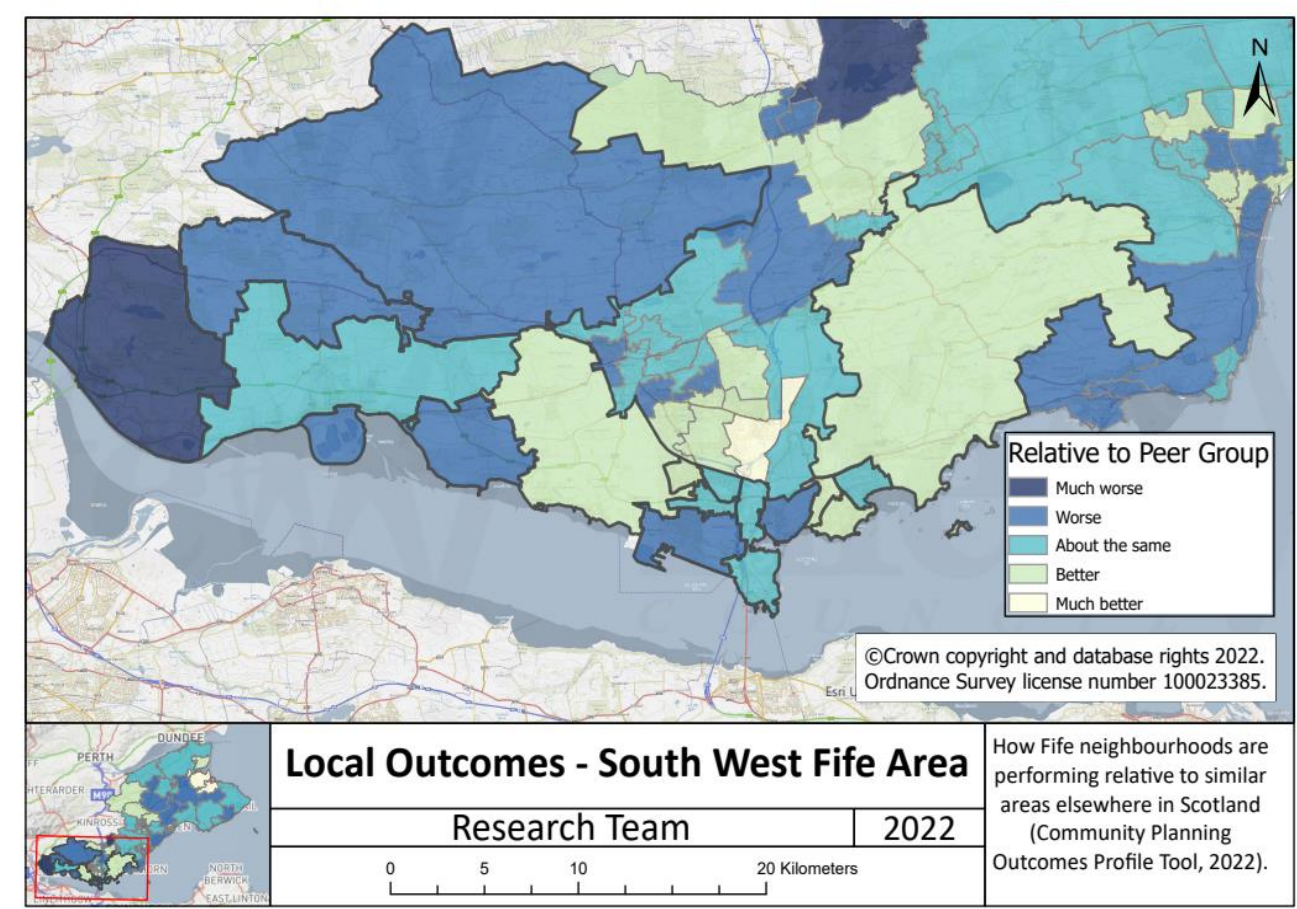


Figure 7.2 – How neighbourhoods are performing relative to similar areas elsewhere in Scotland (Community Planning Outcomes Profile 2022)

South and West Fife has 5 of its 68 datazones in 20% most deprived for Scotland (SIMD 2020).

