WELCOME!

THE RENFREWSHIRE ECONOMY

Partnership Conference

Tuesday 8th September 2026

Paisley Town Hall

#RenfrewshireEconomy2026

INVEST in Renfrewshire

Use the QR code to ask our panelists questions during the Q&A

Renfrewshire Council

Welcome....

Conference Chair, Alan Russell, Chief Executive, Renfrewshire Council

Scotland and Renfrewshire - Economic and Fiscal Outlook	*Andrew Robertson, Glasgow City Region*
Building Renfrewshire's Economy: Opportunities and Ambition	*Alasdair Morrison, Renfrewshire Council*
A Wellbeing Economy: Reducing Deprivation, Reducing Demand	*Professor Gerry McCartney, Glasgow University*
The Renfrewshire We Want to Build	*Ruth Cooper, Renfrewshire Council*

Panel Q&A

Use the QR code to ask our panelists questions during the Q&A

Renfrewshire Economy Conference
Socio-Economic Context

September 2026

Introduction

Renfrewshire and Region

Socio-Economic Context

Opportunities

Content

A snapshot of the current socio-economic issues facing the Renfrewshire and wider Glasgow City Region, the implications for the demand on public services, and opportunities to improve economic outcomes whilst reducing service demand.

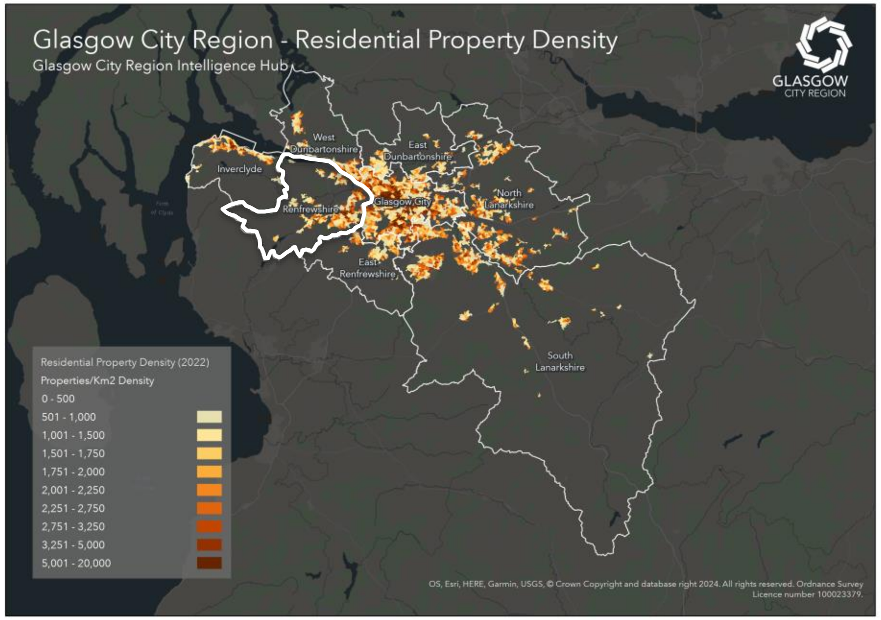
Content

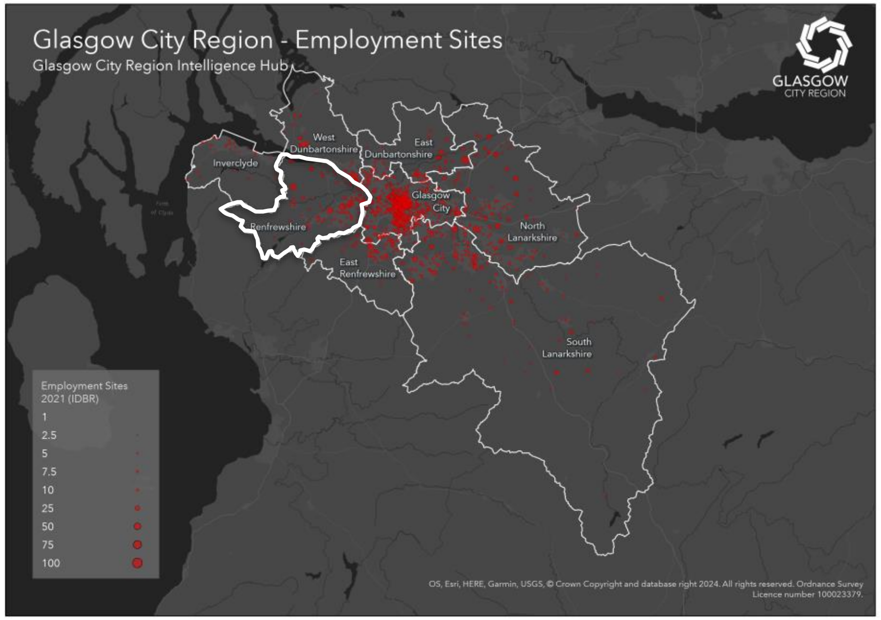
Introduction

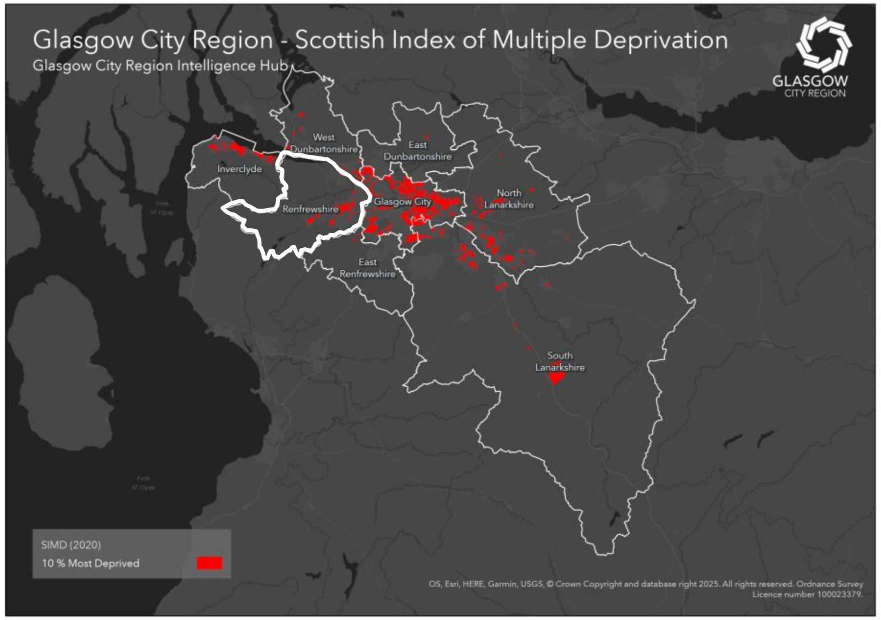
- Renfrewshire is Scotland's eighth-largest local authority and home to Paisley, the country's largest town.
- Situated at the heart of the largest metropolitan economy in Scotland—it benefits from scale, population growth, world-class education and research assets, expanding international connections and a strong economic base. **However, opportunity is not shared evenly.**
- Employment, innovation, investment and high-value economic activity are concentrated around the metropolitan core and key strategic locations,
- While poorer health outcomes, economic inactivity, lower labour market participation and deprivation remain concentrated in other communities.
- **Economic performance is shaped by an interconnected system**. Population change, health, skills, housing, transport, innovation, business growth and place all influence one another.
- Understanding these relationships is essential to improving both prosperity, quality of life and need for public services.

