

## Notice of Meeting and Agenda Fairer Renfrewshire Sub-committee

Date	Time	Venue
Wednesday, 13 November 2024	10:00	Council Chambers (Renfrewshire), Council Headquarters, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN

MARK CONAGHAN  
Head of Corporate Governance

### Membership

Councillor Jacqueline Cameron (Convener): Councillor Graeme Clark (Depute Convener):

Councillor Anne Hannigan: Councillor Alec Leishman: Councillor Marie McGurk: Councillor Iain Nicolson: Councillor Andy Steel:

### Further Information

This is a meeting which is open to members of the public.

A copy of the agenda and reports for this meeting will be available for inspection prior to the meeting at the Customer Service Centre, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley and online at <http://renfrewshire.cmis.uk.com/renfrewshire/CouncilandBoards.aspx>

For further information, please email  
[democratic-services@renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:democratic-services@renfrewshire.gov.uk)

### Members of the Press and Public

Members of the press and public wishing to attend the meeting should report to the customer service centre where they will be met and directed to the meeting.

### Hybrid Meeting

Please note that this meeting is scheduled to be held in the Council Chambers. However, it is a hybrid meeting and arrangements have been made for members to join the meeting remotely should they wish.

## **Webcasting of Meeting**

This meeting will be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's internet site – at the start of the meeting the Convener will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being filmed. To find the webcast please navigate to

<https://renfrewshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

## Items of business

### Apologies

Apologies from members.

### Declarations of Interest and Transparency Statements

Members are asked to declare an interest or make a transparency statement in any item(s) on the agenda and to provide a brief explanation of the nature of the interest or the transparency statement.

- |             |   |                  |
|-------------|---|------------------|
| <b>1(a)</b> | <b>Cost of Living Update</b>                | <b>1 - 16</b>    |
|             | Report by Chief Executive.                  |                  |
| <b>1(b)</b> | <b>Cost of Living Data Dashboard</b>        | <b>17 - 34</b>   |
|             | Report by Chief Executive.                  |                  |
| <b>2</b>    | <b>Fairer Renfrewshire Programme Update</b> | <b>35 - 58</b>   |
|             | Report by Chief Executive.                  |                  |
| <b>3</b>    | <b>Summer of Fun 2024 Evaluation</b>        | <b>59 - 108</b>  |
|             | Report by Chief Executive.                  |                  |
| <b>4</b>    | <b>Alcohol and Drug Death Prevention</b>    | <b>109 - 134</b> |
|             | Report by Chief Executive.                  |                  |






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**To:** Fairer Renfrewshire Sub-Committee

**On:** 13 November 2024

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**Report by:** Chief Executive

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**Heading:** Cost-of-living Update

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 At each of the Fairer Renfrewshire Sub-Committee meetings, an overview of key context and evidence around current pressures on household finances, both in terms of household income and expenditure has been provided to members.
- 1.2 Since the last meeting of the Sub-Committee on 4 September 2024, there have been a number of changes in economic factors and elected members are asked to note that:
- The rate of inflation is standing at 1.7% for September 2024, having reduced from 2.2% in August, and is now slightly below the 2% target set.
  - The inflation rate for food, however, has increased slightly from 1.5% to 1.8%, the first increase since March 2023.
  - The current Bank of England interest rate is 5%, with the next announcement due on 7 November 2024.
  - The Energy Price Cap, originally introduced by Ofgem in January 2019 to set limits on the underlying rates energy suppliers, is now set at £1,717 from the 1 October until 31 December. This is an increase of 10% compared to the cap set between 1 July to 30 September 2024 (£1,568).
- 1.3 A number of changes which will affect households were also announced in the UK Government's Budget on 30 October. This paper provides an overview of information collated by officers at both a national and local level where available.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that members of the Fairer Renfrewshire Sub-Committee note the content of the report.

## **3. Background**

- 3.1. At the Fairer Renfrewshire Sub-Committee meeting on 4 September 2024 an overview of key context and evidence around current pressures on household finances, both in terms of household income and expenditure, was examined. Although inflation has fallen significantly, it leaves a legacy of higher prices and associated issues for families and individuals.
- 3.2. In their report of September 2024, 'Consumer Outlook', Consumer Scotland identifies a broad range of issues affecting consumers in the last few years. In general, they report that price changes during the cost-of-living crisis period have driven changes in patterns of consumer spending and consumption, particularly in relation to essential goods and services. Spending on food and drink across UK consumers, for example, increased 17% between the first quarter of 2021 and the first quarter of 2024, but consumption fell by 10%.
- 3.3. Big rises in energy prices in 2022 and 2023 have continued to increase levels of energy poverty – which now affects around one third of Scottish households. Over a quarter (26%) of households in Scotland in 2024 reported they found it difficult to keep up with their energy bills.
- 3.4. One impact of price inflation during the cost-of-living period has been a rise in the number of consumers falling into arrears to their utilities providers. The average amount of arrears for indebted household gas accounts almost doubled between 2021 and 2024 for example, whilst around 9% of Scottish households were in energy debt in winter 2024.
- 3.5. The cost-of-living crisis period was associated with unprecedented inflation inequality – higher inflation experienced by low income households relative to higher income households. This was driven by higher rates of inflation for essential goods and services, and 'cheapflation' – higher rates of price increases for poorer quality products than higher quality products, such as those within supermarket 'value' ranges.
- 3.6. Whilst inflation has fallen, price levels of most essential goods and services remain well above pre-crisis levels.

## **4. Impacts of cost-of-living crisis**

### **Living costs**

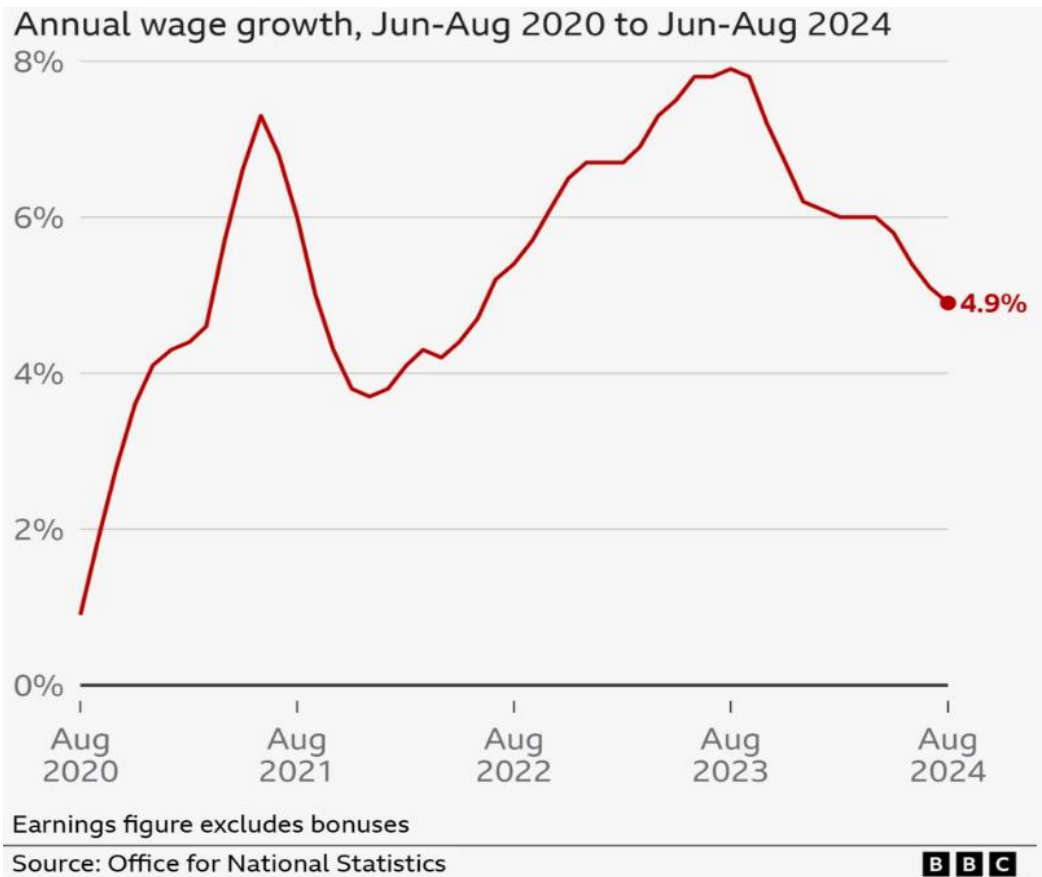
- 4.1. The latest insights into the cost of living from the Office of National Statistics for the period 7 August to 1 September 2024 found:

- 25% of adults said they had had to borrow more money or use more credit in the last month compared to a year ago.
- 49% reported that costs of living had increased compared with one month ago, while 49% said it had stayed the same. This has decreased gradually since October 2022 when 80% of adults reported an increase, and from the last reported figure of 51% in June 2024.
- For those who reported an increase, costs of food shopping at 93%, (the same as June) fuel at 46% (a slight decrease on June figures) and energy bills at 50% (a 3% increase) were the most commonly reported reasons.
- 4 in 10 people are spending less on food and essentials and 58% are spending less on non-essentials.

## **5. Employment and Wages**

- 5.1. According to the ONS, the Claimant Count, which is taken from JobcentrePlus administration systems, for those claiming unemployment-related benefits in Renfrewshire has increased very slightly in September to 3.2% from 3.1% as it was in June 2024. This currently equates to 3,670 people aged between 16 and 64. The Universal Credit rollout, however, affects this figure, which is expected to rise as individuals migrate to Universal Credit.
- 5.2. Around 28,000 people aged 16 to 64 years in Renfrewshire were "economically inactive" in the year ending June 2024. This is an increase based on the previous reported figure of 26,200 in the year ending March 2024. People are classed as "economically inactive" if they are not in employment but don't meet the criteria for being "unemployed". This means they have not been seeking work within the previous four weeks or were unable to start work within the next two weeks. Common reasons include being retired, looking after the home or family or being temporarily or long-term sick and disabled. Of those who are economically inactive, 88.4% are not looking for employment.
- 5.3. The percentage of economically inactive people aged 16-64 that want to gain employment (either in long-term or short/medium term) in Renfrewshire (11.6%) is lower than that of the rates in Scotland (17.3%) and Great Britain (17.8%). Looking at the reasons for economic activity, between March and June 24, the proportion of those who were long term sick declined from 32% to 29%, while the numbers retired increased from 24% to 26%. Student numbers also increased from 23% to 26%.
- 5.4. The ONS has reported that on average regular pay excluding bonuses rose by 4.9% in the three months to August 24, compared with the same period a year earlier. That was a slight fall from the 5.1% increase seen in the previous quarter. This is the lowest growth in more than two years.
- 5.5. The figures have added to widespread expectations that UK interest rates could be cut to 4.75% when the Bank of England meets next month. Pay is still rising faster than inflation - which measures the rate of price increases - but analysts, such as those at KPMG, do not expect that to

delay any rate cut plans by the Bank. The changes to National Insurance, detailed below, are likely to affect rates of pay.



- 5.6. Average weekly earnings in both total pay and regular pay (excluding bonuses) remains strong and shows a steady increase over the long term. Average weekly earnings were estimated at £693 for total earnings, up from the £689 last reported in September and £648 for regular earnings, up from £643.
- 5.7. As part of the October UK budget announcement, changes have been made to the levels of Minimum Wage. Legal minimum wage for over-21s is to rise from £11.44 to £12.21 per hour from April 25. The rate for 18 to 20-year-olds to go up from £8.60 to £10, as part of a long-term plan to move towards a single adult rate. Currently those under 21 have a lower level of minimum wage, with lower again rates for those under 18 and apprentices.

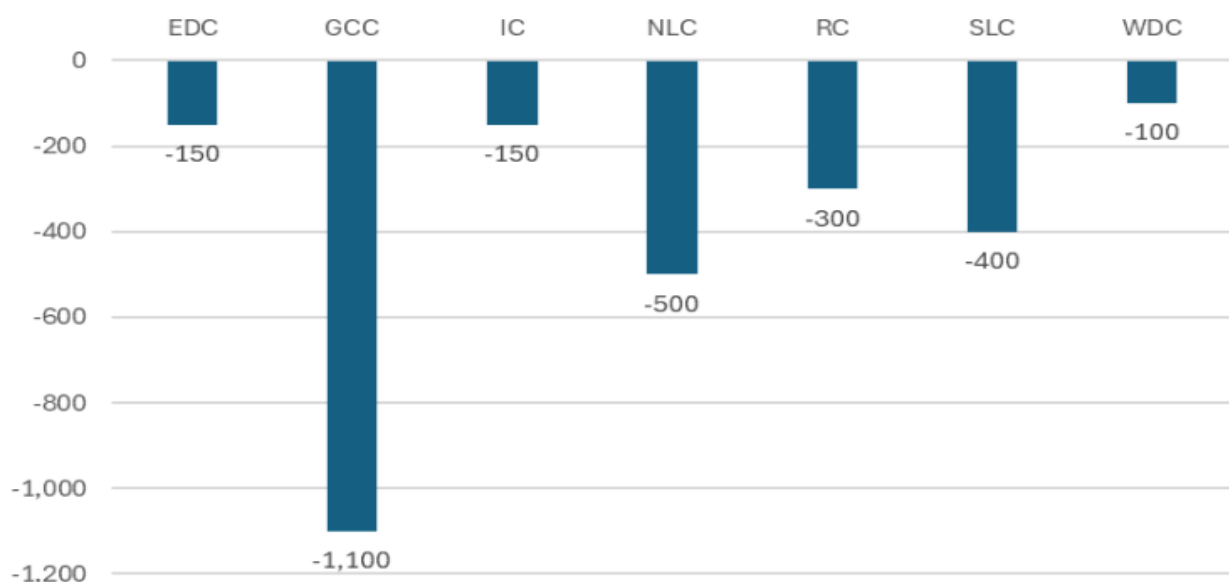
	21 and over	18 to 20	Under 18	Apprentice
April 2024 (current rate)	£11.44	£8.60	£6.40	£6.40
April 2025	£12.21	£10.00	£7.55	£7.55

- 5.8. There was no increase made in National Insurance Contribution (NIC) for employees within the budget, however changes have been made with regard to the employers NIC, with employers to



pay National Insurance at 15% on salaries above £5,000 from April 25, up from 13.8% on salaries above £9,100. It is widely expected, including by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the increase to employers NIC will mean lower wage rises for many employees as employers absorb the higher costs. The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) forecasts that by 2026-27, 76% of the total cost of the increase will be passed on through a squeeze on workers' pay rises and increased prices.

- 5.9. Increases in Employers NICs are not across the board, however. In an additional change, the Employment Allowance, which allows companies to reduce their National Insurance liability, will increase from £5,000 to £10,500. Employment Allowance can be claimed by businesses or charities where and employers' Class 1 National Insurance liabilities were less than £100,000 in the previous tax year. They pay less employers' Class 1 NIC each time they run payroll until the £5,000 has gone or the tax year ends (whichever is sooner). This will increase to £10,500. Due to this change it is anticipated that next year over half of employers with NICs liabilities will experience a benefit or no change overall.
- 5.10. According to the Glasgow City Region Budget 24 summary note, small businesses, which constitute most of the business base in Glasgow City Region, have welcomed the policy as the Employment Allowance protects them from the rise in employer National Insurance. Approximately 48,500 of Glasgow City Region's 50,000 enterprises are classed as a small enterprise – comprising of less than 50 employees.
- 5.11. Post Autumn Budget the OBR has revised its unemployment projections. Using these and the latest Labour Market estimates from the Annual Population Survey (APS) – it is projected that the equivalent of 2,700 individuals would no longer be claiming unemployment benefits in Glasgow City Region by 2026. The forecast figures per local authority are shown below.

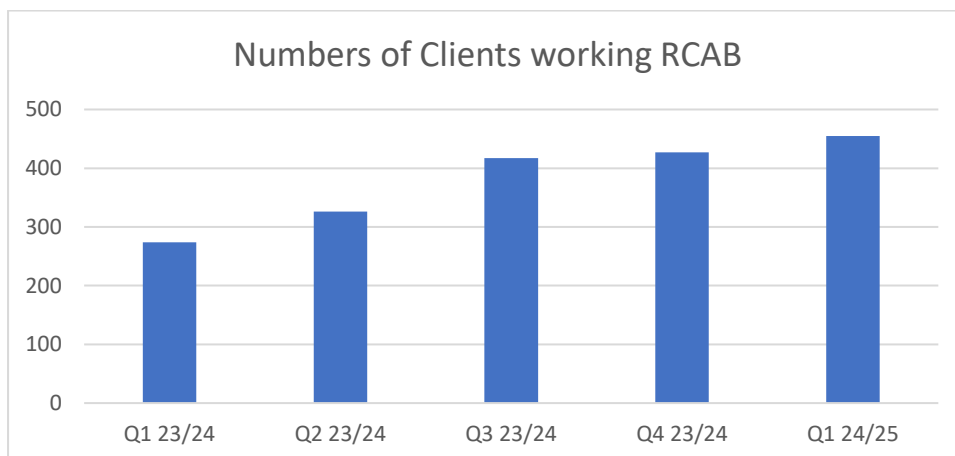


Source: OBR & APS

\*East Renfrewshire Council estimates not statistically robust

## Debt

- 5.12. Elected members will note from the Cost of Living Dashboard attached as a separate item on the agenda, that the amount of debt under management by both Renfrewshire Citizens Advice and Advice Works had sharply risen in the last quarter, at £2,408,161 compared to £740,768 in the previous quarter. As explanation for this, Advice Works advised that their new case management system may have driven this increase, however the majority of the increase had come from RCAB figures. This quarter the combined total of debt under management is £901,726 and as elected members will see from the Dashboard, this is more akin to the usual debt levels. RCAB have pointed to an increased amount of debt from mortgages as the main reason for the increase they have seen, with people struggling as fixed rate mortgage deals end and repayments increase. This increase in housing costs has a knock-on effect with clients 'maxing out' credit cards on household expenditure and then coming forward for debt advice when they cannot afford to make payments.
- 5.13. This may be driving an increase in clients who are working coming forward for advice. Figures from Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau show that of the 1446 clients seen this quarter, 455 were working either full time or part time. The numbers of those working who are accessing the service has risen steadily over the last year.



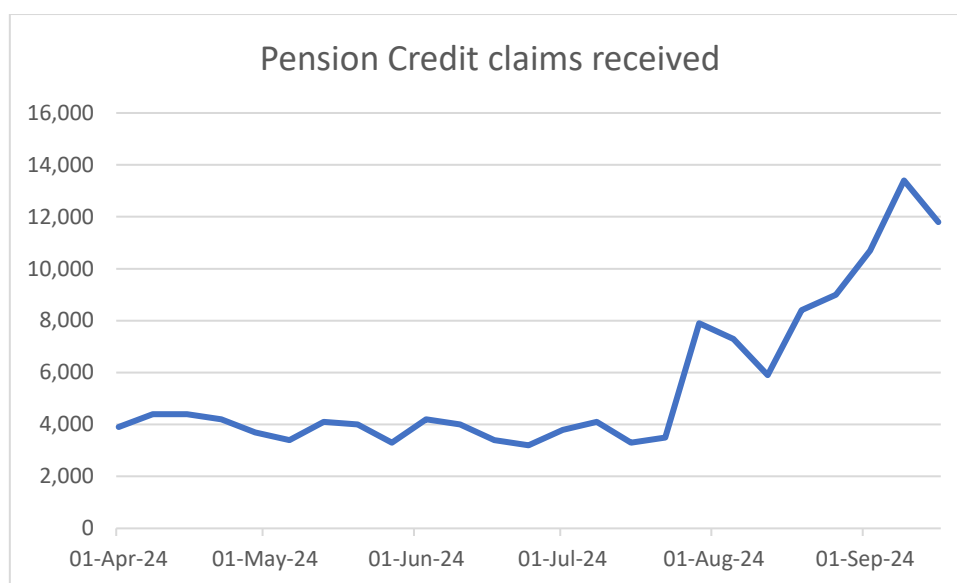
- 5.14. Advice Works are not seeing the same progressive rise, however and after in the previously reported two quarters an increase in employed clients with over 200 being seen in Q4 of 23/24 and 191 in Q1 of 24/25, Q2 24/25 showed a reduction again to 184.
- 5.15. The number of new debt cases for Advice Works in Q2 was 153, down from 186 the previous quarter and debt managed was £391,745 down from £677,064. These trends will be monitored over time, with further information captured around debt and changes in client type.

## 6. Benefits

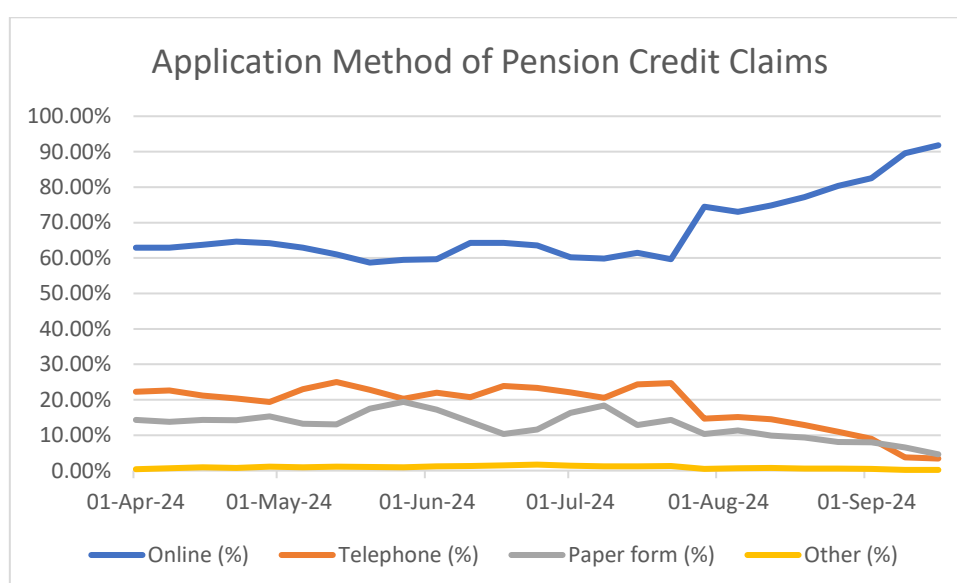
- 6.1. September's inflation figure is usually used to set how much benefits will rise in April the following year. This includes Universal Credit, which goes up at the government's discretion., while all the main disability benefits go up by law by at least the inflation rate. The inflation figure is lower than expected, and so the benefits rise will be relatively small, although the inflation rate

is expected to rise in October, pushed up by the rise in energy bills. This will be too late, however, to affect the benefit uprating.

- 6.2. Rises in state pension are calculated differently, so in April will be uprated by 4.1%, as this increase is determined by the 'triple lock' where the state pension goes up each year by either 2.5%, inflation, or earnings growth - whichever is the highest figure. The new full state pension is set to rise by £460 a year from April 2025.
- 6.3. The 1.7% inflation figure, which was confirmed at the Budget on 30 October, means that the standard allowance of Universal Credit, for a single person aged under 25, will go up by £5.30 a month to about £317. For a couple aged over 25, the rise will be £10.50 to £628 a month. However, it should be noted that the amount received in Universal Credit depends significantly on circumstances, such as earnings, children, or disabilities.
- 6.4. Currently 58% of Universal Credit claimants are women, and 38% of total claimants are working.
- 6.5. In addition to the 1.7% rise in Universal Credit being confirmed, an additional £90 million has been allocated to accelerate the move of Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) claimants onto Universal Credit, which will now start from September 2024 instead of 2028. This will allow DWP to complete the rollout of Universal Credit in 2026, with all working age benefit claimants brought onto one system. This change could affect more than 4,000 ESA claimants in Renfrewshire.
- 6.6. As previously reported to the Sub-Committee, on 14 August, the Scottish Government announced that due to the change in Block-Grant associated with the change to eligibility for Winter Fuel Payment, the payment in Scotland will also be restricted to those on eligible benefits. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) published an updated statistical release on 27 September, which provides information on the weekly Pension Credit (PC) claims volumes and the application method between 1 April and 22 September.
- 6.7. The DWP estimate that up to 880,000 pensioners UK-wide could be missing out on additional financial support through PC entitlement, worth on average up to £3,900 per year. In Renfrewshire, there is an estimated 2,500 households that could be missing out on PC entitlement.
- 6.8. The DWP launched their annual campaign to increase PC take-up on 2 September 2024. The graph below illustrates the significant increase in weekly PC claims. The increase in claims correspond with the initial UK Government WFP announcement on 29 July 2024, the Scottish Government's WFP announcement on 14 August and the increase in local and national media coverage since the announcements and subsequent parliamentary debates and votes. The weekly PC claim count in the week commencing 16 September shows a 237% increase to those made in the week commencing 22 July 2024.



- 6.9. The application method for PC claims has shown an increase in the proportion of claims made online. This data does not distinguish between claims made online with or without support.



- 6.10. Whilst the increase in PC applications is welcome, until PC award entitlement data is published for the corresponding period, which will be some months in the future, it will not be known what proportion of the increase in applications result in PC entitlement. That data will also provide the number of claims awarded in Renfrewshire.
- 6.11. At the Budget of 30 October, changes were announced for Carers Allowance. This benefit, currently £81.90 per week, can be paid where someone is caring for another person at least 35 hours per week and earn less than £151 per week after tax. The person cared for must also be in receipt of certain benefits, such as Attendance Allowance or Child Disability Payment. Eligibility for this benefit was widened in the Budget by increasing the maximum earnings threshold from £151 to £195 a week from April 25.
- 6.12. This increase is the equivalent of 16 hours at the National Living Wage, resulting in one of the biggest increases in the earnings limit since the benefit was introduced in 1976. It is anticipated that up to 60,000 unpaid carers will now have access to Carer's Allowance and the increased

earnings threshold will also allow those currently receiving Carer's Allowance greater access to employment, or the opportunity to work more hours.

- 6.13. This increase could benefit the approximate 27,000 unpaid carers within Renfrewshire, providing labour market opportunities for those previously categorised as economically inactive. Carer's UK estimate that 70% of unpaid carer are female, so the improved Carer's Allowance could also contribute towards the Gender Employment Gap – which is currently estimated at 5.8% points in Glasgow City Region.
- 6.14. An announcement was also made at the Budget around benefit deductions. Benefit deductions are taken automatically from benefits for a range of debts, including Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) benefit advances, historical child tax credit overpayments, rent and council tax arrears, and water and utility bill debts. For those with deductions from their benefits, a Fair Repayment Rate will come into force from April 2025. This will cap the amount that can be cut from benefit payments each month to repay these short-term loans and debts.
- 6.15. The cap is set at 15%, rather than the current 25%, and it is estimated that households could be £420 a year better off. The cap would help 1.2million households across the UK, 700,000 of which are families with children.
- 6.16. Trussell Trust research published in September 2024 shows that deductions play a significant role in driving people into hardship. Just over half of people (53%) facing deductions from their payments shared they were experiencing hunger but didn't have enough money for food, significantly higher than the number of people on Universal Credit but not facing deductions (32%).

## **7. Inflation**

- 7.1. UK consumer prices, as measured by the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) were 1.7% higher in September 2024 than a year before, with the inflation rate reducing slightly from 2.2% in August 24 and now is slightly below the 2% target rate set by the UK Government for the Bank of England. This means that the cost of living is still rising but at a lower rate than the Bank of England had expected.
- 7.2. The reduction in inflation rate was driven by lower airfares and petrol. The inflation rate for food, however, has increased slightly from 1.5% to 1.8%, the first increase since March 2023 and ONS also report that the services sector of the economy, such as restaurants and hairdressers, has seen significant rises. According to the National Institute of Economic and Social Research the 10% increase in the energy price cap in October will exert sizeable inflationary pressure and they expect inflation to rise to around 2.5 per cent by end of year. After the budget announcement on 30 October, the 2.5% prediction remained unchanged and inflation predicted to average 2.6% next year, before falling to 2.3% in 2026.
- 7.3. In Renfrewshire 1,322 Foodbank Vouchers were in Quarter 2, in comparison with 1,295 issued in the same quarter the previous year, an increase of 2%. The vouchers covered 1740 adults and 844

children this year, which was an increase in total number receiving assistance compared to the same quarter last year (1591 adults and 704 children).

- 7.4. The rising costs of essentials remains the most commonly cited factor in the reason for voucher issue in Renfrewshire, at 619 times. This is compared to the next most cited factors, ongoing impact of physical or mental health condition and Priority debt which were both cited 174 times.
- 7.5. The table below shows the number of Vouchers fulfilled per Ward in Quarter 2 2024/25 compared to Quarter 2 last year. The most significant numerical jumps in voucher numbers were Renfrew North and Braehead with 19, Erskine and Inchinnan with 11 and Houston, Crosslee and Linwood with 10. There have been slight reductions in several Wards.

