

# Healthy Eating, Active Living for Everyone

Director of Public Health  
Annual Report 2024



## Acknowledgements

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

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# Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	4
<b>Executive Summary</b>	5
<b>Background</b>	6
The National Approach	6
Our Local Fife Approach	7
<b>Healthy Eating</b>	8
What We Know	9
What We Eat	11
Barriers to Healthy Eating	13
Food4Fife Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029	15
Local Levers for Diet and Healthy Weight	15
<i>Protect and Support Breastfeeding and Healthy Diets for Children</i>	16
<i>Improve Uptake of School Meals</i>	19
<i>Public Food Procurement and Provision Standard</i>	23
<i>Utilising Planning to Improve Food Environments</i>	24
<i>Reduction in Calories on Eating Out of Home Sector Menus</i>	25
<i>Food Advertising</i>	27
<b>Active Living for Everyone</b>	29
What We Know	30
Physical Activity and Inactivity	31
Access to outdoors	32
System-based approaches to Physical Activity in Fife	34
<i>Active Places of Learning</i>	35
<i>An Active Workplace</i>	37
<i>Sports and Recreation</i>	39
<i>Active Places and Spaces</i>	41
<i>Active Travel and Transportation</i>	45
<i>Active Health and Social Care Services</i>	47
<b>Summary and Recommendations</b>	51
Healthy Eating	52
Active Living for Everyone	54

# Introduction



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



# Executive Summary

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

# Background

## The National Approach

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Our Local Fife Approach

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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





**Healthy Eating**



## What We Know

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

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

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

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

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

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

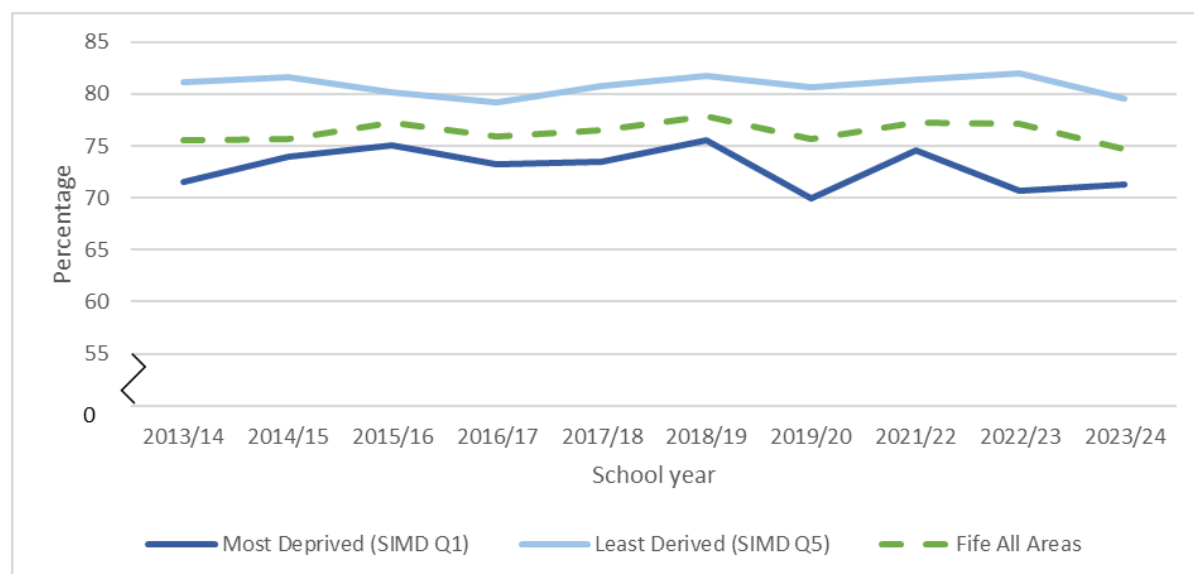
<sup>21</sup> [9 Obesity - The Scottish Health Survey 2023 - volume 1: main report - gov.scot](#)

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

# What We Eat

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

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

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



Source: Eatwell Guide

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Barriers to Healthy Eating

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

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

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



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

## Case Study – Fife College

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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



# Food4Fife Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029

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

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



## Local Levers for Diet and Healthy Weight

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

The local levers include:

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

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

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

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

# Protect and Support Breastfeeding and Healthy Diets for Children

## Why is this important?

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

## Background

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

## Modifiable factors/local actions

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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



