



# UNDERSTANDING FIFE NEIGHBOURHOODS

## PURPOSE OF REPORT

As part of ongoing deliberations, the Fairer Fife Commission have requested that a sample of Fife Datazones in the 20% most deprived in Scotland as identified by the Scottish Index of Deprivation (SIMD) be looked at closely alongside a small and manageable number of key indicators. In particular they are interested in the comparison of these datazones with others which are apparently doing better and to explore the insights this can provide.

## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

1. Poverty is widely dispersed through all Fife communities, although significant pockets of deprivation are present with around 4.2% of Fife datazones significantly deprived. 7 datazones are identified as not only significantly deprived but more so than expected given the demographics of the area. There may be also be further scope to consider the trajectory of deprivation in communities.
2. In Fife, housebuilding, regeneration and housing refurbishment is seen to be associated with reducing deprivation. In the Fife datazones examined a key theme was that of lack of qualifications and the link to attracting new industries in areas which have seen industrial decline.
3. The effort to improve the most deprived datazones can be as much as 4 times that required even for datazones in the lowest quarter of deprived datazones, This will be a key consideration in prioritising resources. Most significant improvement across Scotland is associated with major improvement and regeneration work, although there are also examples of community led improvement in areas comparable to Fife datazones.
4. Deeper exploration of data was seen to be important, Some apparent improvement in deprivation is due to population movements such as dispersion or concentration in an area rather than actually moving people out poverty.
5. There may be scope to consider how concentrating deprivation in specific areas in Fife influences our ability to drive reduction in deprivation. There may also be a requirement to further consider single people and lone parents as target groups which persistently appears in relation to poverty and deprived areas.

## METHOD

The method (detailed in appendix 1) involved identifying 17 indicator datazones (table 1) along with objectively comparable datazones across Scotland. These comparator datazones included less deprived aspirational areas and improving datazones identified to be demographically similar. This analysis also included identifying the difference in SIMD rank from that expected based on its demographic profile. Managers in Area Services, Housing and Community Learning and Development were contacted to provide on the ground intelligence as to recent changes and events in the selected Fife datazones. Contacts across other Scottish Local Authorities were asked to provide similar insight into the comparator datazones.

Datazone Selected	Reason
Gallatown West S01002779	Worst:Fife
Sinclairtown Central S01002765	Worst Fife
Smeaton South S01002759	Improving
Dysart Central S01002756	Improving
Pathhead NW S01002743	Improving
Methilhill SW S01002852	Improving
Methil Shepherds Park S01002837	Improving
Buckhaven & Muiredge SW S01002825	Declining
Leven SW S01002882	Declining
Broom N S01002910	Moved Out SIMD12
Rosyth Kings South S01002603	Declining
Auchmughty NW S01002876	Declining
Macedonia W S01002889	Declining
Crosshil & Lochore S S01002813	Improving
Broomhead S01002677	Declining
Pitbauchlie W S01002626	Declining
Pitcorthie NW S01002638	Moved Out : SMD12