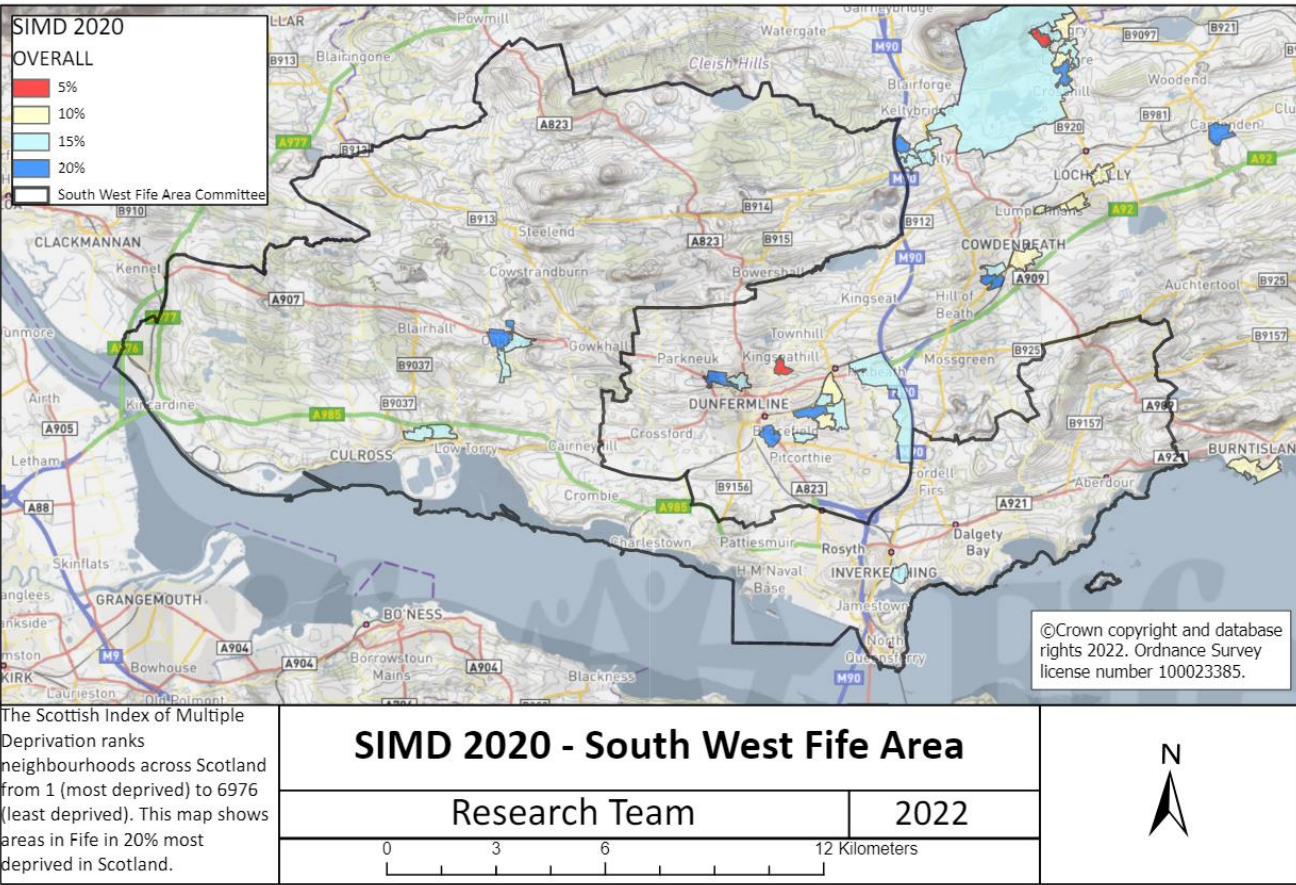


Figure 7.3 – Map highlighting the 5, 10, 15 and 20% most deprived datazones within Area, SIMD 2020