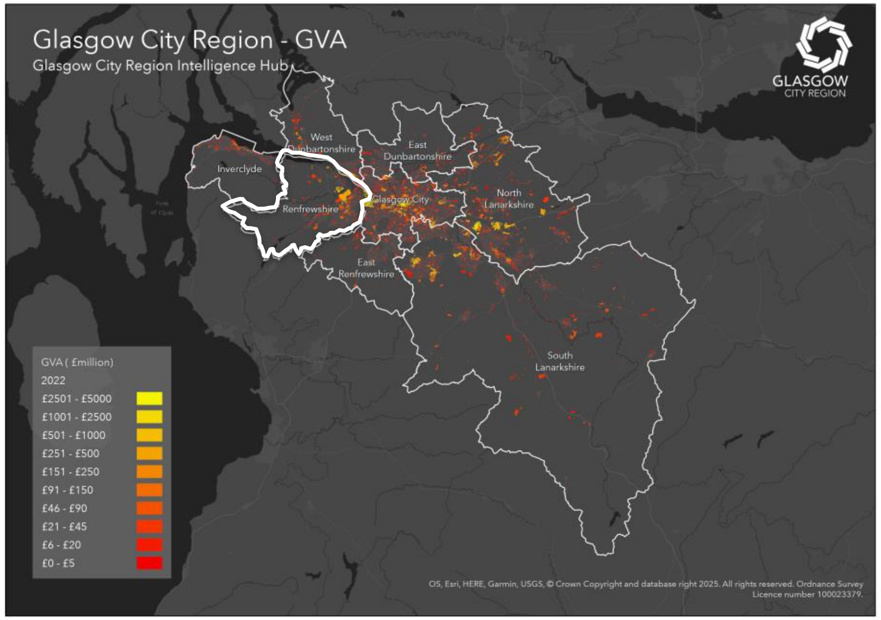
Introduction

- Population and settlement are concentrated around the core urban area and key corridors.
- Deprivation is particularly concentrated around the urban core and close to major economic assets. Although it should be noted that more than half (55%) of people experiencing income and employment deprivation do not live in the 20% most deprived areas as classified by SIMD
- Employment is more concentrated than population, primarily within Glasgow City centre and connected corridors.
- Economic output is also concentrated in strategic employment locations and the city centre.









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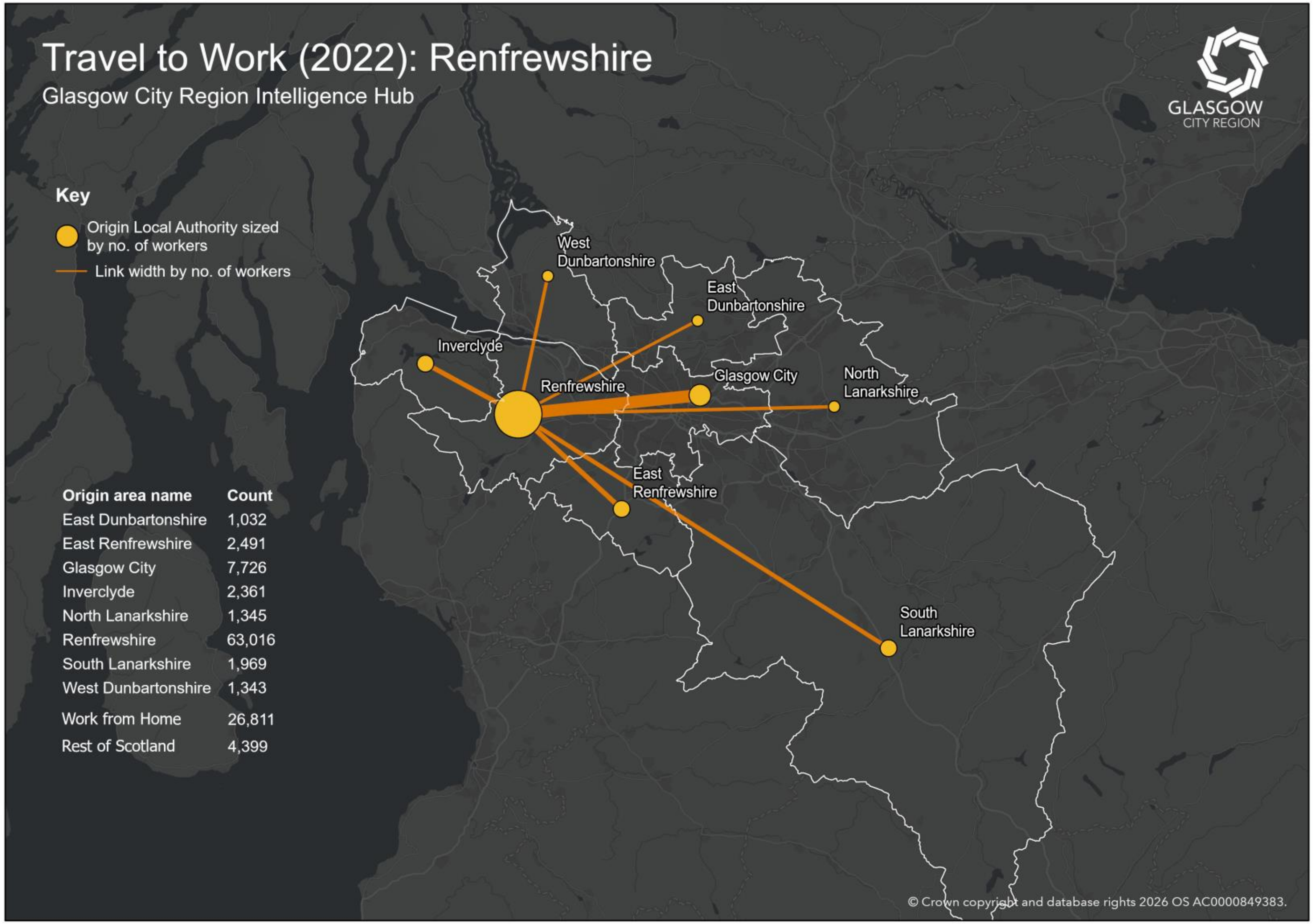

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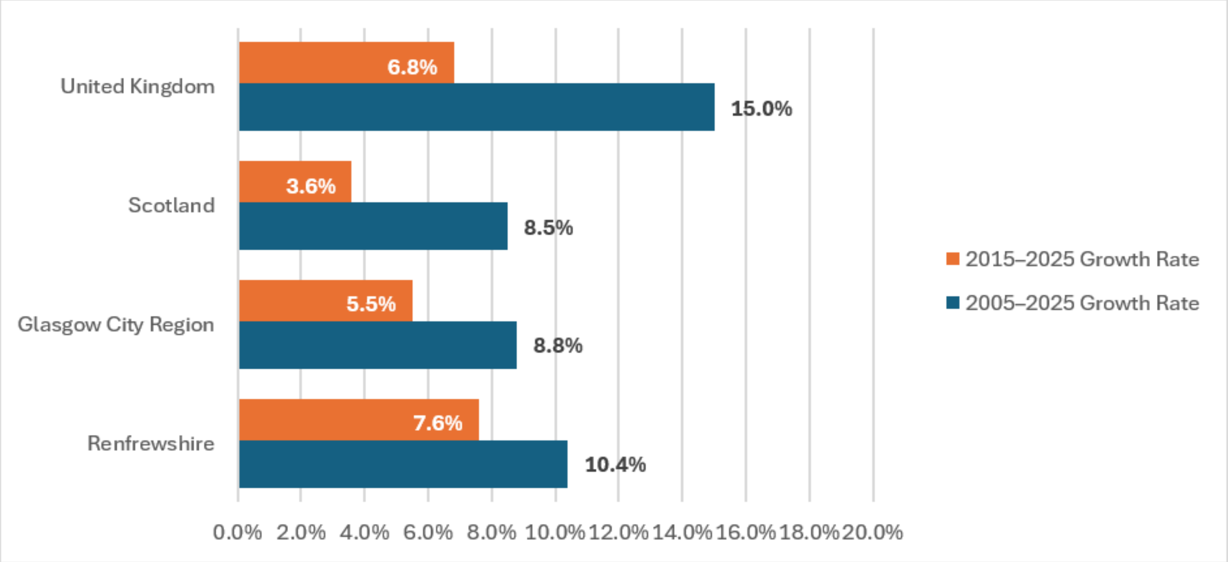
How is the Population Changing?

