



# Food4Fife

## Strategy & Action Plan 2024-2029

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# Foreword

The health we enjoy is firmly linked to the food we eat. Our health and wellbeing flourishes when we eat well.

We need our food to be environmentally sustainable, be affordable and accessible to everyone, and be healthy and nutritious. Unfortunately, we know all too well some people in Fife face stark choices about what and how they feed themselves and their families.

In Fife, we are fortunate that we produce some of the best food and drink in the world. Our food is enjoyed around the globe, and we have a strong food and drink sector.

The food system is complex, and to make changes that will improve sustainability, accessibility, and nutritional value we need to work across all parts of the food system. This means working in partnership with farmers and growers, food businesses, public procurement, and communities.

Food is such an important issue for everyone in Fife. Fife Council is delighted to jointly support this strategy together with NHS Fife and the wider Food4Fife Partnership. Partnership has been key to developing the strategy and will be even more important now we come to delivery.

**Cllr. Jan Wincott**  
Fife Council Spokesperson,  
Environment & Climate Change



Increasing awareness of the climate emergency and biodiversity crisis means more people want to know where their food comes from; how it has been grown and by whom; the food miles it has travelled; how it has been processed; and the impact it will have on their health and wellbeing. Our food strategy aims to support the changes needed across the food system to enjoy fresh, seasonal, delicious, and affordable food based on sustainable use of our land and assets.

I have been very fortunate in the last two years in chairing the Food4Fife Partnership to have worked with people across Fife who are passionate about changing our food system for the better and benefit of everyone.

In 2030, when we look back at our journey, what will be the story we tell about our land, our health and food? This strategy is one of our first steps to create a sustainable food culture for a healthy Fife.

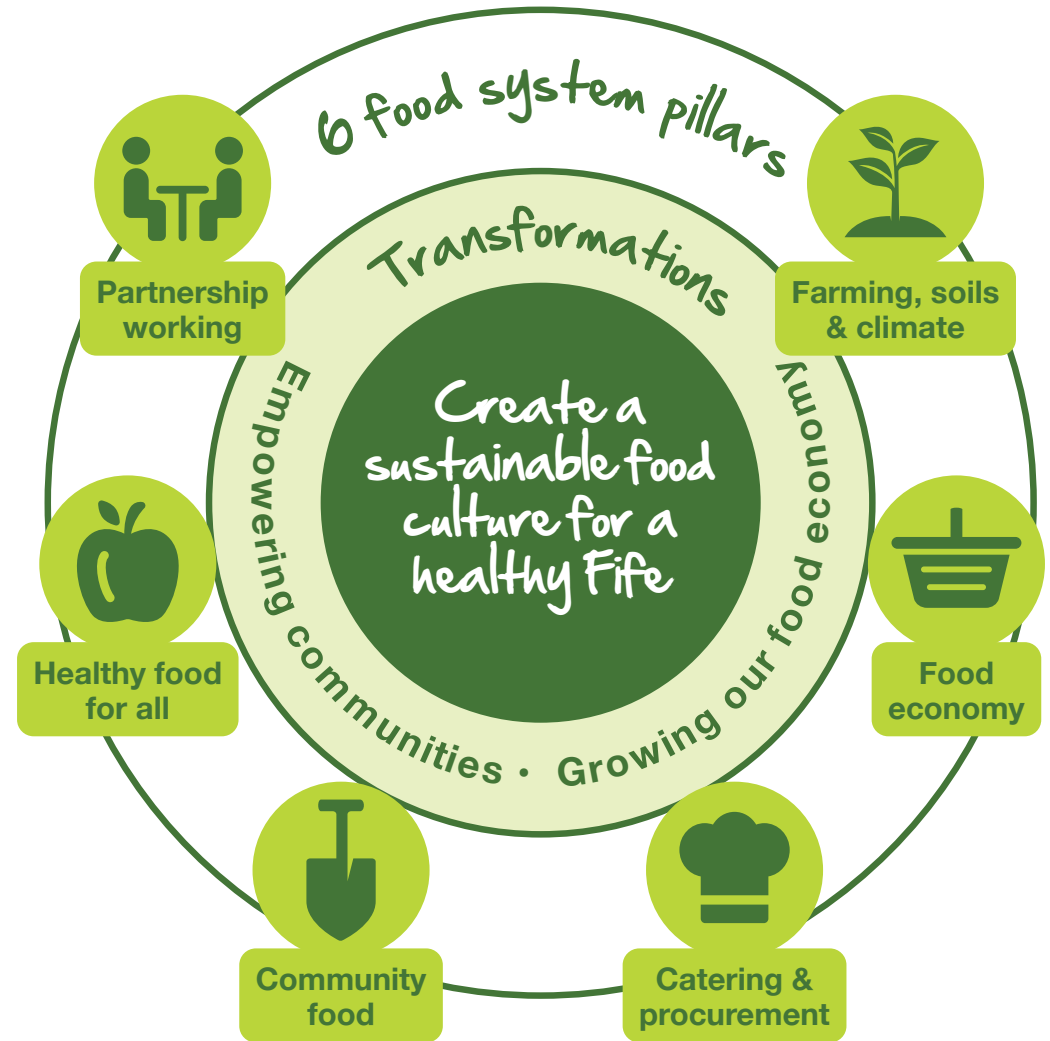
**Jo-Anne Valentine**  
NHS Fife  
Chair of the Food4Fife Partnership



# Our Food4Fife Vision

In August 2021, organisations from across Fife came together to launch the Food4Fife Partnership. The partnership recognised a need to collaborate. They committed themselves to work across boundaries and disciplines to address the key challenges for Food in Fife. The Partnership developed and agreed the vision to:

Create a sustainable  
food culture for a  
healthy Fife



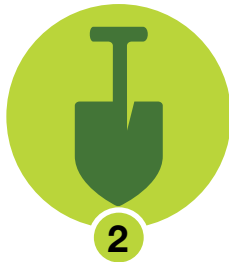
# 6 pillar food system framework

To support our food vision we have created a 6-pillar framework using the **Sustainable Food Places** model. Each pillar represents one part of Fife's food system. This framework highlights how the pillars (parts of the food system) connect and interact. Each individual pillar has its own vision statement and chapter, see pages 14-25. The chapters summarize the food situation in Fife, highlighting the ambition, direction of travel and high-level actions.



## Healthy food for all

Working to stop and prevent food poverty by providing a dignified, fair, and just access to healthy and affordable food for all.



## Community food

Empowering Fife's food community and citizenship through communication and increased access to growing spaces, food skills and education.