## Case Study – Health Promotion and Food

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

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

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



# Improve Uptake of School Meals

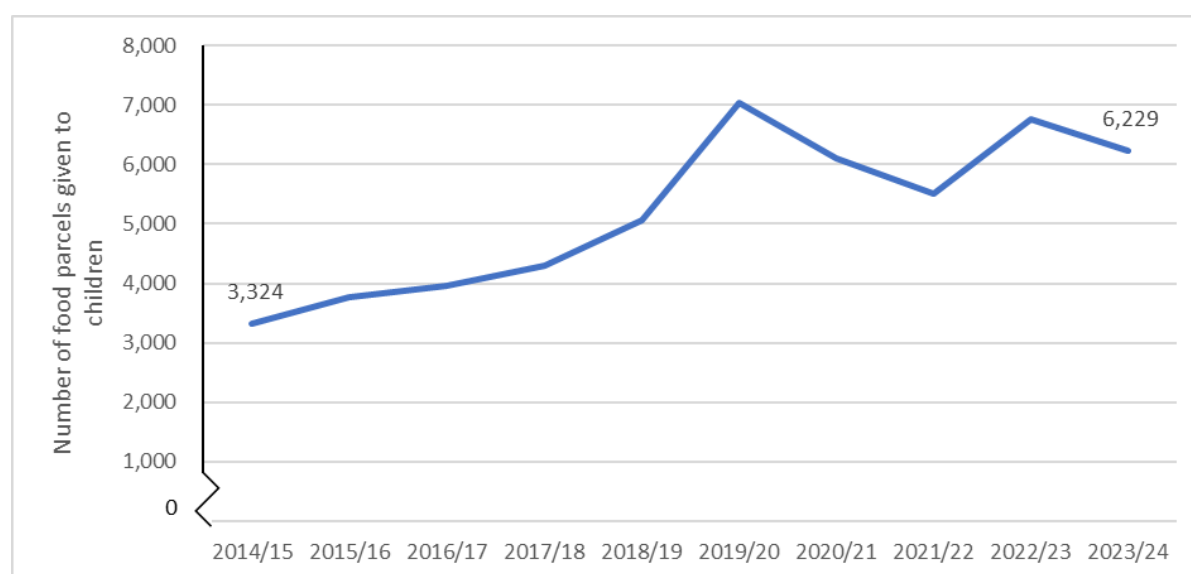
## Why is this important?

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

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

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

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



Source: The Trussell Trust

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

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

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

## Background

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

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

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

## Modifiable factors/local actions

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

# Public Food Procurement and Provision Standard

## Why is this important?

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

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

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

## Background

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

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

## Modifiable factors/local actions

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

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

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

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



# Utilising Planning to Improve Food Environments

## Why is this important?

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

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

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

## Background

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

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

## Modifiable factors/local actions

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

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

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

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

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

# Reduction in Calories on Eating Out of Home Sector Menus

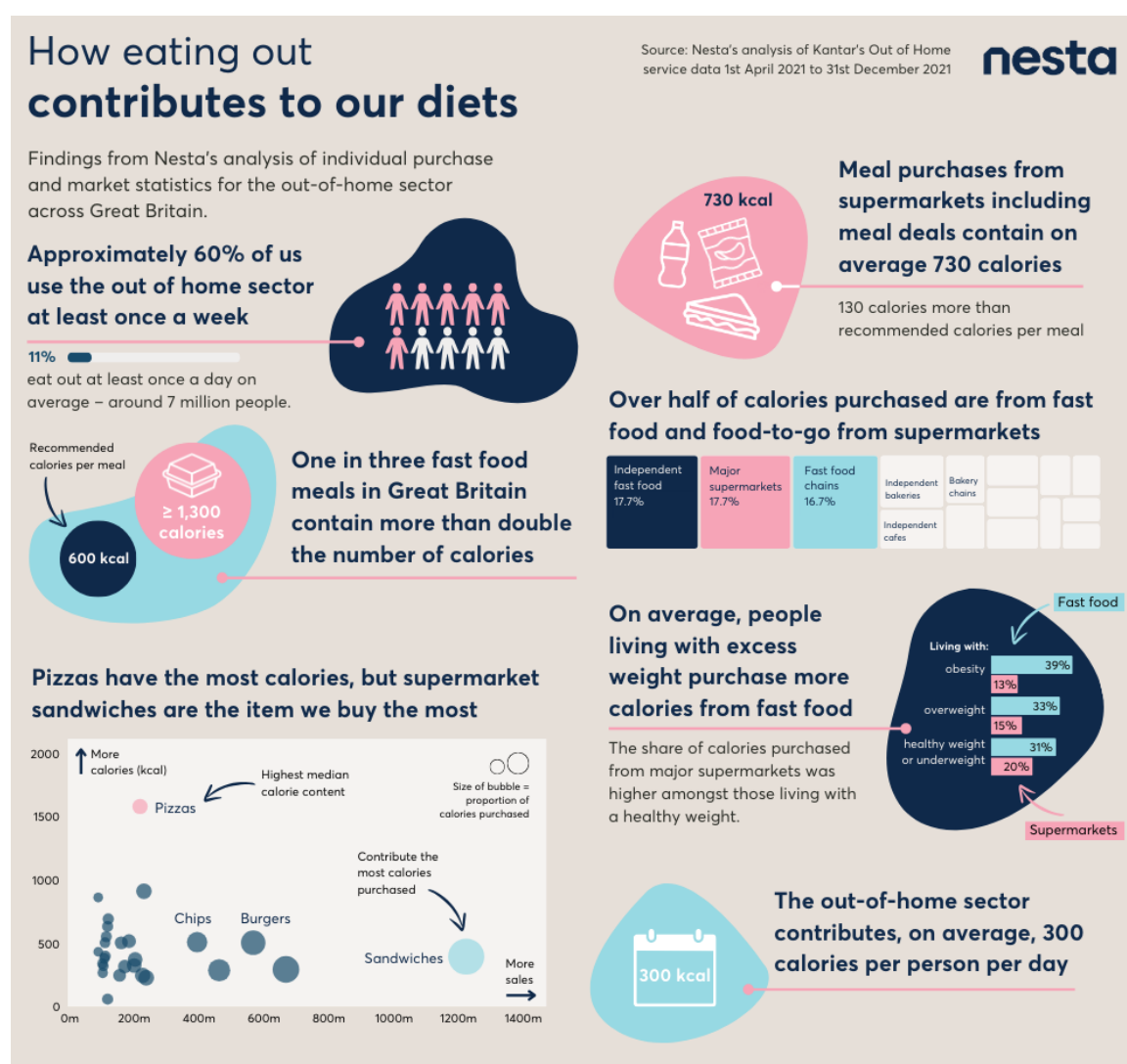
## Why is this important?