Table 1. Selected Datazones

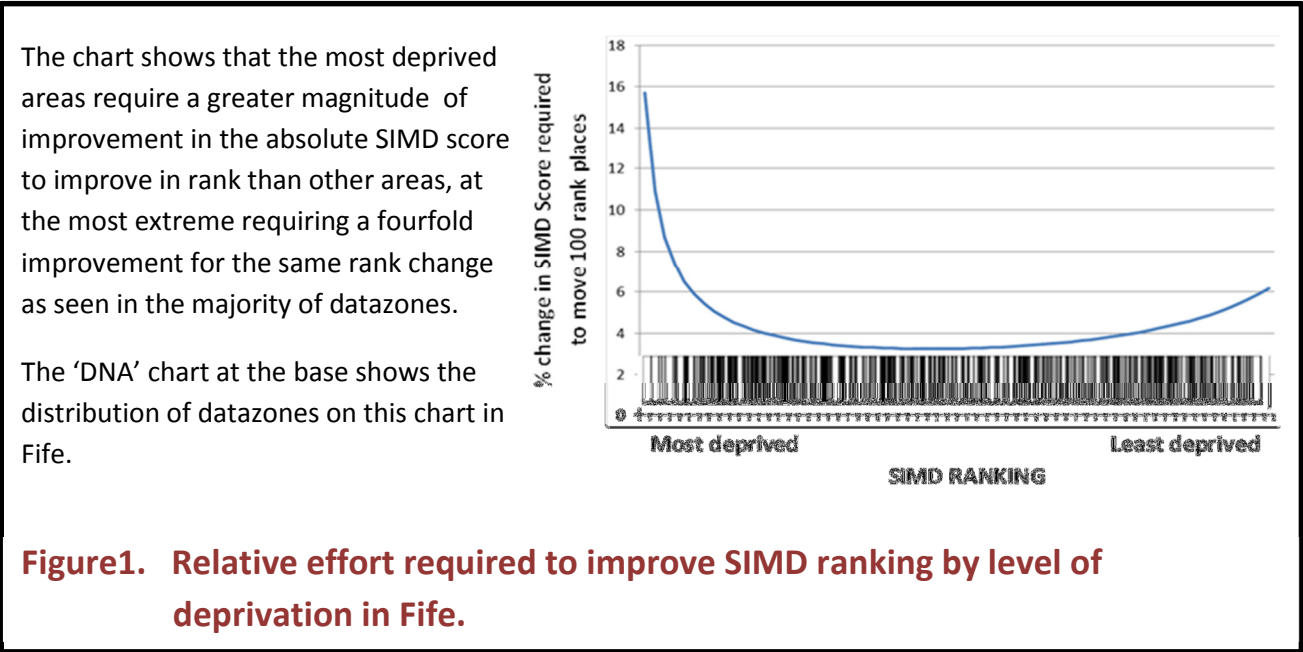
## DEPRIVATION IN FIFE

It has become commonplace for deprivation to be described as the bottom 20% of Scottish Datazones as defined by the SIMD (SIMD 20%). This is easily accessible, easy to understand and can play an important role in managing priorities. Examination of the Fife data in context of Scotland as a whole shows this results in 4 issues which can make it difficult for practitioners to target resources and identify priorities. These are -

1. Ranking does not reflect the actual, often significant, difference in deprivation between datazones.
2. Most people living in poverty do not live in the most deprived datazones.
3. It does not provide a sense of how well we might expect a datazone to be doing given its circumstances
4. Greatest improvement is seen to be achieved by dispersing the population from the most deprived datazones.

It is perhaps unsurprising that Fife, an area known to be demographically similar to the rest of Scotland has 19.2% of its datazones in the most deprived 20% of Scottish datazones (SIMD 20%). This does not necessarily mean that 19.2% of datazones in Fife are deprived, only that they sit at the top of a scoring system focussed on deprivation. Around 61% of people who are income deprived do not live in these datazones (Table 4). While people

claiming Job Seekers Allowance are concentrated in the SIMD 20% (42.4% of all claimants), the majority of Fife claimants (57.6%) are not. Critically however, examination of data shows that the effort required to reduce deprivation in the SIMD 20% is significantly greater than in other less deprived areas (Figure 1.) Fife does not have the high numbers of highly deprived areas seen elsewhere. Gallatown West (Kirkcaldy) is the most deprived area in Fife and within the most deprived 0.5% of Scottish datazones.



Considering the absolute rather than relative deprivation scores suggests that 19 (4.2%) of Fife datazones are in the most deprived category using the method described in appendix 1. This is significantly lower than the 19.2% and reflects that the SIMD Ranking does not necessarily reflect the very large differences in actual deprivation scoring seen between the most deprived areas and those which are 'middling'. Indeed during examination of data it can be difficult to identify significant demographic differences between datazones which are nonetheless quite far apart in rank. An example is Gallatown in Kirkcaldy with a SIMD rank of 82 but which remains comparable to other datazones such as that ranked 1677 (Dundee) and in respect of some indicators e.g. low income households and economic activity it may appear to be less deprived.

It is possible to identify how deprived a datazone is compared to the expected level of deprivation given a similar demographic (table 2). This shows that 14.1% of Fife datazones are not doing as well as we might expect, but 27.8% are doing better. Some 1.5% of all Fife datazones are identified as deprived and more deprived than might be expected. This begins to give a sense of those datazones which are in most need of intervention (table 3). This represents areas of Dunfermline, Ballingry, Methil and High Valleyfield datazone. This does not include expected areas in Kirkcaldy which are seen to be deprived in a way which might be expected given the demographic or Glenrothes, where none of its communities are within this most deprived category. However, it is worth considering the trajectory of some of these communities, for instance, Macedonia and Auchmuty are seen to be declining steadily.

It is worth reflecting that few of our most deprived datazones are doing better than expected (only 2 of them or 9.8%) while 33.8% of our least deprived datazones are doing better than

expected. This would suggest some scope to achieve better results with respect to the most deprived areas. Targeted improvement already occurs and 59% of the indicator datazones have or are undergoing significant housebuilding, regeneration or refurbishment.