## Food economy

Supporting local food producers and suppliers to create a food economy and culture that supports a real living wage, that's local, high quality and innovative with good career prospects.



## Catering & procurement

Using Fife's public procurement to support community wealth building. We will bring local food into our public buildings including schools, hospitals, and learning institutions.



## Farming, soils & climate

Growing food in Fife that is climate friendly and climate ready, reduces waste, redistributes excess and supports soil health and biodiversity.



## Partnership working

Working in partnership across all parts of the food system, driving positive change through leadership and a Fife-wide food strategy.

**Environmental protection will be a focus across all pillars.**

Food4Fife Partnership is a member of the Sustainable Food Places network in Scotland.

# Our challenges

**There are several challenges we need to overcome to ensure Fife's food nourishes our people and planet.**

The way we currently produce, distribute, process, buy and waste our food does the following.

- Creates up to 30% of global climate emissions<sup>1</sup>.
- Is a driver for biodiversity loss, soil degradation and the nature crisis.
- Is linked to our health crisis of obesity and diabetes.
- Is a driver in food waste and plastic pollution.
- Does not always cover the full cost of food production.

From a climate, nature, health, and waste perspective we need to change our present food system<sup>2</sup>. If we do not, as we are reliant on food imports, we risk the ability to feed ourselves as the effects of climate change increase. Climate change will affect the global food systems ability to maintain supplies and reasonable costs. Changing a system cannot happen overnight. However, action needs to start now.

We are fortunate in Fife. We have many sustainable food and drinks companies whose excellent work we can build on to make these bigger changes. To achieve this and meet our Food4Fife Vision this strategy looks to deliver two key transformations.

1 Climate Change and Nature | Sustain (sustainweb.org)

2 Brief 2 What is the food system.  
A food policy perspective (city.ac.uk)



If people are eating nutritious food it impacts on everything from the NHS to school attainment to how often people visit the dentist. It links back to how we produce food and the effect that has on the environment.

Sustainable farmers, Claire Pollock  
and Nikki Storrar Ardress Farm  
[ardrossfarm.co.uk](http://ardrossfarm.co.uk)



# Strategic transformations

There are the two strategic transformations providing a pathway and priority actions to meet our ambitions.

The tables below show the related pillars and their outcomes. This would help us to monitor progress.




## Empowering communities

Transforming local action around growing, healthy food and access.

Pillar	Outcomes
 <b>Healthy food for all</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Reduced food poverty</li><li>● Increased health and wellbeing</li><li>● Improved access to food</li></ul>
 <b>Community food</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Increased capacity around food growing, cooking and diets</li><li>● Increased land available for growing and orchards</li><li>● Increased opportunities for social gathering, volunteering and community cohesion</li></ul>

## Growing our Food economy

Transforming local action for Fife business, employment, procurement, and the environment.

Pillar	Outcomes
 <b>Food economy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Increased resilience and business security for local producers and Fife's food and drinks industry</li><li>● Increased jobs and skills, fair pricing and wages</li><li>● Increased community wealth</li></ul>
 <b>Catering &amp; procurement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Improved local food security and supplies through reduced reliance on imported foods</li><li>● Increased use of local food</li></ul>
 <b>Farming, soil &amp; climate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Reduced carbon footprint and nature degradation</li><li>● Improved adaptation to unavoidable climate change</li><li>● Reduced food waste</li></ul>

# Transformation 1 Empowering our communities

The aim is to reduce food poverty by providing a dignified, fair, and just access to healthy, culturally appropriate, food for all, either fresh or cooked. Building on what already exists across the region we can develop projects further to create an interconnected community infrastructure that offers **places to grow, places to learn** and **places to access food**.

This transformation takes a long-term view to reducing food poverty and links to NHS public health targets, NHS Green Space Strategy and the Allotment & Community Growing Strategy outcomes. This supports, but does not repeat, emergency projects linked to Fife Council's Tackling Poverty & Preventing Crisis work.

## Two areas of work can be developed

- Increasing the community food infrastructure across all local areas in Fife to ensure places to grow and enable food access
- Increasing opportunities for training and capacity building to facilitate learning

Places to grow could offer a range of different spaces across Fife from community gardens, school and church spaces, allotments through to markets gardens. These spaces could also include different facilities to ensure Places to access and Places to learn. For example, community shops, training kitchens, public diners, greenhouses, storage, and distribution options.

## Example project - Market garden with facilities

One example of a combination of all of these could be a Market garden with facilities project. This would be a large infrastructure project that could ensure access to food across the region. A flexible modular design that could include all parts for learning, growing, and access, or be designed appropriate for each site. Projects could be in partnership with allotments, community gardens and existing organisations such as FCCAN's (Fife Communities Climate Action Network) or create new opportunities where there are food access gaps.



Amanda, volunteer cook at Grow West Fife. In 2023 volunteer cooks at Grow West Fife provided over 1000 free meals.

[www.growwestfife.org](http://www.growwestfife.org)



# Actions - what we will do

## Stage 1

### Research and survey

- Understand what land is available across Fife and how it can be used, with a focus on areas of deprivation.
- Identify existing facilities within the seven areas of Fife.
- Identify funding resources for future project delivery before progressing to stage 2

## Stage 2

Develop business cases, funding and partnerships for the following:

- **Places to grow** - Market gardens, community gardens and greenhouses (heated potentially by recoverable heat). Produce to be ideally organic.
- **Places to learn** - Training kitchens and gardens offering courses and information on how to cook and grow food and what is a healthy diet.
- **Places to access food**, fresh and cooked such as community facilities, shops, social supermarkets and public diners.

## Stage 3

Develop business cases for appropriate food storage, freezing and distribution options at strategic sites across the region. Storage and freezer opportunities increase availability of seasonal produce and reduce food waste. Distribution hubs close to production sites will enable food deliveries to charities, food banks, pantries as well as procurement, hospitality, and tourism markets.

## Outputs

Outputs from the Market garden with facilities project could include:

- Fresh seasonal fruit and veg available through the community shop /social supermarket to community members and food banks, hubs, pantries etc
- Cooked food to eat in or takeaway via the public diners and training kitchens
- Training in growing, cooking and what is a healthy diet via the training kitchen and gardens
- Creating opportunities for jobs and training such as managing and running a market garden
- Volunteering opportunities in the kitchens, diners and gardens
- Community spaces and places within nature for community gathering, cohesion and wellbeing
- Storage and distribution options for food deliveries locally
- Increased awareness of local food through marketing and communication campaigns

This transformation project links the **Healthy Food for All** and **Community Food** pillars work.