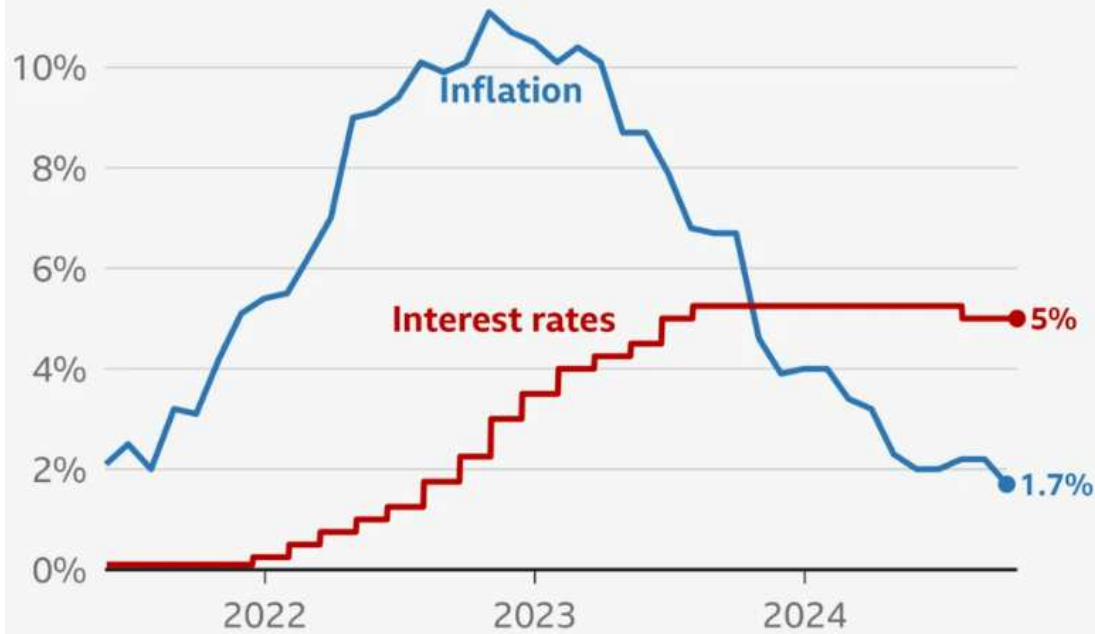


- 7.6. Renfrewshire Foodbank has recently opened and extended their Paisley distribution on a Wednesday afternoon to 18.45 to ensure people who are employed can access. This service has been used by a number of people, and figures for Q2 show a slight increase in numbers who are working using the service at 117 compared to 103 last quarter.

## 8. Interest Rates

- 8.1. On 1 August, the interest rate was reduced to 5% due to decreases in inflation, the first fall for four years, and were held at this rate in September 2024. At the time of the August cut, the Bank of England governor Andrew Bailey said cooling inflation pressure meant the bank should be able to cut interest rates gradually over the upcoming months. After the inflation rate was announced in October, however, Mr Bailey said the Bank of England could be a "bit more aggressive" at cutting borrowing costs, if inflation remained under control. A further interest rate cut is widely expected at the Bank's next meeting on 7 November 2024.

## Inflation and interest rates



Source: ONS, Bank of England. Last update: 16 Oct 2024

BBC

- 8.2. More than 8 in 10 mortgage customers have a fixed rate mortgage. According to the banking trade body, UK Finance, 1.6 million existing borrowers in Britain have fixed term mortgages at a relatively cheap level due to expire this year, many of them at rates of less than 2%. Competition in recent weeks has brought some rates down and according to Moneyfacts, the average two-year and five-year fixed rate mortgages currently available are 5.39% and 5.08% respectively. This a slight decrease on the figures reported to Sub-Committee in September. A recent report by the Bank of England, stated that about three million households were set to see their mortgage payments rise in the next two years, including 400,000 mortgage holders who were facing some "very large" payment increases.
- 8.3. The next announcement on interest rates will be on 7 November, with a reduction expected, however the Home Owners Alliance does not predict a fall in lenders interest rates for fixed rate mortgages and some lenders have recently withdrawn their cheapest deals. i news also reported that lenders are unlikely to reduce rates based on the current figures.

## 9. Housing costs

### Rental Costs

- 9.1. According to the ONS, private rental prices in Renfrewshire rose to an average of £756 in September 2024, an increase of £7 per month on the last reported figure in June 24 and an annual increase of 7.7% from £702 in September 2023. Average rents as of June 2024 in Renfrewshire/Inverclyde by how many bedrooms there are in a property were:

- One bedroom: £474 (from £469 in June 24)
- Two bedrooms: £630 (from £624 in June 24)

- Three bedrooms: £818 (from £808 in June 24)
- Four or more bedrooms: £1,465 (from £1,454 in June 24)

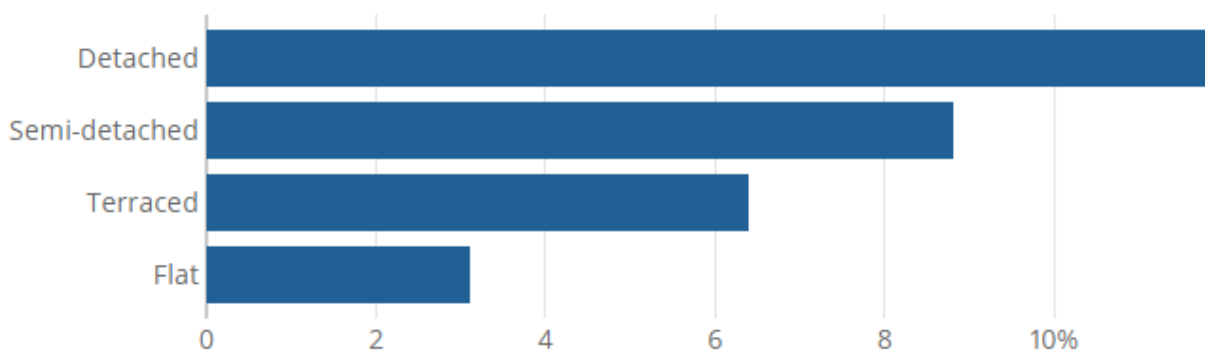
- 9.2. Local Housing Allowance (LHA) is the mechanism by which Housing Benefit and the Universal Credit Housing Element are calculated for private renters. LHA rates were frozen from 2020 and by the end of 2023/24, almost two-thirds (65%) of Universal Credit Housing Element recipients in the private rented sector experienced a shortfall between housing cost support and their actual rent costs. For Renfrewshire the figures rose from 64.8% in 2022 to 70% in Nov 23.
- 9.3. A single year uprating happened in April 2024 facilitating an average 16.6% rise in the maximum housing cost support available to private renters, however in a statement on 30 October, the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions announced that LHA rates for 2025/26 will be maintained at the 2024/25 levels, with no increase being made.

### Home ownership

- 9.4. House prices have continued to rise and ONS figures show that the average cost of a home in Renfrewshire is now £166,000 in August 2024, up 6.2% from August 2023, while the average price paid by first-time buyers was £135,000 in August 2024. This was 5.1% higher than the average of £129,000 in August 2023. For homes bought with a mortgage, the average house price was £179,000 in August 2024. This was 7.3% higher than the average of £167,000 in August 2023.
- 9.5. According to Adzuna, a recruitment agency, the average salary for jobs advertised in Renfrewshire in September is £33,339.
- 9.6. For each property type, average prices as of August 2024 in Renfrewshire were:
- Detached properties: £346,000
  - Semi-detached properties: £202,000
  - Terraced properties: £143,000
  - Flats and maisonettes: £101,000

### Change in house price by type of property in Renfrewshire

Provisional figure for 12-month change in house price, by property type, August 2024

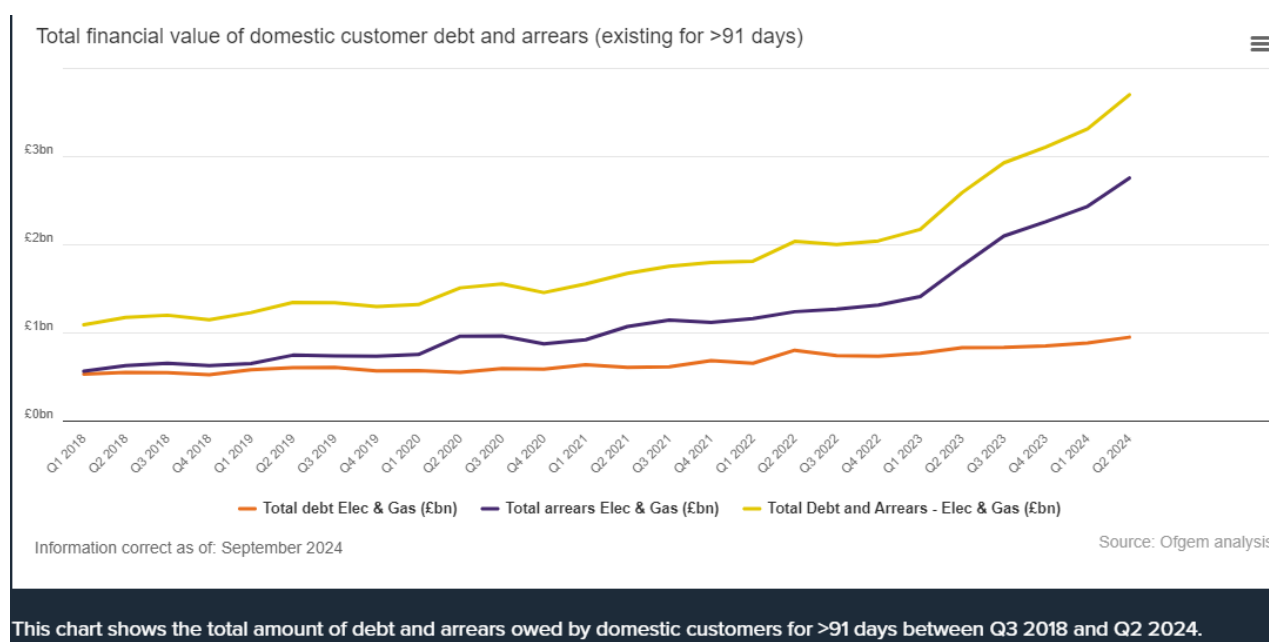


Source: Registers of Scotland and UK House Price Index from HM Land Registry



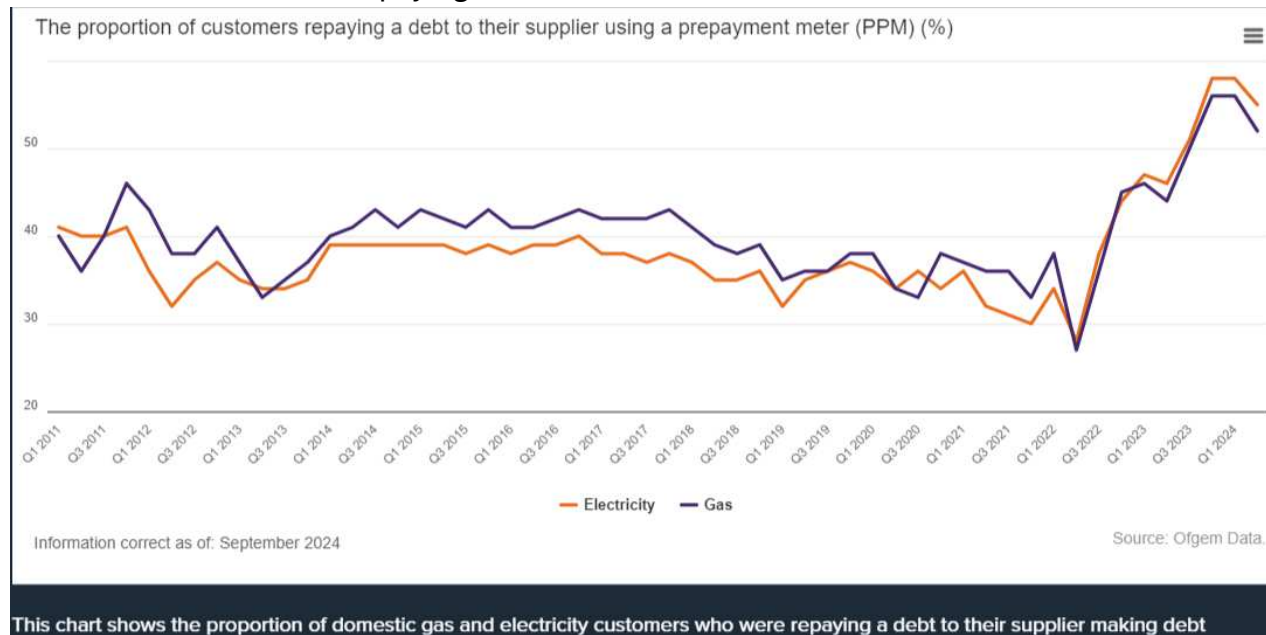
## 10. Fuel – Energy Costs for Households

- 10.1. Every three months, Ofgem reviews and sets a level on how much an energy supplier can charge for each unit of energy. This is known as the price cap. From 1 October to 31 December 2024, the price cap rose 10%. Therefore, an average household on typical usage, paying by Direct Debit for dual fuel is currently paying £1,717 a year, up £149 from the previous cap. The increase was across both unit costs and standing charges.
- 10.2. From 1 October 2024, households on prepayment meters are paying slightly less than those on direct debit, with a typical bill of £1,669 a year. The rates per unit for both gas and electricity are slightly less for those with a pre-payment meter compared to those that pay by Direct Debit, with standing charges charged at the same rate. The current predictions (26 Sep 2024) from analysts Cornwall Insight are that after the 1 October rise, the Energy Price Cap will fall slightly in January 2025, to £1,697 a year for a typical household.
- 10.3. Recent high costs of energy, as well as high costs of living more generally, have affected families with low incomes, with debt more common on priority bills. As was reported to elected members in September 24, Ofgem data indicates that the number of accounts behind on their gas and electricity bills has reached the highest level since records began in 2012. Since then, levels have continued to rise with most current levels indicated below.



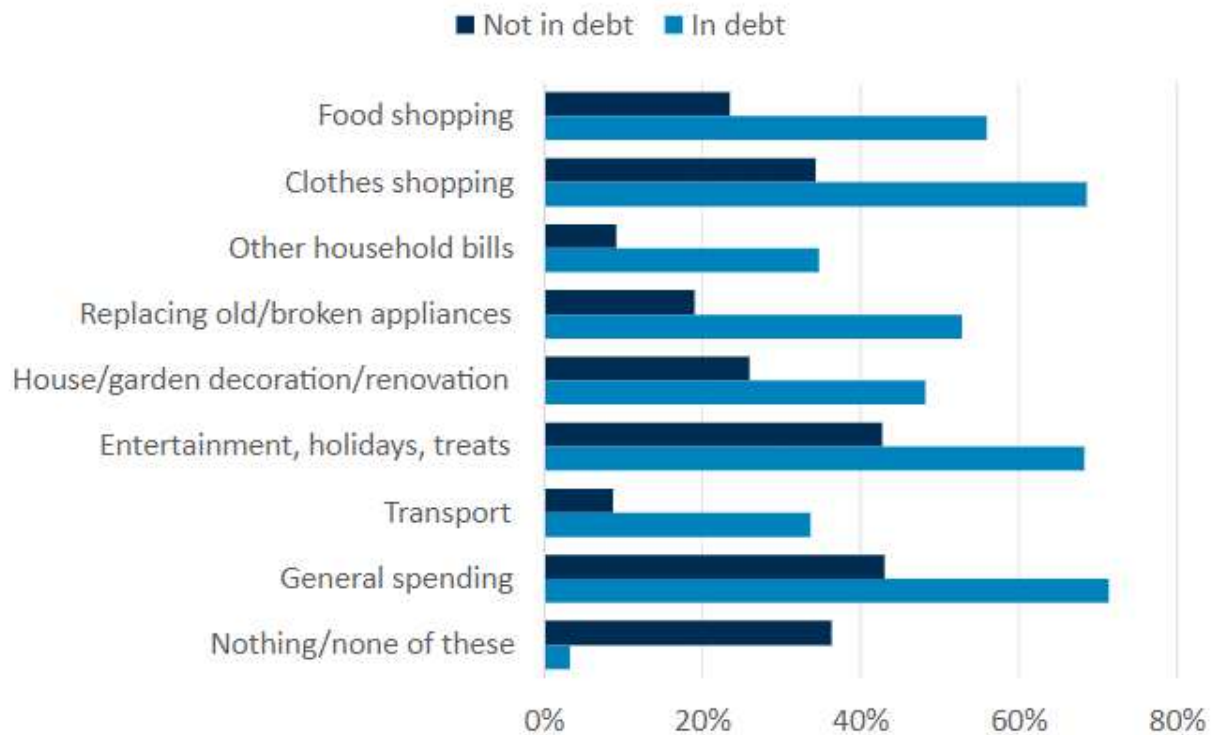
- 10.4. Ofgem data shows the total value of debt and arrears owed by customers to suppliers has risen substantially since 2018. After sustained increases during 2021 and the first half of 2022, the value stayed relatively steady until Q1 2023, after which it has risen sharply. Between Q1 2024 and Q2 2024, it rose by 12%, from £3.32bn to £3.70bn, equating to a 43% increase from Q2 2023.

- 10.5. Ofgem reports that the proportion of customers repaying a debt to their supplier using a pre payment meter (PPM) is over 50%. The proportion of domestic customers repaying debt to their supplier using a PPM has previously ranged between around 30% and 40% for the last few years. Since Q4 2022 the figure has been above 40%, and at the end of 2023 in the last year the number of customers repaying electricity debt through a PPM rose to record levels. In Q2 2024, for electricity customers, this dropped back slightly to 55% from 58% in Q1 2024 in Q2 2024. For gas, the number of customers repaying a debt via a PPM fell from 56% to 52%.



- 10.6. According to Consumer Scotland, fuel poverty rates in Scotland rose from 24.6% in 2019 to 31% in 2022. Their 'Energy Affordability Policy' report, published in October 2024, cites their own tracker and engagement with frontline agencies in Scotland to identify those most at risk of energy affordability challenges, including energy debt:
- Disabled people – particularly those limited a lot by disability
  - Those with a low income
  - Those with children under 5
  - Those on prepayment meters
  - Those using traditional electric-only heating or heating oil
- 10.7. Their tracker survey has found that nearly 1 in 10 consumers self-reported being in energy debt, including indirect energy debt (such as using a credit card or borrowing money from a friend to meet energy costs). This poses additional challenges to the affordability of energy for these consumers, who will be required to pay back their debts while simultaneously paying for their ongoing energy use.

## Percentage of respondents cutting back on spending in order to afford energy bills, by type of spending and presence of energy debt



Source: Consumer Scotland analysis our Energy Tracker, AFF5: Are you having to cut back your spending on any of these things in order to afford to pay your energy bills nowadays? Please tick all that apply. Analysis by indebtedness

## 11. Other Budget measures

- 11.1. A number of other measures were announced in the budget which may affect households over the coming years:
- The existing 5p cut in fuel duty on petrol and diesel which was due to end in April 2025 will be kept for another year.
  - Tax on tobacco is to increase by 2% above inflation, and 10% above inflation for hand-rolling tobacco and a new flat-rate tax of £2.20 per 10ml of vaping liquid will be introduced from October 2026.
  - Tax on non-draught alcoholic drinks to increase by the higher Retail Price Index measure of inflation (currently 2.7%), but tax on draught drinks cut by 1.7%

## Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – There are no financial implications associated with this report, which provides an overview of the position and is for noting.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – none
3. **Community/Council Planning** – This report provides a detailed summary of the current evidence relating to household income and expenditure. Wider poverty related issues are a key element of

both the Council and Community Plan and the information included within this report is part of the wider Strategic Needs Assessment for these plans.

4. **Legal** - none
5. **Property/Assets** - none
6. **Information Technology** - none
7. **Equality and Human Rights** – The report provides an overview of the position around household income and expenditure, and is for noting. As such there are no impacts arising from the recommendation of this paper. It is however important to note that impacts on households explored within this paper are likely to be disproportionately felt by equality groups.
8. **Health and Safety** - none
9. **Procurement** – none
10. **Risk** – none
11. **Privacy Impact** – none
12. **Climate Risk** - none
13. **Children’s rights** – the articles within UNCRC underpin the work that is being progressed in Renfrewshire through the Fairer Renfrewshire programme, particularly in relation to rights in relation to aspects such as life, survival and development, food, clothing and a safe home and supporting the best interests of the child and their families. Child poverty and family wellbeing are key local partnership priorities.
14. **COSLA Policy Position** – none

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# Cost of Living Dashboard

October 2024

Prepared by:

Policy and Partnerships

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## Cost of Living Dashboard

This dashboard has been developed to provide a summary of key indicators relating to how local households might be impacted by the cost-of-living crisis

It has four key sections: economy, social security, financial insecurity and housing

Each section has an overview with key indicators and their movement from the last period, supported by additional information and graphs showing further analysis and longer-term trends

The dashboard is still in development, and feedback is welcome on the information included and its presentation to ensure it is a useful tool

## OVERVIEW

# Key statistics - economy

 **5.00 %**

Bank of England base rate  
(September 2024)

 **£18.33**

Average hourly pay for a  
Renfrewshire worker (excluding  
overtime) (Scotland / £18.09)

 **1.7 %**


Consumer Prices Index (CPI)  
(September 2024)

 **133.86p**

Average fuel price for petrol  
(October 2024)

 **1.8%**

Inflation rate for food and non-  
alcoholic beverages  
(September 2024)

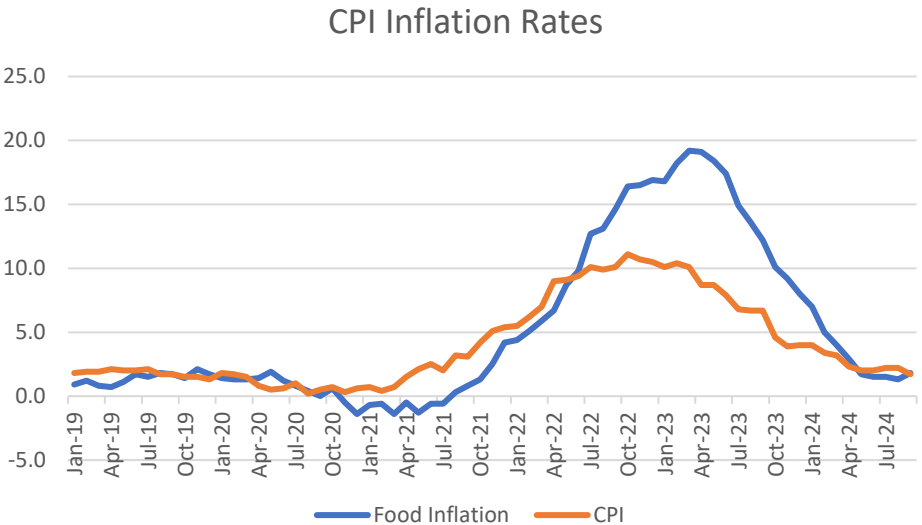
 **£1,717**

Energy price cap, typical use, direct  
debit  
(from October 2024)

- Inflation trend falling, driven by decreases in food inflation
- Reduction in interest rates
- Energy price cap rising, with prepayment meters comparatively cheaper than direct debit
- Hourly pay increasing, slightly ahead of Scotland average

# Inflation

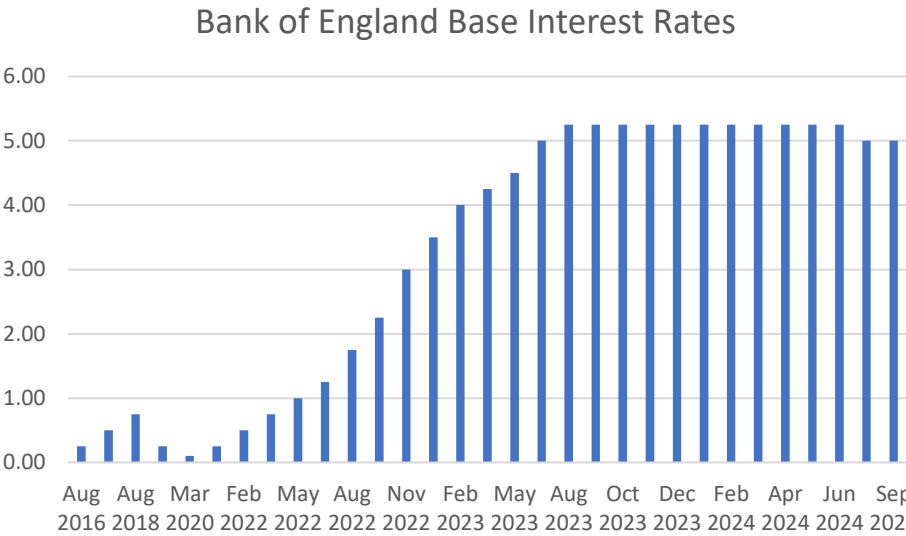
The inflation rate in October 2024 is 1.7%, down from 2.2% in August. The reduction is not consistent across all categories and there are differing future predictions, for example some forecasters suggest the poor summer weather, increase in energy costs and the ongoing conflict in the Middle East may lead to an increases in food prices.



# Interest Rates

The Bank of England’s base rate reduced to 5.0% in August 2024, having increased significantly over the last year, peaking at 5.25% from August 2023.

Interest rate projections are difficult to predict, however many analysts are predicting modest decreases over the next two years. Analysts are predicting a further 0.25% reduction in November or December.





# Earnings

Based on the ONS annual survey of hours and earnings, in 2023 the median hourly pay (excluding overtime) for workers in Renfrewshire is higher compared to that for workers in Scotland, or the rest of Great Britain.

It should be noted that the median hourly wage for females in Renfrewshire is less than that for workers in Scotland. The gender pay gap has been declining slowly over time.

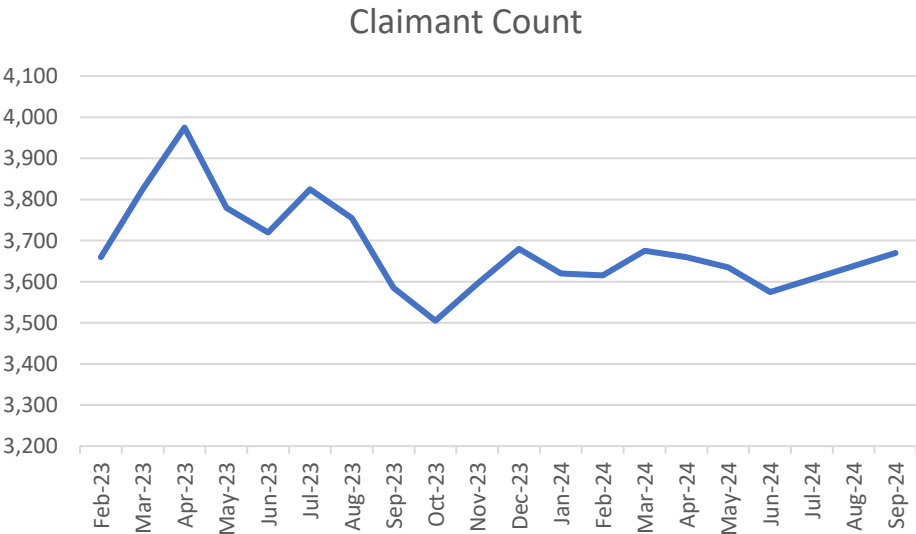


# Employment Rate

The ONS Labour Force Survey shows the Claimant Count for those claiming benefits 'principally for the reason of being unemployed', which now stands at 3,670. This is based on numbers claiming JSA and Universal Credit.

These numbers are based on those aged 16 and over.

The Renfrewshire unemployment rate of 3.2% is the same as Scotland (3.2%) but lower than that of Great Britain (4.3%).

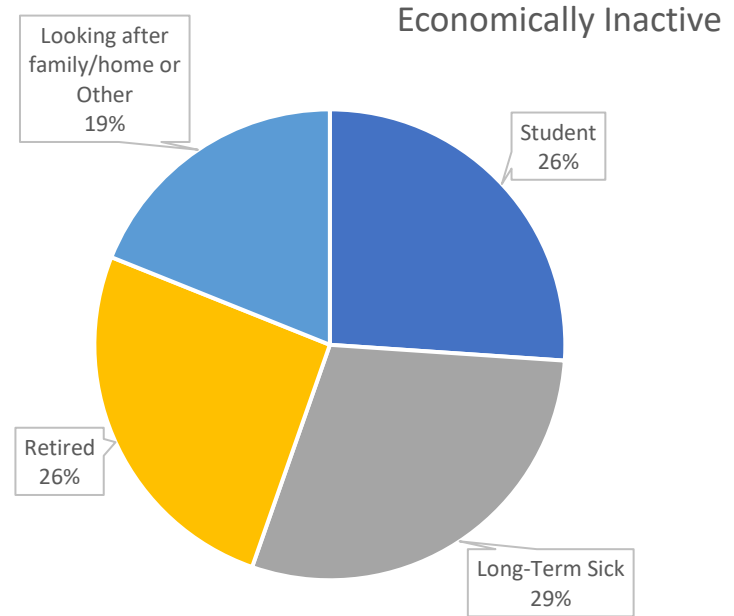


## Economic Inactivity

The ONS Labour Force Survey also provides details on those aged 16+ that are economically inactive and not seeking work. Between July 2023 to June 2024, of the 28,000 people aged 16-64 that are classed as economically inactive, 88.4% are not looking for employment (either in the long-term or short/medium term).