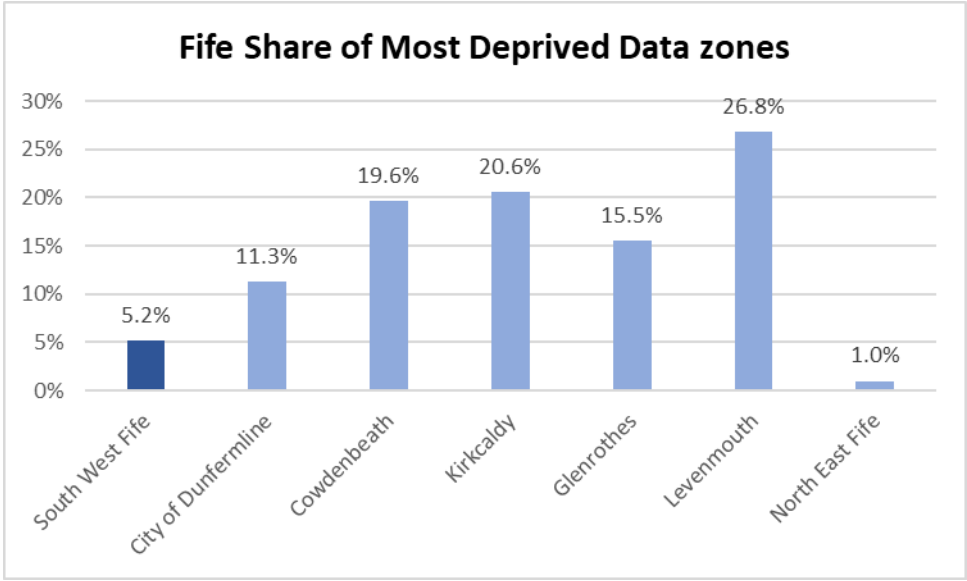


Figure 7.4 – Area share of Fife’s most deprived datazones, SIMD 2020

See [SIMD 2020 Focus on South West Fife Area Profile \(https://know.fife.scot\)](https://know.fife.scot)

8. Horizons

It is nearly impossible to predict the future, however it is possible to identify challenges which are already on the horizon. While change is always constant, the extent of uncertainty that Fife's communities will need to face in the coming years is unlike anything that has been seen for several decades. The impact of national and international events – such as the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, the restrictions and changes in the movement of goods and people resulting from Brexit - will continue to be felt at a very local level impacting on issues such as poverty, health inequality, the environment and the economy.

The health and wellbeing of any community is an important strategic priority. Following many years of continual increases in life expectancy, the number of years that people are expected to live is beginning to level off, and in some of Fife's poorer areas, decrease. Healthy life expectancy (the number of years a person can expect to live in good health) is also reducing in many areas across Fife. This has major negative implications for people's quality of life. While much attention has been placed on the immediate and short-term implications of coronavirus and how it affects the population, this is also expected to impact on people's health and wellbeing outcomes in the longer-term, owing to delays in seeking or providing health services.

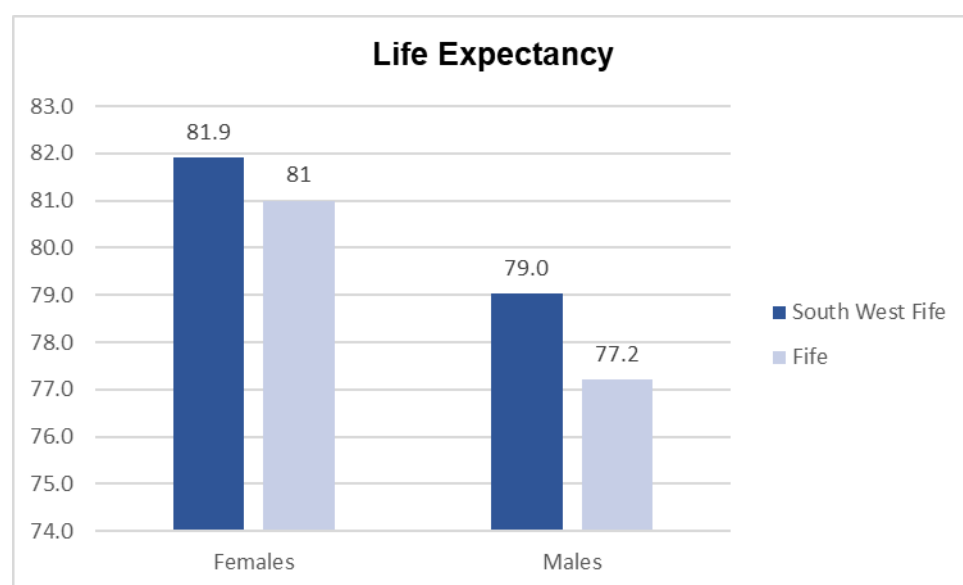


Figure 8.1 – Life Expectancy at birth for males and females (Source: ScotPHO)