## Project Timeline

**2024**

Undertake research and survey

**2025**

Secure partnerships and funding

**2026/29**

Build infrastructure  
Run campaigns

# Transformation 2

## Growing our economy

Our aim with this second transformation project is to support delivery of **Fife's Economic Strategy 2023-30** with the following:

- Maximise public procurement of local food by developing and shortening our food supply chains. This can support Fife's self-sufficiency
- Support local suppliers to deliver into local markets of public procurement, hospitality and tourism at scale. By doing so it can secure jobs and skills within Fife's food and drinks industry. It can also support the recovery and growth of Fife's tourism and hospitality sector by promoting Fife as a food region with food trials and agritourism
- Increase markets for climate and nature friendly food. This can help protect Fife's soils, decouple food energy from fossil fuels all of which can reduce climate emissions from Fife's food system.

Fife remains a breadbasket for Scotland and is in a strong position to take this work forward. Community Wealth Building offers Fife many opportunities to ensure the local food system works well for local people and that any wealth generated by the local food economy stays in Fife.

### Example project - Public Procurement Project

This could look at increasing the amount of local food that is purchased through public procurement. The working group for this project is the Fife Wide Procurement Group, which includes Fife Council, NHS Fife, St Andrews University and Fife College.

## Actions - what we will do

### Stage 1

Undertake a 4-stage information and modelling project to understand the following:

- Supply and demand of food for public procurement, hospitality, and tourism markets,
- Risks to food and drinks businesses from climate impacts
- Gaps, and opportunities in infrastructure to enable local food markets
- Costs and community wealth building potential

### Stage 2

Increase the number of primary food producers (farmers, growers) and processors we work with and link them with the Food from Fife network, our Fife wide public procurement teams, Fife Council's Business & Employability Team, and Fife's wholesalers

### Stage 3

Increase purchase of local produce through public procurement, hospitality, and tourism markets

### Stage 4

Strengthen food markets both locally and Scotland wide for climate and nature friendly produce



Falkland Kitchen Farm is a 5-acre organic market garden in Fife. They grow over 70 varieties of fruit, veg and herbs selling to local retailers, restaurants and a veg box scheme.  
[falklandkitchenfarm.co.uk](http://falklandkitchenfarm.co.uk)

## Outputs

This will support our understanding of:

- What food is grown where and how much there is
- Risks to food production in terms of soils, drought, and flooding
- Gaps and opportunities for a local food infrastructure in terms of processing, storage, refrigeration, distribution, and funding
- Opportunities for economic growth and resilience

Our **Food Economy, Farming, Soils and Climate** and **Catering and Food Procurement** pillars summarize further details.

## Project Timeline

### 2024

- Stage 1 of information and modelling project
- Increase clusters of food producers
- Increase procurement of local food

### 2025

- Stage 2 and 3 of information and modelling project
- Increase procurement of local food
- Plan partnership and funding for local food infrastructure

### 2026/29

- Stage 4 of information and modelling project
- Increase procurement of local food
- Increased climate and nature friendly food markets
- Build infrastructure



Eats Rosyth is a community led charity who grow and share food, reduce waste, help the environment, and improve food education. They have an orchard, community garden and hub that sells and serves food.

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

# Our Pillars

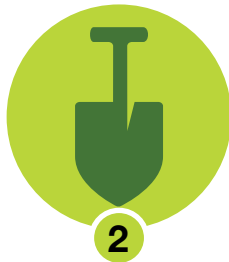
Each of the following chapters show one of the six food Pillars, noting its ambition. Each chapter was developed by a multi-agency working group contributing a wealth of knowledge and perspective on Fife's food system.

The Food4Fife strategy has been developed by the Food4Fife partnership. The partnership work has been supported by the **Sustainable Food Places** (SFP) network and **Nourish Scotland** who facilitate food partnerships across Scotland.



## Healthy food for all

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## Community food

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## Food economy

Supporting local food producers and suppliers to create a food economy and culture that supports a real living wage, that's local, high quality and innovative with good career prospects.



## Catering & procurement

Using Fife's public procurement to support community wealth building. We will bring local food into our public buildings including schools, hospitals, and learning institutions.



## Farming, soils & climate

Growing food in Fife that is climate friendly and climate ready, reduces waste, redistributes excess and supports soil health and biodiversity.



## Partnership working

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**Environmental protection will be a focus across all pillars.**

# Healthy Food for All



Working to stop and prevent food poverty by providing a dignified, fair, and just access to healthy and affordable food for all.

Poor diet is a major risk factor for obesity, cancer, coronary heart disease and diabetes. Overweight and obesity is UK's biggest cause of cancer after smoking.

NHS Fife Director of Public Health Report 2020 and 2021 (nhsfife.org)

The ambition for Fife is nobody goes hungry; that everyone has enough resources to eat healthily; and nobody should have to make choices between heating and eating. The right to good and culturally appropriate food is not a privilege. The right is for everyone no matter who they are, what they do or where they live.

Key to achieving this is to change people's food environment. This strategy puts in place steps to enable these rights.

The Healthy Food for All Pillar builds on previous work in Fife. Research carried out in 2017 estimated that approximately 24,000 adults in Fife were experiencing food insecurity<sup>3</sup>. The covid pandemic and the cost of living crisis have brought the needs of people facing hardship, and the diversity of community and institutional responses, into even sharper focus.

3. Food Poverty and Food Insecurity in Fife (2017)

4. NHS Fife Director of Public Health Report 2020-21

5. NHS Fife Children and Young People in Fife (2023)



Macauley's Fruit & Veg Merchant, Burntisland

Across Scotland, gradual increases in overweight levels have been seen since 2011 and were at their highest levels since 2003 in 2019.

Poor nutrition is a major risk factor for obesity and for a range of chronic diseases including cancer, heart disease and Type 2 diabetes. As with other health outcomes, inequalities are stark. Obesity rates among adults, for example, are higher in Scotland's most deprived areas compared to the least deprived.

There is also evidence of the strong links between nutrition and mental health.

68% of adults in Fife were overweight with 31% being obese<sup>3</sup>

23% of Primary 1 children in Fife were at risk of being overweight or obese<sup>4</sup>

Prevalence of Type 2 diabetes is three times greater in the most deprived areas than the least

Health inequalities in Fife have increased as a result of the pandemic and are likely to be exacerbated further by the economic crisis. We need to act urgently to ensure all of Fife's citizens have the best opportunity for good health. This includes work in rural areas, where pockets of poverty and deprivation can be masked by Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) data, and limited access to services and transport is a significant challenge.