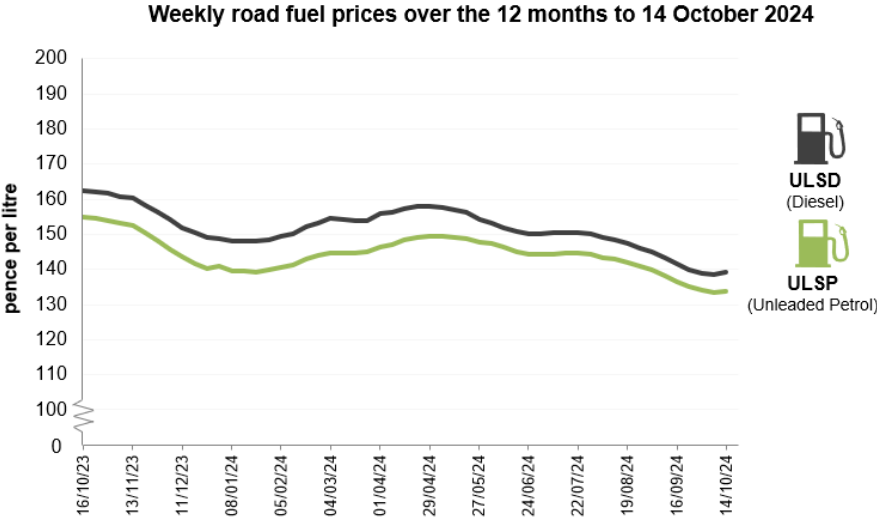
The percentage of economically inactive people aged 16-64 that want to gain employment (either in long-term or short/medium term) in Renfrewshire (11.6%) is lower than that of the rates in Scotland (17.3%) and Great Britain (17.8%).

Please note that due to the sample size within Renfrewshire, some categories do not have a reliable estimate (e.g. looking after family/home, temporary sick or other).



# Fuel Prices

From the UK Government’s weekly fuel price publication, the average UK pump price on 14 October 2024 is 133.86 pence per litre for petrol, and 139.08 pence per litre for diesel.

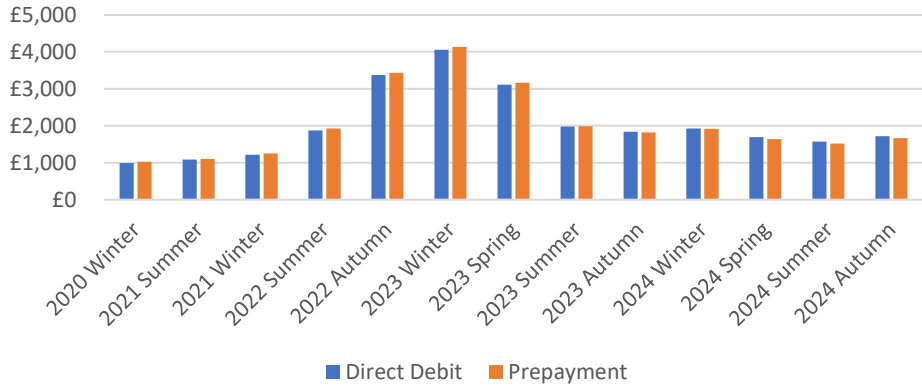


# Energy Price Cap

The Energy Price Cap sets a limit on the maximum amount suppliers can charge for each unit of gas and electricity used and sets a maximum daily standing charge. That means there is no upper limit to what a user pays, if more energy is used, more is paid.

The Energy Price Cap now changes every three months mainly based on average energy wholesale prices in the months leading up to each change. From October 2024 the Energy Price Cap will rise to £1,717 per year for those on a monthly direct debit, and to £1,669 per year for those with a prepayment meter. Energy prices are predicted to increase further during the winter of 2024/25.

It should be noted that between October 2022 and June 2023, no one paid the full amount under the Price Cap due to the UK Government’s Energy Price Guarantee which provided a discount on the Price Cap for households.



## OVERVIEW

# Key statistics - social security

 **15,998**

Household claiming Universal Credit  
(May 2024 - Provisional)

 **5,075**

Children awarded a Clothing Grant  
(end September 2024)

 **10,545**

Children in Renfrewshire receiving a  
Scottish Child Payment  
(June 2024)

 **4,404**

Children in receipt of Free School Meals  
(end September 2024)

- Households claiming Universal Credit increasing, this includes new cases and managed migration from tax credits and legacy benefits
- Slight decrease in number of children receiving Scottish Child Payment compared to March 2024.

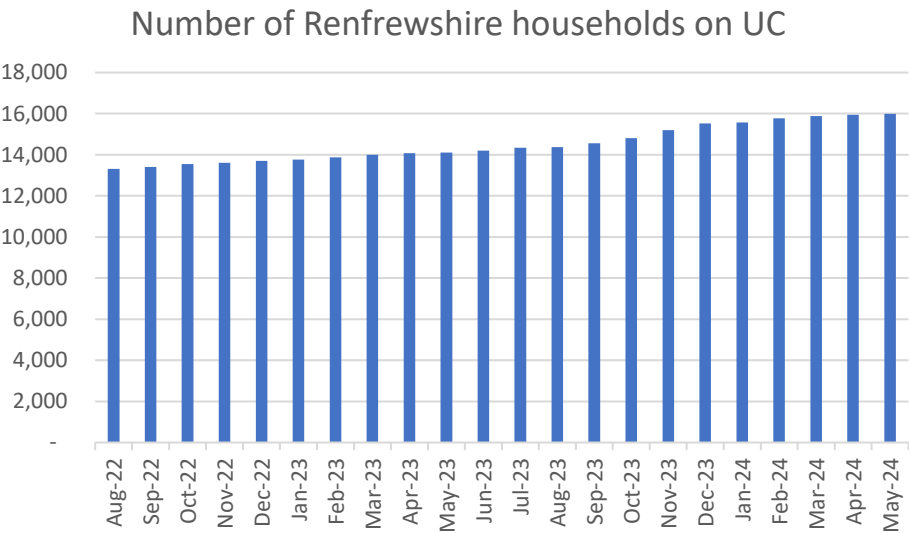
# Universal Credit

Households on Universal Credit (UC) continue to rise with 15,998 households in Renfrewshire receiving UC as of May 2024 (provisional figures).

Starting in August 2023, the managed migration from tax credits to UC contributed to the rises in the UC caseload, with the legacy tax credit caseload closing this year. From April 2024, the managed migration process has commenced for those claimants still on Income Support, Jobseeker’s Allowance, Housing Benefit and Employment and Support Allowance.

Recently published DWP statistics show the impact of the two-child limit policy on families in receipt of UC or Child Tax Credits (CTC). As of April 2024, in Renfrewshire there are 1,200 households in receipt of UC/CTC with 3 or more children. Of these, 790 households are not receiving a child element/amount for at least one child.

The current monthly UC child element amount is £287.92 per month.



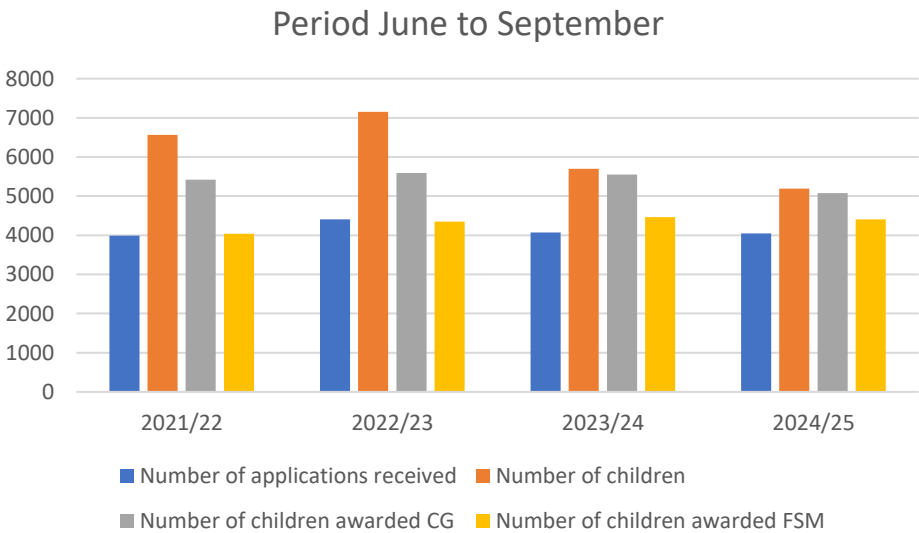
# Free School Meals and Clothing Grants

The 2023/24 Free School Meals and Clothing Grant application process commenced in June 2023 and closed in April 2024.

The 2024/25 Free School Meals and Clothing Grant application process commenced at the start of June 2024.

The number of applications received since June 2024 is fairly consistent with the corresponding period as last year. The number of children awarded a Free School Meal shows a small drop, however there is a drop of 474 children being awarded a Clothing Grant for the same period.

Please note, that there are a number of applications that have been received, where a decision has not yet been made which makes in-year comparisons difficult.



## Key statistics - financial insecurity

↓ 2,927

Number of Crisis Grants awarded -  
spend of £308,840.  
(April 24 - September 24)

↓ 2,584

Number of people who sought  
advice from Advice Works or  
Citizens Advice Bureau  
(2024/25, Q2)

↑ 1,322

Foodbank vouchers issued (includes  
844 children and 1,740 adults)  
2024/25, Q2

↓ £0.9m

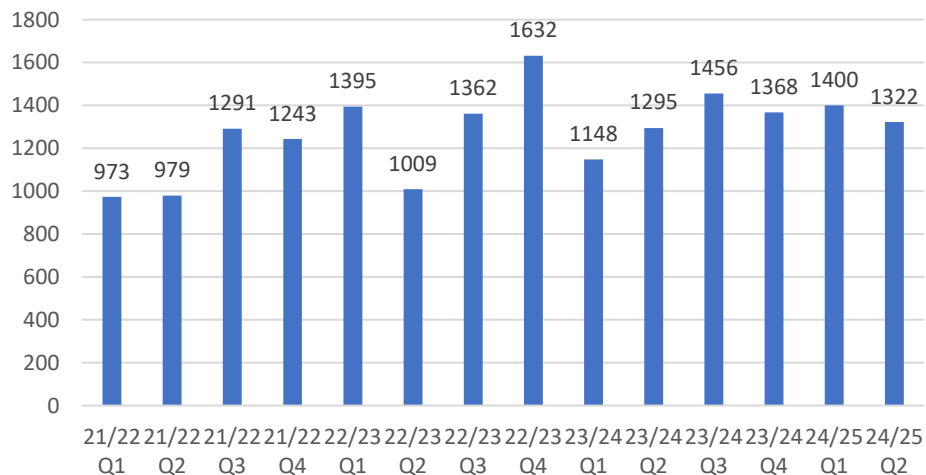
New case debt under management  
between Advice Works and Citizens  
Advice Bureau (2024/25 Q2)

- Foodbank vouchers issued down compared to last quarter, but an increase compared to the same period last year.
- Number of Crisis Grants applications received and awarded slightly down compared to the same period last year.
- Number of people approaching local advice agencies down this period, but wider trend is upward

## Foodbank Vouchers

Foodbank vouchers issued in Q2 2024/25 (1,322) assisted 844 children and 1,740 adults.

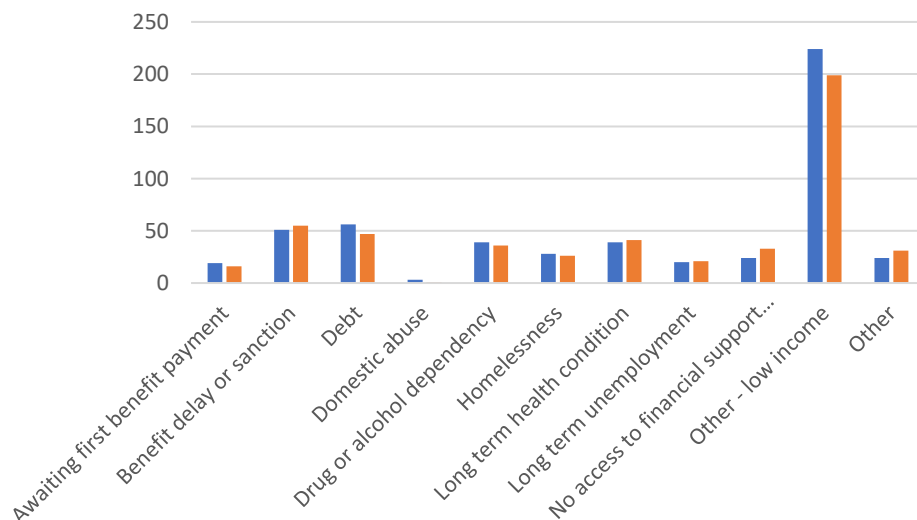
Foodbank Vouchers Issued by Quarter



## More than 3 vouchers needed in the last 6 months

In terms of more than 3 vouchers needed in the last 6 months, there has been a steady increase in the number awarded due to a Benefit delay or sanction. This will be monitored going forward, due to an increase in the sanction regime being implemented within Universal Credit.

Reasons for needing more than 3 vouchers in the last 6 months - 2024/25



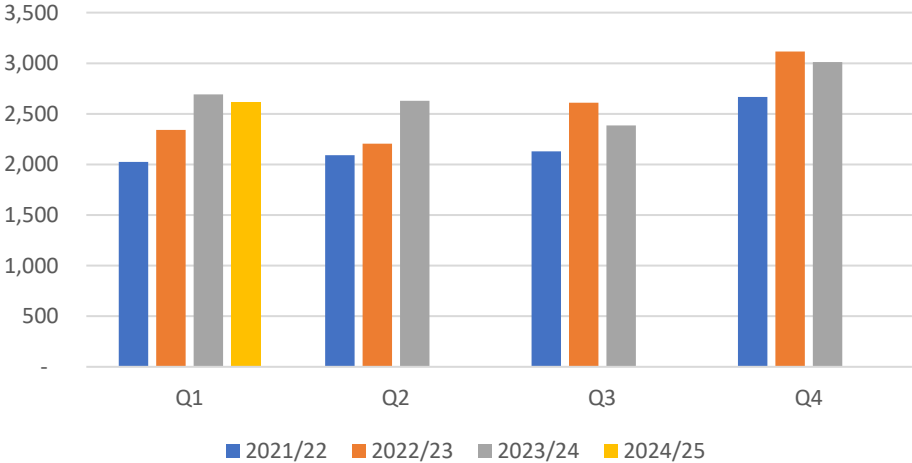


# Advice

Advice Works and Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau (RCAB) are supporting a high level of new clients. The number of clients who received appointment support during Q1 and Q2 2024/25 is only 5 less compared to the same period in 2023/24.

N.B. These figures do not include the number of calls/emails from people looking for signposting information.

Combined Advice New Client Cases



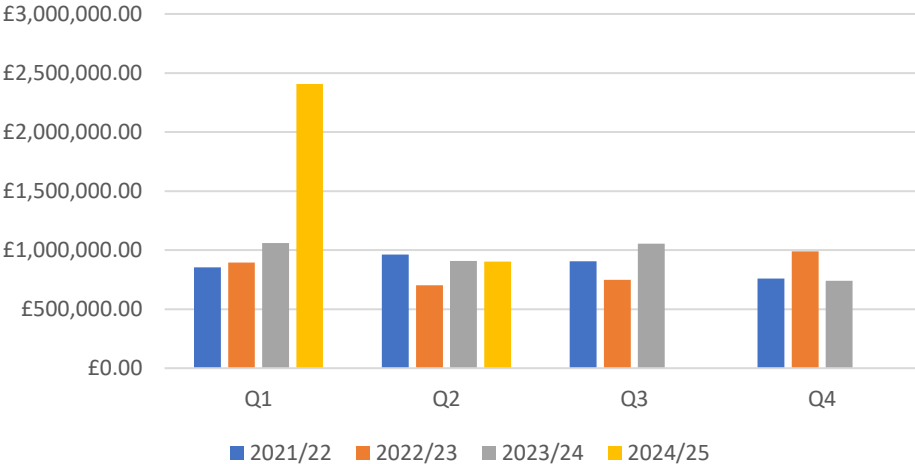
# Debt Under Management

Advice Works and Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau continue to deal with a high level of enquiries regarding debt.

The combined level of new debt cases under management is shown below, by quarter over the last 3 years.

By comparing the debt under management during Q2 2024/25 compared to Q2 2023/24, there is a 0.5% reduction. Whilst it might be too early to make a definitive statement, the levels reported in Q1 could be an anomaly.

Debt Under Management



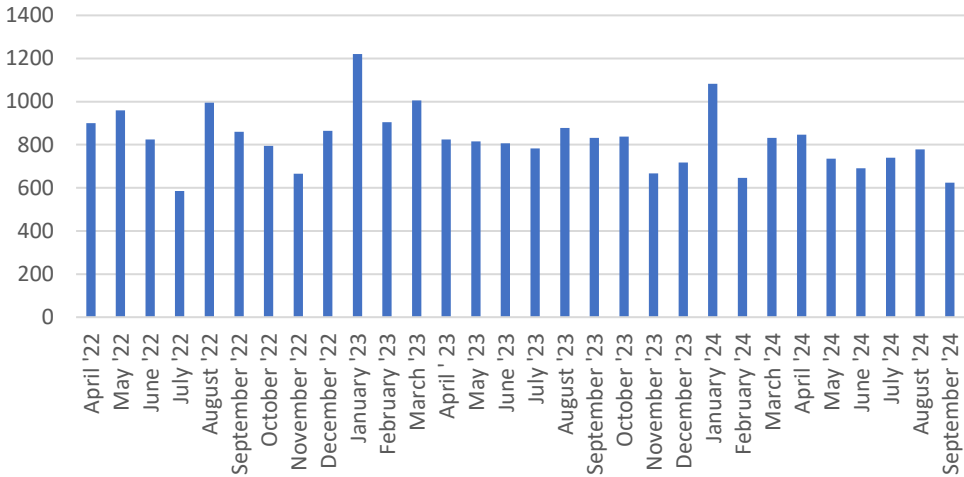
# Scottish Welfare Fund

There have been 4,414 applications for Crisis Grants between April 2024 and September 2024 with £308,840 awarded. This is an average award rate of 66.3%.


Nationwide, the main reasons for a CG not being awarded are “reasons for application do not meet the conditions of award” and “excluded as a result of previous applications”. Generally, awards are restricted to 3 within a 12-month rolling period however discretion can be used. In Renfrewshire, discretion is frequently exercised. Cost-of-living pressures will for many households result in immediate financial crises more often with less flexibility to manage budgets.

Nationwide 52% of Crisis Grant awards are made to single persons, with 22% made to single parents. This suggests single people and single parents, who rely on one income within the household, are financially struggling in terms of income and disproportionately by expenditure due to housing, energy, fuel, and food costs.


Crisis Grant Applications by month



## Key statistics - housing

 **4,964**


Number of applicants on the  
housing list  
(End of year, 2023/24)

 **15,678**

Households in receipt of Council Tax  
Reduction  
(October 2024)

 **244**

Number of new Homeless Cases  
(2024/25, Q1)

 **4,951**

Number of tenants in rent arrears  
(August 2024)

- New homeless cases marginally down this period, but wider trend is upward.
- Significant increase in people presenting who were either in private tenancies or living in parental/relative homes.
- More tenants in rent arrears this period, although a decrease in the value of arrears compared to same period last year.

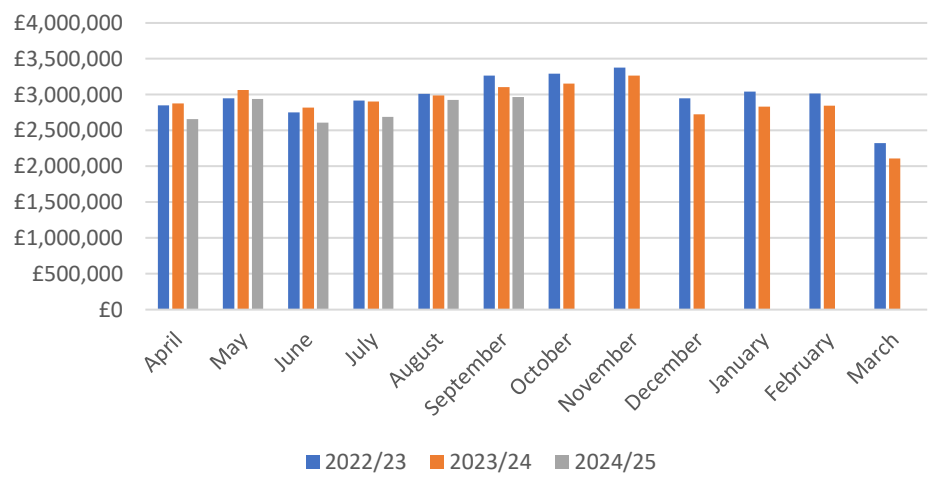
### Council Tenants in arrears

As at the end of September 2024, 4,951 current tenants were in rent arrears totaling £2,967,918. This figure includes all levels of arrears some of which are caused by Universal Credit payment processes. Staff within Housing Services continue to work with tenants to address rent arrears and provide advice/signpost tenants to Support Services and Agencies where financial difficulties are identified.

For the period 1 April 2024 – 30 June 2024, 22 tenants have qualified for Tenant Support Fund assistance with circa £1,390 awarded.

Renfrewshire Council tenancy rents increased by 6% this year.

Current Tenant Arrears

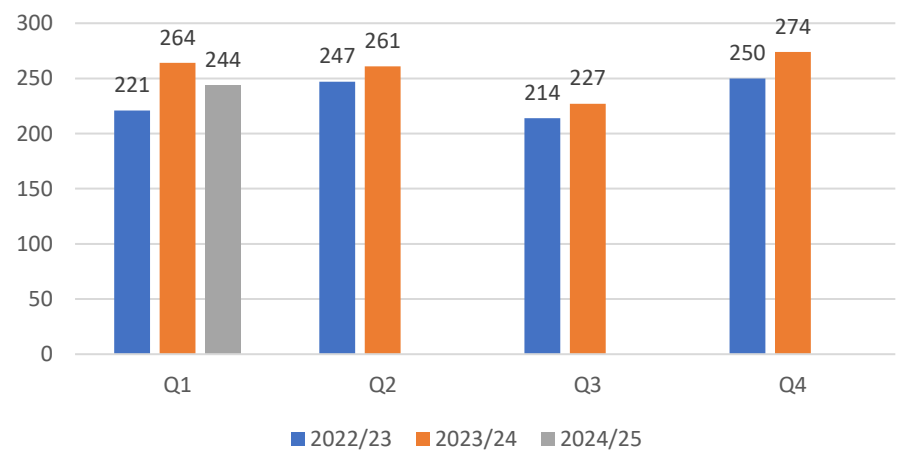


### Homeless Cases

The Housing and Homeless Advice Service had 244 new cases within Q1 in 2024/25 compared to 264 for the same period in 2023/24. Homeless Services are predicting over 1,000 cases in 2024/25, with a significant increase in the number coming from the private sector.

There was a 10% increase in homeless applications in 2023/24 compared to the previous year with the yearly total (1,026) being at the highest level for ten years. The largest increases in reasons given are being asked to leave, disputes/breakdown in relationship or other action taken by the landlord resulting in the termination of the tenancy. Financial difficulties could be a contributing factor to, or a consequence of the reasons given.

New Homeless Cases



# Average Monthly Rent Costs

From the Office for National Statistics’ local housing statistics publication dated October 2024, figures show average rent changes. These statistics are based predominantly on advertised rents, and so do not represent rent changes for existing tenants.

Average Monthly Rents in Renfrewshire	Sep-24	Change in Annual Average Rents
1 Bedroom	£474	7.5%
2 Bedroom	£630	7.5%
3 Bedroom	£818	8.6%
4 Bedroom	£1,465	7.5%

Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates are the maximum amount that can be paid for Housing Benefit and Universal Credit (Housing Costs) for those renting from a private landlord. Any shortfall between charged rent and the amount of Housing Benefit/Universal Credit Housing Costs awarded would have to be made up by the tenant, although Discretionary Housing Payments can be awarded to provide support.

Renfrewshire Monthly LHA Rates	March 2023 LHA Rate	April 2024 LHA Rate
1 Bedroom Shared	£294	£360
1 Bedroom	£350	£400
2 Bedroom	£450	£525
3 Bedroom	£550	£600
4 Bedroom	£1,000	£1,100

# Mortgage Affordability

Average house prices for all property types continue to rise. The house prices combined with recent higher rates have driven up the average monthly mortgage repayment amounts.

Whilst the Bank of England base interest rate fell in August 2024, it is expected that future rates will decline slowly and over a longer timescale to ensure inflation rates remain at levels consistent with the 2% target.

Type of Property	Average Price	Average Monthly Mortgage Repayment (Assuming 25 year repayment, 5 year fixed initial agreement and 10% deposit)
Flat	£98,400	£544
Terraced	£137,000	£759
Semi-detached	£195,000	£1,034
Detached	£329,000	£1,817






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**To:** Fairer Renfrewshire Sub-Committee

**On:** 13 November 2024

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**Report by:** Chief Executive

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**Heading:** Fairer Renfrewshire Programme Update

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1. The Council and partners have a key focus on tackling inequality and improving wellbeing and have longstanding programmes of work and partnership arrangements in place such as the Tackling Poverty Programme and the change programme established in response to the findings of the Renfrewshire Drug and Alcohol Commission.
- 1.2. At Council on 2 March 2023 members reaffirmed their commitment to the Fairer Renfrewshire programme and outlined a number of investments including bringing together the current Fairer Renfrewshire funding alongside the Tackling Poverty and Social Renewal reserve funds into a single resource.
- 1.3. At Council on 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024, members further reaffirmed their commitment to the Fairer Renfrewshire programme with further investments in a number of targeted interventions including additional welfare rights funding, a targeted programme of summer activities for children and young people from low-income families, additional resource to explore inequalities experienced by older people and strengthen engagement with young people, and a further winter school clothing payment in 2024.
- 1.4. Work on priorities has continued with this paper containing updates on a number of key priorities at Section 4.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that members of the Fairer Renfrewshire Sub-Committee note the report.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1 As highlighted in Section 1, the Fairer Renfrewshire Programme brings together a number of existing programmes of work focussed on achieving fairness and equity, including the former Tackling Poverty Programme and Alcohol and Drugs Change Programme. These programmes are being brought together alongside the Council's Social Renewal Plan, mapping a fairer future for Renfrewshire's residents through the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as the ongoing cost-of-living crisis.
- 3.2 There are four key emerging themes which are shared across all elements of the Fairer Renfrewshire programme, and these are:
- Improving financial security
  - Advancing equality of opportunity
  - Building community capacity and resilience
  - Listening to lived experience

### **4. Fairer Renfrewshire Programme Updates**

#### **Winter Connections 2024/25**

- 4.1 At Leadership Board in May 2024, it was agreed that £75,000 of funding be allocated from Fairer Renfrewshire programme to provide small grants to local organisations to support a Winter Connections programme in partnership with local organisations. The programme aims to encourage people to connect and participate in activities in warm and welcoming spaces across communities in Renfrewshire.
- 4.2 The funding will support local community and voluntary organisations with the additional costs of making venues, activities and sessions open as part of the programme, such as equipment, food, energy costs, and rent.
- 4.3 Funded activities must fit the criteria of Winter Connections and be:
- Open, free and easy to access
  - Inclusive, welcoming, respectful, and safe
  - Able or willing to provide connections to other services and supports
  - Able to offer warm drinks/snacks/food along with activities, where possible
- 4.4 The fund opened to applications on 23 September and was quickly over-subscribed. The fund was closed on 11 October to general applications after attracting 42 bids totalling £79,488. Currently these are being scrutinised by a panel made up from Renfrewshire Council, Renfrewshire HSCP and Engage Renfrewshire and recommendations being made around approval.



- 4.5 The fund this year has attracted applications with a good geographical spread, with many of the villages represented as well as most areas of Paisley including Gallowhill, Renfrew, Johnstone and Linwood. Applications have also been made from organisation providing support from those in recovery from drugs and alcohol as well as those with mental health issues.
- 4.6 Details of the first awards made under delegated authority are detailed at Appendix 1. Further information will be provided at the next Sub-Committee and, as with previous years, information about all funded activities will be captured on one webpage on the Council website and posters promoting activities circulated. A pack providing posters, period products and leaflets about other available supports will be provided for organisations taking part. This year, this will include information/promotional material about claiming Pension Credit as part of our campaign to encourage claims.