189,270
Population in 2025

+17,840
Volume change since 2005

+22,420
Net migration since 2005

Population Growth (%) 2005 - 2025



Sources: National Records of Scotland and ONS

Population

- Over the last 20 years, the population growth rate in Renfrewshire and Region has been particularly high over last decade
- There has been a contrasting pattern between UK and Scottish levels, and Renfrewshire and GCR. The growth rate has decreased in the last decade at the Scottish and UK level, but Renfrewshire and GCR has seen a larger increase.

Natural Change

- Natural change (the total number of deaths minus the number of births) has been negative in Renfrewshire
- This mirrors wider regional and national trend over the last decade

Migration

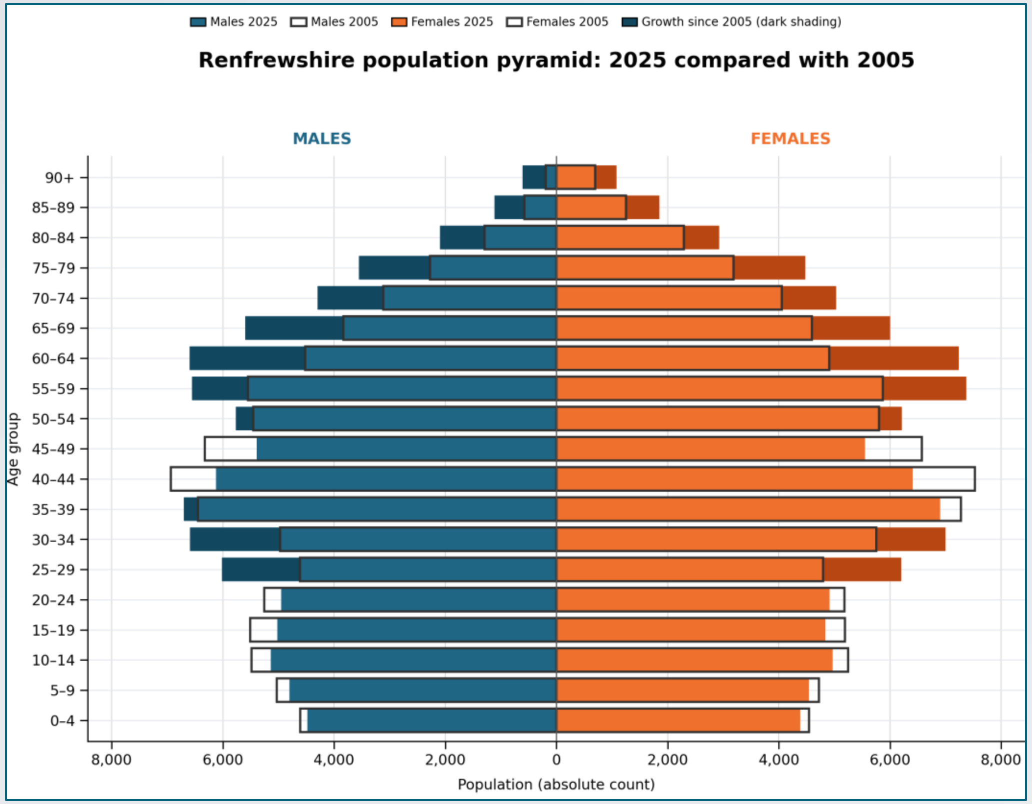
- In the last 20 years, all population growth in Renfrewshire, and the Region, has been driven by inward migration.
- 12,480 people or 55.6% of migration to Renfrewshire over the last 20 years has been form overseas.

How is the Population Changing?

120,230
Working age population

+17,199
Net migration working age population

Population Growth (%)



Source: National Records of Scotland, 2026

Working Age Population

- Of Renfrewshire's population of 189,270, 63.5% are of working age.
- Of those who migrated into Renfrewshire over the last 20 years, they were largely working age (76.7%.)

+7.1% **Working-age population**
Growth in ages 16–64 has been modest.

+41.2% **Population aged 65+**
Older population growth is nearly six times faster.

+71.2% **Population aged 85+**
Strongest growth is in the most service-intensive ages.

53 → 57 **Dependency ratio**
More dependants per 100 working-age residents.

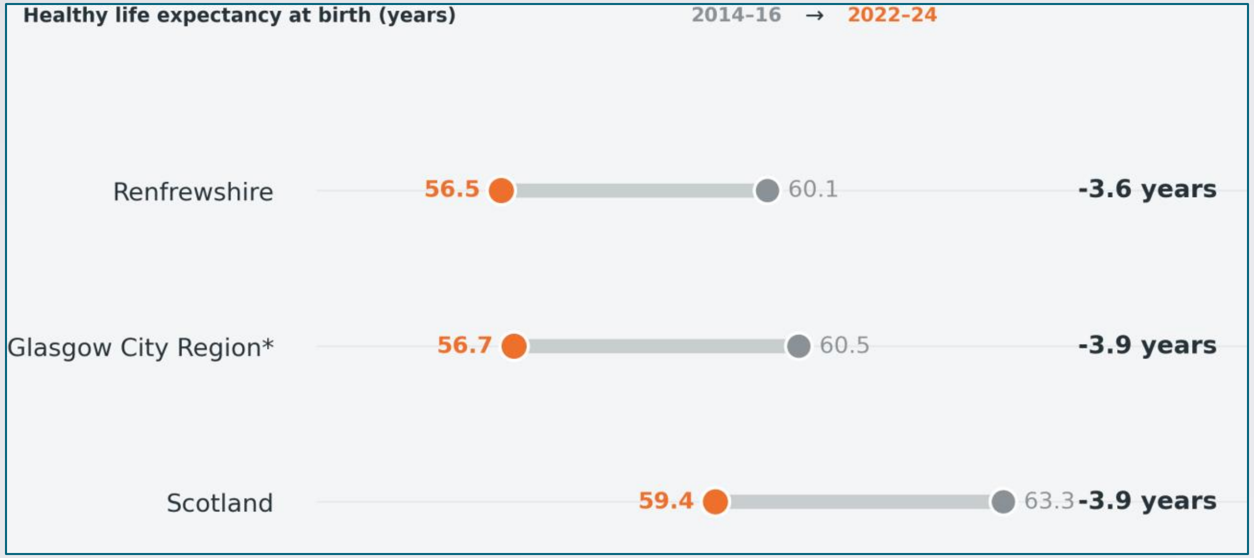
Implication: Future prosperity depends on attracting, retaining and upskilling working-age residents while planning for rising care and service demand.

What Is the Health of the Population (Females)?

-3.6 years
Change Rate over last decade

+12 years
difference across Region

Average Healthy Life Expectancy (years): Females



Source: Annual Population Survey, 2026

Healthy Life Expectancy is a measure of economic performance and inequality

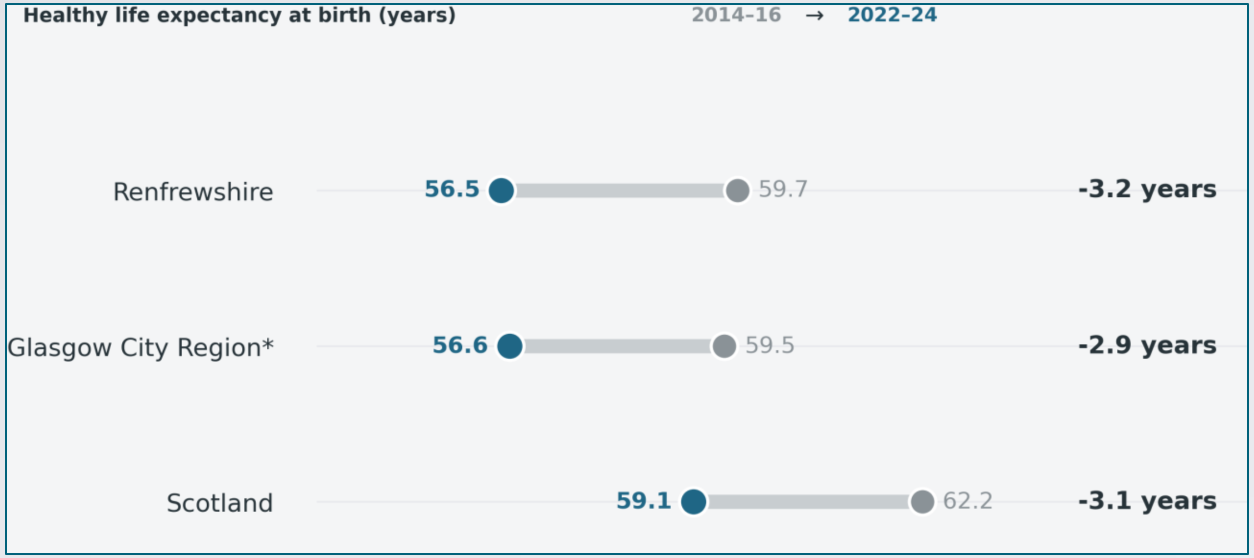
- These widening gaps in healthy life expectancy have significant consequences for both population health and economic prosperity, reducing the number of years people who can participate fully in work and society - increasing demand for health and public services, and limiting the Region's ability to achieve inclusive and sustainable growth.
- In broad terms, there is **roughly a 10-year gap between healthy life expectancy and pension age.**
- That does not mean everyone becomes unable to work at 56.5. Healthy life expectancy is a population-level measure.
- But it does suggest increasing risks of:
    - Health-related economic inactivity
    - Reduced labour market participation
    - Increased sickness absence
    - Earlier labour market exit
    - Greater pressure on health and care services