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

## Background

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

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



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

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

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

## Modifiable factors/local actions

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

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



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



# Food Advertising

## Why is this important?

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

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

## Background

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

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

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

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

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

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

Source: Obesity Action Scotland

## Modifiable factors/local actions

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



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



# Active Living for Everyone





## What We Know

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

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

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



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

## Physical Activity and Inactivity

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

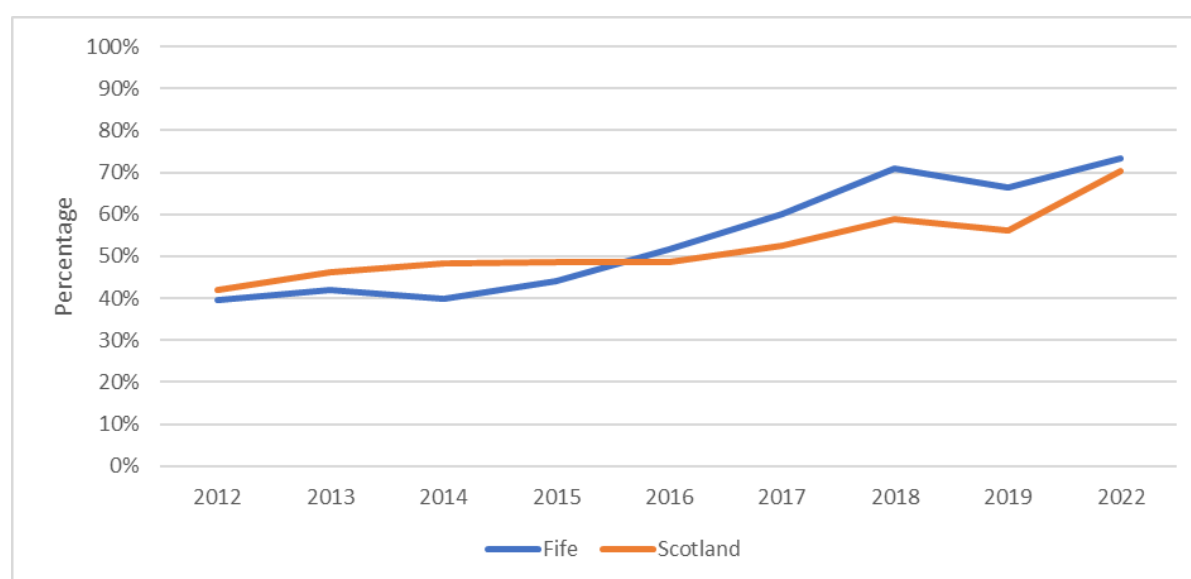
On average adults in Scotland spent 5.7 hours sitting on a weekday and 6.5 hours sitting at the weekend in 2023, excluding time spent at work, college or at school.<sup>70</sup> There was little difference in the average sedentary time reported by men and women with sedentary time greatest in those aged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

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

## Access to outdoors

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

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



Source: Scottish Household Survey, 2022

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

## Case Study – Move for Your Mood

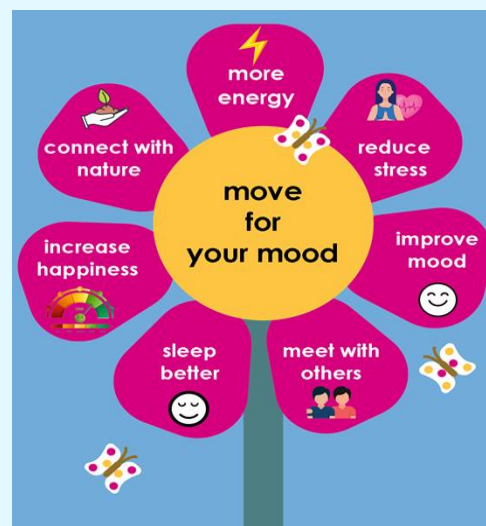
To support Mental Health Awareness Week in May 2024 Health Promotion and Active Communities Team partnered to encourage people to 'Move for Your Mood'. This means finding ways you can build movement into your day, and understanding how this benefits your mental health and wellbeing.