### **School Support and Family Advice Service**

- 4.7 With the new school year having started in August, work has been ongoing with colleagues in Advice Works and Education as well as Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau (RCAB) to boost numbers using the School Support Service across Secondary and ASN schools provided by RCAB and the Family Advice Service for families of Primary and ELCC schools provided by Advice Works.
- 4.8 Engagement with Education Managers has continued and all head teachers have been sent information about the services. A public campaign is also planned. RCAB post information about the schools they will be visiting each week on their own social media to promote their service and engagement will continue throughout the year to ensure relevant school and nursery staff, including pastoral staff are aware of the services and can signpost or refer parents who may benefit from advice around money and benefits.
- 4.9 As previously reported, Advice Works have embedded a question about whether families need support with money as a part of the application process for Free School Meals and School Clothing grants. Any applicant who indicated they wanted support received an email immediately with information on financial supports available for families, where to access help with money and a link to Advice Works online referral form. One reminder was sent if no contact had been made, again including a link to the online form again and reminding them that help is available. Of 300 applicants who received the email in the last tranche, 24 self-referred to Advice Works and a further 200 emails are set to be sent in November. The income generated from those cases to date is £12,206.
- 4.10 This quarter the Family Advice service has seen 80 parents or carers, bringing the total for the year so far to 183. Of these 167 have fitted into at least one Child Poverty Priority Group. Client Financial gain at present is £45,925.
- 4.11 Between August 16th and October 17th, 2024, the School Support Service assisted 38 clients. The most popular advice areas were benefits and housing. During this period there were also two clients who booked an appointment and didn't attend. For this period the School Support service recorded financial gains for clients totalling £15,779.

## **Winter Clothing Grant**

- 4.12 At Council on 29 February 2024, members approved a Winter Clothing Grant of £50 to be paid for each child eligible for School Clothing Grant in Winter 2024, allocating £300,000 for this purpose.
- 4.13 The payment was made directly to parents' bank account week commencing 28th October. The payment was made for 5,076 children, with a final total funding allocation of £253,800.
- 4.14 The payment had been trailed through social media posts from September, ensuring the maximum number of parents were aware, and applied for School Clothing Grant to allow them to receive this payment.

## **Lived Experience Panel**

- 4.15 Elected Members have been given a number of updates relating to work of the Fairer Renfrewshire Panel. Early September saw the Panel Event with Panel members, elected members and council officers in attendance along with HSCP and Engage Renfrewshire. A report of the event has been produced and attached as an appendix to this paper.
- 4.16 In October, the panel took part in the Events Strategy consultation and a walkabout of the Halloween site takes place on 24 October. The 30th October sees the Panel starting a piece of work commissioned by Renfrewshire HSCP, around the findings of their most recent Health and Wellbeing Survey, feeding back on the findings and helping identify priorities from the results.

## **Community Needs Assessment in Gallowhill**

- 4.17 As previously reported to the sub-committee, late in 2023, Renfrewshire HSCP was successful in a funding bid to NHSGGC Public Health to carry out a Community Needs Assessment (CNA) in Gallowhill, recognising the concerning increase in Child Poverty rates in the Gallowhill and Renfrew South Ward. The CNA, being carried out by Active Communities, commenced at the start of July 2024 using the Place Standard Tool and 250 responses have been received to mid-October.
- 4.18 Early indications are that transport is a major concern in the area. Active Communities have also found a lack of engagement from local people and families to any activities being held locally, with families travelling from outwith the local area and sometime outwith Renfrewshire to take part in activities in Gallowhill.
- 4.19 As was reported to elected members at the last sub-committee, an application was made to the Scottish Government Child Poverty Accelerator Fund to support the testing of new place-based approaches to child poverty in Renfrewshire, which would be informed by the CNA currently taking place. This joint bid with Renfrewshire HSCP, NHSGGC and Active Communities, with Renfrewshire Council being the lead partner was unfortunately unsuccessful.
- 4.20 Analysis shows Gallowhill has a high density of lone parents, households with a disabled adult or child and larger families (3 or more children). Recent census data and anecdotal evidence indicates that ethnicity and migration may also be an important factor in the increased rates. This

initial analysis will be augmented by the CNA and we expect that this will provide critical community insights, to support targeted work in the area.

- 4.21 While awaiting the CNA results we are ensuring some supports are available in Gallowhill. Home-Start have introduced a Family Outreach Group to support families in the area, funded through the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund. In addition, Winter Connections funding has been allocated towards groups in the area and Renfrewshire Affordable Credit Alliance organised a community breakfast on 8 November as their annual Talk Money Week Event.
- 4.22 In conjunction with services and partners such as Advice Works, Invest In Renfrewshire, Digital Champions, Social Security Scotland, St Mirren and Skoobmobile, residents were invited to have free breakfast and activities and find out about available supports, including Pension Credit and Scottish benefits. As part of the events, residents were also encouraged to complete a Community Needs Assessment survey with Active Communities to ensure a range of voices were heard.

### **Digital**

- 4.23 Elected members may remember from the presentation by the Digital Strategy Deliver Manager at the last Sub-Committee that work was ongoing to establish DigiZones across Renfrewshire as places where individuals who may be digitally excluded could come to get online, access a digital device or receive digital skills support. Digizones have been developed through the Citizens Voice Forum which seeks to co-design digital inclusion solutions by taking a person-centred and place-based approach and by working with organisations involved in delivering digital inclusion as well as those impacted by digital exclusion.
- 4.24 The DigiZone early implementer phase has been launched on 16 October, during Get Online Week with all Renfrewshire Libraries becoming DigiZones as well as a number of Community Learning and Development/Youth Services locations and one 3<sup>rd</sup> sector partner – Active Communities. Details of venues are here [www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/digizones](http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/digizones)
- 4.25 Learning from this phase will be used to help shape and inform future rollout and the DigiZone sub-group of Citizens Voice will continue to oversee and promote this initiative.

### **Pension Credit campaign**

- 4.26 As previously reported to the Sub-Committee, the UK Government has announced that older adults of state pensionable age in England and Wales not in receipt of Pension Credit (PC) or other means tested benefits will no longer be entitled to Winter Fuel Payment (WFP). On 14th August, the Scottish Government announced that the payment in Scotland will also be restricted to those on eligible benefits.
- 4.27 The DWP are planning to directly contact 120,000 pensioner households by letter from 1 November, who have been identified from Housing Benefit data as potentially eligible for, but not

claiming Pension Credit. Each household will be invited to apply for Pension Credit before 21 December, which is the last date for making a successful backdated claim and still receive a WFP.

- 4.28 Work has been ongoing locally too to encourage application to Pension Credit. While awaiting further detail on this payment, Advice Works and Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau (RCAB), along with Corporate Communications, delivered a Pension Credit take up campaign, with specific appointments for older adults being offered during a benefit take-up week to ensure as many of those eligible in Renfrewshire who have not yet claimed this benefit do so.
- 4.29 A round table meeting was held on 2 October 2024 to discuss options for the Council and partners to promote Pension Credit take-up locally. Attendees included several Council Officers from assorted services including Corporate Communications, HSCP, RCAB, Engage Renfrewshire and ROAR. Work is ongoing to develop a Council targeted letter campaign using Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Reduction data and investigate the possibility of organising a text campaign using GP surgery patient records. Scheduling of this work will take cognisance of the resources and capability of Advice Works and RCAB.
- 4.30 It was also noted during the meeting, that successful engagement with those aged 66 or over may also require face-to-face discussions from trusted partners in community locations throughout Renfrewshire, encouraging conversations about money and the benefits of getting a free benefit check. Attendees agreed to work in partnership, with those offering a client facing service undertaking to speak to their clients about Pension Credit.
- 4.31 Council Officers have undertaken a communications campaign promoting Pension Credit take-up via social media posts, press releases and internal communications. Flyers and posters have also been designed targeting both those that are aged 66 or over, and those that know someone of pension age, encouraging calling either Advice Works or RCAB for a benefit check. The draft wording and layout of the posters and flyers was amended following feedback received from attendees and stakeholders during a community Cost of Living Event held at Southend Action Centre on 8 October. The feedback was especially welcomed from those who attended who do not speak English as a first language, and from those that come from, or assist those, from an ethnic minority.
- 4.32 The flyers and posters will be distributed to multiple locations across the area including libraries, health centres, sheltered housing complexes, GP surgeries, community centres, third sector organisations and shops. Pop-up events are also being arranged to generate face-to face discussions in the community.
- 4.33 Initial figures from Advice Works have been encouraging with 284 adults over 65 coming forward for a benefit check in the period 1 August to 15 October, compared to 197 in the previous period. Although many of those coming forward have been found not to be entitled to Pension credit, a benefit check has identified other supports, with applications made in particular for adult disability benefits.

## **Implications of the Report**

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1. Financial – There are no financial implications associated with this report.
2. HR & Organisational Development – none
3. Community/Council Planning – The Fairer Renfrewshire Programme is a key driver in achieving the ‘Fair’ strategic outcome and theme within the Council Plan, and covers a number of the key actions identified in the plan. It also represents a significant partnership programme of work which supports the ‘Fair’ theme within the Community Plan, with dedicated partnership governance being established to ensure alignment between these areas of work.
4. Legal - none
5. Property/Assets - none
6. Information Technology - none
7. Equality and Human Rights – Equality and human rights are a key pillar of this plan, and it is anticipated that the programme will likely advance equality of opportunity.
8. Health and Safety - none
9. Procurement – none
10. Risk – none
11. Privacy Impact – none
12. Climate risk – none
13. Children’s rights - the articles within UNCRC underpin the work that is being progressed in Renfrewshire through the Fairer Renfrewshire programme, particularly in relation to rights in relation to aspects such as life, survival and development, food, clothing and a safe home and supporting the best interests of the child and their families. Child poverty and family wellbeing are key local partnership priorities.
14. COSLA Policy Position – none

**Author: Laura McIntyre, Head of Policy and Partnerships**

## Appendix 1

### Winter Connections 2024/25 – First batch of approvals

Organisation	Area	Purpose	Funding proposed for approval
Brick Lane Music Academy	Paisley	<b>Soup and a Jam</b> will run on Wednesdays from 1pm to 3.30pm and is specifically targeted at those in recovery, isolated or struggling with everyday mental health issues who have an aptitude or desire to create music or play in a band. The project will include a soup lunch, access to warm studios and rehearsal rooms for 2 hours every Wednesday and rehearsing in a band with newfound friends. Instruments are available for use free of charge too. The project will run from November 2024 for 14 weeks until the end of February 2025. .	£2,000
Erskine Arts	Erskine	<b>Soup Sessions</b> will run on Fridays from 11am to 1pm from 1 November 2024 to 28 March 2025 and will offer a choice of freshly made and healthy soups and bread, tea, coffee, and biscuits. Attendees will also enjoy company from others and staff and volunteers, many of whom are young people. Food and music go hand in hand so they will play music that can conjure stories, memories, and chats with those who attend.	£2,000
Foxbar Elderly Forum	Paisley	<b>Foxbar Elderly Forum</b> will provide activities such as bingo, board games and indoor bowling as well as hot food for around 50 older adults on a Monday 1-3.30pm at Foxbar Community Centre. The project will run from 7 October 2024 to 3 March 2025.	£2,000
Friends of Howwood Park	Howwood	<b>The Tuesday Club</b> will run from 18 November 2024 to 31 March 2025 on Tuesdays from 11am to 1pm and support 80 older adults. The club will run in the Pavilion, a building which the group has taken on as an asset transfer and now use as a 'hub' for activities for local people. Although the club is aimed at older people, anyone would be welcome. There will be a different activity every week including bingo, quizzes, watching a short movie, talks from various people, sing-a-longs etc. followed by hot food such as sausage rolls, pies etc, hot drinks and biscuits.	£2,000
Johnstone Dementia Friendly Community Group	Johnstone	<b>Still Here</b> will provide activities and lunch for older people on a Wednesday and Friday from 1-3pm at Johnstone Town Hall. Activities will include word games, quizzes, group puzzles, music, and bingo. Every second week there will be two musicians, a folk musician, and a popular music singer. Funding will enable them to continue running the project providing food and activity throughout the winter. The Dementia Friendly group are part of an intergenerational project bringing P7 pupils together with older people and sharing different tastes in music and songs.	£2,000

		The group welcomes people from Johnstone, Linwood, Elderslie, Howwood, Kilbarchan, Houston/Crosslee, Bridge of Weir/Brookfield. The project will run from 1 October 2024 to 1 April 2025.	
Just Dive In CIC	Paisley	<p><b>Winter Warmth and Wellbeing: Crafting, Floating, and Swimming for Older Adults</b> will provide activities including knitting, painting, and making holiday decorations along with Floating Therapy and light swimming which helps alleviate chronic pain and promotes relaxation. Participants will be provided with warm drinks and snacks. Activities are aimed at reducing isolation, improving wellbeing, and connecting participants with services.</p> <p>The project will run on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 10am to 6pm from 1 November 2024 to 31 March 2025 and will support approximately 100 older adults throughout the course of the project, focussing on older adults who may be experiencing social isolation, mobility challenges, or mental health issues.</p>	£2,000
Kairos Women+	Paisley	<p><b>Community Soup</b> will support the continuation of the Community Soup group, offering a 2-hour 'café style' environment for women+ to access a free hot meal, a small community pantry and free shop as well as access to specialist services for support over the winter period. There would be a key service visiting the space monthly, for example, Citizens Advice, Home Energy Scotland, Social Security Scotland, and access weekly to an Information Hub.</p> <p>15-20 different women+ attend each week, including women+ with learning disabilities and around half of participants are disabled in some way. They will share cooking tips and provide supplies to take home such as herb planting and spice stations as well as equip those without cooking equipment with a slow cooker. This group also supports the Breastfeeding Support Group by providing free hot meals to new mum's and connections between them. The group will run from 1 October 2024 to 31 March 2025 on Tuesdays from 12.30-2.30pm.</p>	£2,000
Paisley North Church of Scotland	Paisley	<p><b>Wednesday Drop In Group</b> will run from 9.30 to 11.30am on a Wednesday and 12 noon to 2pm on a Friday at the Tannahill Community Centre. The Drop In is open to anyone.</p> <p>They offer breakfast rolls, hot meals and activities including pool and darts. The project will run from 6 November 2024 to 26 March 2025 and will support between 4 and 15 adults, men and women aged from 30's to 50's.</p>	£1,000
Paisley YMCA	Paisley	<b>Cosy Crafts @ The Y</b> will be a free weekly crafting and making club for adults in Renfrewshire running on a Tuesday from 11am to 2pm from 5 November 2024 to 8 April 2025. The YMCA's digital makerspace offers access to a range of technology	£2,000

		from 3D Printers, a heat press, a vinyl cutter, and lots of crafting and making resources. Cosy Crafts aims to provide adults with a space where they can meet and connect with other people and take part in activities which will positively contribute to their wellbeing. They hope to support 40-50 adults through this project.	
Ralston Primary OSC	Paisley	<b>Winter Drama Club and Show</b> will provide a weekly drama group for primary aged children for 10 weeks on a Wednesday from 3pm to 5pm, culminating in a show that parents and local people will be invited to see. The project will run from 6 January to 24 March 2025. There will be drama games and they will work towards a scripted show with costumes. The club will run from the hall at Ralston Primary and children will be offered a variety of snacks and drinks. There are spaces for up to 30 children at the club and up to 100 parents and family members at the show.	£2,000
Rays of Hope	Elderslie	<b>HOPE Project</b> will run from 13 September 2024 to 31 March 2025 from 10am to 3pm every Friday and once a month on a Wednesday. It will provide cooking demonstrations along with information on nutrition and healthy eating from a chef as well as craft classes including Christmas crafts. There will also be a Pilates class for all ages and 1:1 advice should anyone have any difficulties. Hot food (homemade soup and bread) with tea and coffee will also be provided.	£2,000
Renfrew Trinity Church	Renfrew	<b>Lite Bites @ Renfrew Trinity</b> aims to provide a monthly lite bites lunch to people in the local community on a Saturday from 12-1pm. This would consist of cup-a-soup, sandwiches, sausage rolls, cakes, biscuits, tea, coffee, juice. Activities will include board games, puzzles and colouring sheets.	£1,150
Renfrewshire Rainbow Buddies	Paisley	<b>Shortroods Youth Club</b> will run from the Beechwood Community Centre on Tuesdays from 17.50 to 19.45 from 22 October 2024 to 25 March 2025. The youth club is aimed at young people in P1-P7, including care experienced young people, refugees, and young people from low-income families. There are also 10 spaces for young people in S1-S3 to obtain a Saltire award for volunteering. Activities will include sports and a service that can provide mental wellbeing/ cooking sessions with the young people.	£2,000
ROAR Connections for Life	Johnstone	<b>Jam Jar Movies at Station Seven</b> has run for the last two winters on a Friday 12.30 to 3.30pm and gets a regular attendance of over 30 service users. Attendees enjoy a film, interval quiz and hot beverages and food in a hall equipped at Station Seven to show movies. This will support adults predominantly over 82 years of age from 6 December 2024 to 28 March 2025.	£2,000
STAR Project	Paisley	<b>STAR Winter Connections</b> will take place on Tuesdays from 12 November 2024 to 18 March 2025 from 6-8pm and will provide alternate activities each week with either a craft activity to complete together or games/quizzes. Prizes for the games/quizzes will be practical and take the form of food/essential items for people to take home. The craft sessions will have a practical application, such as making	£2,000



		your own Christmas gifts or wrapping paper. Community members will have access to charge their phones, tablets, laptops. STAR will also increase the opening hours of Pantry Plus so that individuals who may usually be working during the day have the same access to low-cost foods as everyone else.	
The Thursday Club	Paisley	<b>Thursday Club</b> will provide a hot lunch to all the Thursday Club members and anyone who wishes to come along every Thursday from 12.30 to 2pm from 31 October 2024 to 27 February 2025. They will also deliver activities. They aim to support around 95 people each week at Saint Peters Men's Club in Glenburn.	£2,000
Twist and Hit Cheerleaders	Paisley	<b>Winter Youth Club</b> will run from Covault Business Centre on a Saturday evening from 7 to 9pm from 9 November 2024 to 22 February 2025. This is a youth club for young people aged 5-18 years where they will receive warm snacks and drinks and a range of activities including: Inflatables; Dance/Gymnastics Activities; Football/Rounders; Games Consoles; Arts & Crafts; Parkour Style Fun Sessions. They aim to support up to 70 young people.	£2,000





## Fairer Renfrewshire Lived Experience Panel Event

### Summary and evaluation report October 2024

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## 1. Introduction from the Fairer Renfrewshire Panel

The Fairer Renfrewshire Lived Experience Panel brings together members with experience of various forms of disadvantage and unfairness, with poverty a recurring and linking theme. Members also have experience of being consulted on changes to their communities and lives with little impact and of having aspirations stated without determination of the steps required to realise them.

The Panel has welcomed what has always appeared a sincere determination to make Renfrewshire fairer.

The Panel has met with several groups of Officers engaged in work for, or in partnership with, Renfrewshire Council, including being informed and consulted about employability, events, Council Tax collection, summer holiday provision, digital inclusion services, school meals provision and the new transport strategy approach.

The Panel has found this work positive and encouraging and has met with the Convenor and Depute of the Fairer Renfrewshire Sub-Committee as well as senior officers working within the Fairer Renfrewshire remit and some service managers who have all listened to the Panel.

However, the Panel has remained critical that consultations were about discrete operations rather than the larger picture of fairness and its lack in Renfrewshire. The Panel believes consultations should not happen in silos and that coordinated work must be undertaken to analyse the bigger picture of the lack of fairness in Renfrewshire.

To work towards addressing these criticisms, the Panel collaborated with senior members of the Partnerships and Inequalities team to organise an event with various members of Council staff and Councillors in an event in early September designed to achieve:

- better understanding of the work to date, achievements, and ambitions for a fairer Renfrewshire
- identification of key Individual Actions/Decisions which will support the work; and
- identification of key external partners to recruit to the overall effort, to help towards the development of a strategic Fairer Renfrewshire Plan.

The event took place on 3<sup>rd</sup> September in Johnstone Town Hall and was attended by Panel members, STAR Project team members, elected members from the Fairer Renfrewshire Sub-Committee, Council officers and the Chief Executive and Community and Partnership Manager from Engage Renfrewshire.

## 2. Summary of the themes discussed

The event was set up around table discussions, with tables having a mix of Panel members, Elected Members and Council Officers from across services. After hearing from the Panel members at each table, the tables took part in two activities:

1. Each person was asked to complete the sentence, 'Renfrewshire will look fairer when...' and discuss responses as a table, and
2. Each person was asked to note what key contribution they or their service could make towards a fairer Renfrewshire, again followed by a table discussion on responses. Attendees were also asked to identify who needs to be involved in collective effort to make Renfrewshire fairer.

### 2.1. Activity 1 - "Renfrewshire will look fairer when...?"

Responses around Renfrewshire looking fairer covered some main areas:

- Everyone having affordable warmth and food security
- Everyone having access to decent, affordable housing and being able to be proud of their home and the area they live
- Access to services and activities, including activities for children, being fair and equitable. This includes for New Scots who face additional barriers to accessing information about services and resources.
- People being involved in decision making at the start and empowered to contribute and enact change

*'Communication between decision makers and residents is open, respectful and progressive'*

- Better more affordable public transport that meets residents needs to travel around and beyond Renfrewshire
- Everyone being trauma informed, mindful of different life experience and stigma being removed

*'Every person counts – no one is 'just' anything'*

A number of themes or discussion points came out through the table discussions:

**Housing**, with Council and Housing Associations having a part to play to contribute to a fairer Renfrewshire. The lack of a Renfrewshire-wide strategic overview of housing across the area was discussed as well as how housing affects family, safety and, educational attainment and health and wellbeing.

**ParentPay** and **School meals**, with a lack of information for parents and carers being highlighted. New Scots in particular are unsure of their entitlement to free school meals. Digital Champions were also suggested as a solution for helping understanding of Parentpay.

Good **Communication** between the Council and public is vital, with the Council understanding and overcoming the barriers there can be to communication, including to New Scots, ethnically diverse communities and because of stigma. The Council was also urged to share good news stories.

**Benefit** rules are difficult to understand, there can be stigma and misinformation preventing people from coming forward to claim. How do we communicate about benefit changes? Schools could be used.

**Transport** was discussed, especially the cost of buses and the Council supporting community bus services. Improvements for wheelchair users to get around are needed.

**Racism** is an issue affecting families, and the Council should show real action around this, including on racism within schools. Policies on racism need to be more accessible.

Many **New Scots** have No Recourse to Public Funds and are living in hardship, and don't have information about supports that are available in the area. Family pressures from back home can also add strain for New Scots. There are differences between families coming from different countries, e.g. African countries and Ukraine.

**Working together**, either within different services in the Council or with external organisation and 3<sup>rd</sup> sector partners is needed to make Renfrewshire fairer. The Council can't do it alone.

Strategic **Planning** across the Council needs to reflect Fairer Renfrewshire priorities and the Council should be more ambitious about making Renfrewshire fairer. The voice of lived experience should be heard and embedded in policies and the Council should check back with people to ensure the policy is working. EQIAs need to be real not based on assumptions.

## 2.2. Activity 2 – Summary of Key Contributions by Services

Because of the number of services involved in the event, the key contributions identified by attendees were varied. Overall most services stated a desire to start to work or continue working with the Panel to inform their work. Apart from more generally arranging to consult with the Panel, services mentioned involving the Panel in planning campaigns and looking at things like communications as well as helping establish barriers to access and engagement in services as specific actions. A number of services made commitments to involve the Panel in developing and implementing plans and strategies, such as developing Renfrewshire's Food Plan and delivery of the Plan for Net Zero. Working better across Council services, not just with the Panel was also a theme.

More specific issues were raised such as ParentPay and school meals. A number of issues were raised around ensuring parents were better informed about ParentPay use, as well as about menus, recipes and knowing meals are cooked from scratch.

**Environment Housing and Infrastructure** agreed to produce a parent pack on school meals services for P1 and S1, including ParentPay use, School Meals. There was also a commitment to offer careers in facilities management, including to school leavers and through supporting Project Search which helps people with additional needs to get into/back into work.

From the point of view of **Digital**, a commitment was given to think about those who aren't online as well as support those who are currently digitally excluded.

Increasing online access through DigiZones and the digital champion network, as well as better promotion of social tariffs and charities connected SIM cards.

**Invest in Renfrewshire** will continue to support people to move into and sustain employment, ensuring the service supports people from ALL backgrounds and is non-judgemental. They also commit to working across Council Services to create more opportunities. **Advice Works** had good results in attracting and retaining staff members through working with Invest, and they will continue to use the service.

**Social Work** committed to gaining a better understanding of the range of supports within Renfrewshire as well as examining their approachability as a service.

Through their different roles, Engage Renfrewshire will encourage Community Leaders to participate in fora that can have impact and support positive change as



well as continue to promote the importance of co-production to change making (co-production, co-delivery, co-evaluation, co-development).

Recognising that free events in Renfrewshire have a cost, with stalls, rides etc, **Events** committed to continue working with the Panel and use input gained to target specific groups to provide free access/snacks etc in a non-stigmatising way.

The **Partnerships and Inequalities** team will maximise cross service work through the Fairer Renfrewshire Officers Group and increase awareness of the Panel throughout the Council. They will connect the equalities and migration workstreams to New Scots and the Panel and use lived experience to shape actions, plans and strategies.

With barriers and fairness in Council communications raised as an issue, **Communications** will challenge services around consultations to ensure they are done fairly and will challenge their team to ensure communication channels are fair for all.

**Renfrewshire HSCP** will pursue the 'Housing as a Health Issue' priority that was previously identified and try to ensure all agencies work together to support better housing. They have also committed to work with the Panel on the Health and Wellbeing survey to develop a community response and identify things we can do to make a real difference to health inequalities.

**One Ren** will revisit KPIs and what information they collect - what's useful and what they're measuring ensuring accountability (not a tick box exercise). They will also look at poverty proofing activity.

The **Faire Renfrewshire Panel** will continue to make their voices heard, promote and deliver activities around Dignity and encourage further development towards a Fairer Renfrewshire Plan with active contribution from all partners needed for an effective plan.

We had asked who else needed to be involved to make Renfrewshire fairer. Apart from Senior managers within the Council and Council Services, the following were identified:

- **Housing Organisations/Housing Associations (very important)**
- **Community Planning Partners, HSCP, Police, Fire, DWP**
- **Third Sector**
- **Local Partnerships**

- Other Local Authority Lived Experience Panels
- Mental Health Services
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Transport Providers

### 3. Panel thoughts about the event

The Panel found the event positive and thought that it achieved its aims with those who attended, which has been confirmed by evaluation responses from participants.

Individuals committed to specific actions they could take towards making Renfrewshire fairer and to working with the Panel and other lived experience groups to inform work to realise this aim. This demonstrates a greater understanding of the Tackling Poverty team's and Panels' Fairer Renfrewshire work. We identified external agencies which need to be involved in the work, which demonstrates recognition of the need for wider involvement in the development of an inclusive strategic plan to make Renfrewshire fairer.

The Panel feels that a subsequent event needs to be held which involves more Council departments, key external partners and community-led services. This event should discuss a draft Fairer Renfrewshire plan which includes all these stakeholders, with a view to both strengthening the draft and determining wider contributions made in partnership with the Council.

### 4. Evaluation

An evaluation of the Fairer Renfrewshire Panel event was conducted after the session. All attendees were asked to complete a feedback survey, allowing them to share their thoughts on the event. The feedback received has been very positive.

The first objective set out by the Panel for the event was to allow partners to better understand the work of the Panel to date and their achievements and ambitions. 100% of respondents agreed that this was achieved. One respondent's main takeaway from the event was that they left having a *"greater awareness and understanding of the work of the Panel and importance of involving members from the outset when developing or redesigning services."*

All respondents agreed that the Panel achieved their second objective which was around identifying individual actions and decisions to support the work of the Panel.

Every attendee was asked to note one thing that they could do to support the Panel – *“small acts of how to make Renfrewshire fairer we can all make and contribute to.”*

The majority of those who submitted feedback stated that the panel achieved their final objective which was to identify key external partners to work with. One of the 2 responses which indicated that this objective hadn't been achieved was qualified by the comment, *“it's just making sure that the panel are not overloaded and that other networks should be utilised for this type of approach.”*

No suggestions for improvement to the event were made and attendees indicated that they would like follow-up events or updates and more time to spend with the Panel.

Attendees were asked to note one key takeaway from the event and some of these comments are listed below:

*“Impressed by the knowledge and enthusiasm of the Panel and how well connected they have become in a short space of time”*

*“That we really need to listen to what the Panel are saying, and we must do what we can to stop the culture whereby Panel members and all living with similar difficulties and issues feel they are being looked down upon. Their lives are incredibly difficult and their input invaluable.”*

*“The Panel is doing a lot of great work, and are well supported by STAR.”*

*“That it's fantastic that we have the panel in Renfrewshire.”*

*“That the group is doing meaningful work. I was especially impressed by all the different council services they have engaged with and influenced!”*

## **5. Next steps from the Panel's perspective**

The Panel believes consultations should not happen in silos and that coordinated work must be undertaken to analyse and address the bigger picture of the lack of fairness in Renfrewshire.