The most fundamental element of any area's make-up is its people, and so it is crucial that there is a good understanding of what that population looks like and how it is likely to change in the future. South and West Fife, like Fife, has seen its population grow for several decades, however, over the next 10 years South and West Fife's population is estimated to reduce in size, and after 2030, it is expected to reduce at a faster pace. South and West Fife will see the second largest decrease in its population of the seven Fife Areas. South and West Fife's overall population is projected to decrease by around -3,400 people (-7%) by 2030. Inverkeithing and Dalgety Bay Ward is projected to see the largest decrease of -2,100 (-12%) and is the Ward which will see the biggest reduction in its population of all Fife's 22 Wards. Rosyth Ward will see -800 fewer people (-5%), while West Fife and Coastal Villages Ward will have -450 less people (-3%).

South and West Fife's overall population reduction is mainly due to a reduction in the numbers of Children and Working Ages, with Working Age groups showing the largest decrease in numbers of -4,250 (-13%), while Children will decrease by -1,900 (-23%). Although the reduction in child numbers is not as high as for working ages, the proportion of children that will reduce in the South and West Fife Area is nearly twice that of Working Ages. South and West Fife Area will see the highest level of reductions in population for children and working ages of the seven Fife Areas. To off-set the reduction in population for children and working ages, older people are expected to increase in number by 2,750 (28%) by 2030, showing the second highest increase in population in Fife for this age group. All three South and West Fife Wards will show a reduction in both children and working age numbers, and an increase in older people numbers.