Tackling Poverty and Preventing Crisis is a key priority in the **Plan for Fife 2021-2024 Update**, and a significant programme of reform is underway with the aim of ensuring people get the help they need, when they need it. This includes actions around benefit take-up and income maximisation, support with fuel and childcare costs, and providing early, joined-up support through a 'no wrong door' approach. This part of the Food4Fife Strategy references the Tackling Poverty and Preventing Crisis programme of work but aims not to duplicate it. Instead, it sets out actions where there is a clear and direct relationship with food.

While our goal is to end food insecurity and the need for emergency food provision, this plan recognises the need for, and the vital role played by, providers of free and low-cost food. In particular, those providers mitigating food insecurity who are rooted in and led by communities. We want to ensure that provision is adequate, appropriate, sustainable, and dignified.

The Healthy Food for All actions include work to build knowledge and skills around food in our communities and increasing understanding of the impact of good nutrition on physical and mental health wellbeing. This Pillar and the Community Food Pillar's work will be closely linked particularly around training and skills.

Food is about much more than physical nutrition. Food is a vehicle for bringing people together, building connections and strengthening communities.

The events of the last few years have affected food security, cooking and eating habits, and social connections. But with these challenges come opportunities to:

- Understand, explore and work together
- Look differently at our habits and responses
- Build on the best of what has happened so far
- Take more coordinated action to ensure healthy food for all.

### High level actions

- Ensure everyone has access to healthy and culturally appropriate food through increased food infrastructure and public food services (schools, care homes, colleges, university, and hospitals).
- Support research and data collection around the causes, solutions, and monitoring of food poverty, and ensure communication across all services.
- Increase communication campaigns and capacity building to support people toward eating healthily, including food preparation and cooking skills.

Healthy Food for All has been written in collaboration with Local Welfare Reform & Anti-Poverty Groups, Food Insecurity Network, Health promotion, Food and Health teams NHS, Communities & Neighbourhoods staff and the Food4Fife Partnership.

# Community Food



Empowering Fife's food community and citizenship through communication and increased access to growing spaces, food skills and education.

Community food encourages people to grow their own fresh produce, stay active, feel connected to nature, and be part of their community.

The Fife Allotment and Community Growing Strategy highlights that more people want to grow their own fruit, vegetables, flowers, and herbs. To do this people need access to land, in ways that are safe and sustainable, and to be supported with the requisite skills and knowledge. Community growing should be accessible to all who want to take part. This means having opportunities suitable for people of all ages, abilities, and life circumstances.

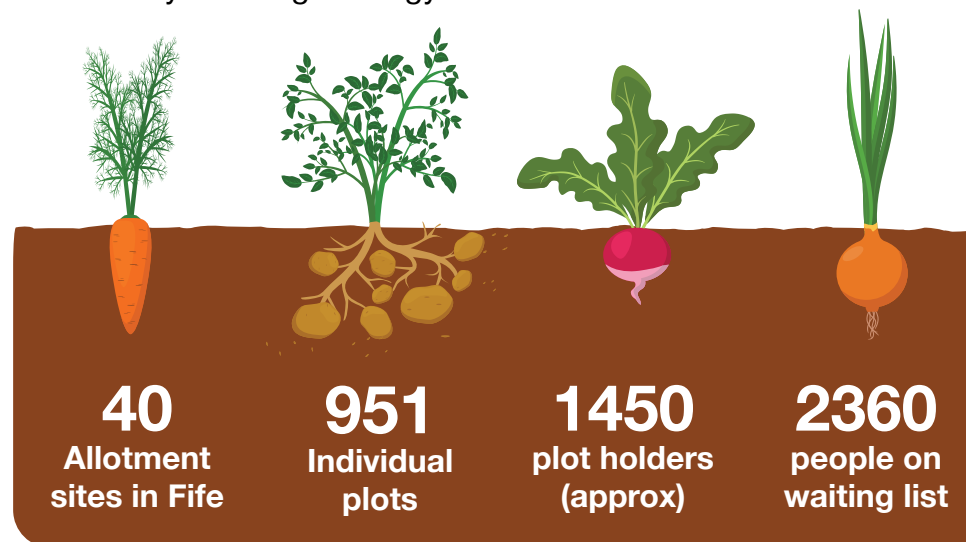
There are many different forms of community growing. These include market gardens, allotments, orchards, edible hedgerows, and growing spaces in schools, churches, health centres, as well as town and village bloom groups. This strategy looks to support people to access the space, which is right for them, whether that is an individual plot or joining a community organisation. Actions also encourage redistribution and sharing of surplus food to where it is needed. A challenge going forward will be to find appropriate land, enabling access to it and ensuring change of use for growing.

Wareing Altyre Plot



This strategy builds on the previous Fife Allotment Strategy by expanding the remit to include community growing. By doing this, the Community Food Pillar seeks to empower Fife's food community and citizenship. Through communication and increased access to growing spaces, food skills and education we will look to grow the Good Food Movement across Fife.

The Community Food pillar actions are led by Fife's Allotment and Community Growing Strategy 2024.





## High level actions

- Expand, create, develop and manage sites for growing food via a range of options from people's gardens through to markets gardens.
- Create capacity through developing horticulture and food preparation skills.
- Encourage participation across the region to create a joined up good food movement.
- Support communities' groups to start, sustain and build on best practise.
- Work in partnership with community groups ,NHS Fife, local businesses, and third sector organisations

People Learning About Nature in Tayport (PLANT) has been working on projects bringing people together to grow food and flowers, while reducing carbon emissions and enhancing Tayport's natural environment.

[tayportgarden.org](http://tayportgarden.org)



The Community Food pillar links to the **Farming, Soils & Climate** and the **Healthy Food for All** pillars.

Community Food has been written in collaboration with Fife Council Communities and Corporate Development, the Community Projects Team, Community Food Working Group, the Food Insecurity Network, and the Food4Fife Partnership.



St Monans - First allotment site with a community orchard linked to new housing and supported by developers. Used by local school and community groups.

# Food Economy



Supporting local food producers and suppliers to create a food economy and culture that supports living wages, that's local, high quality and innovative with good career prospects.

This chapter sets out why entrepreneurs and businesses in Fife's food economy need support to become more sustainable to ensure long term resilience.

'**Food From Fife**' Network, the regional food group supported by Fife Council and Scotland Food & Drink, brings together local businesses, promoting the quality and variety of their offerings. It includes top restaurants, neighbourhood cafes; resort hotels, B&B's; artisan producers, large-scale manufacturers, markets, festivals; and everything in between. This network and their website along with The **Food4Fife** website will be key communication tools for positive change moving forward.