What Is the Health of the Population (Males)?

-3.2 years
Change Rate over last decade

+ 11 years
difference across Region

Average Healthy Life Expectancy (years): Males



Source: Annual Population Survey, 2026

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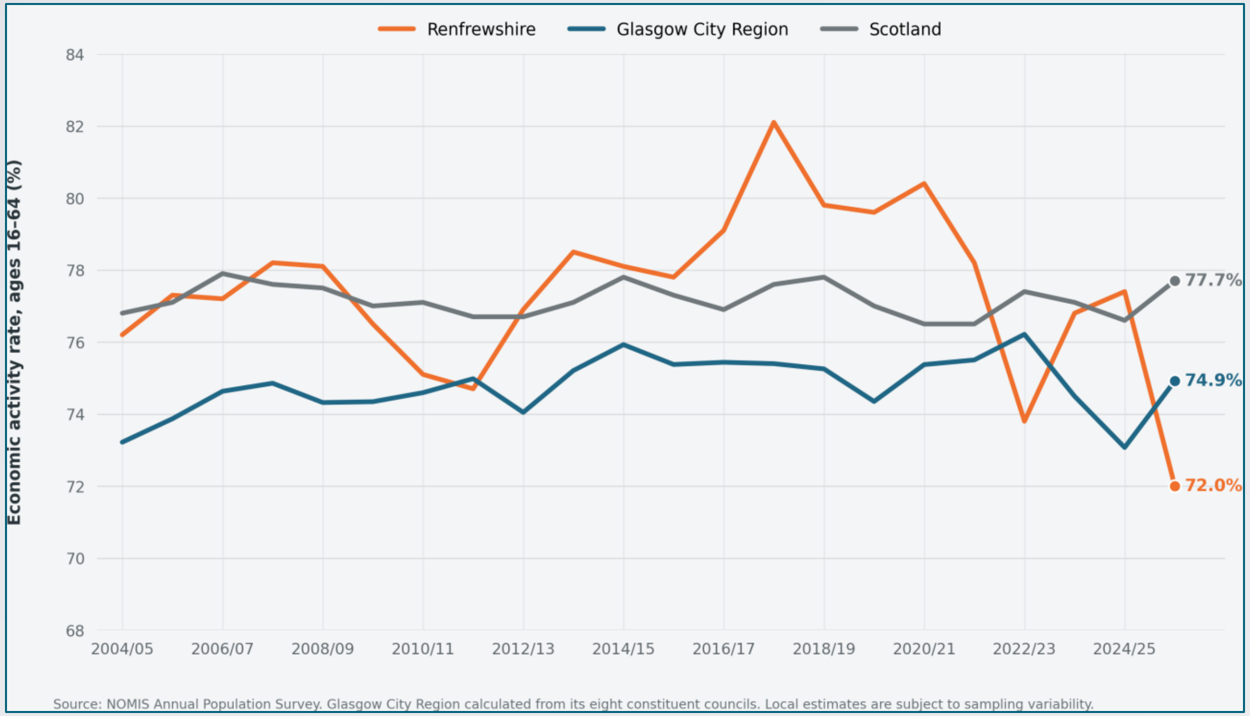
  - Reduced labour market participation
  - Increased sickness absence
  - Earlier labour market exit
  - Greater pressure on health and care services

What Has Happened to the Local Labour Market Over the Past 20 Years

69.1%
Employment rate

4.0%
Unemployment Rate

Economic Activity Rate



Source: Annual Population Survey, 2026

Labour Market Indicators

- **Employment rate – 71.8%:** higher than the Regional average of 71.0%, but lower than the Scottish average of 74.6%.
- **Unemployment rate – 4.0%:** lower than the GCR average of 5.3%, but higher than the Scottish average of 4.1%.
- **Economic Inactivity rate - 28%:** higher than both the Regional average of 25.11% and the Scottish average of 22.3%

Participation is a major challenge which is not always discussed – particularly given it is falling (potentially linked to Healthy Life Expectancy) and is combined with an ageing population

Why Are Some People Out the Labour Market?

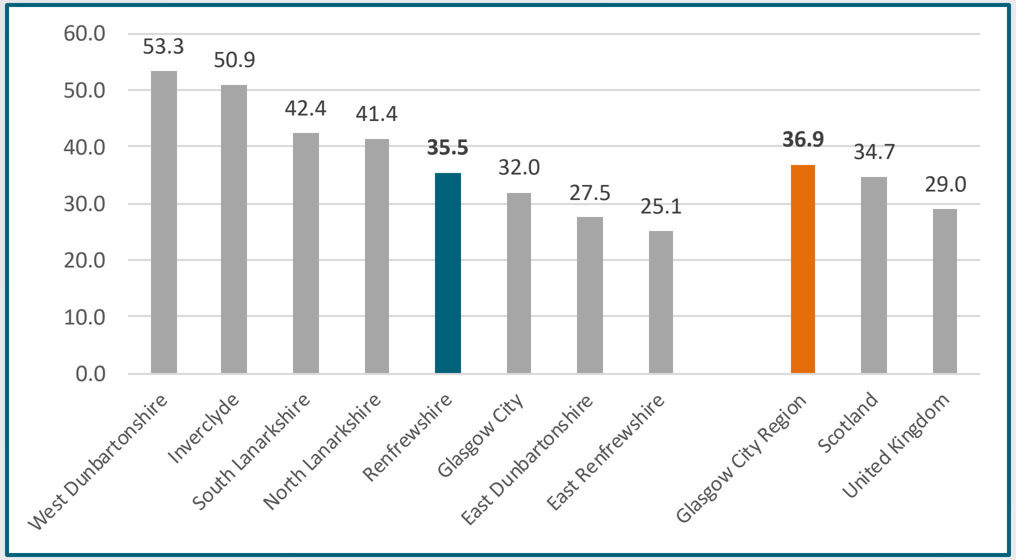
Ill Health:

- **Long-term ill health accounted for 35.5% of economic inactivity** among working-age residents in 2025, **up 2.4 percentage points since 2015.**
- Barriers that continue to constrain labour market participation, include broader social and economic issues, such as poor health outcomes in certain communities, limited access to preventative healthcare, or higher levels of poverty and deprivation, which are often correlated with worse health.