The Panel also feels that the Council's role is one of leadership of networks of external agencies and direct delivery of services for which it is responsible.

The Panel would like to contribute to the development of a draft plan to make Renfrewshire Fairer which:

- States the ambition of Renfrewshire Council for a Fairer Renfrewshire;
- Outlines the contributions (what, when, who, review date) of Renfrewshire Council's services towards making Renfrewshire Fairer;
- Outlines the major contributions (what, when, who, review date) of Renfrewshire Council's key partners;
- Outlines the contribution (what, when, who, review date) of community-led services towards Renfrewshire being fairer, and the support for the development of community-led services towards this aim; and
- Sets out the oversight and accountability arrangements for delivery of the plan.

The Panel would like to support a subsequent event which involves more Council departments, key external partners, and community-led services, to discuss the draft Fairer Renfrewshire plan, with a view to both strengthening the draft and determining the wider partnership contributions to making Renfrewshire fairer.

## 6. Council Next Steps

Renfrewshire Council commits to continue to work alongside the Panel to gain their insights in how to make Renfrewshire fairer. They will also look to improve cross-service working and involve services, projects and people within the Council and beyond not currently included in Fairer Renfrewshire planning and delivery.

The output of the event, including the commitments and actions identified within table discussions will be discussed and progressed by the Fairer Renfrewshire Officer Group.

Officers within the Partnerships and Inequalities team will involve the Fairer Renfrewshire Panel in planning processes supporting the development of steps to be taken by the Council and its partners towards realising the objective and of a Fairer Renfrewshire. This will include sharing the output of the event with the Community Planning Partnership, to consider the wider partnership effort required to achieve a Fairer Renfrewshire.

Fairer Renfrewshire Panel Members taking part:

Nigz Azim

Regine Bews

Tony Carr

Kate Ebouh

Sarah Findlay

Angela Gilmour

Craig Green

Linda Greig

Lisa McDonald

Tracy Navarra

George Walker

Many thanks to STAR Project for supporting the Fairer Renfrewshire Panel and this event






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**To: Fairer Renfrewshire Sub-Committee**

**On: 13 November 2024**

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**Report by: Chief Executive**

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**Heading: Summer of Fun Evaluation 2024**

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 As part of the Council's budget which was approved in February 2024, £100,000 was allocated through the Fairer Renfrewshire programme to support the development of a summer holiday programme, with a focus on providing support and healthy food over the holiday period to low-income families.
  - 1.2 It was agreed that £50,000 of the funding would be allocated to the provision of summer camps and £50,000 would be allocated to the Summer of Fun Community Programme piloted in 2023. The Fairer Renfrewshire Lived Experience Panel played a key role in directing how this funding could be used.
  - 1.3 This report provides an overview of the evaluation report that has been produced on the 2024 Summer of Fun programme, with key findings summarised in Section 4. Appendix 1 provides information on all projects funded through the community grants programme, and the full evaluation report is attached at Appendix 2.
  - 1.4 Findings from the evaluation will be considered as part of the development of the Fairer Renfrewshire programme for 2025/26.
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## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that members of the Fairer Renfrewshire Sub-Committee note the report.
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## **3. Background**

- 3.1 In February 2024, £100,000 was allocated through the Fairer Renfrewshire programme to support the development of a summer holiday programme, with a focus on providing support and healthy food over the holiday period to low-income families.
- 3.2 It was agreed that £50,000 of the funding would be allocated to the provision of summer camps and £50,000 would be allocated to the Summer of Fun Community Programme piloted in 2023. The Fairer Renfrewshire Lived Experience Panel played a key role in directing how this funding could be used.
- 3.3 The Community Programme is a small grants programme for local community groups and organisations to operate free activities over the summer holidays which could reach communities that might be underserved by mainstream activities, particularly low-income families. The fund was very quickly oversubscribed and at the start of June 2024, a further £10,000 was allocated to support the programme.
- 3.4 In line with the programme developed in 2023, Summer of Fun 2024 targeted access to activities, childcare and food during the summer holiday period for school age children from low-income families. It was agreed that the programme should operate based on a set of key principles including:
- There should be a range of activities for children and families – a mixture of child only, family activities, free/chargeable and across several different communities in Renfrewshire
  - The Council will work with partners to promote the variety of activities that are available – making sure that families know what is on and where
  - The core focus of the funding will be to provide activities which support families from the child poverty priority groups and to target gaps in provision across localities
  - Any activities funded through Fairer Renfrewshire should be free at the point of access with free food or snacks available depending on the length of the activity.



- 3.5 The full programme included third sector activities funded through small grants, Community Learning and Development summer camps, ASN provision based at Mary Russell and Riverbrae schools, family learning activities funded through the Multiply programme and a Libraries programme of activities, including the Skoobmobile which attended areas where no other activities were taking place as well as supporting some of the CLD summer camps.

#### **4. Overview – Summer of Fun Evaluation**

- 4.1 The Community Programme is a small grants programme for local community groups and organisations to operate free activities over the summer holidays which could reach communities that might be underserved by mainstream activities, particularly low-income families.
- 4.2 The £50,000 allocated to the small grants programme was very quickly oversubscribed, and a further £10,000 was allocated, bringing the spend to £110,000, with a further £1,800 allocated to OneRen Libraries to provide activities in villages where no other funded activities were taking place, as well as drinks and snacks for families within all libraries.
- 4.3 In addition to the Fairer Renfrewshire funded activities, summer ASN provision was provided across two sites, Mary Russell School and Riverbrae School. The provision at Mary Russell, a new Playtime service was provided through Klas care, who were funded to provide this programme as part of wider work through the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund (WFWF). The camp at Riverbrae continued to identify and respond to the need for provision for children and young people with complex additional support needs.
- 4.4 Street Stuff continued to deliver their core programme of activities in the evenings from Monday to Saturday for young people aged 8 to 16 throughout the summer holidays which also included the provision of healthy food funded from Fairer Renfrewshire. 2,221 attendances were recorded with activities including multi-sports and the games buses with ps4 games, DJ decks and having the ability to mix with friends and listen to music and play fun and interactive games.
- 4.5 The Adult and Family Learning team supported 54 families in Renfrewshire to enjoy a fun-filled summer regardless of the weather through Multiply, the government-

funded programme to help people be more confident with numbers. Multiply funding covered the cost of lunches and some staffing costs.

- 4.6 29 organisations applied for a grant through the small grants programme, with 21 being funded to a total of £60,000. Activities were varied and included toddler play session, day trips, arts and crafts activities, sports and music workshops, and covered all ages. It is estimated that at least 1,939 children and 577 adults benefited from this programme.
- 4.7 There were 2,776 recorded attendances at the Community Learning and Development Summer camps. Participants were asked their views on the Summer of Fun camps with a rating of 4.7 out of 5 saying they enjoyed it. Evaluation shows that families within the Child Poverty Priority Groups benefited from the summer camps. 44.4% of families with children attending were lone parent families, 36.3% were large families and 22.2% families where someone within the household had a disability.
- 4.8 Renfrewshire Libraries ran their own summer programme using some of the equipment and games that had been previously funded by Fairer Renfrewshire as well as their own resources. Over the summer holidays they delivered 249 events for children and families in their libraries. This allowed a coverage of activities in areas where no Summer of Fun activity was proposed. A total of 1,353 adults and 2,948 children attended these events, including 1,535 children taking part in the Summer Reading Challenge.
- 4.9 Evaluation has shown that the programme overall was successful in reaching low-income families, particularly those families who are in the child poverty priority groups who may be underserved by mainstream holiday programmes. The wide range of activities on offer ensured that children were able to try new experiences and visit new places. The key findings of the evaluation are:
- Access to free, inclusive, and enjoyable activities alongside provision of a healthy snack or lunch contributed to a successful Summer of Fun programme. The wide range of activities on offer ensured that children were able to try new experiences and visit new places.
  - The Summer of Fun programme provided children with the opportunity to learn new skills, make friends, be creative, gain confidence and make memories with their families.

- The programme was able to reach low-income families, particularly those families who are in the child poverty priority groups who may be underserved by mainstream holiday programmes.
- Benefits of the Summer of Fun programme included providing free fun activities that low-income families could access, encouraging new people to engage with organisations and helping to reduce financial costs for families.
- The free holiday camp places were helpful in supporting working parents with childcare costs, particularly single parents. They provided a safe environment for children to socialise and enjoy activities over the holidays, giving parents peace of mind and making the transition back to school easier.
- Analysis indicates that some parents and carers that do a block booking for holiday camps unfortunately do not attend or cancel their spaces if unable to attend. This resulted in a significant number of unused spaces, and it is recommended that processes are developed in any future provision to maximise the use of spaces.
- Partnership work enabled organisations to broaden their offer of activities and bring in community safety partners to deliver informative sessions to keep young people safe.

#### 4.10 Recommendations within the evaluation include:

- Consideration be given to providing additional and targeted funding to increase the capacity of organisations to deliver a wider range of activities for a longer period.
- Due to numbers of families who do not utilise or cancel booked camp spaces, examination of the booking and reminder system should take place to maximise the number of families gaining the benefits of the camps.
- Exploring partnerships with local businesses or community organisations could provide opportunities for discounted or free entry to attractions, maximising the use of the small grant funding.

#### 4.11 A copy of the full evaluation report is attached at Appendix 2.

#### 4.12 Findings from the evaluation will be considered as part of the development of the Fairer Renfrewshire programme for 2025/26.

## Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** –  
The costs to deliver the Summer of Fun programme was funded by Fairer Renfrewshire, OneRen and Scottish Government through the Whole family Wellbeing fund.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – none.
3. **Community/Council Planning** –  
The multi-agency, universal and targeted work developed and delivered across Renfrewshire throughout the summer holidays as part of the National summer holiday and activities initiative contributed to key areas of activity relevant to Community Planning priorities and Renfrewshire's Council Plan strategic outcomes; outlined below.
  - Our Renfrewshire is well - Supporting the wellness and resilience of our citizens and communities.
  - Our Renfrewshire is fair - addressing the inequalities that limit life chances.
  - Reshaping our place, our economy, and our future - Promoting learning and skills for life.
  - Building strong, safe, and resilient communities - Empowering communities and Delivering community-based services.
  - Tackling inequality, ensuring opportunities for all – Promoting skills and learning for life, Celebrating youth! Improving mental health and wellbeing; Addressing health inequalities; and promoting active lifestyles.
4. **Legal** – none.
5. **Property/Assets** - none.
6. **Information Technology** - none.
7. **Equality & Human Rights** – The evaluation of the Summer of Fun programme considers the impact of the programme on a range of equalities groups where we know there are distinct needs or disparate outcomes, for example children with additional support needs, or children from child poverty priority groups such as children where a member of the household is disabled or ethnic minority families.
8. **Health & Safety** - none.
9. **Procurement** – none.
10. **Risk** - none.
11. **Privacy Impact** - none.

12. **Climate Risk** – not applicable.
13. **Children’s rights** – The Summer of Fun 2024 is considered to have a positive role is upholding children’s rights. In particular, the programme supports the right to rest relax and play. The inclusion of free healthy food throughout the programme also supports the right to a proper home, food and clothing. The evaluation also demonstrates the involvement of children and young people in the design and delivery of programmes over the summer period.
14. **COSLA Policy Position** –not applicable.

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**List of Background Papers**

None

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**Author:** Diane Dunn, Fairer Renfrewshire Lead Officer



## Appendix 1: Summer of Fun 2024 – list of funded projects

Organisation	Area	Purpose	Funding awarded
Renfrewshire Effort to Empower Minorities (REEM)	Paisley	<b>Summer Project</b>	£1,200
Outspoken Arts	Paisley	<b>Big Art Show Summer Camp</b>	£3,450
Thorn Athletic Community Trust	Johnstone	<b>Summer Football Fun</b>	£3,500
Twist and Hit Cheerleaders	Paisley	<b>Active Summer: Cheerleading and More!</b>	£3,500
Renfrewshire Rainbow Buddies	Paisley	<b>P1-P7 Youth Club</b>	£3,000
The New Tannahill Centre	Paisley	<b>Ferguslie Summer of Fun (pilot)</b>	£3,500
Brick Lane Music Academy	Paisley	<b>Kids and Families Summer Workshops</b>	£3,480
Erskine Arts	Erskine	<b>An Erskine Arts Summer</b>	£3,440
Friends of Knockhill Park	Renfrew	<b>Let's Get Outdoors 2024</b>	£3,060
Sewing2gether All Nations: Caring, Creating, Connecting	Paisley	<b>Summer of Fun @ All Nations</b>	£3,010
Just Dive In	Paisley	<b>Marine Marvels Summer Programme</b>	£3,500
KLAS Care CIC	Linwood	<b>Schools Out for Summer 24</b>	£2,975
Paisley North Community Council	Paisley	<b>Shortroods shorts and shades beach party</b>	£1,000
STAR Project	Paisley	<b>STAR Summer Programme</b>	£1,951
Johnstone Castle Learning Centre	Johnstone	<b>Johnstone Castle Chaos Club</b>	£2,152
Renfrewshire Women's Aid	Paisley	<b>Safe Journeys</b>	£1,600
CREATE Paisley	Linwood, Johnstone and Paisley	<b>Go CREATE</b>	£2,755
Renfrew YMCA	Renfrew	<b>Summer Activity Programme</b>	£3,500
Paisley YMCA	Paisley	<b>Paisley YMCA</b>	£3,500
Scottish Afro Caribbean Arts Association (SACAA)	Paisley	<b>Active Summer</b>	£2,427
School of African Cultures	Paisley	<b>"To Sakana Camp"</b>	£3,500







## An evaluation of the Summer of Fun Programme 2024

*"Me and the kids really loved Blair Drummond. We could never have afforded it so to get to go for free, get lunch and everything, it was just magic. It felt like our summer holiday and the kids keep talking about going again."*

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# 1. Executive Summary

In February 2024, £100,000 was allocated through the Fairer Renfrewshire programme to support the development of a summer holiday programme, with a focus on providing support and healthy food over the holiday period to low-income families.

It was agreed that £50,000 of the funding would be allocated to the provision of summer camps and £50,000 would be allocated to the Summer of Fun Community Programme piloted in 2023. The Fairer Renfrewshire Lived Experience Panel played a key role in directing how this funding could be used.

The Community Programme is a small grants programme for local community groups and organisations to operate free activities over the summer holidays which could reach communities that might be underserved by mainstream activities, particularly low-income families. The fund was very quickly oversubscribed and at the start of June 2024, a further £10,000 was allocated to support the programme.

Renfrewshire's Community Learning and Development team developed a programme of activities for children and young people through a summer camp model in partnership with Streetstuff, and with the provision of a healthy meal. Work was undertaken to prioritise access to camp bookings to families with low incomes, especially in the child poverty priority groups and through referrals from Childrens Services before opening up access more widely.

In addition to summer camps, additional funding from a number of different sources was used to deliver a varied programme of activities for children, families, and young people, along with youth work provision, a youth voice and participation programme, sports activities and an Adult and Family Learning programme.

Summer Additional Support Needs (ASN) provision was across two sites, Mary Russell School and Riverbrae School. The provision at Mary Russell, a new Playtime service, was provided through Klas care, who were funded to provide this programme as part of wider work through the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund (WFWF).

One Ren delivered a summer programme in the libraries and with the Skoobmobile team. Funding through Fairer Renfrewshire was provided to OneRen to provide activities in libraries in particular areas where there were no other activities and to provide drinks and snacks for young people and families across all Renfrewshire libraries.

This report describes the multi-agency, universal and targeted work delivered across Renfrewshire throughout the summer holidays as part of the 2024 Summer Holiday Provision initiative.

## Key findings

- Access to free, inclusive and enjoyable activities alongside provision of a healthy snack or lunch contributed to a successful Summer of Fun programme. The wide range of activities on offer ensured that children were able to try new experiences and visit new places.
- The Summer of Fun programme provided children with the opportunity to learn new skills, make friends, be creative, gain confidence and make memories with their families.
- The programme was able to reach low-income families, particularly those families who are in the child poverty priority groups who may be underserved by mainstream holiday programmes.
- Benefits of the Summer of Fun programme included providing free fun activities that low-income families could access, encouraging new people to engage with organisations and helping to reduce financial costs for families.
- Partnership work enabled organisations to broaden their offer of activities and bring in community safety partners to deliver informative sessions to keep young people safe.
- The free holiday camp places were helpful in supporting working parents with childcare costs, particularly single parents. They provided a safe environment for children to socialise and enjoy activities over the holidays, giving parents peace of mind and making the transition back to school easier.
- Despite camps being oversubscribed, there were a significant number of unused spaces where children and young people it is recommended that processes are developed in any future provision to maximise the use of spaces.
- Adult & Family Learning Services sessions delivered with Multiply funding offered families lots of practical ways to encourage children to recognise how maths helps us in everyday life.
- Library activities provided by One Ren were popular and booked up quickly and the provision of healthy snacks and drinks was appreciated by families. These activities were particularly important in areas where no other activities were being delivered.



- Additional Support Needs provision at Mary Russell and Riverbrae schools continued to identify and respond to the need for provision for children and young people with complex additional support needs through free engaging activities, healthy snacks and free transport for some sessions.
- Recommendations suggest that consideration be given to providing additional funding to increase the capacity of organisations to deliver a wider range of activities for a longer period.



## 2. About Summer of Fun

In February 2024, £100,000 was allocated through the Fairer Renfrewshire programme to support the development of a summer holiday programme, with a focus on providing support and healthy food over the holiday period to low-income families.

It was agreed that £50,000 of the funding would be allocated to the provision of summer camps and £50,000 would be allocated to the Summer of Fun Community Programme piloted in 2023. The Fairer Renfrewshire Lived Experience Panel played a key role in directing how this funding could be used.

The Community Programme is a small grants programme for local community groups and organisations to operate free activities over the summer holidays which could reach communities that might be underserved by mainstream activities, particularly low-income families. The fund was very quickly oversubscribed and at the start of June 2024, a further £10,000 was allocated to support the programme.

Renfrewshire's Community Learning and Development team developed a programme of activities for children and young people through a summer camp model in partnership with Streetstuff, and with the provision of a healthy meal. Work was undertaken to prioritise access to camp bookings to families with low incomes, especially in the child poverty priority groups and through referrals from Childrens Services before opening up access more widely.

### a. Renfrewshire Summer Holiday Camps

Following on from last year's successful programme, Renfrewshire's Community Learning and Development team delivered a summer camp for children and young people. The holiday camps were held in 6 venues across Renfrewshire with a focus on reaching families most in need of the free provision. There were **2,776** attendances at the holiday camps.

A programme was developed offering several core activities targeted to young people aged 5 to 14 years from low-income families, in addition to separately funded youth work provision, a youth voice and participation programme, sports activities and youth bus delivered by Street Stuff and an Adult and Family Learning programme that families could attend together. The approach built on the successes from previous summer programmes and the partnership working between services. The summer provision also ensured a varied programme catering for families, children, and young people across the whole of Renfrewshire.

Information about the camps and details of how to book were sent directly to families who were receiving free school meals and clothing grants and, although we know this information was shared between families, the targeting of the information allowed us to reach low income families in the first instance. Care was also taken to work closely with services such as Children's Services, Social Work, Education and other partners to identify families and young people that would particularly benefit from organised summer activities and to signpost them towards and sign them up for universal activities.

The aim was to develop a programme of integrated provision to address the barriers and isolation faced by people in the most deprived areas, but at the same time open to families across Renfrewshire, concentrating on the Scottish Government's child poverty priority groups.

Camps for ages 5 to 14 years were delivered throughout the summer holidays from Monday to Friday from 9.30am to 3pm, twice per week in each of the following venues:

- Renfrew – St James' Primary School
- Gallowhill – St Catherine's Primary School
- Ferguslie Park – Glencoats Primary School
- Linwood – Linwood High School
- Foxbar – Gleniffer High School
- Johnstone – West Johnstone Shared Campus

This summer a range of activities were delivered which included multi-sports, dance and outdoor play along with healthy food. Children and young people were also consulted about the development of the Local Development Plans and the Fire and Rescue service also delivered workshops on water safety.

## **b. Summer of Fun Community Programme**

Utilising the final budget of £60,000, local community and voluntary organisations could apply for small grants of up to £3,500 to cover costs of activities, including venues, materials, food, transport and sessional staff. Smaller awards of up to £500 were also available for organisations with existing activities over the summer to provide healthy snacks or food. Applications were considered for single events or programmes of activities, designed for whole families or for children and young people of a range of ages.

All projects agreed to the following principles

- Activities must be **free**, with no hidden or additional costs

- **Healthy snacks** should be provided, or lunch if full day activities
- Activities should be **inclusive, welcoming, respectful** and **safe**
- Compliant with requirements around **safeguarding, child protection** and **food hygiene** as appropriate
- Able or willing to provide **connections to other services** and supports

In order to ensure that this funding was distributed as quickly as possible, authority was delegated to the Head of Policy and Partnerships to award grants in line with the guidance, with information on awards to be provided to the Leadership Board in consultation with the Council Leader.

In total 29 organisations applied for funding. Applications were assessed by a panel consisting of officers from Renfrewshire Council, including from Community Learning and Development, Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership, and Engage Renfrewshire, with the panel meeting regularly between the end of May and the end of June. The panel members were able to evaluate the Summer of Fun applications based on knowledge of other available support across localities.

Overall 21 projects were funded through Summer of Fun, to a total of £60,000.

As the fund was oversubscribed, it was not possible to approve all applications received. Unsuccessful applicants were signposted to other support or information about sources of funding via Engage Renfrewshire. Organisations were also linked with the Multiply Coordinator to establish whether this funding could be offered, depending on the activities taking place, with Sewing2GetherAllNations being awarded funding from this source.

A list of the organisations that delivered Summer of Fun small grants activities can be found in Appendix 2.

A wide range of activities for children and young people of all ages were provided through the funding, along with healthy snacks/ lunches and drinks.

Activities that were offered included:

- Toddler play sessions
- Summer playschemes offering free childcare
- Traditional games and outdoor activities in local parks
- Day trips to local visitor attractions
- Arts and crafts and creative activities, such as printing, tie dye, clay modelling, sewing, outdoor photography
- Sports activities such as circus skills, football, rollerskating, scuba diving, cheerleading, swimming and dance workshops



- Educational activities like basic cooking skills, music technology, baking, English language learning, marine conservation and leadership skills and STEM (Science Technology Engineering Art & Maths)
- Music workshops

Day trips proved to be very popular, with young people heading off for the day to Blair Drummond Safari Park, the Riverside Museum of Transport, the Sealife centre at Loch Lomond, Monty's Farm Park, Dean Castle & Country Park and the outdoor centre at Lapwing Lodge.

Many of the organisations, like the Tannahill Centre, worked with partners to offer as wide a range of activities as possible.

*Activities from our youth workers included art activities such as sun printing, tie dye, clay modelling and hapazome Japanese art and scavenger hunt. We also ran a drama workshop, a talent show and organised a trip to the transport museum. Some of the activities ran by our partnerships included V.R by YMCA, dancing by Right to Dance and samba drumming by Pachedu. We also offered a day at Paisley Community Circus where young people learned circus skills. We provided a variety of healthy food at every session with the highlight being a make your own pizza day with our NHS qualified community chef.*

The STAR Project held an end-of-summer celebration event for everyone who attended their summer programme. This provided the opportunity for families to come together again and share stories from their summer, embedding memories and further strengthening connections. The event included fun holiday-themed activities and games, a summer fun slideshow and food.

Paisley YMCA delivered an exciting programme of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Maths) activities over 5 weeks. Young people also had the opportunity to have their voices heard in a session with the Scottish Youth Parliament about Children's Rights and a session with Let's Be Heard where they could talk about their experiences of the pandemic as part of the Scottish Covid-19 Inquiry.

Renfrew YMCA ran additional support needs sessions once a week which were quieter sessions that enabled young people to benefit from one to one support around a different theme every week.

As well as offering gardening workshops and traditional games, The School of African Cultures took young people sightseeing in Paisley to learn about the history of its buildings.



School of African Cultures participant playing in the park

CREATE Paisley provided drop-in sessions across Linwood, Johnstone and Paisley for young people aged 12-18 with visual arts workshops, outdoor photography sessions, and arts and crafts activities to support wellbeing and mental health. They also collaborated with Right2Dance to provide dance sessions and supported the Youth Forum to organise their own event.

*The young people were given a budget at the initial session and were given the freedom to produce an event of their choosing. As a group (now self-named 'The Magnificent Blue'), they decided to hold an Arts and Crafts Fundraiser to raise money for a trip to a Sea Life Centre for themselves and their peers, to "allow local young people a chance to get out of the house and experience things away from Renfrewshire that they might not have experienced before." (young attendee). This was a huge success and they ended up raising £157 for their trip. The group of young people were from all over Renfrewshire, and many had never met before but have established very strong bonds through this rewarding process.*

CREATE Paisley

### c. **Additional Support Needs (ASN) Provision**

Summer ASN provision was across two sites, Mary Russell School and Riverbrae School. The provision at Mary Russell, a new Playtime service was provided through Klas care, who were funded to provide this programme as part of wider work through the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund (WFWF). Although families were allocated with 3 free spaces across the 5 weeks, additional sessions could be purchased. The provision responded to the identified needs of children and young people with an additional support need.

16 spaces were available each day Monday to Friday 9am to 3pm, with WFWF also funding the hall lets. For those using free spaces, transport costs were provided. Fun engaging activities and free play time was delivered throughout the summer holiday period which included:

- Free transport for parents within Renfrewshire for booked free sessions
- A nutritious meal and healthy snacks throughout the day
- Indoor and outdoor activities – including sports and creative arts
- Much needed social interaction with other young people
- Staff who could respond to each individual child's needs

The offer of a blended approach between free and paid for was found to be popular because families liked the flexibility of booking individual sessions when it suited them. However, paid sessions did not offer transport, so this excluded some families who had no access to transport. The money collected from paid spaces was put back into services by hiring bouncy castles, visits from exotic animals and a day of sport coaches, along with extra resources to meet the needs of the children.

309 bookings were allocated over the 5-week period, a mix of free and paid. Children's suggestions on activities were gathered and each day planning was adjusted to suit the needs of the children attending. Each week was a different theme including bubble, dance, bouncy, physical play and using games, arts, and crafts. Alongside activities children were given breakfast, snacks and lunch.

The camp at Riverbrae continued to identify and respond to the need for provision for children and young people with complex additional support needs. 193 families took up the offer of support during Summer 2024, and fun engaging activities and free play time was delivered throughout the summer holiday period which included:

- A nutritious meal and healthy snacks throughout the day

- Indoor and outdoor activities – including sports, creative arts and sensory experiences.
- Much needed social interaction with other children/young people
- Staff who could respond to each individual child's needs (this included training opportunities to better support our most complex children/young people)
- Free transport for parents within Renfrewshire where required due to the location of the venue and to maximise opportunities and support for families during the summer holiday period.

#### **d. Street Stuff**

Street Stuff continued to deliver their core programme of activities in the evenings from Monday to Saturday for young people aged 8 to 16 throughout the summer holidays which also included the provision of healthy food. 2,221 attendances were recorded with activities including multi-sports and the games buses with ps4 games, DJ decks and having the ability to mix with friends and listen to music and play fun and interactive games. The Street Stuff activities were delivered at the following places:

- Linwood – Our Lady of Peace
- Foxbar – Morar Drive and Foxbar Youth Drop in
- Erskine - Bargarran Primary School
- Johnstone – McMaster Centre
- Shortroods – Beechwood Community Centre MUGA
- Gallowhill Community Centre
- Glenburn – Skye Crescent

#### **e. Adult and Family Learning**

The Adult and Family Learning team supported 54 families in Renfrewshire to enjoy a fun-filled summer regardless of the weather thanks to Multiply, the government-funded programme to help people be more confident with numbers. Multiply funding covered the cost of lunches and some staffing costs.

Six, weekly sessions in Paisley, Johnstone, Renfrew and Erskine ran throughout July and offered parents lots of practical ways to work with their children and gain skills around maths to support them in everyday life. From baking cakes in Bargarran and Southend Action Centre to building volcanoes in Glenburn, there were hands-on activities involving weighing, measuring, counting and telling the time, all using numeracy skills.

The sessions also included everyone preparing and sharing lunch together, music, stories and rhymes and outdoor activities weather permitting.

The Glasgow Science Centre hosted a day out for 10 families that included free entry, lunch, and travel to and from the centre. The families from Ferguslie and Johnstone were made very welcome and thoroughly enjoyed exploring all the exhibits and activities.

The Multiply programme also provided practical numeracy activities for some of Renfrewshire's New Scots from Sewing2gether All Nations at the Mossy Café and from ESOL groups at Southend Action Centre. Learners were able to practice their English by taking part in a variety of fun tasks and games that helped build their maths vocabulary and boost their confidence in using English.