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

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

The Move for Your Mood campaign message:

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



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

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

## System-based approaches to Physical Activity in Fife

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

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

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



# Active Places of Learning

## Why is this important?

From earliest years, through school age and into further and higher education children and young people spend a large proportion of their lives within learning institutions. As we highlighted in last year's DPH annual report, Children and Young People in Fife, movement is essential for life. It provides the building blocks for development, physical and mental health as well as social and academic progress. Taking part in activity increases confidence, self-esteem, as well as reduces stress, the effects of depression and improves our physical health. Places of learning are key places to embedding normalisation of physical activity throughout the school day.

## Background

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

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



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

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

## Modifiable factors/local actions

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

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

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





# An Active Workplace

## Why is this important?

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

## Background

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

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

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

## Modifiable factors/local actions

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Case Study – Annual Walking Challenge

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

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

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

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



# Sports and Recreation

## Why is this important?

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

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

## Background

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

## Modifiable factors/local actions

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

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

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



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



## Case Study – Bums Off Seats

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

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

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

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





## Fife Social Work Programme

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

## Active for Leisure

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

## Active Places and Spaces

### Why is this important?

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

## Background

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

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

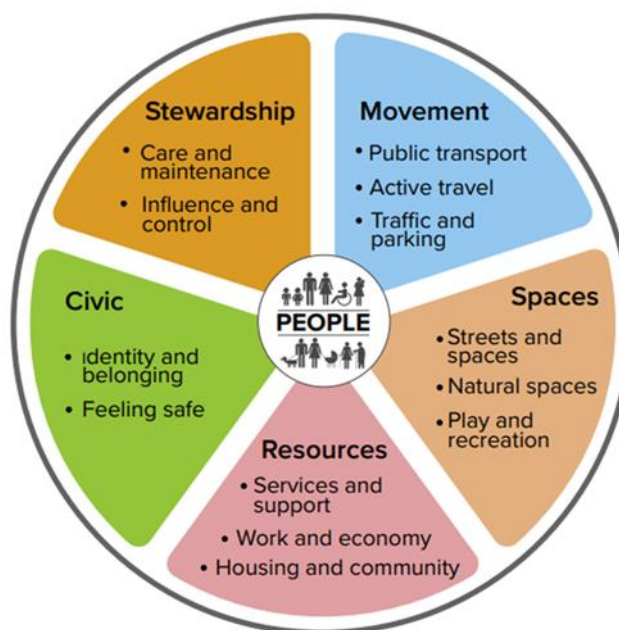
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<sup>82</sup> [Place and Wellbeing Outcomes | Improvement Service](#)

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

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

Figure 7: Place and wellbeing outcomes graphic



## Modifiable factors/local actions

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

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

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

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

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

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

## NHS Fife's Greenspace Strategy

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

### Case Study – Lynebank Hospital



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

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

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



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



## The Leven Programme ‘Growing with the Flow’

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



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

# Active Travel and Transportation

## Why is this important?

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

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

## Background

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

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

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

## Modifiable factors/local actions

Shorter trips can often be made by foot or by bike, linking into public transport, but this relies on our public transport systems having capacity to meet people's needs. Fife Council's Local Transport Strategy for Fife 2023-2033 sets out the council's vision and priorities for transport in Fife over the next 10 years.<sup>89</sup> This strategy includes ambitions relating to active travel including the objective to increase the proportion of trips that are walked, wheeled or cycled to 30% by 2033, from a baseline of 23% in 2019. Action one in the Local Transport Strategy is to produce an Active travel Strategy for Fife, this strategy focuses on how active travel can be improved and made more accessible for all. This includes both infrastructure and behaviour change elements. The draft strategy has engaged a wide range of stakeholders, with the aim of the strategy being approved in early 2025.

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<sup>88</sup> [Scotland's Census](#)

<sup>89</sup> [Local Transport Strategy for Fife | Fife Council](#)



Figures from NHS Fife's 2024 travel survey of employees reported that just over three-quarters of respondents (77%) travelled to work in a single occupancy vehicle with 11% taking public transport and a further 6% actively travelling to work (walking, running and cycling). More needs to be done to increase accessibility to public transport and to more active forms of travel and to encourage a move away from driving to work.