		Comparison to cluster average			
% datazones		Better	Similar	Worse	total
Score based deprivation (not rank)	Most deprived	0.4	2.2	1.5	4.2
	Middling	4.9	19.4	4.9	29.1
	Least deprived	22.5	36.4	7.7	66.7
	total	27.8	58.1	14.1	100.0

**Table 2. Non-ranking SIMD based scoring and comparison to expected deprivation for Fife Datazones**

The table shows the percentage distribution of datazones with respect to deprivation level if an absolute methodology is used, in this case using an arbitrary 3 equal bands across the range of Fife SIMD scores (not ranks). These are compared to expected average values for Scottish datazones to which each datazone is most demographically similar to if deprivation is controlled. Specific datazones are shown in table 2.

Deprived and more so than expected	Deprived as expected	Deprived and less so than expected
2647 - High Valleyfield	2656 - Abbeyview East (Dunfermline)	2778 - Lochgelly East
2655 - Abbeyview North (Dunfermline)	2713 - Fife - Kirkcaldy Linktown and Seafield	2853 – Kirkland South (Methil)
2672 - Touch (Dunfermline)	2755 - Templehall (Kirkcaldy)	
<b>2685 – Headwell (Dunfermline )</b>	2765 – Sinclairtown Central (Kirkcaldy)	
<b>2819 –Ballingry West</b>	2775 – Smeaton North (Kirkcaldy)	
<b>2842 – Methil Memorial Park</b>	2779 - Gallatown West (Kirkcaldy)	
<b>2843 – Methil Haven</b>	2823 - Buckhaven and Muiredge South West	
	2855 – Methilhill East	
	2856 – Aberhill (Methil)	
	2864 – Kirkland North (Methil)	

**Table 3. The Specific datazones referred to in table 1.**

The datazones in bold are those which are the deprived and furthest below expected values for the demographic within them when using a stricter 4 equal band approach.

Indicator	in 20% most deprived	outwith 20% most deprived
% employment deprived	38.8%	61.2%
% income deprived	40.7%	59.3%
% children (under 16 in poverty)	43.6%	54.1%
% households in low income (BHC)	28.9%	71.1%
% of households with gross income < £300	30.2%	69.8%
% of households in fuel poverty	26.9%	73.1%
% of Job Seekers Allowance Claimants	42.4%	57.6%

**Table 4. Levels of selected poverty indicators within and outwith 20% most deprived SIMD areas.**

The table shows that deprivation is distributed widely in the community and is by no means confined to the most deprived areas. The majority of income deprived people do not live in an area likely to be categorised as deprived.

## DRIVERS OF DEPRIVATION IN FIFE

There is a significant lack of systematic front line intelligence regarding the context of Fife communities. Where intelligence exists, much of it is largely 'locked in heads' and not always readily accessible. Deriving meaning from the quantitative data can therefore be problematic. Nonetheless it was thought useful to consider drivers for deprivation in the Fife communities selected. So long as the above caveat is held in mind, this proves instructive in building a picture of deprivation.

A significant driving force will be the fortunes of the wider area that a datazone is located within. Wider decline of Kirkcaldy and its town centre will be a major determinant in communities such as Gallatown, Sinclairtown and Smeaton. Such declines can also see a decline in overall jobs available but also the quality of jobs available. Typically in Fife, decline is associated with decline of industries such as heavy engineering. A prevalence of low income work rather than worklessness can be key in some areas e.g. Gallatown/Sinclairtown where Job Seekers Allowance claimants are lower than in comparison datazones which are doing better. Low levels of qualifications can make it difficult to address these issues in Fife.

The information collated tends to suggest that housing policy may appear to drive some of the results seen, particularly with regard to datazone SIMD rank. Care must be exercised in interpreting this as to some degree all that is happening is that people are being moved around rather than changing the overall levels of deprivation. An example is Broom North (Leven) where large scale regeneration over 20 years has resulted in it moving out of the bottom quintile of most deprived areas.

This drives a situation where inequality is apparently increased but in practice it is made more clumped. In particular social housing may simply filter already deprived people from the wider community into social housing areas. Examples of this may include Gallatown in Kirkcaldy. Step changes in apparent deprivation can be seen when private housing is built in a datazone with nearby Smeaton showing this effect. How housing voids are managed will be a key driver in this, with reputation of an area being a significant factor. Pitcorthie North (Dunfermline) is an example of a datazone successfully moving out of the bottom quintile. This was achieved by the council taking over ownership of the housing and redeveloping it.