## **f. The Promise Champs Summer Programme**

The Youth Services Promise Champs summer programme was co-designed with young people with care experience, young carers, and young people on the edges of care to tackle feelings of social isolation, holiday hunger and to promote positive wellbeing during the summer holiday period. Young people requested themed youth club sessions and summer trips themed to their interests as teenagers. Utilising Future Paisley funding, Youth Services were able to deliver an impactful summer programme that aimed to ensure that young people had a fun and happy summer, were provided with opportunities to making positive lasting memories and meet new friends.

The summer programme was shared across the Promise Keepers network, Social Work teams, Renfrewshire High Schools, and Renfrewshire Youth Work network to the leads of youth work organisations that support young people with care experience and young carers ages 11-17 years of age.

The programme delivered 8 weekly themed youth club sessions which were attended by 29 young people, 5 summer trips attended by 59 young people and a Sunshine Vibez event for youth and community at Gallowhill Community Centre which was attended by 24 young people.



Summer trips included visits to Youth Beatz festival in Dumfries and Galloway, Glasgow Science Centre and planetarium, InflataNation and Foxbar Drop-In centre for pizza lunch and games, Ayr beach with outdoor games and Blair Drummond Safari Park. Packed lunches were provided for all the trips.

The Promise Champ participants enjoyed the trip to Youth Beatz which gave them an opportunity to experience a musical festival. At the festival they attended the Toon performance which was an interactive theatre which focused on youth issues. This was a good way for the young people have their say and learn facts on the issues that affect them.



The Summer trips were a great way to bring the Promise Champs participants from different communities together. These trips provided opportunities for fun, learning and socialising with one another with the support of Youth Services staff to break down any barriers to participation. Youth Services Community Learning Officers helped support and facilitate these trips and transport the young people.

In addition, Youth Club Summer sessions were held in Paisley Methodist Church from 1 - 3pm on Fridays throughout July and August and were open to young people aged 11-17 years of age. The themed sessions were full of fun activities that could be delivered on a larger scale, as an enhanced version of their usual weekly youth club sessions. Young people enjoyed laser tag, neon rave party, summer fun fayre, the Big Art Attack and active team games. Participants were encouraged to bring along friends and siblings.

For one of the themed sessions, local artist Seamus Killick was commissioned to deliver a giant art attack workshop at the Promise Champs request. The young people really enjoyed this workshop creating their favourite buildings of paisley and would like to continue to develop this project in future as part of a wider youth arts project.

Promise Champs participants were encouraged to provide feedback on their summer programme. The young people rated the trips with star ratings



and were provided with the opportunity to comment on any trips and events they participated in. They also gave ideas to help develop future Promise Champs youth clubs, develop a Promise Champs youth voice forum and plan to programme future trips and experiences.

*"I had a good summer and being on the trips I was able to make more pals."*

*"I gained more confidence this summer...it got me out of the house, and I got to meet up with my friends."*

## **g. One Ren Libraries**

In addition to the small grant funded programme, Renfrewshire Libraries ran their own summer programme using some of the equipment and games that had been previously funded by Fairer Renfrewshire as well as their own resources. Over the summer holidays they delivered 249 events for children and families in their libraries. This allowed a coverage of activities in areas where no Summer of Fun activity was proposed. A total of 1,353 adults and 2,948 children attended these events, including 1,535 children taking part in the Summer Reading Challenge.

The Summer Reading Challenge was launched with award winning children's author Lindsay Littleson at Paisley Central Library. She read from her new book "Ice Cream Boy" and children created their own ice cream flavours. Library staff were really creative in coming up with great ideas for fun free activities for families over the summer including making puppets, jewellery boxes, super-hero pencil holders, printing 3D bookmarks and keyrings, creating outsider art.

There were free sessions from the Dog Trust which were popular and Animal Man Mini Zoo sessions, funded through Fairer Renfrewshire to ensure some activities in villages, in Bridge of Weir, Bishopton and Lochwinnoch libraries which were quickly booked up. Children really enjoyed this entertaining and educational activity. Staff commented that *"the whole event was excellent. Kevin presenting was very engaging with the children. He was enthusiastic encouraging and joked with them. The children loved touching the animals, learning about them, and all the children got a chance to participate."* The sessions worked well because groups were quite small meaning that all the children got a chance to hold the animals and ask lots of questions.

At Lochwinnoch Library children enjoyed learning how to play old-school Scottish games like 'Peever' and 'Beds' as part of a Make-Your-Own Traditional Playground Games Summer Reading Challenge activity.

At Ferguslie Park Library 18 children attended The Bletchley Riddle activity, a virtual event which took place in the Activity Room using the large screen. The children enjoyed coming up with questions to ask the author of The Bletchley Riddle, Ruta Sepetys and global bestselling author Steve Sheinkin.

Erskine Library held Marvellous Treasure Chests and Jewellery Boxes as part of their Summer Reading Challenge Activity. Children used paint sticks to create treasure chests and jewellery boxes. One parent commented “*the summer activities at Erskine have been amazing and a lifesaver. Very well organised.*”

At Renfrew Library children participated in Pendulum Outside Art as part of the Summer Reading Challenge Activity. This craft session involved creating pendulums outside but due to bad weather it was only possible to deliver one of the two sessions.

OneRen was also allocated £1,800 to provide healthy snacks and drinks such as popcorn, cereal bars, juice and hot chocolate in all 12 Renfrewshire libraries throughout the summer, which were really appreciated by families.

## h. Skoobmobile

In addition to activities in libraries, the Skoobmobile provided access to library services to families as well as fun activities for all. This was particularly important in areas where there was no other local provision, either through Camps or the grant funded programme. The mobile service was at the following locations:

- Houston Scout Hut South Street
- Gallowhill Community Centre
- Marshes playing fields, Paisley
- Barshaw Park
- Howwood, Midton Road
- Gockston Road, Paisley

Skoobmobile also visited the Additional Support Needs (ASN) summer camps, working between Riverbrae and Mary Russell on Monday mornings and at ON-X for sports camps on Friday mornings:

**Skoobmobile**  
Children and families mobile service  
Summer Reading Challenge 2024  
*Delivered in partnership with OneRen*

**Marvellous Makers**

Date	Time	Location
Monday July 1, 8, 15, 22, 29	2pm-4pm	Houston Scout Hut, South Street
Tuesday July 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 August 6	10-12.30 2pm-4pm	Gallowhill Community Centre Marshes Playing Fields, Paisley
Wednesday July 4, 11, 18, 25, 31 August 7	10-12.30 2pm-4pm	Barshaw Park All Day
Thursday July 5, 12, 19, 26 August 1, 8	10-12.30 2pm-4pm	Howwood, Midton Road Gockston Road, Paisley

Games, crafts, competitions, and more!



ONEREN



### 3. Evaluating the Summer of Fun programme

Different parts of the programme were evaluated in different ways, but we have included information on numbers attending and comments from staff, parents, carers and children, we have included these below.

#### a. Renfrewshire Summer Holiday Camps

Over the summer period there were 2776 recorded attendances at the Summer camps. Participants were asked to provide their views on the Summer of Fun camps by giving the camps a rate out of 5, with 1 being the worst and 5 being the best. Participants stated that they enjoyed the camps and the total rating for the camps was 4.7 out of 5.

Evaluation has shown that the free holiday camp places were helpful to families for a number of reasons. The availability of free spaces supported working parents with childcare costs, particularly single parents. The camps provided a safe environment for children to socialise and enjoy activities over the holidays, giving parents peace of mind and making the transition back to school easier. The range of activities available meant that children were able to try something new and the positive impact on both parents and children's mental health was noted as an important benefit.

*They are important because they keep them motivated, they also get to meet other kids outside their own environments, mingling with others, as I feel 7 weeks off school is a bit long away from their friends, which I think can be daunting when the time comes for them to go back, whereas these camps keep their wee social skills going.*

*We have a lot of mental health issues and disabilities in our house. There are 6 of us so space to ourselves isn't really an option. Having the younger ones at summer camp, gave the older ones some space which helped immensely.*

*Because we have 3 children and although we work money is very tight. We can't afford to take our children out on day trips over the summer as its too expensive. The camp gives them something to do and be like their friends who go to other camps.*

The views of children, young people and their families will be used to further develop holiday childcare and activity programmes in the future.

The table below details the characteristics of the families who responded to the questions as part of the sign up process for the Summer Camps. The majority of families were lone parents, while over a third of families had 3 or more children. Promotion of the camps was done through messaging to all parents and carers in receipt of School Clothing Grants, to ensure the camps were targeted to low income families. Although those parents passed the booking details to friends and family, the figures show that the camps reached the targeted groups.

Category	Yes Responses	% of Families
Lone parent families	374 out of 843	44.4
Families with 3 or more children	316 out of 871	36.3
Families with a disability	187 out of 843	22.2
Black and minority ethnic families	73 out of 874	8.4
Families with a child under 1	55 out of 874	6.3
Families with parents under 25	16 out of 874	1.8
Percentage of children from each age		
Category	% of Families	
Aged 5	2.6	
Aged 6	15.8	
Aged 7	19.0	
Aged 8	15.1	
Aged 9	17.5	
Aged 10	11.7	
Aged 11	9.3	
Aged 12	5.5	
Aged 13	2.7	
Aged 14	0.6	

Aged 15

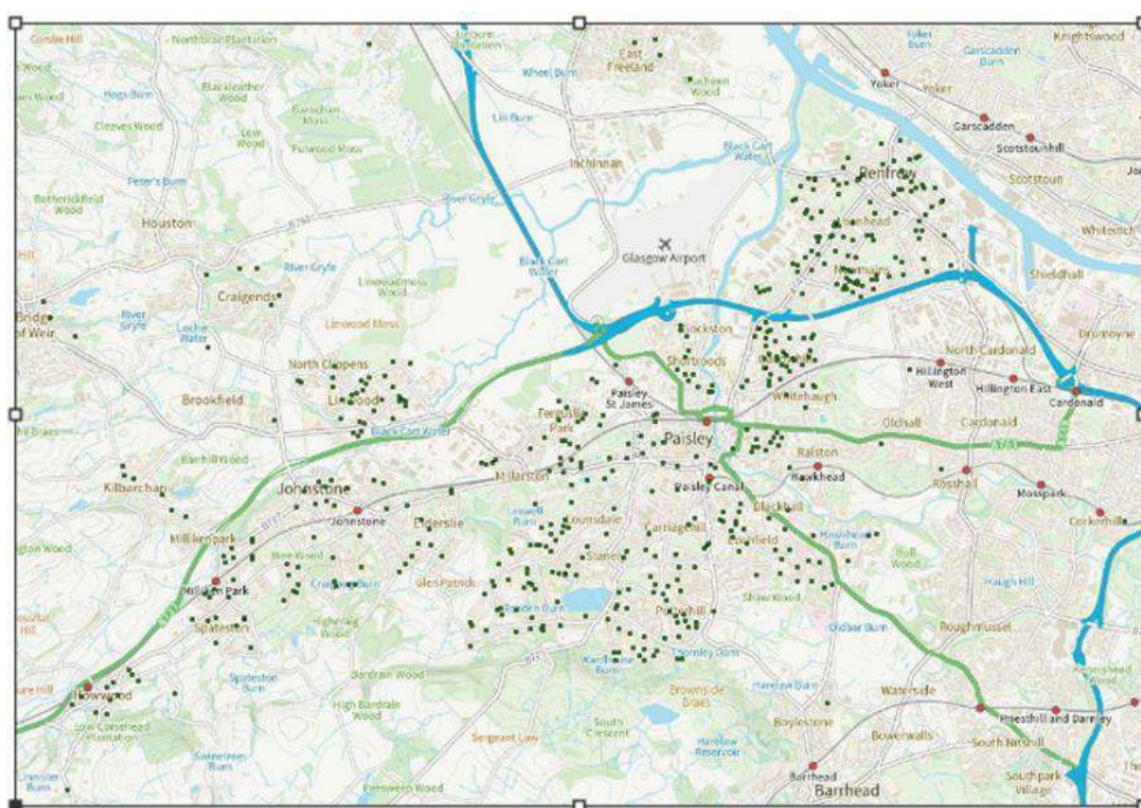
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The overall total within the 'Yes responses' column is calculated by counting only those responses where an obvious straight 'yes' or 'no' response was provided, hence the differing totals for each category.

On a less positive note, over the summer holiday period around 2,776 attendances were recorded out of a possible 3,744 spaces, with children and young people benefitting from the daytime camp provision.

It has been established that many parents and carers that do a block booking when the programme launches do not show up to the camps and do not cancel their spaces. Looking forward, we will examine how we can remind parents of the camps and prompt them to cancel if they will not attend, to allow other families to make use of the places. A waiting list is kept, so when cancellations are made, other families can be quickly advised of spaces.

Looking at geographical coverage, there were registrations for the camps from most areas across Renfrewshire with the exception of Lochwinnoch. We can infer that transport may be an issue for parents and carers to get children to camps from this village, especially for those who don't have a car, however we will ensure we promote any future camps to Lochwinnoch parents and carers.



Most comments about staff were very positive noting that staff were friendly and helpful, remembering children's names and encouraging children who were shy to participate. Comments from parents are included below.

*Staff are amazing my daughter is selective mute and is autistic and their absolutely amazing with her.*

*All staff were great, friendly, made all the kids and the parents dropping them off welcome. I felt it went smoothly and offered lunch etc. it wasn't rushed. My daughter really enjoyed it and only had positive things to say. My daughters favourite staff member was the art and craft lady.*

## **b. Summer of Fun Community Programme**

In mid August a feedback form was sent out to every organisation that had delivered activities as part of the Summer of Fun Community Programme to ask about their experience of delivering activities and to gain understanding of the difference that it had made for those who participated.

Out of 21 funded projects, 19 feedback forms were returned. Feedback from organisations included photographs of activities, some of which are included in this report.

### **Promoting Activities**

Renfrewshire Council's Communications and Marketing team promoted the Summer of Fun programme widely through social media and organised a poster distribution to venues across Renfrewshire towns. In line with input from the Fairer Renfrewshire Panel, all free activities, whether Summer of Fun grant funded, through Community Learning and Development, or through Libraries, were listed on one web page. This included the Skoobmobile programme.

Organisations were asked how people found out about the activities they were offering. While 79% of those who responded stated that people had found out about their project mainly through social media, 58% found that word of mouth was a key factor in promoting their activity. Just over half of respondents (53%) related that people found out because they were already attending other activities that the organisation delivered, while 42% cited referrals from partner organisations.

How did people find out about your Summer of Fun project?	
Method of information	%
Social media	79
Word of mouth	58
Attending other activities	53
Partners	42
Posters	37
Referral from another organisation	16
Council website	5

Note: All respondents provided more than one answer to this question

*We used Facebook in the first instance and due to the massive response we didn't need to advertise anywhere else. Our drop in sessions were also promoted on social media, word of mouth was a specific strength here for our teen drop in sessions as many of the local young people do not use Facebook and we do not have TikTok etc to target them online. Thankfully, through the weeks, the drop in has only become busier and busier due to young people spreading the word amongst friends.*

Erskine Arts

Due to the nature of their work, Renfrewshire Women's Aid only invited women and children who were already using their service to attend the summer programme.

Renfrewshire Rainbow Buddies promoted their activities to young people attending their youth club, via the local Shortroods Facebook page and networking with the local school. Friends of Knockhill Park also contacted local nurseries and schools before the start of the summer holidays and School of African Cultures used their local school very successfully to advertise their programme.



The Tannahill Centre advertised through their social media pages and also engaged with regular members at their youth club and were fully subscribed within two days of advertising.



CREATE Paisley found that many of the young people they engage with through term time brought friends along who had not engaged with them before and these young people have continued to attend sessions since. They also found that many of the young people who regularly attend a specific drop-in, attended other drop-ins in other areas, creating lots of connections across the different groups in Renfrewshire.

Only 8 organisations had received referrals and these came from a wide range of organisations including schools, the Health and Social Care Partnership, Whole Family Wellbeing, Barnardos, Serve 2020, and other local groups such as the STAR Project and Home-Start Renfrewshire & Inverclyde. Going forward we will look at how we can maximise referrals for families who may benefit from free activities.

## How successful were the activity sessions?

All organisations had consistently good attendance throughout the summer and found that sessions were booked up very quickly. The range of engaging activities on offer was aimed at different ages and often included trips to places of interest, resulting in a successful programme that afforded children and young people the opportunity to try new activities in an inclusive and supportive environment. Children were able to maintain their friendships from school as well as making new friends and memories with their families.

*Most of our workshops were fully booked within a few hours. This shows the need for free activity during the summer, we think we offered a varied and diverse mixture of booked activity and drop in sessions for all ages. Everything we have offered over the summer has been really well attended and has created a lovely feeling of community in our space. All the verbal feedback we have received has been overwhelmingly positive, and it has even led to some interest in our term time programme, which has affordability and accessibility at its core.*

Erskine Arts



Erskine Arts music programme



The programme ensured that there were no financial barriers to participation. This was important for families who may have been reluctant to sign up for sessions because of concerns around additional costs, for example lunches, snacks and entrance fees to attractions. Paisley YMCA let parents know that lunches and snacks would be provided so that families were aware up front that there would be no additional costs associated with attending their sessions.

Many organisations commented on the inclusivity of the activities on offer. KLAS Care ensured that children accessing free places at their summer programme were integrated into the main service provision and Sewing2gether All Nations ensured that all ages were able to participate by providing different activities for younger children. The inclusive nature

of the programme was particularly beneficial for children who needed a bit of additional support.

*The private family sessions and sensory sessions were particularly well-received, providing a safe and supportive environment for families and children with special needs. The inclusive environment and the specialised attention from our volunteer team ensured that everyone felt supported and included.*

Just Dive In

Renfrewshire Rainbow Buddies found that being based within a community centre that was local and available to all young people in the community led to good attendance and enabled them to network with the local schools.

CREATE Paisley found that running drop-ins at the times and venues the young people were used to and familiar with, was crucial to the success of their summer programme and provided structure throughout the summer period.

*We were able to provide a regular check-in point for young people at a time when many feel out of touch with support services/trusted adults. For neurodiverse young people, we were able to continue an element of routine in their lives where there might be a lack of structure with schools and colleges being off.*

CREATE Paisley

Many organisations brought in external partners to deliver activities, for example Thorn Athletic Community Trust invited Police Scotland along to some of their sessions, which added a valuable educational element to the programme.

Other organisations linked in with Right2Dance and Pachedu for dance and drumming workshops and Paisley Community Circus to deliver circus skills. The STAR Project found that working with partners provided additional opportunities for participants to meet new people and offer peer support.

*We have always worked with partners to encourage a more diverse range of families on trips but this year we specifically allocated additional places for families involved with Pachedu and the local After School Club to get involved. This worked well as it meant they were able to offer their community access to trips and our regular community members were able to meet new people. During the trips, staff were available if people needed support, but many families peer-supported each other, and the trips facilitated strong bonds among attendees. Since returning from the trips, many of the attendees who had not previously met, have continued to meet up outside the Project and attend other activities within STAR.*

STAR Project





Some organisations were keen to get young people as involved as possible in deciding which activities to do. Paisley YMCA asked for suggestions and then tailored activities in line with the feedback they received. The School of African Cultures had a plan but also listened to what young people wanted to do. Young people enjoyed going to the park so a visit to the park was built in to any trips that they did around Renfrewshire.

CREATE Paisley went a step further and undertook weeks of consultation with the young people prior to developing their summer programme. This resulted in a programme that was developed and led by the interests and needs of the young people they engage with.

*The young people put forward their own suggestions for the trips we went on, they were consulted about what workshops/ activities they would like to see at the drop-ins, and the Youth Forum event process was led by them from start to finish. This meant that we had consistent attendance throughout the summer and across the different projects. They could see their suggestions being brought to life and their needs being met.*

CREATE Paisley

Outspoken Arts and the Tannahill Centre both commented that children enjoyed creative activities and the fact that they were able to create their own artworks and take them home.

*The young people were keen to engage in the art activities, especially tie dye. I think the young people liked the idea of creating and applying their learning and going home with a finished product.*

Tannahill Centre



Outspoken Arts



Tannahill Centre, tie dye t-shirts

## How many people attended?

Organisations were asked about the number of people who attended their activities. We did not ask organisations to keep track of numbers while delivering activities, but some did, and others provided an estimate. The average number of people attending each session was 20 adults and 32 children (from 19 project responses). Not all projects had adults participating. Some projects had much higher attendance such as Renfrewshire Rainbow Buddies (45 children per session) and KLAS Care (55 children per session).

Sessions which attracted the most children were activities for toddlers, football camp, cheerleading, arts and crafts and fun days. Paisley North Community Council attracted 80 adults and 150 children to their Carnival themed Fun Day. Johnstone Castle Learning Centre had 50 young people attending each in house session and 40 young people attending day trips while their inflatable fun day attracted 100 young people over two sessions. Not all projects ran for a full six weeks but an estimated figure from 19 project responses suggests that around 577 adults and 1,939 children benefited from Summer of Fun activities.



The aim of the small grants programme overall was to provide a range of activities that would be accessible to low-income families across Renfrewshire, in particular supporting families in the six child poverty priority groups, who are at higher risk of living on a low-income as well as Care Experienced young people. All 19 small grants funded projects that provided feedback responded that they had managed to reach these families through their activities. Just over a quarter of projects (26%) were able to reach families in all of the child poverty priority groups and those with care experience, whilst 79% of projects were able to reach families in four or more of the six child poverty priority groups. Almost 37% of projects managed to reach six of the seven priority groups.

Projects were most successful at reaching the following families:

- families with three or more children (100%)
- lone parents (84%)
- families where someone in the house has a disability (84%)
- families where parents are under the age of 25 (74%)
- black and minority ethnic families (74%)

Just over two thirds of organisations managed to reach families with a child aged under one year old (68%) and 63% of organisations reached care experienced children and young people.



Who attended your Summer of Fun project?		
	Number of projects	%
Families with 3 or more children	19	100
Lone Parents	16	84
Families where someone in the house has a disability	16	84
Families where parents are under the age of 25	14	74
Black and minority ethnic families	14	74
Families with a child aged under one year old	13	68
Care experienced children and young people	12	63

When asked how they were able to reach these families, whilst some organisations received referrals, most of the organisations responded that they are based in areas with a high level of single parent families on low incomes and many of the young people already use their other services. Other projects worked with asylum seekers, refugees on universal credit and people with No Recourse to Public Funds.

*We already work with low-income families and have positive relationships with them and so we made sure to communicate directly with them to make them aware of the sessions we were offering; that they were free, and that food and snacks would be provided too. We also received a very kind donation of back-to-school items e.g. uniforms, school bags, pencil cases, water bottles & stationery from a local business (facilitated by Cash for Kids) so we encouraged our families to take whatever they were able to use to help ease some of the costs associated with young people returning to school. We shared the remaining items with a local organisation in Ferguslie Park who also work with low-income and child poverty priority families.*

Paisley YMCA

Organisations proactively ensured that the programme would reach families most in need by working directly with local schools and Home Link workers who were able to refer families that they knew would benefit from the programme. They also offered priority booking for postcodes within the highest SIMD areas.

Partnership working was also used to identify families that would benefit most from free spaces.

*Beneficiaries of the free trip places (20 per trip) and the free end-of-summer evaluation event were identified through our partnership with statutory and voluntary services and our own community base. We liaised with our partners to identify family groups who would not ordinarily access STAR's services but who would benefit from gaining access to free trips. When we released our Summer Programme and asked families to sign up for trips, we met with each family to discern who would benefit from being offered free places.*

STAR Project



Feedback from families and young people themselves has also confirmed that the programme has benefited those who needed it most.

*With verbal feedback, we have had good mix of people telling us that they would not have had the opportunity for their children to have done other summer camps 'because of the cost'. This feedback has been repeated throughout the summer.*

Erskine Arts

*Many of our young people do not have access to many of the activities on offer ie: dancing and circus skills. Some young people commented on how they used to attend these clubs but could not afford the upkeep.*

Tannahill Centre

## What difference did the small grants programme make?

Feedback from organisations about the impact of the programme was overwhelmingly positive. All the organisations agreed that there were several benefits for families who attended activities. They highlighted the opportunity for low-income families to access fun activities that were open to everyone and where their children could socialise and make new friends in a safe environment. Most respondents reported that the programme had encouraged new people to engage with the project (95% of respondents) and activities had also helped to reduce financial costs for families (95%). Other perceived benefits were providing access to information and advice (84% each) and helping people to learn about a new service in their local area (79%).

Benefit to people attending activities	Number of responses	%
Providing fun activities that low-income families could access	19	100
Encouraging new people to engage with the project / organisation	18	95
Reducing financial costs for families	18	95
Providing access to information / advice	16	84
Helping people to learn about a new service in their local area	15	79

Some organisations highlighted other benefits of the programme. At KLAS Care, parents had access to a free food pantry, school clothes, leisure clothes, toiletries, period products and laundry products helping to reduce costs. The STAR project went to great lengths to ensure that families who accessed their free spaces did not feel stigmatised.

*The staff kept their lunches in cool packs alongside the lunches of other attendees at predesignated meeting areas. Therefore, at lunchtime, the families receiving free lunches did not stand out from the other families when collecting their lunch. By doing this, families all came together to eat, often sharing food and discussing the activities of the day.*

STAR Project

Participating in fun and engaging activities provided wider benefits for many of the young people who attended the summer programme. Thirteen young people aged 11 to 18 years old volunteered with School of African Cultures over the summer and 9 young people signed up for the Saltire Award.

Through attending the programme at Paisley YMCA young people were given the opportunity to share their experiences, stories and views with the Scottish Youth Parliament about human rights and with the Scottish Covid-19 Inquiry about their experiences of the pandemic.



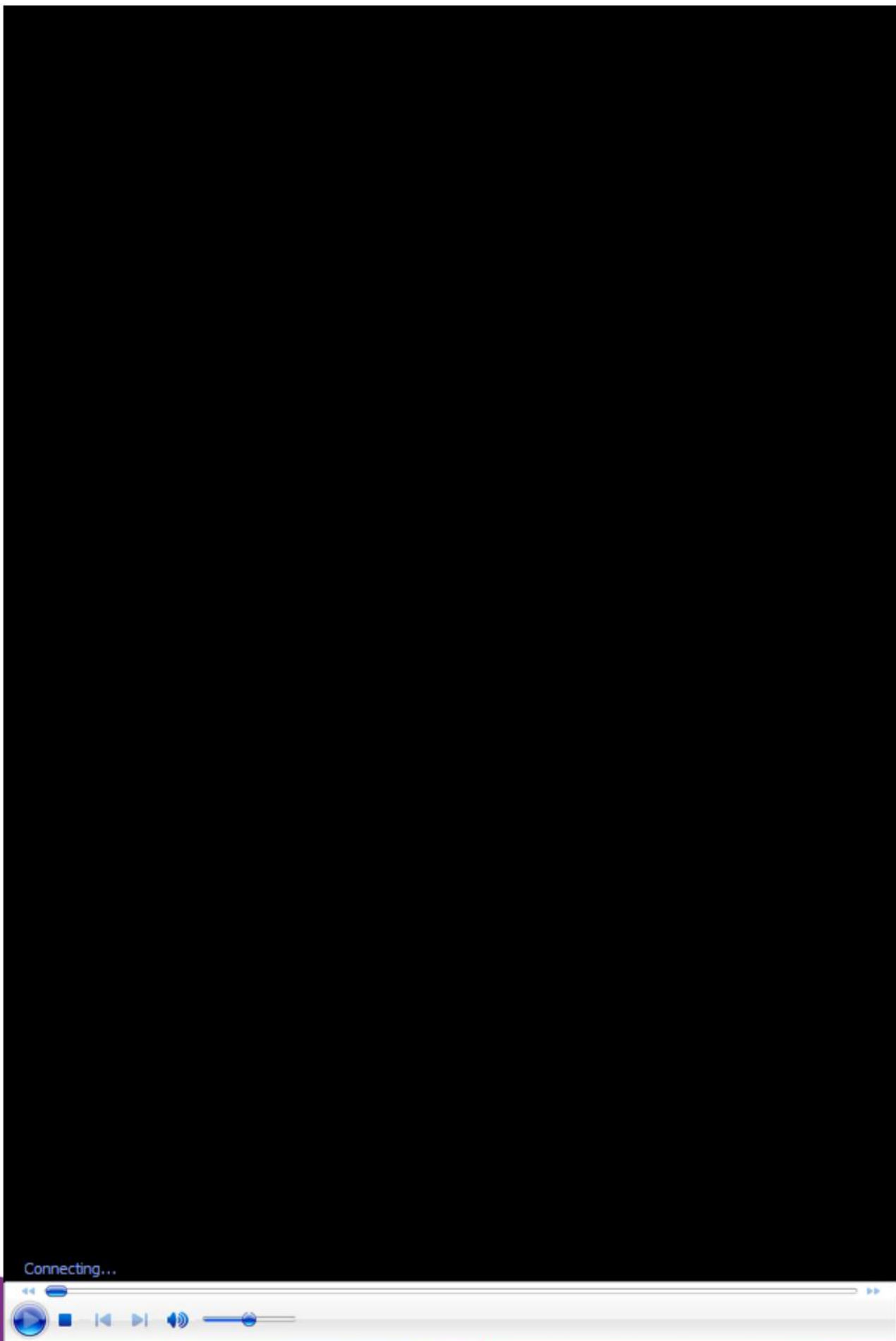
Brick Lane Music Academy

CREATE Paisley found that the programme provided regular safe and supportive neurodiverse-friendly spaces and activities and encouraged young people across Renfrewshire to engage with young people they did not know from other areas.