Within NHS Fife action to encourage cycling has included a year-round cycle-to-work scheme, an e-bike scheme, cycling training for staff, bike maintenance events and cycling information days and cycling champions via the NHS Fife Active Travel Group. NHS Fife are in the process of finalising an Active and Sustainable Travel Plan which provides the basis to implement the necessary behaviour change elements (Information, Engagement, Facilities, and Policies) associated with supporting and encouraging active and sustainable travel choices.





# Active Health and Social Care Services

## Why is this important?

Physical activity is an important part of prevention, treatment, and recovery of many illnesses, diseases and conditions. Physical activity is an important part in the treatment to control diabetes, and in rehabilitation from respiratory conditions, stroke and coronary heart disease interventions and in mental health conditions.<sup>90</sup> There is growing evidence that movement and meaningful activity can improve quality of life and wellbeing of older adults and those experiencing care. Staff supporting older adults in communities and care settings are key to enabling older adults find ways to continue being active in a way that is meaningful to them.

## Background

Health and social care professionals come into contact with large proportions of the population on a daily basis and interact with people who either have or are at risk of having chronic diseases. Healthcare based interventions that target physical activity or combine physical activity with other factors are effective and mostly cost effective. The benefits of physical activity for their patient groups needs to be included within training of health and social professionals.

## Modifiable factors/local actions

### NHS National Physical Activity Pathway

The NHS National Physical Activity Pathway consists of a set of steps that healthcare professionals can take to encourage people in their care to be more active.<sup>91</sup> The pathway targets adults who are inactive, or not active enough to benefit their health. It can be used in both primary and secondary care settings and can be integrated into existing clinical pathways. The pathway provides health benefits to every adult that becomes more active.

Resources exist to help health and social care professionals with the knowledge and skills to raise the issue of physical activity and to screen adults for current levels of physical activity. Health and social care professionals can then gauge readiness to change and provide person-centred advice to engage, motivate and support people to introduce physical activity into daily lives.

NHS Fife and Fife Health and Social Care Partnership work with Fife Sports and Leisure Trust and Fife Council's Active Communities to deliver physical activity programmes and projects across different population groups and with groups who have different needs. This includes working with social care providers to incorporate physical activity into the daily lives of those living within care settings.

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<sup>90</sup> [Pulmonary rehabilitation | NHS Fife](#)

<sup>91</sup> [NPAP overview - NHS Physical Activity Pathway \(NPAP\) - Food and physical activity - Improving Scotland's health - Population health - Public Health Scotland](#)

## Moving More for Health

Being active and moving more has lots of positive benefits for health and wellbeing. Staff from across the Health and Social Care Partnership can play a key role in raising awareness of the health benefits of physical activity.

To explore this topic Health Promotion and Active Communities led a workshop for HSCP Community Led Support Workers in April 2024. This workshop aimed to raise awareness of the health benefits of physical activity, and to discuss opportunities for physical activity in Fife. It also looked at what counts as physical activity and some of the common misconceptions around this.

Feedback from the workshop was very positive with participants reporting that the training was impacting positively on their practice and how they think about physical activity. The workshop has now been adapted and a new training session called Moving More for Health and Wellbeing has been developed. This course is available as part of the Health Promotion Prevention and Early Intervention Training Programme. The training could also be delivered to teams and services on an ad hoc basis.

The training will support participants to understand the benefits of movement and physical activity for health and wellbeing and provide information and knowledge to enable them to support people to be more active. It will allow participants:

- To reflect on the ways we are active and explore perceptions of physical activity
- To raise awareness of the health benefits of physical activity and how moving more can benefit health and wellbeing
- To identify barriers to physical activity and ways of overcoming these
- To explore ways of bringing movement and activity into our day and raising it with the people we support
- To signpost opportunities, services and training in Fife to support physical activity.

## Meaningful Activity Network

Fife Council's Active Communities team and Fife Health and Social Care Partnership Care Homes occupational therapy team along with staff who have a role in supporting older adults in care homes and care settings are part of a Meaningful Activity Network. The aim of the network is to allow staff to explore ways of supporting people experiencing care to live active, engaging and meaningful lives to improve wellbeing and positively impact quality of life. The network provides a supportive space for staff working with older adults in care or community settings to be able to share good practice, learn together and collaboratively solve problems.