Fife's food economy has shown remarkable resilience over the past few years, with pressures from Brexit and Covid impacting significantly on all within the sector. Its inherent entrepreneurial strength gives confidence. Its actors, with appropriate support, can continue to be innovative ensuring businesses across all sections of the food system.



**Bowhouse** A food hub for small businesses to collaborate and call home.  
[www.bowhousefife.com](http://www.bowhousefife.com)

**Fife's food and drink sector is a considerable wealth generator for the area.**

**1,500**  
businesses (2021)

**15.8%**  
of Fife's businesses

Annual turnover  
**£550m**

Supporting  
**14,800**  
jobs

Home to  
**524 farms**  
of 50 hectares or more

**1,530**  
smaller farms and  
small holdings

It is clear; however, climate change will impact adversely on the sector, in primary production and secondary manufacturing areas, processing, storage, and logistics. Fife's food and drink sector underpins Fife's tourism and retail sectors. Any stress within the food and drink sector causes disruptive ripples in these other industries.

For the food system in Fife to continue to produce, process and get to market sustainable products, it requires long-term systemic change where every sector of the bioeconomy adapts their practices to successfully meet the future.

Putting entrepreneurs and enterprises at the heart of local economic development and promoting them to consumers ensures buying healthy and sustainable food becomes an easy choice. This then supports jobs, businesses, and communities which in turn contributes to the regeneration of our town and city centres.

Identifying the changes required starts with an analysis of how the business model for the whole sector currently operates. This strategic analysis and research has started and will help to identify the correct programmes of support for individual businesses.



[scotlandthebread.org](http://scotlandthebread.org)

GH Barnett, Anstruther

The **Fife Economic Strategy (2023-30)** sets a vision for a vibrant and resilient Fife economy which is Stronger, Greener and Fairer.

## High level actions

- Further analysis to develop products and programmes of support for businesses to sustainably start, operate, grow, and trade.
- Support food and drinks business development to achieve net zero and build resilience.
- Undertake information collection and modelling projects to support development of local food infrastructure opportunities.
- Explore and develop new climate and nature friendly food and drink markets.

Food Economy pillar links closely with the **Farming, Soils & Climate** and **Catering & Food Procurement** pillars.

This Food Economy Pillar has been written in collaboration with Fife Council Business and Employability Service and the Food4Fife Partnership.



[www.csinclairfish.com](http://www.csinclairfish.com)

# Catering & Food Procurement



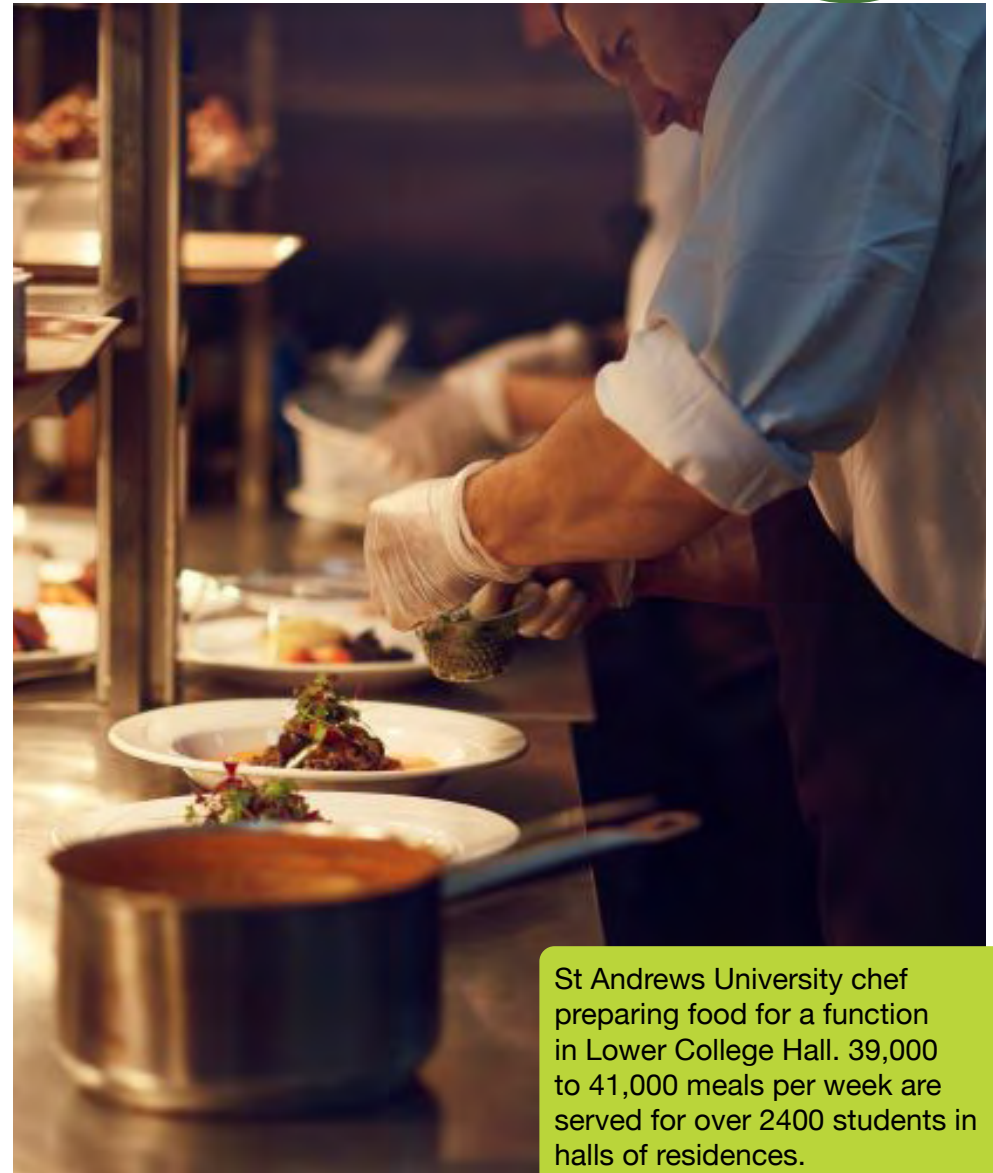
Using Fife's public procurement for community wealth building we will bring local food into our public buildings including schools, hospitals, and learning institutions.

Food procurement in Scotland is changing. There is pressure to become more agile in the face of national and global change, as well as new commitments to use the public purse to deliver greater public and environmental good.

Catering and procurement provide uniquely powerful levers for promoting good food. It has vast potential, and therefore importance, in transforming catering across a wide range of settings, from nurseries, schools and colleges through hospitals and care homes, workplace canteens, and smaller scale catering outlets.