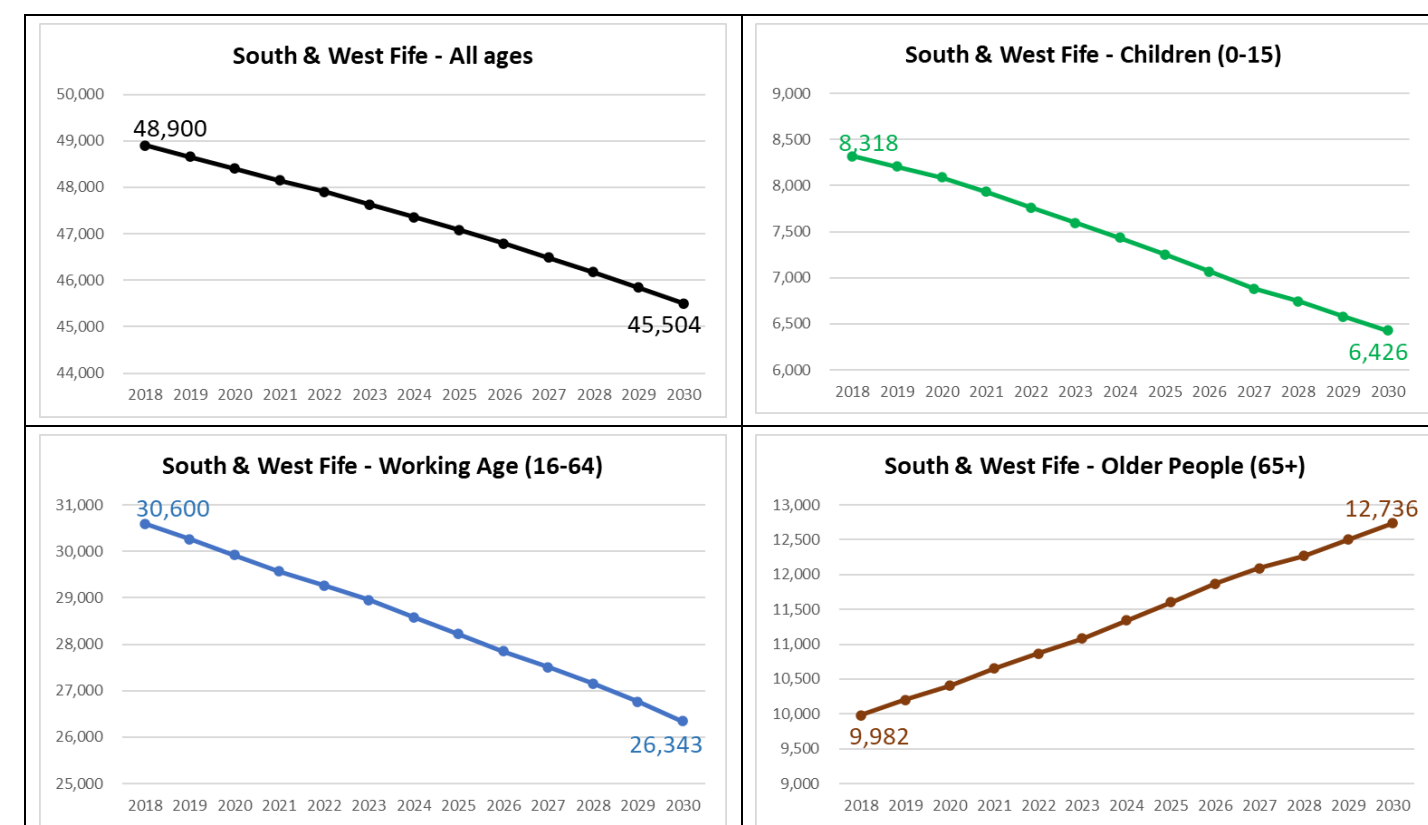


Figure 8.2 – Projected change in population of the area over the period 2016 to 2030 (Fife Council Research)

While much of the coronavirus pandemic has heavily influenced people’s health, and their broader wellbeing, it has also had a major impact on people’s jobs, and businesses and industries, with many facing a much less certain future than even a few years ago. Between 2020 and 2021, the number of businesses fell in all parts of Fife and whilst claimant rates have now returned to pre-pandemic levels in some parts of Fife, employment rates are still generally lower than in 2019, and most areas have seen an increase in the number of people who are economic inactive. The pandemic has also accelerated changes in the ways in which people work and their working lives, with much more emphasis on working from home and other hybrid models of work. The full implications of this new style of working life may have many benefits, but may also create some unforeseen issues, and many businesses and organisations will need time in which to adapt and adjust to this new environment.

There is a need to anticipate and plan for the more pressing implications of climate change and how it will affect peoples’ lives, particularly in the area of Adaptation.

Climate Fife Theme	Classification
Adaptation	High
Energy Consumption	Medium
Transport Consumption	Medium
SIMD	Low
Community priorities	Low

Figure 8.5 – Area Summary by Climate Fife Theme (Source: Climate Change and Zero Waste Team)

As with many parts of Fife, the Area’s built assets, including its buildings and property, are not resilient or easily adapted to increased surface water, rainfall or storm surges. In some cases, the buildings’ construction may not be sufficient, for example, old or unsuitable gutters, and their location may suffer from poor performing drainage systems and sewer infrastructure. Many homes, premises and other buildings, are not resilient to high temperatures. Due to the construction of these buildings, it would be difficult or costly to install measures that would alleviate excessive heat, or provide other facilitation that would allow them to be cooled. South and West Fife area also has high rates of challenging home types, including older properties, listed or restricted buildings status, and non-traditional properties, that make energy efficiency improvements expensive or prohibited. An investment portfolio blending public and private investment will be essential for homes of all tenures and non-domestic buildings, to reduce energy demand and decarbonise remaining energy consumption. There will need to be a significant increase in the pace and scale of progress on transition of buildings to decarbonise energy required if we are to meet new building criteria and the Scottish Government’s targets. This will be hampered to some extent by a lack of sufficient skills and suitable supplies. The cost of energy transition will be significant against existing income and spend opportunities across the area, and large-scale improvement initiatives will be needed as small-scale improvements tend to be less cost effective in the long run. In the short-term, there is likely to be significant increase in fuel poverty due to increasing energy prices.

Given the location of South and West Fife, it is vulnerable to unavoidable impacts of climate change, particularly flooding, and other impacts on agriculture. It will also experience pressure for more renewable energy generation, particularly solar farms. The area benefits from opportunities to develop "sustainable food places" and approaches to tackle food poverty, as the cost of living continues to escalate. In terms of transport and infrastructure, South and West Fife has a high reliance on cars, and poor public transport links that are mainly used by poorer communities. It has a relatively low density of population and access to local services and amenities. This increases the challenge in the area to decarbonise transport, as it has a high proportion of transport emissions due to its rurality. Its existing cycling networks are not joined up, especially for commuting, and there needs to be more options for walking and cycling.