Youth Inactivity:

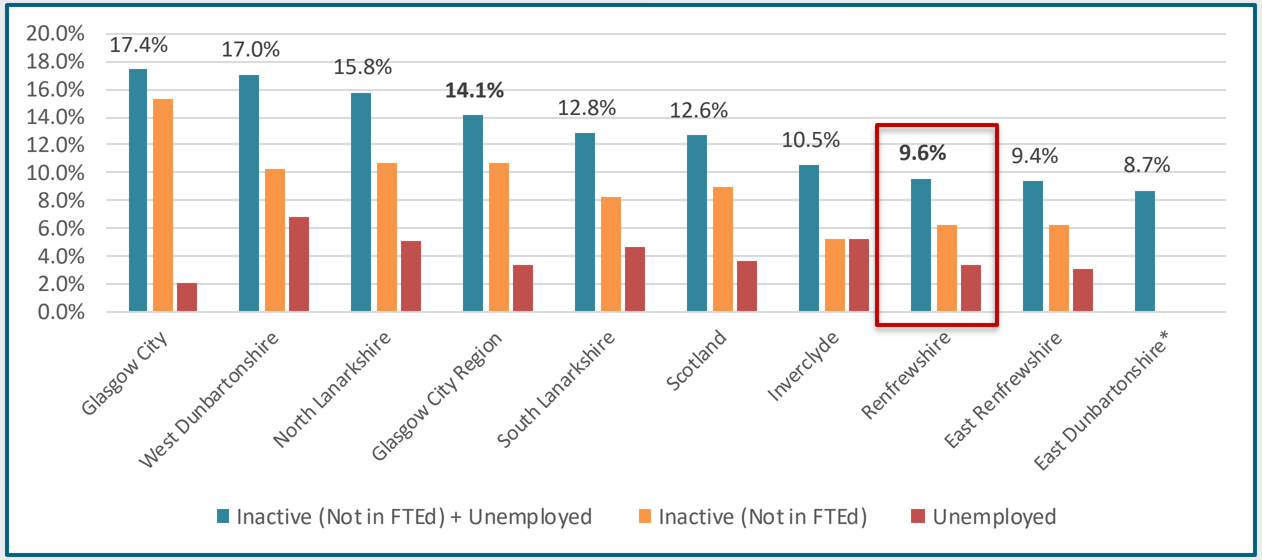
- The proportion of **16 to 24-year-olds who were unemployed or economically inactive (and not in full-time education) was 9.6%,** below both the Scottish average (14.1%) and GCR average (12.6%).
- Following regional trends, this is driven largely by high levels of inactivity, rather than unemployment alone, suggesting that the issue is not simply shot-term labour market friction, but may reflect deeper and more complex social, health, or structural challenges.

Economic Inactive by reason (%): Long-term ill-health 2025



Source: Annual Population Survey, 2026

Inactivity (Excluding Education) and Unemployment Rates (Ages 16–24), by Local Authority (Jan 2018 to Dec 2020)**



Source: Young People Local Data, 2018-2020 Annual Population Survey 3-year poll
**Note: Data for unemployment for some local authorities is based on varying or small sample sizes so interpretation should be taken with caution. Distinct unemployment and inactivity figures for East Dumbartonshire were unavailable.*
**Note: Data does not account for people in training (i.e.: apprenticeships), Data does not include unconfirmed destinations, which should be considered when interpreting trends, *APS. Data excludes student, discouraged, retired, and other as reasons for inactivity*

The Local Labour Market and Skills?

54.7%
High Qualification rate

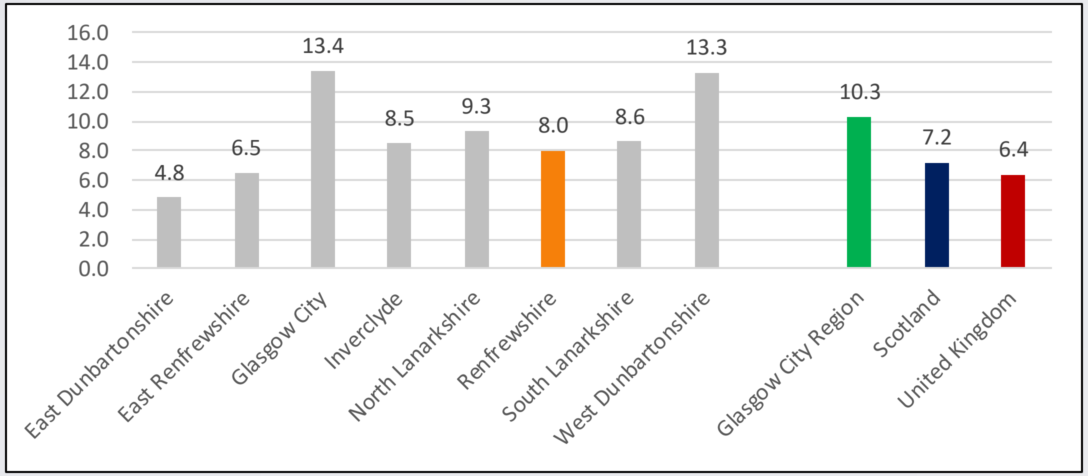
8.0%
No Qualification rate

22,500
Student enrolments at UWS and West College

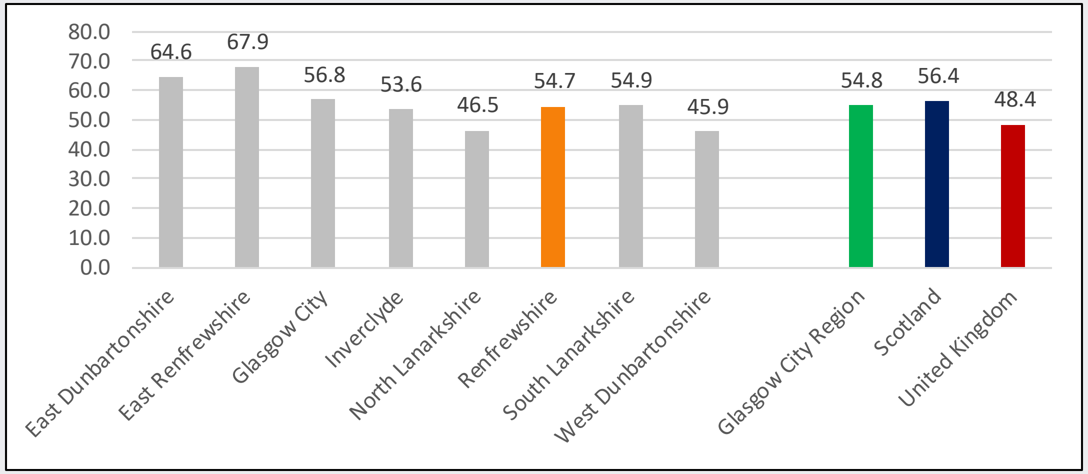
Labour Market Skills

- **Educational Attainment:** Renfrewshire's estimates of educational attainment are relatively positive when compared across the Region but fall below the national averages. Increasing the attainment levels of Renfrewshire's residents will improve access to employment opportunities across the Region, in addition to making the local labour market more attractive for potential investors in Paisley or AMIDS.
- **Skills Provision:** Over 22,000 students are enrolled in Renfrewshire's higher and further education institutions. Increased collaboration between these skills providers and industry will facilitate future skills provision alignment to industry need – providing a skilled local labour force to meet future demand.

No Qualification Rate of residents aged 16-64, 2025



High Qualification Rate of residents aged 16-64, 2025



Source: Annual Population Survey

How Well Does the Labour Market Work for Local Residents?

85,975
Jobs in 2024

3%
Growth since 2015

RESIDENT WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION

Economic activity rate, ages 16-64

76.2% → 72.0%

Down -4.2 pts

LOCAL LABOUR DEMAND

Workplace employee jobs

83.3k → 85.9k

Up +3.0%

Foundational Economy

- The Foundational Economy (FE) consists of essential industries and services that provide the basic goods, infrastructure and employment needed to support the wider economy. Renfrewshire has 55,000 jobs in the FE, covering 64.7% of all jobs.
- Renfrewshire experienced a **5.2% decrease of 3,000 jobs that were classified as part of the FE between 2015 and 2024**,

Knowledge Intensive Jobs

- Knowledge Intensive Business Sectors (KIBS) are industries that rely heavily on specialist knowledge, highly skilled workers, innovation and expertise, such as Finance and Professional services.. Renfrewshire has 17,000 jobs classified as KIBS, covering 20.0% of jobs.
- Renfrewshire experienced an **increase of 3,000 jobs categorised as KIBS in GCR between 2015 and 2024**, as one of three of the eight GCR member authorities to experience an increase in KIBS employment in that period.