Through this change it will then be possible to not only improve the eating habits of many thousands of people but also to create the large-scale demand for healthy, sustainable, and local food. This underpins a fundamental shift in the food production and supply system in Fife and offers opportunities for improving the local economy and community wealth building.

Collaboration between catering, procurement and menu teams, suppliers, growers, and distribution contractors, will be key to enable change.



St Andrews University chef preparing food for a function in Lower College Hall. 39,000 to 41,000 meals per week are served for over 2400 students in halls of residences.

## High level actions

- Develop and embed approaches to increase procurement of local food.
- Work with suppliers and Fife Council's Business & Employability Service to support local food producers into the supply chain,
- Enable procurement contracts to include community benefits and promote sustainability in line with best practice and regulation requirements.
- Ensure best value for health as well as budgets. Ensure all opportunities to achieve health and environmental improvements are considered
- Explore alternative approaches for procurement. Consider commercial elements and practicing a risk minimisation approach
- Carry out research pilots to understand local market, cost, and health implications.
- Improve collaborative working across organisations and partnerships.

### Public sector annual spend on food procurement

Fife Council	NHS Fife	St Andrews Uni
<b>£6.7m</b>	<b>£5.1m</b>	<b>£3.5m</b>
<b>4.26m</b>	<b>18,677</b>	
School meals served per year	Free school meals per day	

To reduce the environmental impacts of procurement activity, the Fife Wide Procurement Team will utilise the Scottish Government's 'Procurement Journey' guidance. Adopting these tools and best practice principles across all partners will make a real difference and support efforts to tackle the climate emergency. The procurement of ethically traded products will also be considered, encouraged and monitored as appropriate.

The Procurement pillar works very closely with the **Farming, Soils and Climate** and **Food Economy** pillars.

Fife has established a Fife wide procurement group who collaborated on this strategy. Members represent Fife Council, Fife College, NHS Fife, the University of St Andrews, Fife Council Catering Service and the Food4Fife Partnership.



HNC professional cookery students preparing for dinner service at The Academy, the training restaurant at Fife college.

# Farming, Soils & Climate



Growing food in Fife that is climate friendly and climate ready, reduces waste, redistributes excess and supports soil health and biodiversity.

Fife has an abundance of seasonal food and a strong food and drinks business network that delivers world class food production. Many Fife farmers are leading the way in sustainable and regenerative practices. The Scottish Government has set out a vision for Scotland as a leader in sustainable and regenerative farming<sup>6</sup>. Farmers will be supported to move in this direction through new legislation. This strategy supports the growth of local markets for sustainable, regenerative and organic food produce.

The transition of Scottish agriculture to net zero will need guidance and support. Two reports offering information and targets include, **Farming for 1.5 degrees a transformational pathway** and **WWF Scotland report, Delivering for net zero**.

The Food4Fife partnership will work with Fife farmers, NFU and Scottish government to support reductions and improve business resilience to the impacts of unavoidable climate change.



View the **Fields of Hope** film made with Fife Farmers, which premiered at COP26. Visit [our.fife.scot/food](http://our.fife.scot/food)

<sup>6</sup> Agriculture and Rural Communities (Scotland) Bill



Balbirnie Home Farms  
[www.balbirnie.com](http://www.balbirnie.com)

Tackling the nature and climate emergencies requires us to redefine the role of farmers. For decades we've been asking them to deliver food, and they have stepped up to that challenge despite many difficulties. Now we're asking them to deliver for nature and climate too, because the path to net zero has to go through a farm gate.

Nigel Miller, former president of the NFUS

Sustainable farming is critical to maintain and protect biodiversity. Action is also needed to improve the structure, retention, and health of soil to:

- Improve water retention, helping to reduce impacts of flooding and soil loss,
- Increase the capacity of the soil to store carbon (sequestration),
- Reduce harmful agrochemical inputs and run off and maintain soils fertility.
- Build capacity and share knowledge

The strategy supports developing networks of landowners and farm clusters/groups, in Fife, to work in partnership. This will be key to bring about positive change.

Labour shortages are negatively impacting Fife's Food and drinks sector. It will be crucial to work with schools' colleges and landowners to encourage a new generation of land workers and food producers.

The impacts of unavoidable climate change bring risks to food supplies. Fife needs to reduce its dependence on imported food. Understanding the scale of food production and consumption in Fife is critical to our local food economy and food security. This will require an information and modelling project to map resilience, gaps, and opportunities; to inform required investment.

Food waste needs to be reduced across all the Pillars in this strategy, from growing right through to eating. Wasted food from each stage wastes all the energy and resources that went into growing, processing, transporting, and cooking it. Closing the loop in the food system and applying circular economy principles to the whole food and drink sector will be important. Action will link to the **Zero Waste Fife Resources Strategy**.

## High level actions

- Expanding the network of farmers working together across Fife to support action within this pillar.
- Undertake necessary research work to redistribute unused food and ensure households take action to reduce food waste.
- Undertake the information and modelling project to understand market scope and infrastructure gaps and opportunity
- Understand what food production areas are at risk of flooding and or drought and recommend adaptation methods for food resilience and security.

Farming, Soils and Climate chapter has been written in collaboration with Fife farmers, members of the Fork to Farm Dialogues, and the Food4Fife Partnership. The **Farming, Soils & Climate** pillar works very closely with the **Food Economy** and **Procurement** pillars.



Sheep grazing on a herbal ley (temporary grasslands made up of legume, herb and grass species) at Kilburns Farm, Balmerino

# Partnership working



## Food4Fife Partnership and Governance

The Food for Fife Partnership, strategy goals and action are recognised and supported nationally by Scottish Government and local policy and legislation.