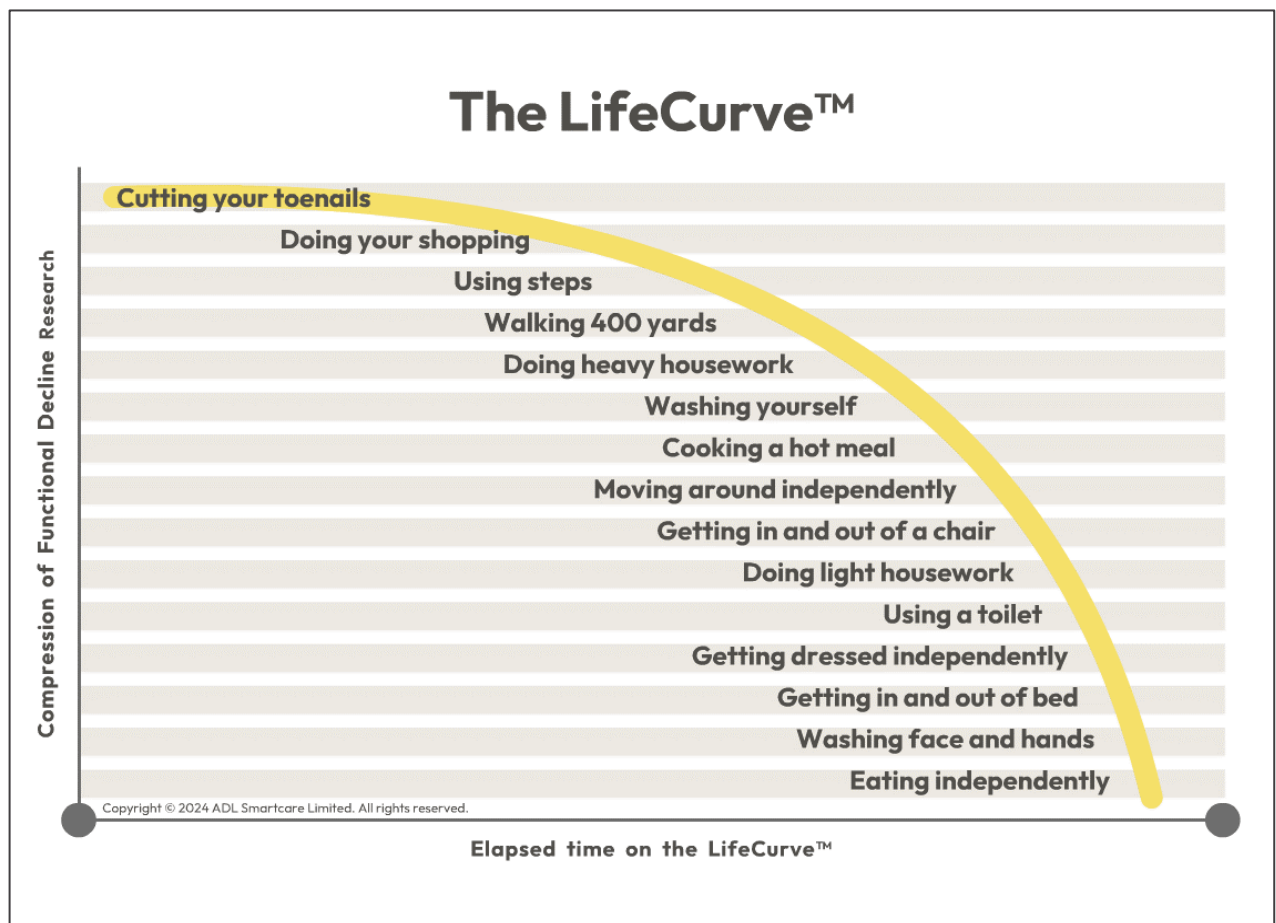
## Move More Programme

Fife Sports and Leisure Trust have relaunched a cancer specific rehabilitation programme. Informed by feedback from participants and people using the Maggie's Centre Fife, Fife Sports and Leisure Trust have invested and trained 3 health and wellbeing advisors to deliver the Active Move programme. This programme provides support for people living with a cancer diagnosis to increase physical activity before, during and after cancer treatment.

## The Life Curve™

The LifeCurve™ is an example of a tool that can be used with patients and service users to aid understanding of how keeping more physically active as we age aids our ability to carry out everyday tasks.<sup>92</sup> It provides a common language on how individuals are ageing which can be understood by the public, professionals and organisations, regardless of their level of experience in ageing or their profession. Research has shown that people lose the functional ability to complete activities of daily living in a specific order. Using activities of daily living along with fitness and strength markers enables a person to position themselves on the LifeCurve™ to see how they are ageing. In developing the LifeCurve™ research showed that intervening with people and increasing their healthy life expectancy does not increase their overall life expectancy, but rather reduces the time they have with greater care needs.<sup>93</sup>

**Figure 8:** Graphic showing The LifeCurve™



<sup>92</sup> [Smart Life in Fife: LifeCurve Assessment](#)

<sup>93</sup> [The Scottish national LifeCurve™ survey: costs of functional decline, opportunities to achieve early intervention to support well-being in later life, and meaningfulness of the LifeCurve™ - ePrints - Newcastle University](#) Abstract only

## Community Engagement for Musculoskeletal (MSK) Waiting Lists

An example of partnership working across health and partnership services is a successful community engagement event held for people currently waiting to see either physiotherapy or podiatry with the purpose of supporting them to self-manage musculoskeletal conditions and signpost them to community resources that can provide further help. One hundred people on the waiting list for either hip or knee problems were given an appointment from the event. The event was a collaboration between Fife Sports and Leisure Trust, Podiatry and Physiotherapy Services, as well as Health Promotion Service and other services from the H&SCP and third sector including Versus Arthritis. The event was a pilot to test this approach with useful feedback from attendees and staff.