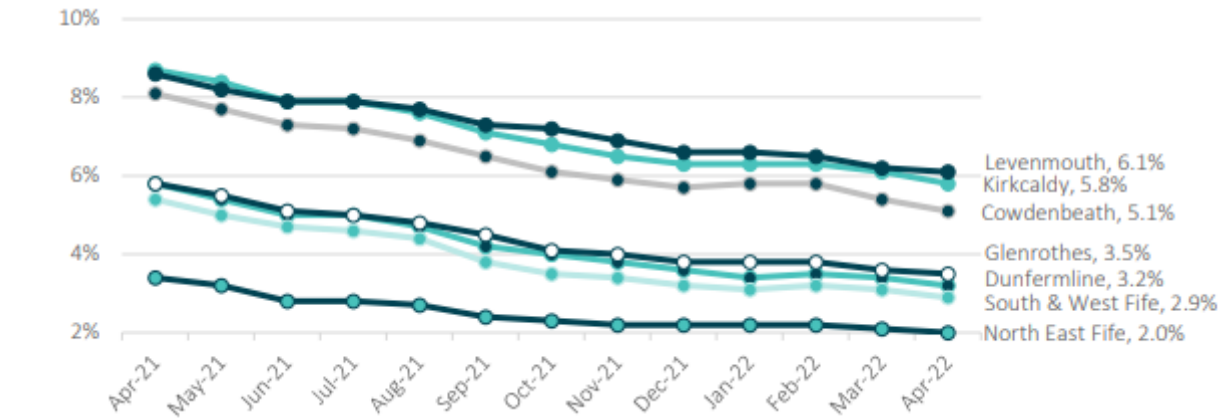


Figure 8.3 – Claimant Rate by Area Committee (Source: Monthly Economic Update, April 2022)

The current rise in living costs that people are experiencing for everyday goods and services is an example of how easily local people’s lives can be impacted by global events in a relatively short period of time. Levels of poverty were increasing before the pandemic, with rates of child poverty in all wards within the Area tending to be at or tracking below Fife, but increasing over time. Now high levels of inflation and substantial increases in the cost of living for basic necessities, such as food and fuel, are adding to the pressures felt by individual households. It is unclear when this situation will stabilise, and how this will impact on widening inequalities within Fife’s communities.

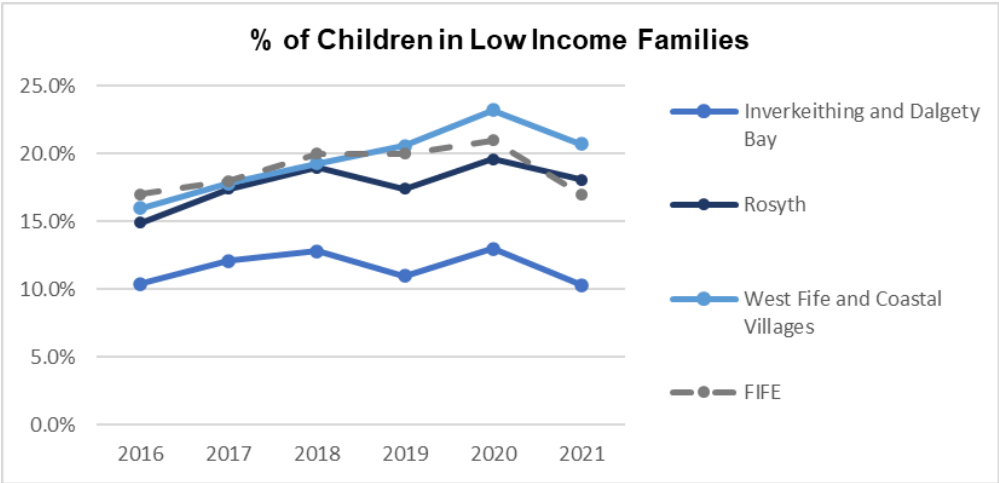


Figure 8.4 – Children in low income families by Ward (Source: Department of Work and Pensions)