*One of our aims for the GO CREATE Summer Programme was to bring young people from across all the different areas together so they feel more connected to their community, less isolated, have shared positive experiences and make new friends. Throughout the programme, young people from all our different groups across Linwood, Johnstone and Paisley came together for the trips and additional sessions. They made strong connections and even spent time together outside of our sessions as a result.*

CREATE Paisley

The wide variety of activities were well spread out across Renfrewshire and reached many families who would not normally be able to afford to attend a summer programme. Organisations used their local knowledge to ensure that families most in need could participate in and benefit from the programme. Some activities, such as those delivered by Just Dive In, had multiple benefits, including improving mental and physical health and promoting environmental awareness through beachcombing and clean-up activities. Their video report can be viewed [here](#).





*The comprehensive support from the program allowed us to offer a variety of engaging activities at no cost to participants, ensuring broad accessibility. The flexibility of the program also enabled us to tailor our offerings to meet the specific needs of our community. The Marine Marvels programme, in particular, provided a unique educational experience that was both fun and informative, leaving a lasting impact on the young participants.*

Just Dive In

The Tannahill Centre extended their activities to include children under 8 and this had a beneficial impact on parents.

*A particular highlight was the inclusion of children under 8 as long as they were accompanied with a parent. This also brought parents who were new to the area together and meant that siblings above and below 8 years old were not split up. Some of the parents have offered to volunteer at the youth club when it starts up after the summer. Tannahill Centre*

For many families without transport or unable to afford public transport, the trips to visitor attractions were a highlight of the summer for both parents and children. Renfrew YMCA discovered that these trips also benefited the young people in a more practical way. They learned how to use public transport, how to plan journeys and learn about what is accessible to them in Renfrewshire and beyond.

Renfrewshire Women's Aid reported that the small amount of funding they received had increased confidence and strengthened family bonds, leading to positive impacts that will be long lasting for the families who participated.

*The funding enabled us to provide invaluable respite and joy to mothers and children recovering from domestic abuse. Our programme offered a vital escape from their daily challenges, fostering a sense of normalcy and fun. By providing transport, healthy meals, and access to engaging activities like soft play, farm parks, and the Sealife centre, we created memorable experiences that empowered children and gave them positive stories to share. These outings not only boosted their confidence but also provided much-needed quality time for families to bond and rebuild.*

Renfrewshire Women's Aid



School of African Cultures, first trip in the Underground



Tannahill Centre pizza making

## Suggested improvements to the small grants programme

There are always ways in which we can improve upon our design, development and delivery of the summer programme. The most common comments from projects related to additional funding and having funding decisions made earlier.

Organisations were positive about communication with council officers and the speed of payments, however the **timescales** between being awarded funding and delivering the programme of activities was challenging. Several organisations suggested that providing information about the Summer of Fun programme and awarding funding earlier would have given them more time to plan and advertise activities and to liaise with partner organisations, including schools, nurseries and health visitors to reach families that would benefit most.

Organisations would also like **funding decisions to be made as early as possible**. One commented that having a decision in March would allow them to organise staffing and improve marketing for places.

*Everything went really well and smoothly with the exception of the length of time to hear back if the application was successful or not, this meant that some families, children and young people were unsure of their plans and it made it more of a challenge for our team to make plans.*

Paisley YMCA

**Additional funding** would help organisations to expand their programmes or offer more free places. The demand for activities often exceeded what organisations were able to supply. This was evident from how quickly sessions were booked up, sometimes in a matter of hours. Most of the organisations would like to offer more sessions but need more funding to do this due to increasing costs for staffing and overheads. Some organisations would like to be able to increase staffing levels on high demand days to manage large groups better or would like to increase the hours to better support working parents with childcare.

One organisation suggested that **exploring partnerships with local businesses or community organisations** could provide opportunities for discounted or free entry to attractions, maximising the use of the funding.

Another suggestion was to **improve marketing** to increase awareness of the programme and have **more of a digital presence**. Currently the programme is promoted through the Council's webpage, social media and through networking with partners. Targeted promotion through Children's Services to all schools could help to cascade information down to parents and raise awareness of the programme.

### c. **Additional Support Needs (ASN) Provision**

For children with additional support needs attending activities at the Mary Russell and Riverbrae schools, the aim was to provide activities that focussed on inspiring conversation and understanding others, prompting kindness and friendship.

Children were involved in deciding which activities to do. For example, at Mary Russell school children identified that they wanted to go and explore their surroundings in a physically active way and this promoted an increase in positive mental health.

Delivering activities in a school for ASN children allowed for a free flow indoor and outdoor space, giving a full and rich environment that was both challenging and safe. Outdoor learning played a huge part with the children who were encouraged to be creative with their play and were given the tools to achieve this.

193 families were supported by Riverbrae and 309 bookings (free and paid for) were made for Mary Russell. Feedback from parents was very positive and identified the benefits to both children and parents.

*Ava has loved her time with the playscheme, she has never been able to settle anywhere before including school, she has been so happy, although Ava is nonverbal, but she was clearly empowered by the support she was given, I can't thank everyone enough, the staff have made me and Ava very happy.*

*Kolten's speech came on leaps and bounds, this showed that he was comfortable and felt safe in the environment. The service was a life saver, it allowed me to go and visit my mum who was at the end-of-life care and Kolten refused to go into the hospice to see her, playtime allowed me quality time with mum, I really don't know what I would have done with this. The surprise outcome for me was that his development and confidence grew, it was amazing.*

*Ethan has had such a lovely time; I want to thank everyone involved for giving us the opportunity to attend and getting to buy the extra spaces was great.*

#### **d. Adult and Family Learning**

54 families took part in the Adult and Family learning programme. Places were offered to families of learners that face multiple barriers and who are already engaged with the service. Participants commented on the friendliness of the groups, the inclusivity of the programme and the opportunity it provided to get kids out of the house away from computer games. Parents enjoyed seeing their children mixing with other children, enjoying the activities and they also benefitted from meeting other parents.



*Summer family day was fully inclusive for my ASN girls, they dipped in and out as they could cope and had a fantastic time. Mixing with other children is something we don't get to do very often. Thank you for the sessions and as always, your patience and kindness.*

*Attendee*

*Can't afford to do things with kids because it's so expensive and to have something like this to come to and spend as family great, kids love doing the activities and it's nice to share what we did as a group.*

*Attendee*



Family Fun Days –Photos from Moorpark, Bargarran and Glenburn Learning Centres, Southend Action Centre and West Johnstone Shared Campus.

## 4. Conclusions

The Summer of Fun programme aimed to deliver activities over the summer holidays which could reach communities that might be underserved by mainstream activities, particularly low-income families. Feedback suggests that the programme was able to reach these families, particularly those families who are in the child poverty priority groups. The majority of families that attended the holiday camps were lone parents, while over a third of families had 3 or more children. All 19 small grants funded projects that provided feedback responded that they had also managed to reach these families through their activities.

Feedback from the small grants programme suggests that the programme benefited around **577** adults and **1,939** children by providing inclusive, safe environments for children to participate in activities, make friends and create lasting memories with their families. In addition, there were **2,776** attendances at the holiday camps and **2,221** at Street Stuff, while the Adult and Family Learning team supported **54** families in Renfrewshire. ASN provision at Riverbrae supported **193** families and **309** bookings were made for Mary Russell.

There is evidence that the Summer of Fun programme provided a range of benefits for children and their parents/carers including:

- providing free fun activities that low-income families could access
- supporting working parents with childcare costs, particularly single parents
- providing a safe environment for children to socialise
- having a positive impact on parents and children's mental health
- encouraging new people to engage with services
- helping to reduce financial costs for families.

It provided access to food, activities, clothing and advice, providing support in a dignified manner which reduced the potential for stigma.

Whilst the summer camps were successful in reaching low income families, with children and young people benefitting from the daytime camp provision, it must be recognised that there were a significant number of unused spaces with 2,776 attendances were recorded out of a possible 3,744 spaces over the summer. Moving forward, it is recommended that further work is carried out to minimise unused spaces, for example, a system which reminds parents and carers to attend or release places. Community Learning and Development do operate a waiting list for the camps and for future camps, we will examine how we can maximise attendance and utilise the waiting list to ensure families get the benefit of the free places.



Whilst the Community Programme was successful, it is important to take into account feedback from organisations that could improve a future programme. Earlier notice of funding opportunities would enable organisations to plan a detailed programme of activity and to work with partners to promote this to families who will benefit most from the small grants programme.

Targeted promotion of the Community Programme through Childrens Services to all schools could help to cascade information down to parents and raise more awareness of the programme.

The offer of a blended approach for ASN between free and paid for spaces was popular but did exclude some families who had no access to transport. Bridging the gap in supporting the developmental needs of children with ASN and the financial struggles of some families that need respite is an issue that requires consideration in future provision.

Providing programmes that are inclusive and accessible for all children and young people is an important part of the legacy of the Summer of Fun initiative.

Additional funding across the programme would increase capacity and allow expansion of activities on offer to meet demand and support more families, with the benefits this brings across the areas mentioned above.

*I feel the whole project worked well. We had great positive feedback from our young people, their families and the local and wider communities. We help to prevent the young people engaging in anti-social behaviour and youth disorder. We alleviated food poverty due to the cost of living crisis by providing a snack or lunch depending on the length of time the session ran. We also helped to prevent the escalation of mental health within our young people. And we help alleviate financial pressure on low income families. Feedback stated the majority of the families could not have afforded such luxuries if the project had not taken place and our services helped to offer respite to the parents and guardians of the young people who attended.*

**Johnstone Castle Learning Centre**

## 5. Appendix – Organisations which received Summer of Fun small grants

Brick Lane Music Academy

CREATE Paisley

Erskine Arts

Friends of Knockhill Park

Johnstone Castle Learning Centre

Just Dive in CIC

KLAS Care CIC

Outspoken Arts Ltd

Paisley North Community Council

Paisley YMCA

Renfrewshire Effort to Empower Minorities (REEM)

Renfrew YMCA

Renfrewshire Rainbow Buddies

Renfrewshire Women's Aid

School of African Cultures

Scottish Afro Caribbean Arts Association

Sewing2gether All Nations

STAR Project

Tannahill Centre

Thorn Athletic Community Trust

Twist and Hit Cheerleaders



School of African Cultures, trip to the Botanic Gardens

Chief Executive's Service  
Renfrewshire Council  
Renfrewshire House  
Cotton Street  
Paisley  
PA1 1BR



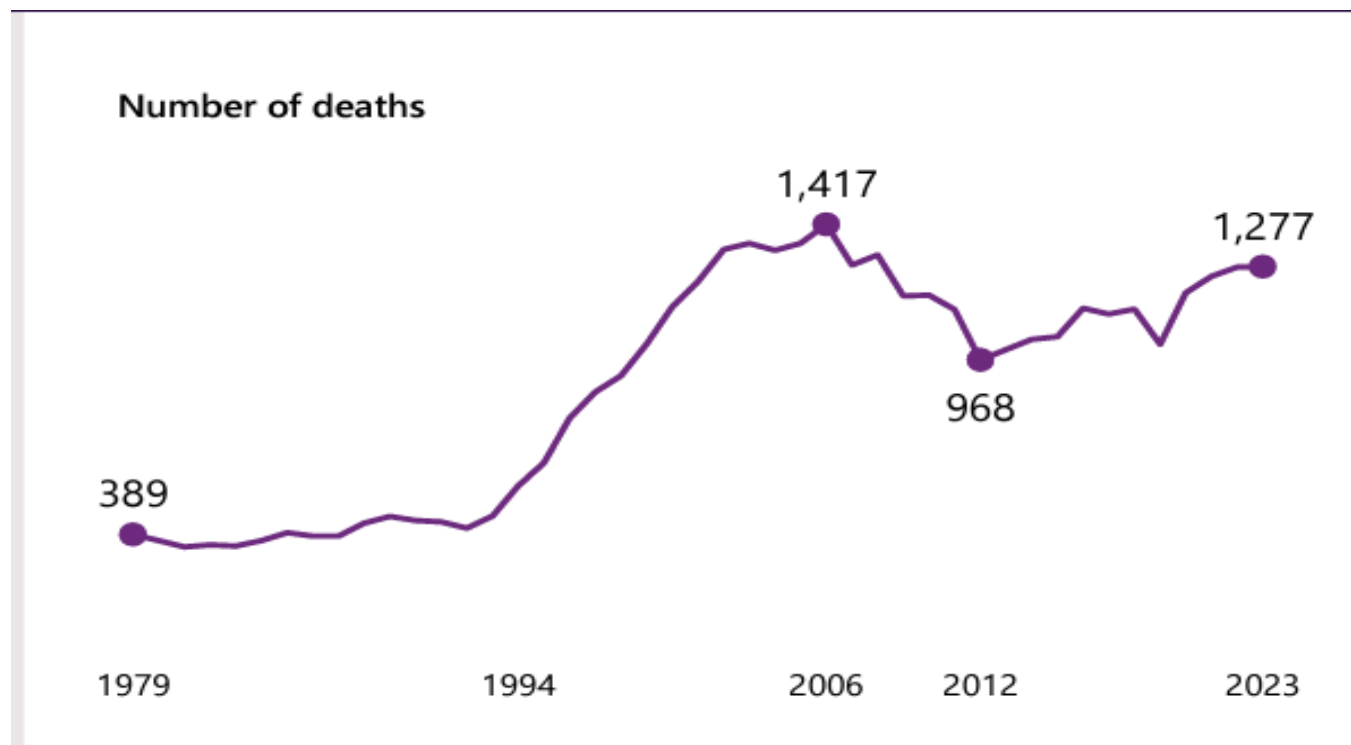
# Alcohol and Drug Death Prevention in Renfrewshire

**Karen Nightingale – Alcohol Death Prevention Lead Officer**

**Cara Durnie – Drug Death Prevention Lead Officer**

**Karen Reynolds – Alcohol and Drug Recovery Service Manager**

# Scotland 2023 Update:



There were 1,277 alcohol-specific deaths registered in Scotland in 2023, an increase of one death from 2022.

This is the highest number of alcohol specific deaths registered in a year since 2008.

# Scotland Key Points:

- The rate of mortality for alcohol-specific deaths was 22.7 deaths per 100,000 people in 2023.
- Male deaths continue to account for around two thirds of alcohol-specific deaths. Over the last year, male alcohol-specific deaths increased by 25, while female deaths decreased by 24.
- The age profile of alcohol-specific deaths has become older over time, with the average age at death increasing from 56 to 60 in the last decade.
- In 2023, the alcohol-specific mortality rates for those aged 65 to 74, and 75+ were at their highest since the series began in 1994.

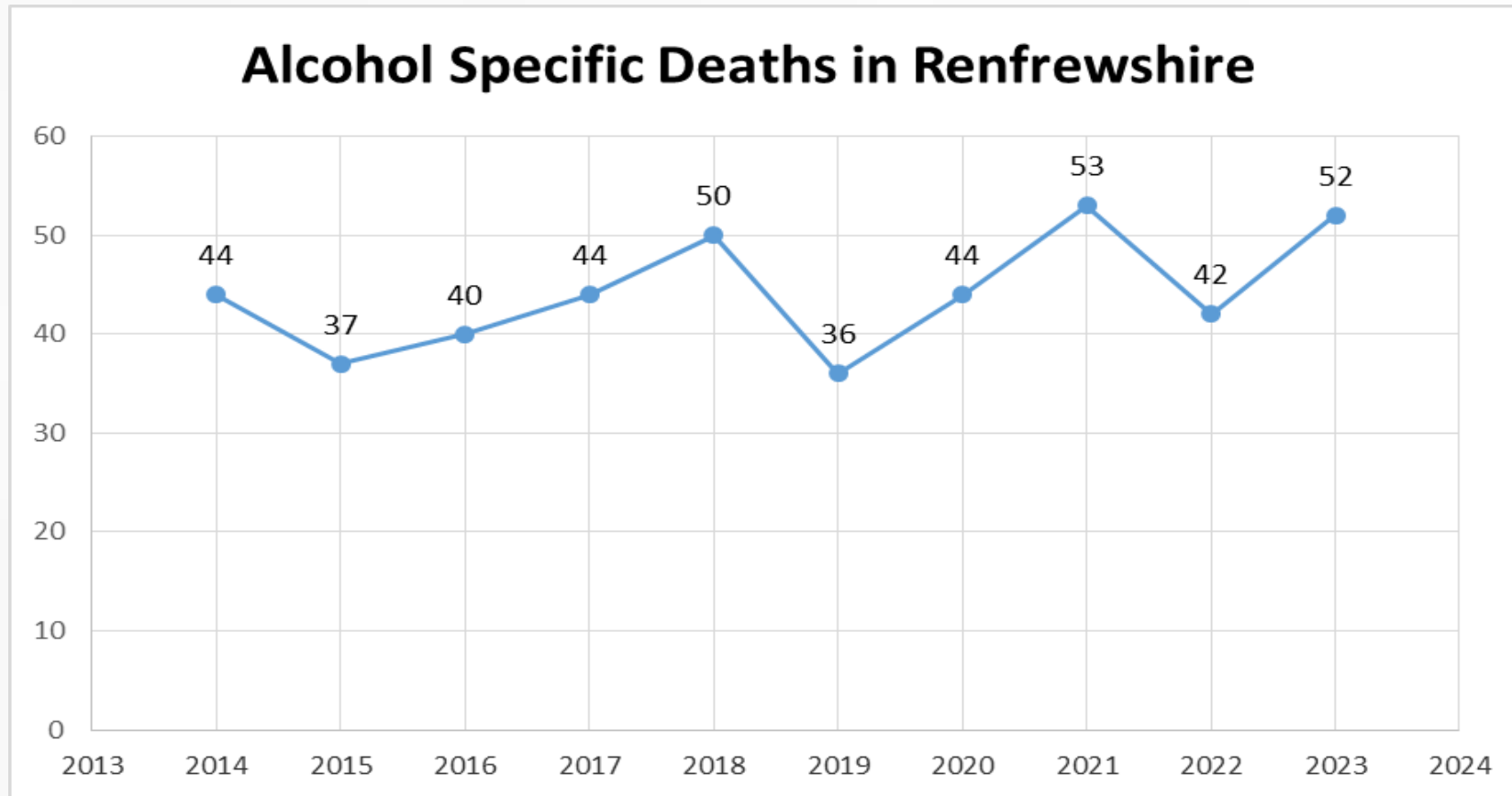
# Greater Glasgow & Clyde

## *Greater Glasgow & Clyde - number of Alcohol Specific Deaths, 2022 – 2023*

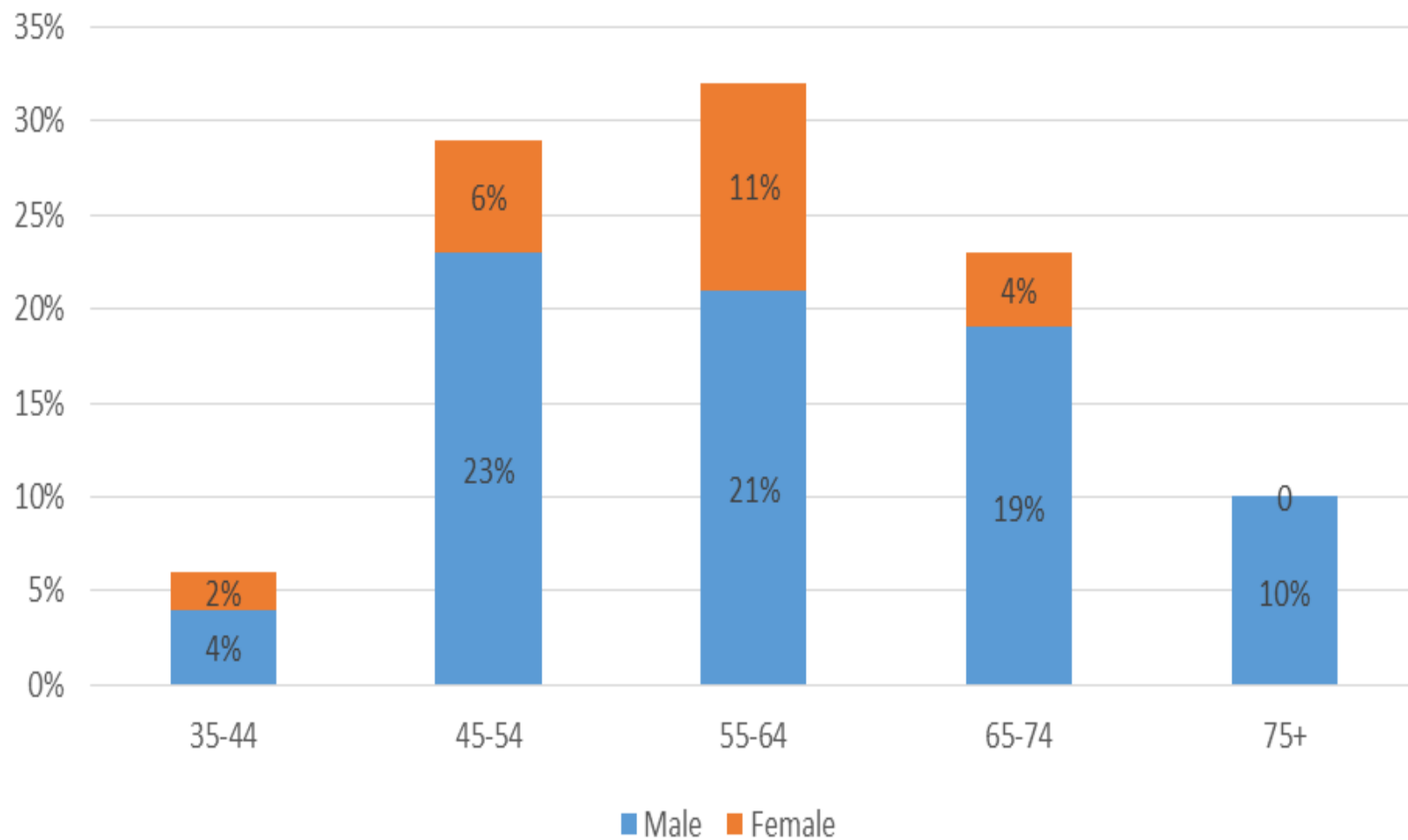
Area	2022	2023	% change	
Renfrewshire	42	52	24%	increase
East Dunbartonshire	24	15	37.5%	decrease
East Renfrewshire	9	16	78%	increase
Glasgow City	202	184	9%	decrease
Inverclyde	28	33	18%	increase
West Dunbartonshire	21	23	9.5%	increase
NHS GGC	326	323	1%	decrease

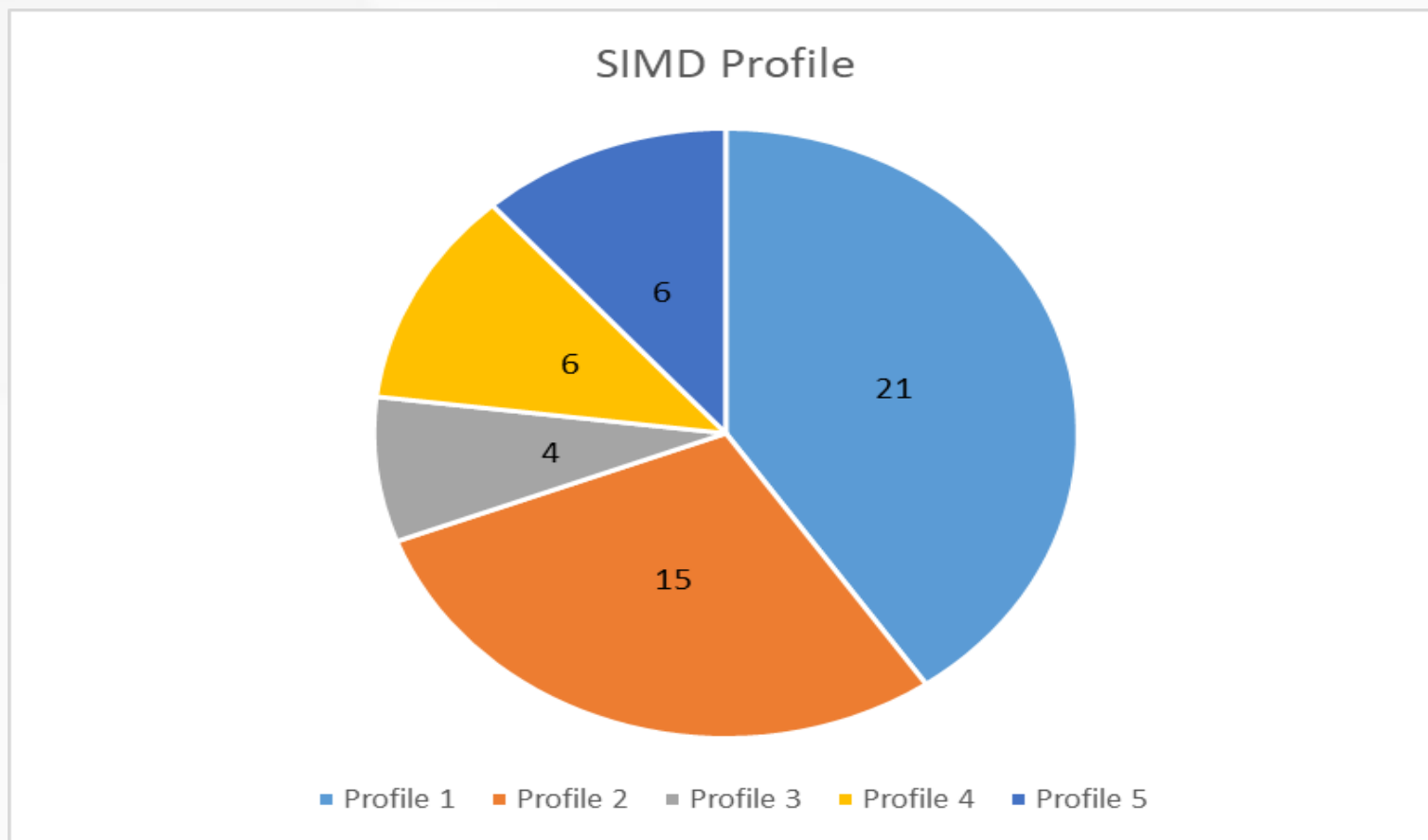
# Renfrewshire Specifics:

- In Renfrewshire, 52 people died as a direct result of alcohol in 2023, an increase of 24% from the previous year.



## Age Range with Gender Shown





Alcohol-specific deaths were 4.5 times as high in the most deprived areas of Scotland compared to the least deprived areas in 2023.