## Health and Transport

NHS Fife has partnered with SEStran 'Transport to Health' programme of work to support staff and patients look at active travel options when attending work and/or appointments. This is supported by NHS Fife's work towards the NHS Scotland Annual Delivery Plan 2023/24, Priority 6 – Health Inequalities, action 6.6 which is to support Patients have access to all information on any relevant patient transport (including community Transport) and travel reimbursement entitlement. These actions are reflected in the NHS Fife Population Health & Wellbeing Strategy - Delivery Plan 2023/24.

Since March 2023 NHS Facilities and FHSCP Health Promotion Service have designed and promoted a New NHS Fife Travel Expenses Leaflet and Posters across primary care, community services and NHS acute. This resource supports patients understand how to reclaim travel expenses in hope that it supports patients attend appointments. This resource is promoted through the Health Promotion Poverty Awareness Training, and through local anti-poverty groups across Fife.

To complement the Travel expenses resources a new Community Transport Services Leaflet and Poster has been developed in partnership with a range of Community Transport Services to raise awareness of dedicated patient transport available across Fife.<sup>94</sup>



<sup>94</sup> [How to get to our main hospitals | NHS Fife](#)



# Summary and Recommendations

The themes of this years' report fit well with our national and local direction as we address the challenges of health and inequalities in Fife. How we eat and how we move in the context of the places where we live, work and play are crucial influences on our health and wellbeing. In addition, there are inequalities in how these fundamental determinants of health are experienced by individuals and communities.

When we look at the seven 'local levers for diet and healthy weight' there are some areas where we have data, and we have seen some improvements in the Fife context. We are seeing improvements in breastfeeding but this needs to be maintained. Healthy weight at P1 has stalled so we need to find ways of reinvigorating this work. Provision of healthy and nutritious meals throughout school age is important. We have seen encouraging improvements in uptake of school meals through both primary and secondary school which also needs to be maintained. What we are learning about the challenges for some families of feeding their children healthy nutritious meals throughout the school holidays is concerning. Partners could consider further collaboration to address this aspect of eating well.

Other local levers include food procurement, food environments, work with the out of home sector and food advertising. There are good examples of work in these areas. However, a relatively untapped opportunity exists to address some of these areas. The links between public health and spatial planning are increasingly recognised. The ongoing work on Fife's Local Development Plan, 'Fife's Place Plan', provides a means of influencing how our healthier places and communities can develop. Examples could include exploring and addressing the clustering of retail related to unhealthy commodities in some of our most deprived communities.

If we consider physical activity there are key settings where a whole systems approach is possible with particular populations. Examples include places of learning and places of work. Sport and active recreation, active travel and active places and spaces are examples again of where the development of 'Fife's Place Plan' provides opportunities to influence healthier environments and communities. There are some great examples of work in all these areas. We need to make sure within all this we maintain a keen eye on inequalities and make sure access to services, systems and places is focused in populations and communities where it is most needed.

Organisations and partners across Fife have the opportunity to look at their own places and spaces through a physical activity lens. Community Planning structures also provide a significant opportunity for partners across Fife to work together and learn from each other about maximising physical activity in different settings. Collaboration and connection is a key part of this. Community planning partners' engagement with the LDP process provides a significant opportunity to influence spatial planning to create spaces and places that maximise the opportunity for people to be physically active.

Finally, for both eating well and physical activity in addition to a whole systems approach we need to consider where we can address these issues across the life course. The health and social care system may play a crucial role here particularly in view of our ageing population. The 'life curve' gives us a really useful insight into how maintaining basic movement and flexibility into older age can have a significant positive impact on independence, health and wellbeing. This will become increasingly important in the future.