Sources: Annual Population Survey, 2006, Business Register and Employment Survey, 2026

How Well Does the Labour Market Work for Local Residents?

Workplace employee jobs increased from 83.3k to 85.9k (+3.0%) and demand is expected to be 28,000 to 2035

(while resident labour market participation weakened)

Ageing Population	Health Life Expectancy	Economic Activity	Available resident workforce	Business and Public Service Demand
Dependency pressure is rising	Down around 3-4 years	76.2% - 72.0%	Fewer residents participating	Recruitment, productivity and service pressures

The emerging constraint may be workforce availability and health

and not job availability

What Is Happening with the Local Business Base

4,655
Businesses in 2025

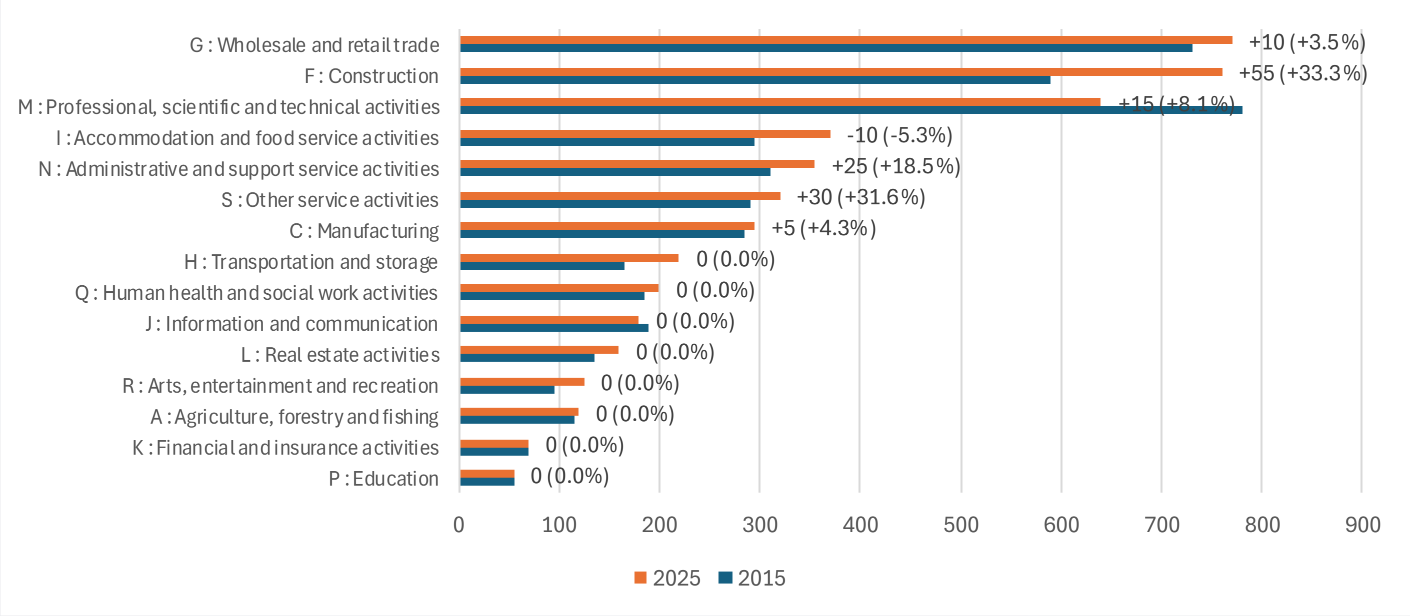
7.9%
Growth since 2015

The **growth in number of businesses since 2015 in Renfrewshire of 7.9% was significantly below GCR (11.9%)** and the UK (11.6%) but ahead of the growth in Scotland of 2.9%.

Knowledge Intensive Business Services (KIBS) & Foundational Economy (FE)

- There were **1,245 businesses operating in the KIBS** in 2025, making up 27% of the businesses in Renfrewshire and in line with GCR (28%). **There has been a decrease in the number of KIBS businesses of 8.1%** since 2015. Glasgow City was the only member authority with an increase during this period.
- The **2,560 FE businesses make up over half of all businesses in Renfrewshire (55%).** There was consistent growth in the Foundational Economy in the last decade of 1-3% per year. **The overall growth of 17.2% between 2015 and 2015 outpaced total business growth in Renfrewshire by 8.3 percentage points**. The growth in Foundational Economy businesses was widespread across all member authorities except Inverclyde.

Volume change (value & %) in Business base by sector in Renfrewshire



Sector Growth and Decline

- **Almost half of the increase in businesses since 2015 came from the Construction sector (49%),** followed by Accommodation & food (21%) and Transportation & storage (16%). Together these industries added 300 new businesses to the Renfrewshire economy.
- **Professional, scientific & technical activities had a decrease of 140 businesses** since 2015 (-17.9%) when it was the largest sector in Renfrewshire.
- Additionally, since 2015 enterprise rate in Renfrewshire has declined by 1.3.

Source: ONS UK Business Counts. Note: Other industries with 0% change were hidden from the data

How Productive Is Renfrewshire: GVA?