Improvement would appear to take time to become obvious in the SIMD results. Declining areas such as Broomhead where significant work has occurred recently and reputation improved have not yet had long enough to necessarily see a step change in the results. It is highly likely that this will be an improvement example in future years. Where more time has been available such as Methil Shepherds Park, some improvement in SIMD score is apparent: The improved flats perhaps being more desirable to a wider range of people. A significant number of datazones where improvement has occurred is linked to housebuilding, examples include Crosshill & Lochore South, Pitcorthie North West, Dysart Central, Smeaton South and Methilhill South West. Leven South West is an area where a decline appears to have been arrested by housebuilding and the beginning of improvements. This all suggests that housebuilding and refurbishment can have a positive impact on an area, bearing in mind caveats around simply dispersing the population and exchanging it for one which is a bit better off.

There are some significant demographic factors apparent in deprived datazones. In some cases these are specific to some datazones, such as a higher level of children in low income households e.g. Sinclairtown. Single people and lone parents however appear to be features of more deprived areas and this may be worthy of further consideration in terms of additional support requirements. This may simply be a result of housing policy concentrating this demographic into some areas. Smeaton (Kirkcaldy) which has seen some improvement has a lower prevalence of lone living. In Auchmuty North West (Glenrothes) there is a clear example of various factors driving a concentration of most deprived people. A declining datazone, housing quality and reputation drive a high level of housing refusals leading to increased transfer of homeless people from other areas. There may be scope to consider the impact of concentrating deprivation and whether this makes it easier to address or compounds issues in Fife.

## COMPARISON TO SIMILAR SCOTTISH DATAZONES

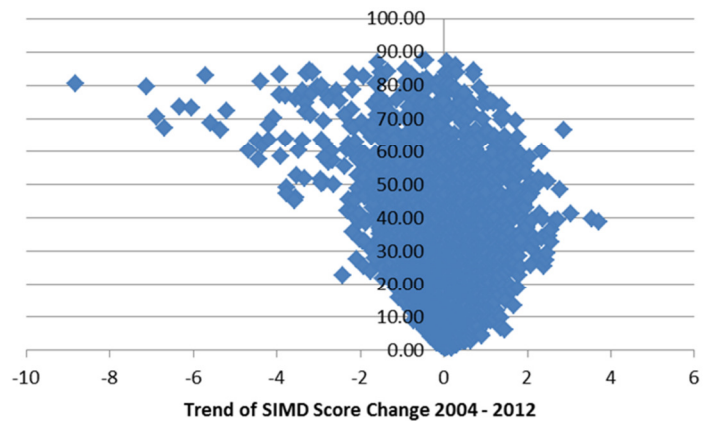
A significant element of the current study was to look at the comparison of the selected datazones with those elsewhere in Scotland, particularly those which appear to be 'doing better'.

Buckhaven and Muiredge South East is in many ways characteristic of a declining datazone, although levelling out in more recent years. It shares a similar history to the comparator datazones across Scotland in being part of a wider community which has had declining industries. It differs in that comparator aspirational areas, across Glasgow, Arbroath and Moray, have been more successful in attracting new service based industries, highlighting the role of economic development in turning around an areas fortunes. In this case, higher levels of lower socio-economic classifications with a higher prevalence of lone living and may hint at a reduced ability to supply people with the required skills to service new industries. Similar messages are visible elsewhere in Fife. Pitbauchlie (Dunfermline) shows higher levels of couple and family households than similar comparators, but compared to aspirational datazones it has lower levels of economic activity, greater proportion in lowest socio-economic classifications and crucially relatively more people with no qualifications. Similarly in Gallatown west and Sinclairtown Central (both Kirkcaldy) educational barriers are significant in regard to the working age population and a barrier to moving people out of poverty.

An obvious question is to consider which datazones elsewhere in Scotland managed to improve, particularly those which are identified as being most difficult to improve. It is possible to identify a cluster of areas which show significant, sometimes astonishing improvement in SIMD ranking (Figure 2). Detailed exploration of this cluster of around 20 datazones shows they are predominantly in Glasgow with one in Edinburgh (Muirhouse) and another in Dundee (Hilltown). The main reasons for improvement seen are –

- Major regenerative improvement and infrastructure change works
- Demolition of houses and dispersion of deprived communities
- Dispersion of the original community and construction of houses for a different demographic

The chart shows a major series of outliers at top left, representing Scottish datazones which were among the most deprived in 2004 but which saw significant improvement in SIMD score between 2004 and 2012



**Figure 2. Change in SIMD Score Trend Plotted for all Scottish Datazones**

Around half of the datazones identified as aspirational comparators for the identified Fife datazones had improved due to significant development or regeneration works. For instance the improvements seen at Broom North (Leven) are associated with long term regeneration over about 20 years.