# Healthy Eating

Local Lever	Recommendations	Strategic Alignment
<b>Protect and Support Breastfeeding and Healthy Diets for Children</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue to prioritise resource use for services that support breastfeeding and health diets for children, such as the Breastfeeding Support Workers, and Fife Loves Life.</li> <li>2. Promote the NHS Fife Child Healthy Weight Toolkit to professionals who work with families to support consistent evidence-based communication about child diet and physical activity.</li> <li>3. NHS Fife Child Healthy Weight Service to develop targeted approach to offering support from NHS Fife Child Healthy Weight Service in areas of deprivation and poor health outcomes.</li> <li>4. Extend the Baby bites session into nurseries in all localities in Fife.</li> </ol>	<p>Children's Services Plan</p> <p>Children's Services Plan</p> <p>Children's Services Plan</p> <p>Children's Services Plan</p>
<b>Improve uptake of school meals</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Work with stakeholders to explore best practice and evidence for how to further increase nutritional content and uptake of school lunches.</li> <li>6. Work with stakeholders to explore how nutritional content and uptake of Café Inc can be promoted to families in receipt of free school meals.</li> </ol>	<p>Children's Services Plan Food4Fife Strategy</p> <p>Children's Services Plan Food4Fife Strategy</p>
<b>Public Food Procurement and Provision Standards</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Public Sector organisations in Fife to explore the feasibility of promoting healthier options in catering provision by increasing the proportion of health food and drinks on offer to at least 75% in on-site catering outlets, providing price promotions on healthier items, reducing the calorie contents of food on offer, creating a mandatory calorie cap per item sold and providing free drinking water at catering outlets.</li> </ol>	<p>NHS Fife Anchor Strategy Food4Fife Strategy</p>
<b>Utilising Planning/National Planning Framework 4 to Improve Food Environments</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. NHS Fife and Fife Council to explore the feasibility of mapping food outlets and food growing as part of the local development plan process.</li> </ol>	<p>Fife's Place Plan (LDP2) Food4Fife Strategy</p>

Local Lever	Recommendations	Strategic Alignment
<b>Reduction in Calories on Eating Out of Home Sector Menus</b>	9. NHS Fife, the Fife HSCP and Fife Council to explore the feasibility of a pilot to work with the out of home sector to explore understanding among retailers of the calories on their menus, and options to reduce these including portion size reduction.	Food4Fife Strategy
<b>Food Advertising</b>	10. NHS Fife and Fife Council to explore the feasibility of advertising healthy foods using existing sites or assets.	Fife's Place Plan (LDP2)
	11. NHS Fife and Fife Council to encourage community planning partner organisations to restrict advertising of products high in fat, sugar or salt in spaces and at events under their control.	Food4Fife Strategy
	12. Fife Council to explore roundabout sponsorship to exclude unhealthy food from advertising at these sites.	Fife's Place Plan (LDP2)
	13. NHS Fife and Fife Council to work collaboratively and with national partners to explore how NPF4 could be used locally to influence local planning decisions around unhealthy commodities.	Fife's Place Plan (LDP2)



# Active Living for Everyone

Systems Approach Theme	Recommendations	Strategy Alignment
<b>Active Places of Learning</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Fife adopt a “Whole of School Approach” in schools including to create active environments, policies and opportunities across all places of learning.</li> <li>2. Fife to prioritise suitable physical environments, dedicated time and resources to support structured and unstructured physical activity throughout the day.</li> </ol>	<p>Children’s Service Plan Plan for Fife ambitions</p> <p>Children’s Service Plan Plan for Fife ambitions</p>
<b>An Active Workplace</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Health Promotion Service to provide expert Public Health advice by implementing workplace health initiatives to support employees increase physical activity and reduce sedentary behaviour, particularly through increasing incidental physical activity during the working day.</li> <li>4. Health Promotion Service to co-ordinate the delivery of Moving More for Health and Wellbeing Training to increase understanding around the benefits of movement and physical activity for health and wellbeing, and to provide information and knowledge to support people to be more active.</li> </ol>	<p>Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy</p> <p>Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy</p>
<b>Sports and Recreation</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Through Active Fifers approach physical activity providers strengthen their understanding of barriers to participation in sport and recreation to develop programmes that prioritise the least active, while supporting those who are already active to remain so.</li> <li>6. Fife Council and Fife Sports and Leisure Trust physical activity providers to provide universally accessible programmes and mass participation events for people of all ages and abilities across our community settings and facilities.</li> </ol>	<p>Plan for Fife ambitions</p> <p>Plan for Fife ambitions</p>
<b>Active Places and Spaces</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Fife Council to strengthen access to good quality public and green spaces, green networks, recreational spaces (including blue), play and sports facilities through Fife’s Place Plan.</li> <li>8. Integrate urban design, transport planning and land-use policies to ensure increasing levels of physical activity is a priority within planning consideration.</li> </ol>	<p>Fife’s Place Plan (LDP2)</p> <p>Fife’s Place Plan (LDP2)</p>

Systems Approach Theme	Recommendations	Strategy Alignment
<b>Active Travel and Transportation</b>	9. Through implantation of the finalised Active Travel Strategy, Fife Council prioritise investment in walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure and actions that influence active travel behaviour to encourage modal shift.	Local Transport Strategy for Fife 2023-2033
	10. NHS Fife to finalise an Active and Sustainable Travel Plan to support an increase in active travel by staff and patients.	NHS Fife Active and Sustainable Travel Plan
<b>Active Health and Social Care Services</b>	11. NHS Fife and Fife Health and Social Care Partnership review and integrate the NHS Physical Pathway and develop programmes to support health care professionals to encourage patients to be more active.	Population Health and Wellbeing Strategy
	12. Develop partnerships between health and social care professionals and physical activity providers to embed the provision of appropriate physical activity opportunities and programmes for different patient groups.	Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy

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