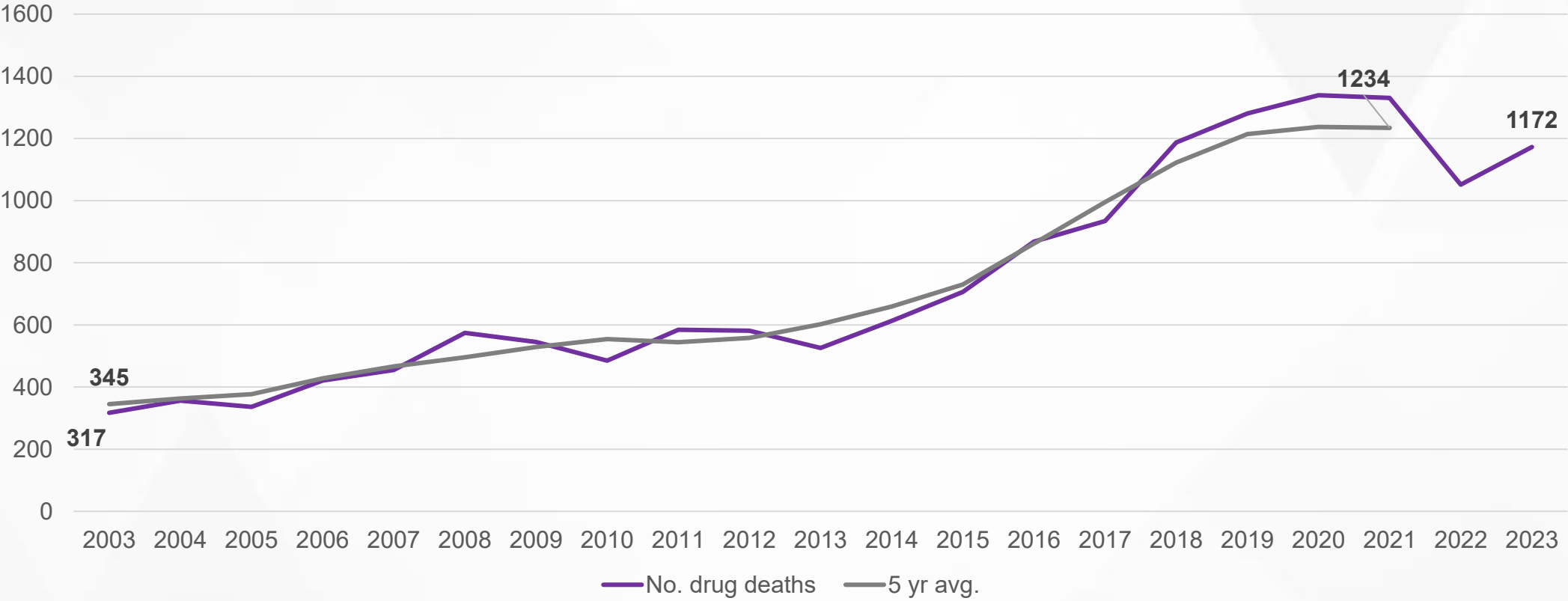
# Context: Scotland's Drug-Related Deaths 2023



- **1172 people sadly lost their life to a drug-related death (DRD) in Scotland in 2023**
- 121 more deaths than the previous year (12% increase)
- However, second lowest figure since 2017
- Males were twice as likely have a drug death than females
- The average age of a drug death has increased from 32 in 2000, to 45 in 2023



# Scotland's drug-related deaths: 2003-2023

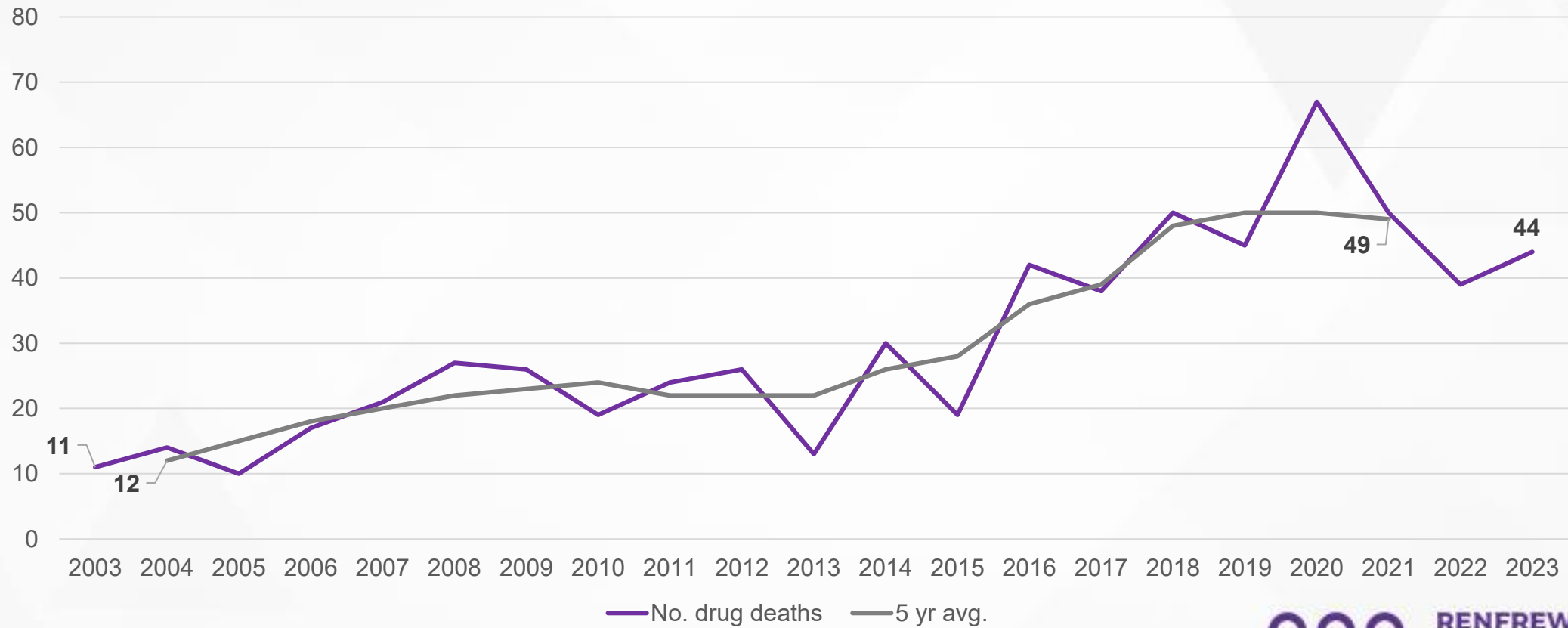


# Drug deaths: Greater Glasgow and Clyde

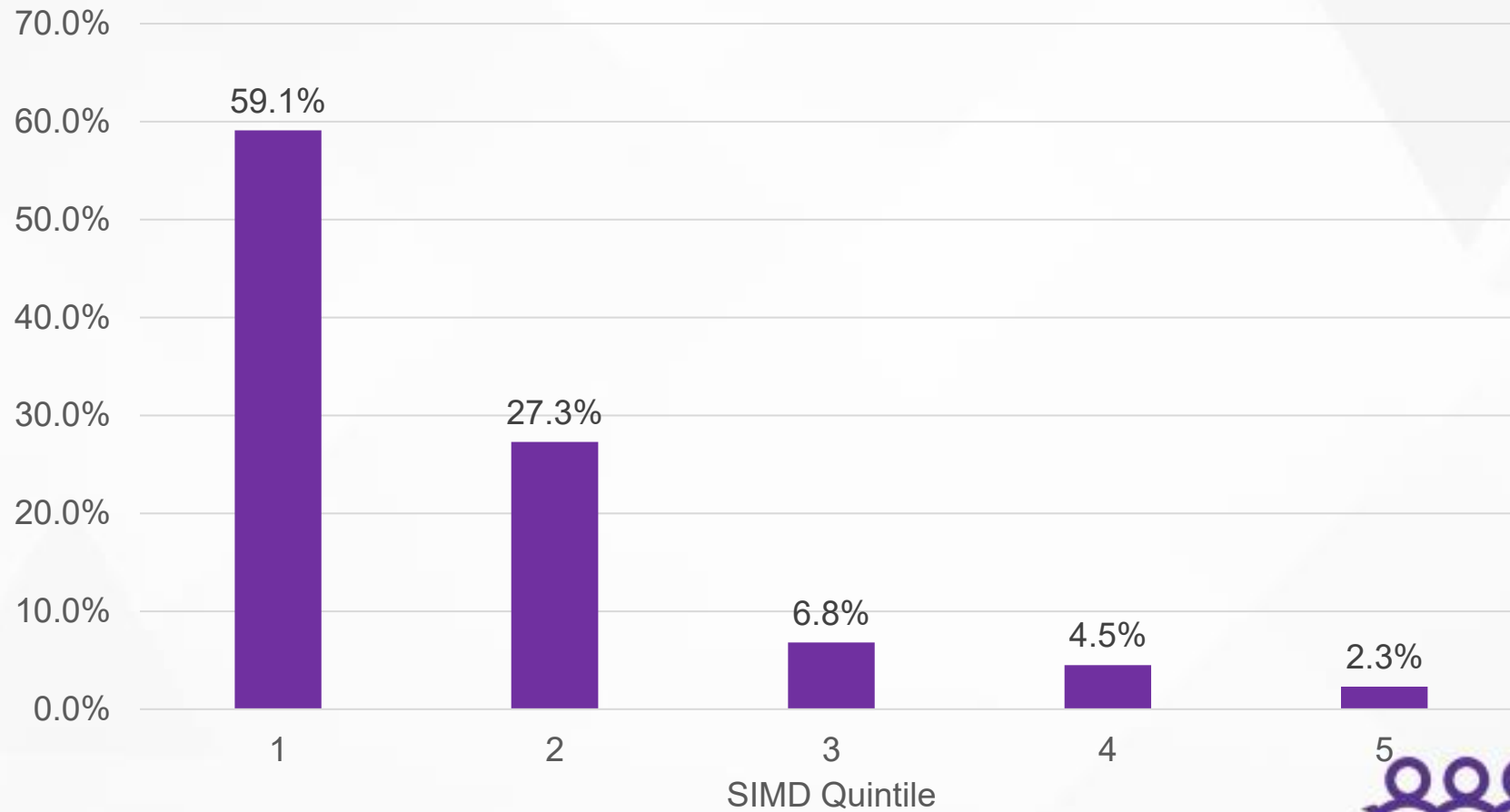
Area	2022	2023	% change
<b>Renfrewshire</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>+12.8%</b>
East Dunbartonshire	9	6	-33.3%
East Renfrewshire	7	7	-
Glasgow city	196	246	+25.5%
Inverclyde	29	26	-10.3%
West Dunbartonshire	20	26	+30%
<b>NHSGGC</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>+18.3%</b>
Scotland	1051	1172	+11.5%

Across NHS GGC, there were **355** drug-related deaths in 2023, an **18% increase** from the previous year.

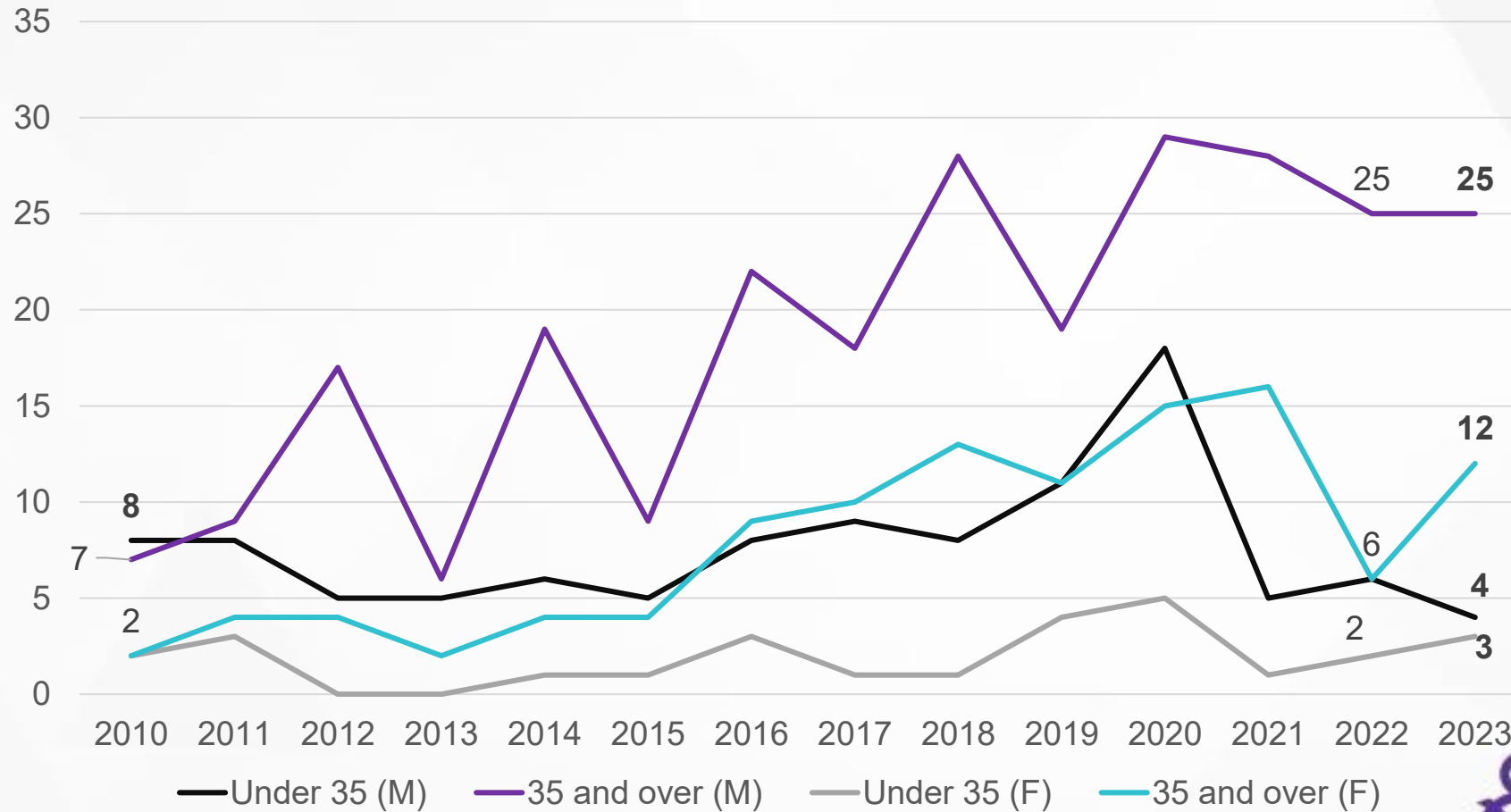
# Renfrewshire's drug-related deaths 2003-2023



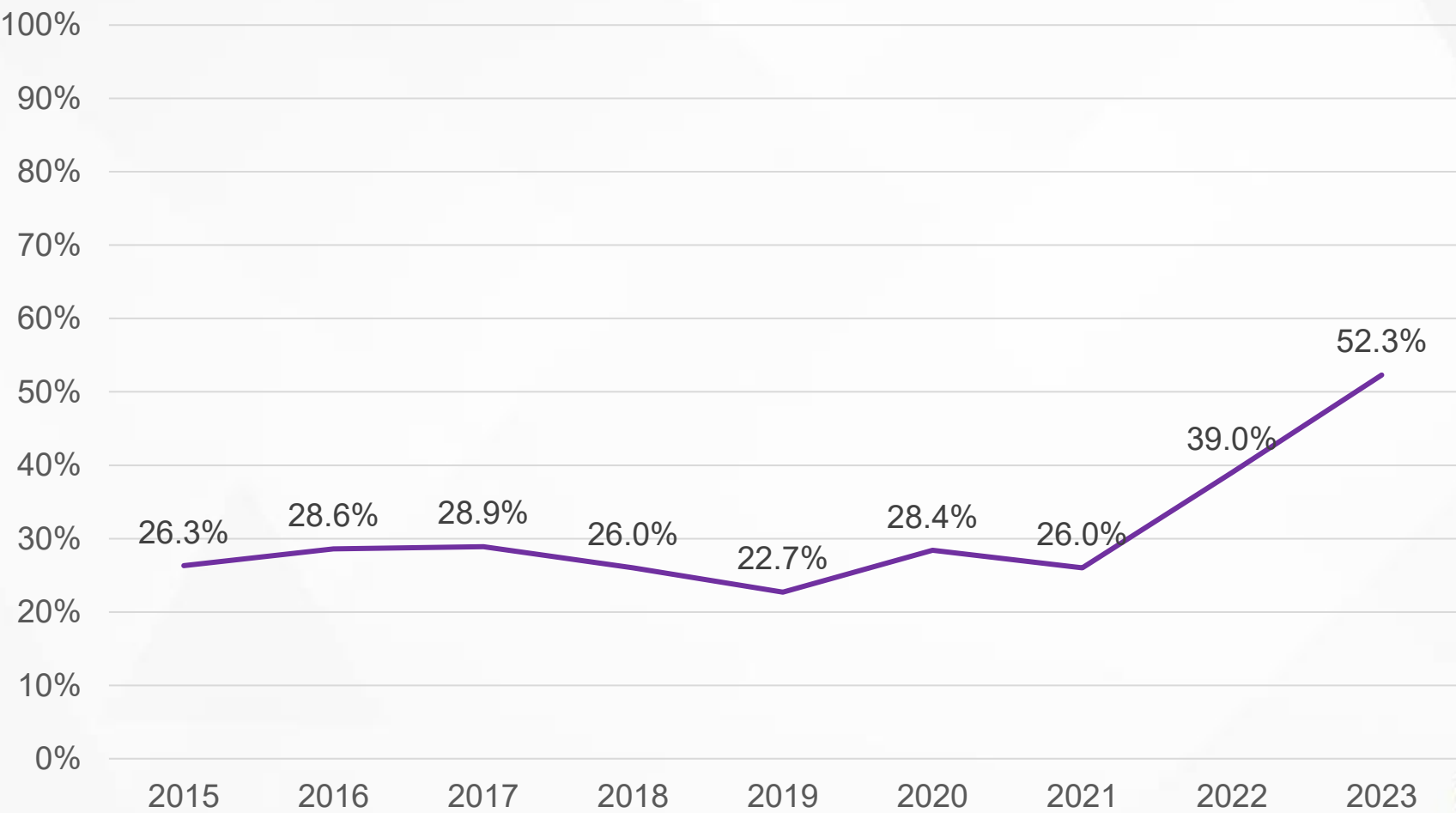
# Renfrewshire deaths by SIMD



# Renfrewshire breakdown by age and sex

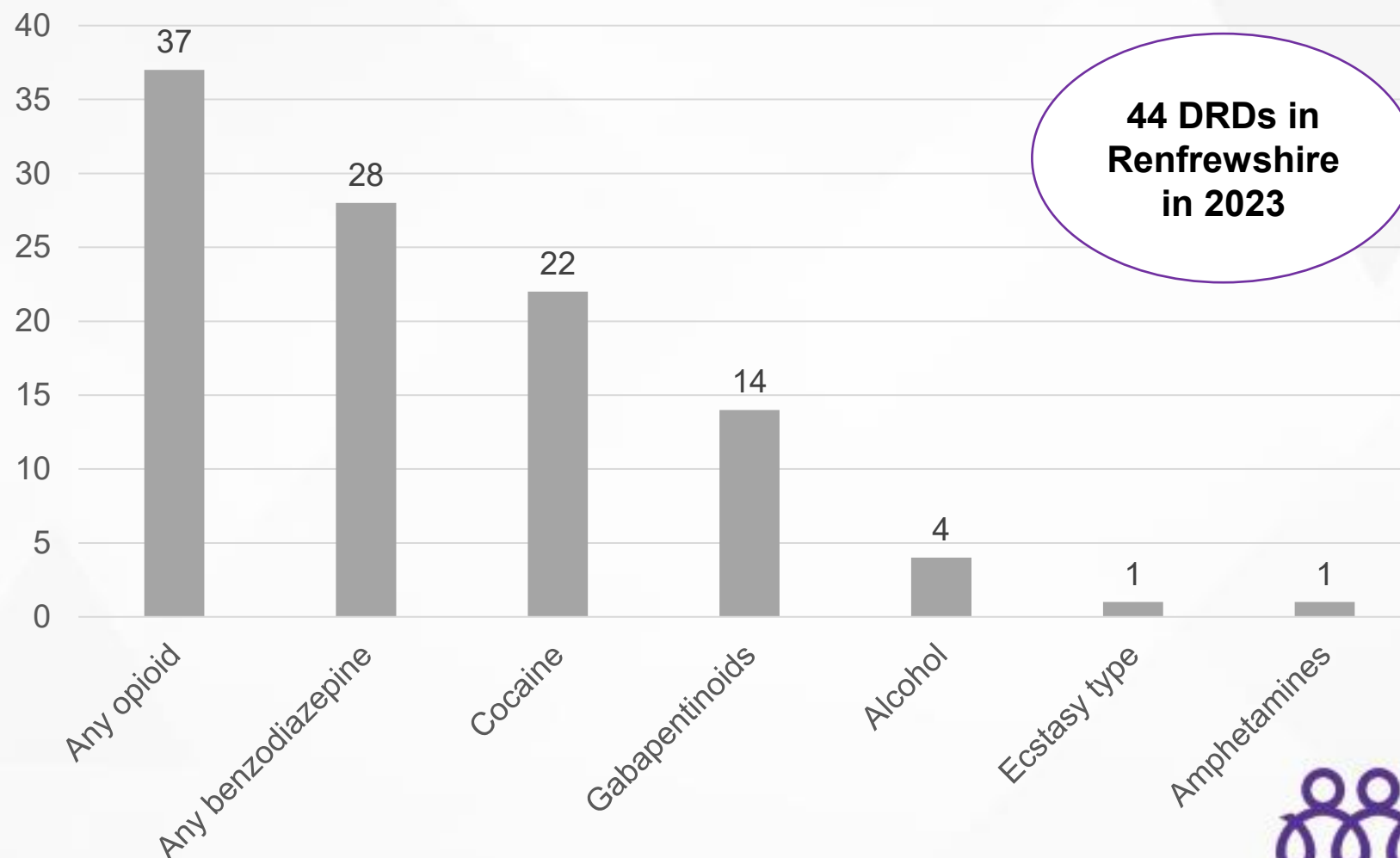


# Renfrewshire deaths: underlying health conditions



An underlying health condition contributed to the death in **more than half of** deaths, as well as drug toxicity.

# Renfrewshire DRDs 2022: substances implicated



# Alcohol & Drug Deaths – Review & Prevention Group

Renfrewshire has a multi-agency approach to reviewing drug and alcohol deaths

- ❖ dedicated posts for both an Alcohol and Drug Death Prevention
- ❖ a higher quality of information on circumstances surrounding deaths
- ❖ identifies learning opportunities and good practice
- ❖ identify trends and risk factors, in real time
- ❖ use this intelligence to provide a focus for the Alcohol and Drug Death Prevention Group

Alcohol and Drug Death Prevention Group

- ❖ interagency approach to applying the national policy and guidance - alongside local needs
- ❖ to mitigate the harms caused by drug use in Renfrewshire
- ❖ Action Planning - details the multi-agency activities required to achieve these outcomes as well as having a monitoring performance role
- ❖ The Group will also action any trend information and implement learning highlighted through the drug death review process



# Naloxone Delivery Group

A multi-agency Naloxone Delivery Group has been established with the goal of expanding Naloxone availability throughout Renfrewshire

- ❖ focuses on reducing barriers to receiving Naloxone,
- ❖ addressing stigma
- ❖ raising the profile of Naloxone
- ❖ providing more learning opportunities for overdose awareness
- ❖ target those most at risk of overdose through supply by local services including the Alcohol and Drug Recovery Service (ADRS), our Recovery Hub CIRCLE, the mobile harm reduction unit HaRRT, as well as local pharmacies
- ❖ well on our way to completing the target of 740 Naloxone kits for 2024/2025 – we have distributed 263 between April and June 2024 (36%)

# First Crisis Service

The existing crisis support provision provided by RAMH to be enhanced to include an alcohol and drug provision

- ❖ telephone the service between 9am-8pm Monday-Friday, and 9-5pm Saturday/Sunday, and public holidays
- ❖ 297 referrals were received for the period 19<sup>th</sup> April 2022 – 18<sup>th</sup> April 2024
- ❖ Those who accessed the service were most likely to be Male (62%); aged between 26-45 (54%)
- ❖ The main reason for referral was alcohol issues (41%)

# Harm Reduction Response Team (HaRRT)

## Harm Reduction Response Team (HaRRT)

- ❖ provides an assertive outreach mobile service to individuals affected by drugs and alcohol who are not in contact with treatment and care services
- ❖ reduce the harm caused by alcohol and drugs by connecting with people and providing non-judgemental support based on their needs
- ❖ provides a variety of harm reduction measures from wound care, Naloxone, dry blood spot testing etc
- ❖ responds to Near Fatal Overdose and will make the onward referral to treatment and support services
- ❖ currently operating 6 days per week and on 3 days until 8pm
- ❖ has a clearly defined pathway directly linked to ADRS to ensure barrier free access to ongoing treatment and care
- ❖ working in partnership with a variety of different services – from local Homeless Services, Police Scotland, Sandyford Sexual Health, Community Safety, Street Connect and First Crisis

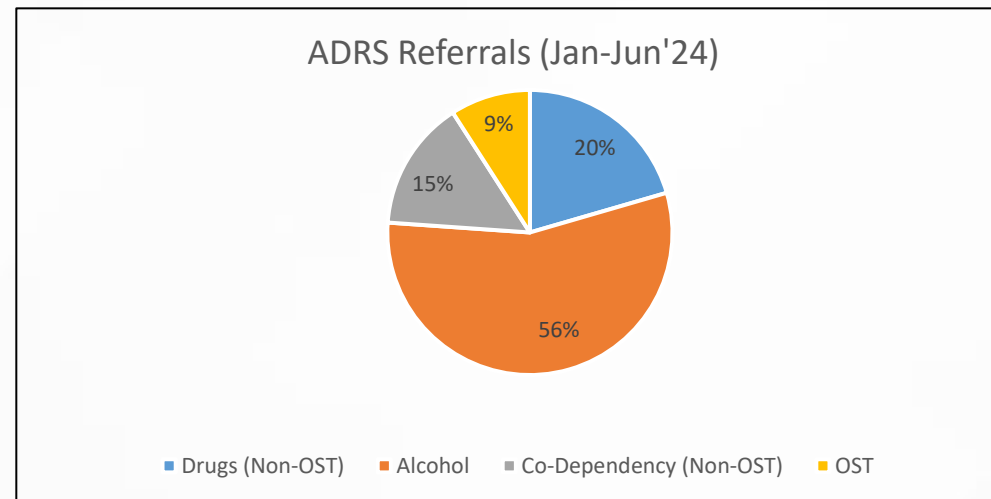
# Medicated Assisted Treatment (MAT) Standards

The MAT Standards aim to

- ❖ improve access, choice and care for people who experience drug problems across Scotland
- ❖ substantial improvement to access and choice of treatment for people with problematic drug use
- ❖ people within Renfrewshire can now access services and have the option to start Opiate Substitution Therapy the same day
- ❖ experiential evidence gathered shows particularly good performance with praise given to staff for their support, trauma-informed practice and consideration of wider health and wellbeing needs
- ❖ in 2023 almost 80% of all drug-related deaths in Scotland involve opiates
- ❖ of the 44 deaths in Renfrewshire in 2023 opiates were implicated in 84%
- ❖ as a result, we must focus our efforts on increasing the number of people in treatment
- ❖ this is a challenge given competing priorities with alcohol and drug treatment services

# ADRS Referrals January-June 2024

- ❖ From Jan to June 2024 the number of referrals to the Alcohol and Drug Recovery Service was 473
- ❖ 43 of those were for OST (9%)
- ❖ 263 referrals were in relation to alcohol problems (56%)
- ❖ 97 were for non opiate drugs (20%)
- ❖ 70 were for non opiate drugs and alcohol (15%)



# Alcohol

In response to the escalation in alcohol related harm

- ❖ Alcohol Recovery Pathway is in place in Renfrewshire and across Greater Glasgow and Clyde
- ❖ ensure the safe, effective delivery of practice
- ❖ person centred, low threshold access to Renfrewshire ADRS alcohol assessment and support
- ❖ reducing barriers to accessing care and treatment
- ❖ ensure a consistent least restrictive approach To assertively outreach all high risk service users
- ❖ offer range of detoxification options such a Home Detoxification, In Patient Detoxification or Residential Rehab
- ❖ protective medications for Service Users with additional complexities
- ❖ Recovery Opportunities via RCA, CIRCLE, Mutual Aid
- ❖ Learn from the Audit of Alcohol Specific Deaths that Karen is undertaking within Renfrewshire



# CIRCLE

CIRCLE Recovery Hub formally opened in October 2022 and is unique as supports people in their recovery from both Alcohol and Drugs and Mental Health and has strongly developed links and pathways with HSCP core CMHTs and ADRS

CIRCLE provides

- ❖ enhanced support to local people in recovery
- ❖ improved links with related partner services
- ❖ contributing to a Renfrewshire wide Recovery Orientated System of Care
- ❖ currently 230 PWLE actively engaged in Recovery focused work with CIRCLE
- ❖ average between 5-9 new referrals per week
- ❖ existing group work sessions are well attended and full in some instances
- ❖ recruiting volunteers to facilitate a Recovery Café
- ❖ continues to grow
- ❖ open the first community café in January/ February 2025 at Station 7, Johnstone



# Events

## **Overdose Awareness Day - 31st August 2024**

- ❖ Continuing the development of the Connected and Caring Renfrewshire legacy
- ❖ provides an opportunity to reflect on those affected by drug use
- ❖ Creates better understanding of overdose
- ❖ reduce the stigma of drug-related deaths
- ❖ create change that reduces the harms associated with drug use

## **Harm Reduction Campaign - 10 October 2024**

- ❖ first Harm Reduction Open Day at Back Sneddon Street
- ❖ aim was to ensure the people of Renfrewshire are fully aware of the services available to them, or to their friends or families who might need them

## **Recovery Walk – 12 Oct 2024**

- ❖ Renfrewshire hosted the national event in 2022
- ❖ this year it was held in Glasgow aim to make recovery visible, accessible and reduce stigma





# Next Steps

- ❖ still much work to be done against a complex backdrop
- ❖ changing drug use within Scotland and the emergence of new substances
- ❖ Scotland's complex relationship with alcohol
- ❖ financial climate - but we need to build on the extensive work already underway
- ❖ develop and embed these and additional preventative measures
- ❖ ADP Needs Assessment
- ❖ evaluate these findings and include required developments and actions within the Preventing Drug Deaths Action Plan