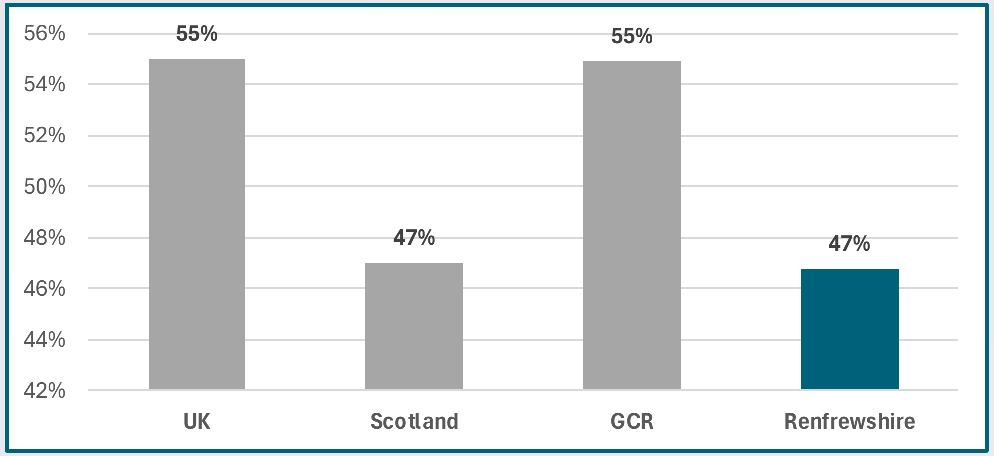
GVA Growth

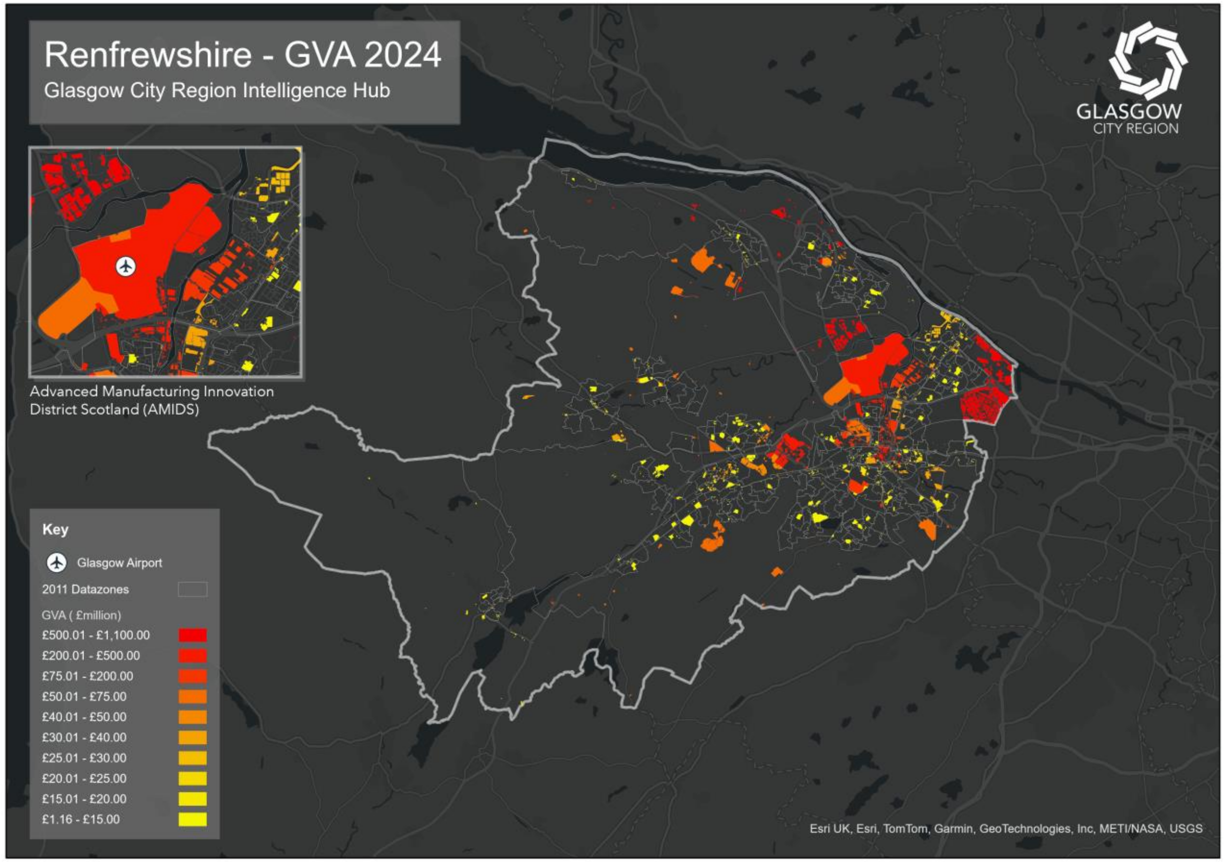
- In 2023, Renfrewshire generated £5.18bn in Gross Value Added (GVA), accounting for 8.6% of the GCR economy.
- **Between 2013 and 2023, GVA increased by 47%, in line with Scottish national average but significantly bellow the UK (55%) and GCR (55%).**

Productivity

- GVA per hour worked of £39.1 in Renfrewshire is slightly below GCR (£39.3).
- Between 2020 and 2023, **productivity grew 8.9%, below the regional average (11.2%) and slower than all GCR member authorities** except East Dumbartonshire and South Lanarkshire.

GVA growth (%) in current prices between 2013-23





Using datazone estimates of GVA, the Intelligence Hub has attributed economic production to specific employment sites throughout Renfrewshire.

The **majority of Renfrewshire's economic output is generated in the vicinity of Renfrew, Glasgow Airport, and Paisley**.

Source: ONS. Regional gross value added (balanced) by industry: current prices, pounds million

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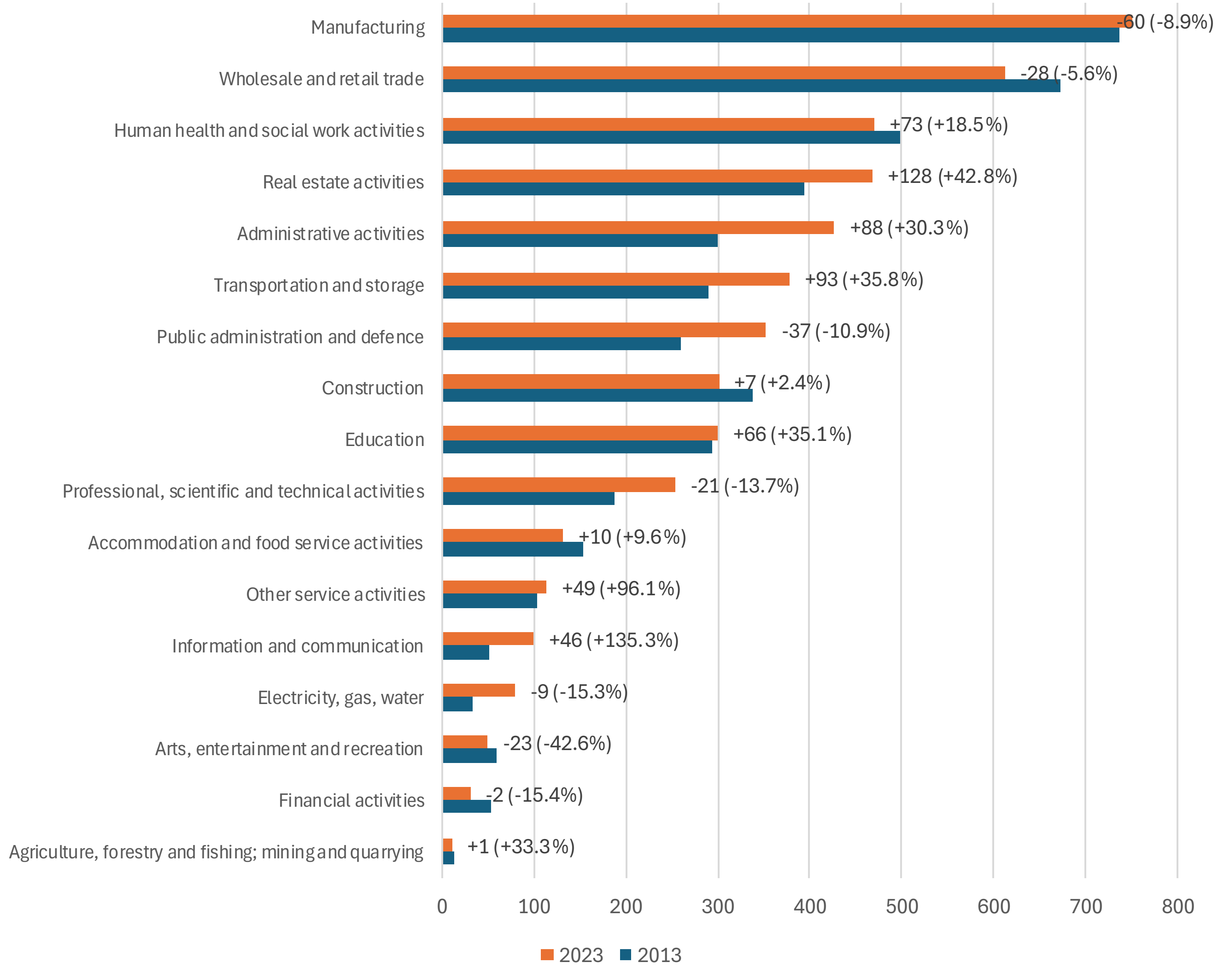
How Productive is Renfrewshire: GVA by Sector?

Change (volume & %) in GVA by sector in Renfrewshire



GVA by Sector

- **Manufacturing, Wholesale & Retail Trade and Human Health generate the largest shares of GVA**, Although growth in these last two sectors have decelerated in the last years.

Growth

- **Administrative Activities (+42.8%), Public Administration (+35.8%) and Transport & Storage (+30.3%) saw the biggest increases in GVA contribution,** surpassing previously dominating sectors of Construction and Education. The growth in these sectors generated a surplus of +300m for the economy between 2013 and 2023.
- Although relatively small, **Professional activities and Information & Communication grew by 35.1% and 96.1%,** respectively.

Sector Decline

- **Foundational Economy sectors have experienced the greatest deceleration**. In addition to Wholesale & Retail and Human Health, Construction (-10.9%) and Accommodation & Food services Activities (-13.7%) have experienced decline.

What This All Means: Summary

ASSETS

- Jobs and knowledge-intensive employment are growing
- Strong connectivity, airport and city-region access
- University, firms and innovation assets
- A large urban population and strategic location

CONSTRAINTS

- Healthy life expectancy is falling
- Economic activity and participation have weakened
- The workforce is ageing and dependency is rising
- Productivity and inequality remain persistent challenges

What are the Opportunities to Address These Challenges

What Can Renfrewshire Practically Do?