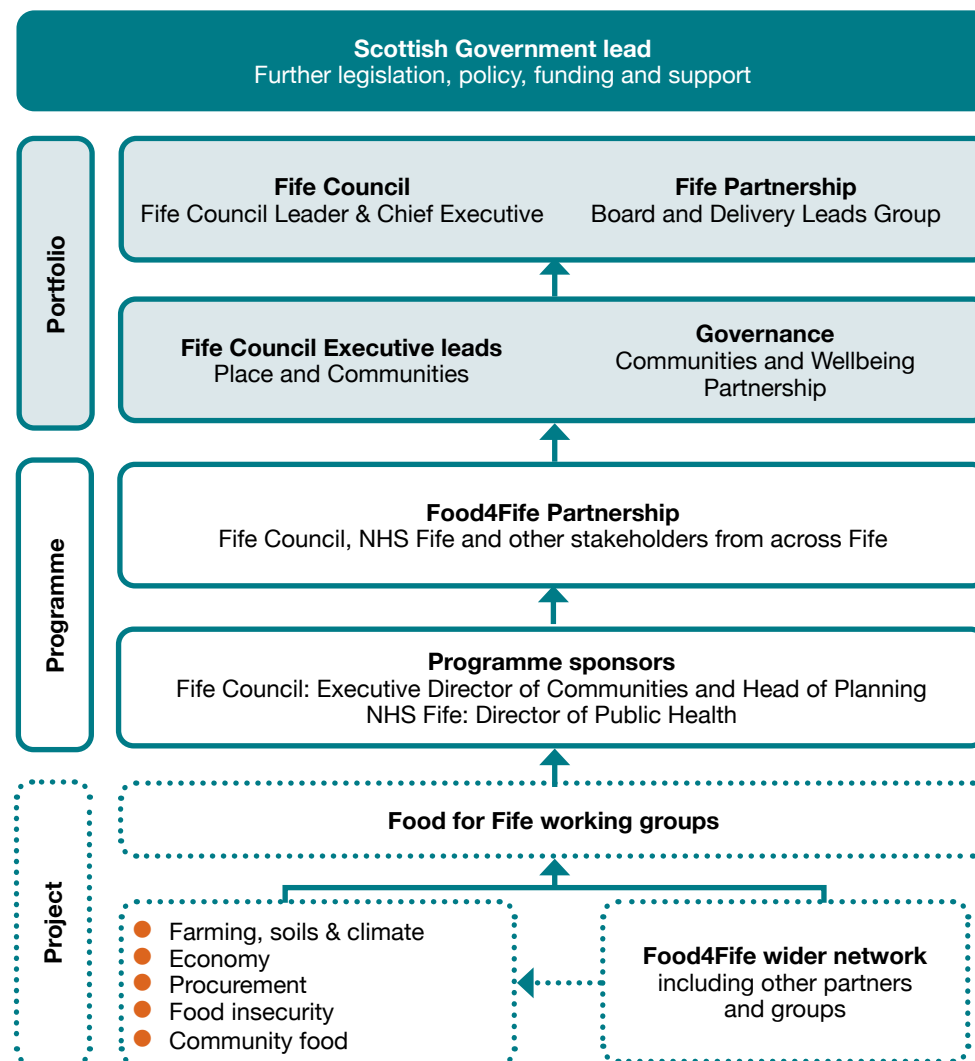
The **Good Food Nation (Scotland) Act 2022** placed a duty on the Scottish Government and certain public bodies, including the local authority and health board, to produce a Good Food Nation plan. Public bodies must report progress every 2 years and review the plan every 5 years. Once the relevant provisions of the Good Food Nation (Scotland) Act requiring relevant authorities to publish a good food nation plan have been commenced we will use the Food4Fife strategy as a valuable first step towards producing our own good food nation plan

To transform Fife's food system into one that is healthy and sustainable, Fife needs a joined-up strategic approach and committed long-term collaboration. This needs to happen between individuals and organisations across every sector and at every level; from community grassroots and third sector organisations to businesses and council leaders.

Legislation, policy, support and finance around agriculture, farming and food are fast-evolving areas. Coordination of these areas and input to national legislation and policy will be through the Food4Fife Partnership and Governance Pillar.

See **Appendix 2** for details of partnership members.

The below diagram illustrates the Food4Fife Partnership governance structure.





## Implementation and monitoring progress

The Food4Fife Strategy actions will be monitored through the Food4Fife Partnership governance structure. There will be ongoing updates with reporting on each of the Pillars. The action plans will respond and develop each year as a living agile document.

## Increasing our Resources, Knowledge and Skills

There is increasing pressure on public service budgets, a limited amount of wider funding available, and an increasing demand for services with local communities keen to develop their capacity for food related activities.

The Good Food Nation is a new duty with no new funding as yet announced. A limited number of Food4Fife Strategy actions will be supported within existing NHS Fife and Fife Council work areas. The Food4Fife Partnership recognises the need to explore new funding models beyond existing Fife public sector resources.

Staff capacity for delivery of projects is also under pressure across the public and 3rd Sectors. Communication and skills development will be crucial to delivering both action and behavioural change. Partnership working will be key to wider delivery.

### Example of partner change projects and actions

- Climate Action Fife - Climate Friendly Food
- Climate Action Fife - Mapping Fife's fruit trees
- Go Falkland - Falkland Stewardship Trust event
- NHS Fife Greenspace strategy and actions
- Fife Council Climate Fife 2024 strategy and actions

## High level actions:

- Support administration and governance of the Food4Fife Partnership to deliver and meet requirements of Good Food Nation (Scotland) Act 2022.
- Responding, where agreed, to food related legislation and policy.
- Reporting annually to NHS Fife and Fife Council
- Developing a Food4Fife Partnership communications plan enabling collaborative working across the Pillars.
- Secure funding opportunities for partnership projects



**Greener Kirkcaldy's**  
Community Training  
Garden at Ravenscraig  
Walled Garden



# Partnership working

**Climate Action Fife** is a partnership project that empowers individuals to take climate action. The **Fife Climate Hub** empowers community-led action on climate.

The Hub is an FCCAN (Fife Community Climate Action Network) project. Members of the FCCAN take action on the climate crisis through tree planting, nature protection, community gardens, access to food and support and training around cooking and growing food.



Children from Markinch Primary School planting trees at Balbirnie Park with Balbirnie's Future Foundation and Climate Action Fife



CLEAR, Buckhaven and Methil



Sustainable Cupar

**Ceilidh for Nature** is an annual event with the aim of inspiring people to do more for nature. The ceilidh is a collaboration with Rachel Ives of Balmerino, a regenerative farm and wool producing company and Rory Fyfe of Kinkell Byre who leads on the rewilding project at Kinkell. The event brings together farmers and landowners and those who care about protecting nature.



**GO Falkland** brings together vital voices and organisations in regenerative farming and forestry with the aim of generating awareness, engagement and agency in people and organisations within Fife and across Scotland. Led by farmers and those who work the land, the aim is towards a healthier and fairer future in Fife and Scotland's food and farming systems.



**East Neuk Estates** is a cluster of 7 estates including Balcarres, Balcaskie, Elie, Gilston, Kilconquhar, Charleton and Strathtyrum which together cover over 6% of Fife's agricultural land. They farm for local markets producing wheat, oats and vegetables mainly using the principles of Regenerative agriculture. They also have a mob-grazing cattle enterprise producing high quality grass-fed beef from cattle that spend all year outside.



# Appendix 1 National and Local Policy

The Food4Fife Partnership and strategy goals and action are recognised and supported nationally through Scottish Government and local policy and legislation.