There is a risk that in some cases the original deprived population has been dispersed into other communities, rather than there has been significant improvement in deprivation. This serves as the opposite example to that of housing policy concentrating deprived people into an area and reinforce the intractability of deprivation in those communities which are most deprived. It is apparent therefore that while major change to SIMD Rank is possible for a datazone, it does not necessarily indicate a change in overall deprivation across a wider geographic area.

There are examples of improvement in other Scottish datazones which do not rely on major infrastructure change. Alness in Ross and Cromarty is clustered with Smeaton. It suffered as a result of downturn in the oil industry and has many demographic similarities to areas of north east Kirkcaldy. It has seen improvements linked to energetic and focussed community groups and won the 2007 British Urban Regeneration Agency award for community inspired regeneration.



## APPENDIX 1 Methodology

A suite of 17 indicator datazones were identified (table 1). The 2 most deprived datazones and 2 which had moved out of the bottom 20% datazones were selected automatically to ensure their inclusion. A further 10 were selected through a process relying on 3 criteria, notably 1) presence in the 20% most deprived Scottish datazones, 2) identifying the trend in their SIMD rank from 2004 to 2012 to provide a spread of improvement and decline and 3) the extent to which it was indicative of neighbouring datazones to ensure that it was 'typical'. A further 3 datazones from Levenmouth were added as the process continued to give greater geographical balance. Other datazones were examined during the process of exploring the data. Managers in Area Services, Housing and Community Learning and Development were contacted to provide on the ground intelligence as to recent changes and events in the selected datazones which may help in interpreting the results obtained.

A suite of 9 key poverty measures were identified and the information assembled for all datazones involved in the study. The measures selected are –

- SIMD Income Deprivation (2012)
- % Children in Low Income Households (2012)
- % Low Income Households (after Housing Costs) (2008)
- % Households that are Materially deprived (2008)
- % Economically active (2011)
- % with no access to a car (2011)
- % With no qualifications (2011)
- % Claiming Job Seekers Allowance (March 2015)

With the exception of economic activity, all indicators are highly correlated with SIMD Income deprivation.

Fife datazones were compared to demographically similar Scottish datazones to provide objective comparators and to indicate if the level of deprivation was more or less than might be expected given the demographic involved. To do this 16 key context indicators were identified, notably –

- % Age 0 to 15
- Age 16 to 24
- % Age 25 to 49
- % Age 50 to 64
- % Age 65 plus
- % Owner Occupied
- % All Rented Accommodation
- % All Social Rented Accommodation
- % One Person Household
- % Couple Household

- % Family Household
- % Lone Parent Household
- % Social Class AB
- % Social Class C1
- % Social Class C2
- % Social Class DE

These were used to define 53 datazone clusters across Scotland which were similar demographically and to identify the relevant cluster for each of the 17 Fife datazones. SIMD indicators were excluded from this exercise specifically to control for deprivation itself. Alongside the cluster work, the Understanding Scottish Places (USP) Towns Tool was used to help narrow down the comparator datazones. Four comparators were identified for use in the data exploration notably –

Comparator Type	Description
Like	A datazone in the same cluster, also in the most deprived Scottish quintile (20%) and with the USP tool used to narrow the options
Like but Improving	A datazone in the same cluster with the highest rate of improvement in SIMD rank from 2004-2012 and in the most deprived Scottish quintile
Aspirational	A datazone in the same cluster but which is in the least deprived quintile of Scottish datazones and matched with the USP tool. A second aspirational category was added to identify the datazone in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> top quintile by the same method.
Aspirational Light	A datazone in the same cluster which has the least deprived SIMD rank in that cluster, ie selected across all Scottish datazones.

Contacts across other Scottish Local Authorities were asked to provide insight into these comparator datazones and desk based research was undertaken to provide further context.

Deprivation was also analysed at an absolute level along with the standard ranking approach. To do this the range of SIMD scores (not ranks) were segmented into 3 equal bands and the data explored in this way. Other bandings were explored i.e. 2,3,4 and 5 but 3 gave the best balance of ensuring each category contained results and a good resolution avoiding a simple deprived or not dichotomy.

The key demographic data and context was compiled into a workbook for analysis and this workbook is available separately to this report.