The **Good Food Nation (Scotland) Act 2022** placed a duty on the Scottish Government and certain public bodies, including the local authority and health board, to produce a Good Food Nation plan. These public bodies must also report progress every 2 years and review the plan every 5 years. Once the relevant provisions of the Good Food Nation (Scotland) Act requiring relevant authorities to publish a good food nation plan have been commenced we will use the Food4Fife strategy as a valuable first step towards producing our own good food nation plan. It sets out the main outcomes to food related issues for Fife Council and NHS Fife for their areas of authority, together with aspirations and actions from other partners.

The **Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, part 9** outlines the duty for a Scottish council to prepare a food-growing strategy for its area. This covers allotments, or other areas of land for use by a community for the cultivation of vegetables, fruit, herbs, or flowers. The Food4Fife plan sets the policy context under this Act, with detailed actions outlined in the Fife Allotment and Community Growing Strategy.

Scotland's third Land Use Strategy **Land use - getting the best from our land: strategy 2021 to 2026** provides a holistic focus for Scotland's land, the demands placed upon it and the benefits received. It recognises 'Scotland's land is a precious resource and fundamental to our economy, our environment and our wellbeing as a nation'.

The **Agriculture and Rural Communities Bill (2023)**, as introduced, outlines the objectives of the Scottish Government to support farmers.

In 2023 the Scottish Government consulted on **Tackling the Nature Emergency - strategic framework for biodiversity**. Objective 3: looked to 'embed nature positive farming', with a key action to: 'ensure increased uptake of high diversity, nature-rich, high soil-carbon, low intensity farming methods while sustaining high quality food production'.

Securing a green recovery on a path to **Net Zero: Climate Change Plan 2018–2032 – update** restated the target to reduce food waste by one third by 2025, against a 2013 baseline. This sought to embed circular economy principles into the wider green recovery and take steps to reduce food waste through the **Food Waste Reduction Action Plan (2019)**. The Food4Fife strategy sets the wider context of food waste reduction with detailed actions outlined in the Fife Council **Zero Waste Fife: Resource Strategy & Action Plan 2018-2028**.



Cairnie Fruit Farm, Cupar

# Appendix 2

## Food4Fife Partnership membership

### Fife Council

- Business and Employability
- Communities and Corporate Development
- Facilities Management
- Planning
- Procurement

### NHS Fife

- Health Improvement
- National Services Scotland Procurement
- Scotland Catering
- Sustainability

### Fife Health & Social Care Partnership

### Fife College

- Faculty of Business, Enterprise and Tourism
- Food Procurement

### University of St Andrews

- Procurement

### Food businesses

- Balbirnie Home Farms
- Balcaskie Estate
- Balmerino Farm
- Falkland Estate
- Falkland Kitchen Farm
- Falkland Rural Enterprises Ltd
- National Farmers Union Scotland - Fife
- Toll Farm
- Scotland the Bread

### Third sector

- Dunfermline Greenspace SCIO
- Fife Climate Hub  
(representing Fife Community Climate Action Network)
- Greener Kirkcaldy
  - Community Food Team
  - Climate Action Fife



East Neuk Orchards, Arncroach Image: Garry Thomas

# Glossary

## **Adaptation to unavoidable climate change**

Adapting to the impacts of climate change that has already happened, and those that are projected to continue, and/or intensify over the coming decades.

## **Agritourism**

A form of commercial enterprise that links agricultural production and/or processing with tourism to attract visitors onto a farm, or other agricultural business for the purposes of entertaining and/or educating the visitors while generating income.

## **Bioeconomy**

The economic potential of harnessing the power of bioscience, using renewable biological resources to replace fossil resources in innovative products, processes, and services.

## **Carbon footprint**

The total amount of greenhouse gases (including carbon dioxide and methane) that are generated by actions.

## **Circular economy**

Where products and materials are kept in circulation through processes like maintenance, reuse, refurbishment, remanufacture, recycling, and composting, decoupling economic activity from the consumption of finite resources.

## **Climate change**

The climate is the long-term pattern of day-to-day weather. There is conclusive evidence that climate change is caused greenhouse gas emissions caused by human activity.

## **Climate Emergency**

Where our climate is changing faster than nature can adapt to it, including us. There is very limited time to keep global temperatures within a limit that the Earth can recover from, so significant action needs to be taken action now. Fife Council has committed to set a target for a Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045 at the latest. This will require a huge transformation in Fife's communities.

[What Is Climate Change? | United Nations](#)

## **Climate emissions**

The release of greenhouse gases that are the main cause for climate change into the atmosphere over a specified area and period of time.

## **Food mile**

Unit of measurement, in miles of the fuel used to transport a food item during the journey from producer to consumer.

## **Food insecurity**

The condition of not having access to sufficient food, or food of an adequate quality, to meet basic needs.

## **Food security**

When all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

## **Food system**

A collective term used to describe the whole supply chain for food and drink including food production, processing, distribution and storage networks, waste management, markets and consumption.

**Fork to Farm**

Local-led dialogues and relationship-building meetings aimed at bringing farmers into food system and food policy discussions.

**Good food / Healthy food**

Food that helps the health of the population.

**Nature Emergency**

The loss of species and degradation of the natural environment which is a threat to humanity which requires restoration of nature.

**Net Zero**

A government commitment to ensure the UK reduces its greenhouse gas emissions by 100% from 1990 levels by 2050. This requires the amount of greenhouse gas emissions produced would be equal to, or less than, the emissions removed by the UK from the environment, such as through how land is managed.

**Organic**

Food which is produced using environmentally and animal friendly farming methods (agroecological) defined and regulated by organic standards.

**Resilience**

The capacity to withstand or to recover quickly from difficulties;

**Self-sufficiency (food)**

The ability of a region or country to produce enough food (especially staple crops) without needing to buy or import additional food.

**Sustainable**

Balancing the needs of the people, the environment, and the economy.

**Sustainable and regenerative farming**

Farming that delivers high quality food production, climate mitigation and adaptation, and nature restoration. Such as organic standards and agroecological approaches.

# Food for Fife Strategy & Action Plan 2024-2029

For more information:

Visit [our.fife.scot/food](https://our.fife.scot/food)

Email [Food4Fife@fife.gov.uk](mailto:Food4Fife@fife.gov.uk)



Food4Fife Partnership are members of Sustainable Food Places  
[www.sustainablefoodplaces.org](https://www.sustainablefoodplaces.org)

In recognition of the work and practices around food the Food4Fife Partnership and Fife as a region have been awarded the Silver Award from Sustainable Food Places.