Five priorities to strengthen workforce capacity, productivity and inclusive growth across the areas

1

Grow the foundational economy

Not every community is going to become a life sciences cluster.

But every community has:

- Care
- Retail
- Construction
- Tourism
- Food
- Logistics

Improving productivity in these sectors matters enormously.

2

Spread innovation, not just create it

The challenge isn't inventing innovation.

The challenge is getting SMEs, manufacturing, firms, service businesses to adopt it.

The future of productivity depends as much on diffusion as it does invention.

Helping existing businesses do things better will unlock biggest gains.

3

Public Service Reform / Devolution

Better decisions are made when they are closer to where impacts are felt

Devolution enables locally led solutions that align economic development, skills, health, employability and transport around local needs.

But equally, need to join up skills, health and employment

Local challenges need local solutions

4

Community Wealth Building

Build an economy that works for local people and places.

But every community has:

- Retain more spending locally
- Strengthen local supply chains
- Support local business growth
- Create better quality jobs
- Increase economic resilience

Communities need to be able to share in success

5

AI and new technologies

AI is happening.

Our challenge is to ensure businesses and workers benefit from it:

- Support adoption
- Build digital skills
- Manage workforce transitions
- Identity sectors more exposed to change
- Help SMEs exploit new technologies

AI should be a productivity opportunity, and not just a disruption

What are the Opportunities to Address These Challenges?

Healthier lives → Higher participation → Higher productivity → Stronger, fairer growth

So, whilst Renfrewshire's economy continues to create jobs, future growth will increasingly depend on improving the health, participation and productivity of its residents*.

*and hopefully reducing demand for services

RENFREWSHIRE –

STRONG INVESTMENT ACTIVITY CONTINUES

ALASDAIR MORRISON

Economy Conference

8 September 2026

Renfrewshire Council

Exciting times ahead for Renfrewshire's economy….

One year on…….

- JOB CREATION– either directly or indirectly through supply chains and other economic spend and activity
- PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY - for local companies and local jobseekers – which in many ways is the raison d'etre of the team that I oversee at Renfrewshire Council
- uncertain economic context - where inflationary pressures and a competitive labour market are causing many to put off making investment decisions
- It is also taking place in times of an ever changing context in Renfrewshire

K1 SPEED / GRID, BRAEHEAD

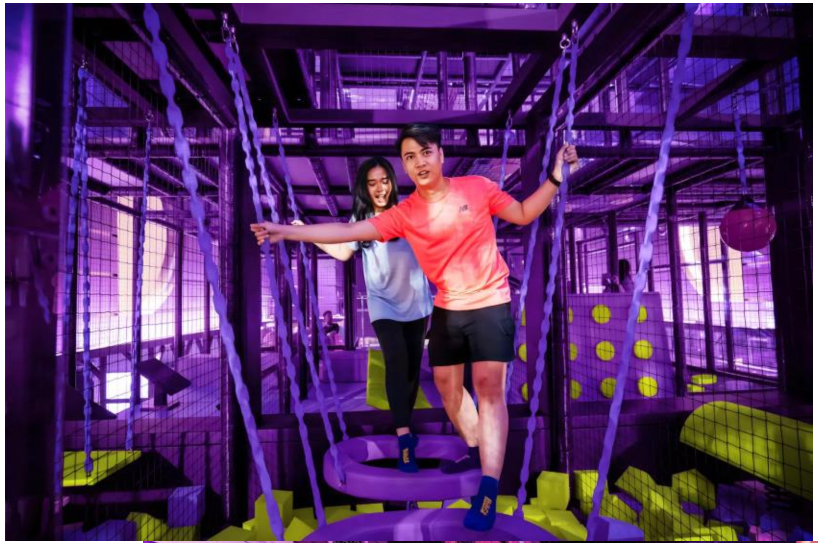
Investment = £12+ million

First in Scotland

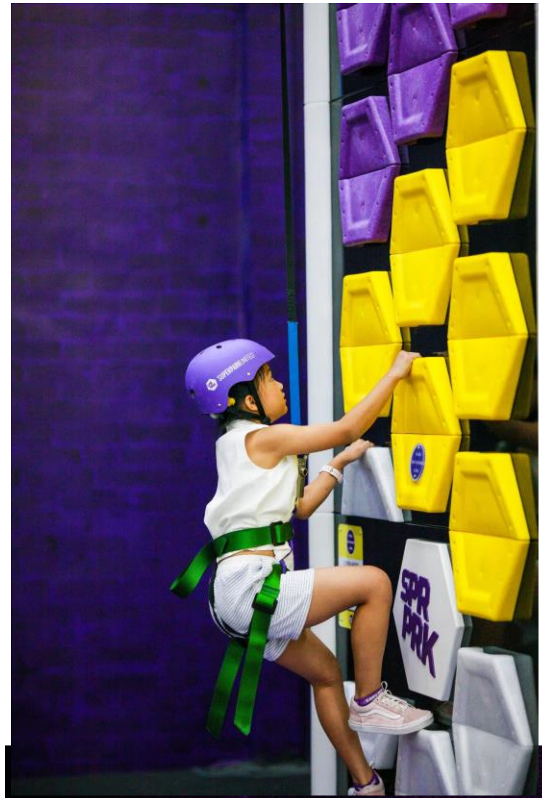
Mar Hall Resort

Investment = £20 million

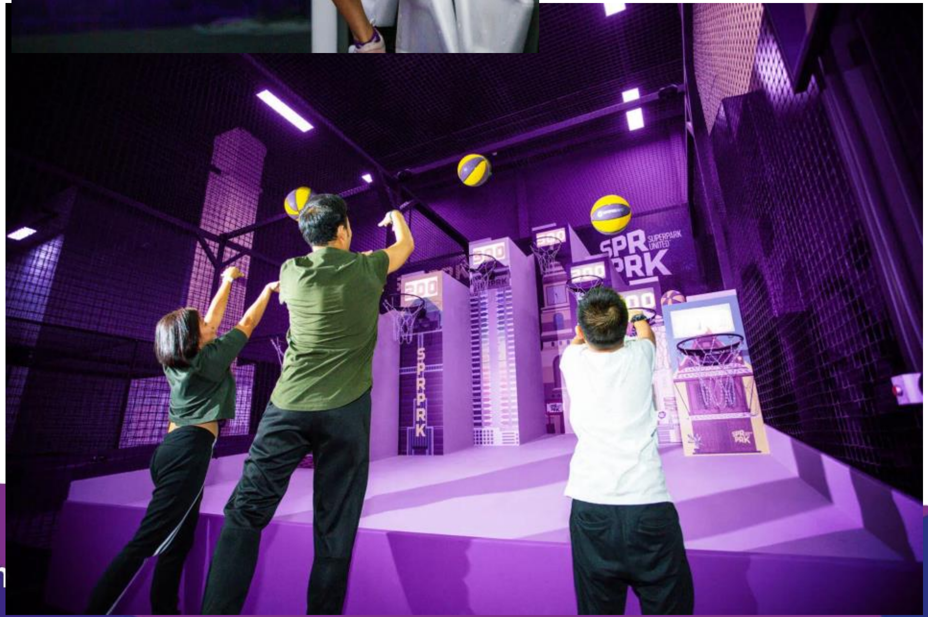
Superpark, Braehead



Investment = £4.5 million



First in U.K



Glasgow Airport

Investment = £350 million

Tech Terrace, AMIDS

Investment = > £10 million

Westway, Renfrew

Investment = > £25 million

2025 deal is believed to be Scotland's largest speculative industrial and logistics letting in three decades.

INVESTMENT ZONE – TAX SITE (from March 2026)

Investment = >£25 million

Paisley Grammar and Thistle Primary

Investment = £100 million

Former Paisley Grammar School

Investment = £20+ million

Housing Regeneration Area Investment in our largest towns

Investment = £100 million

Renfrew

Paisley

Johnstone

Dykebar Hospital – Abercrombie Park [600 new homes]

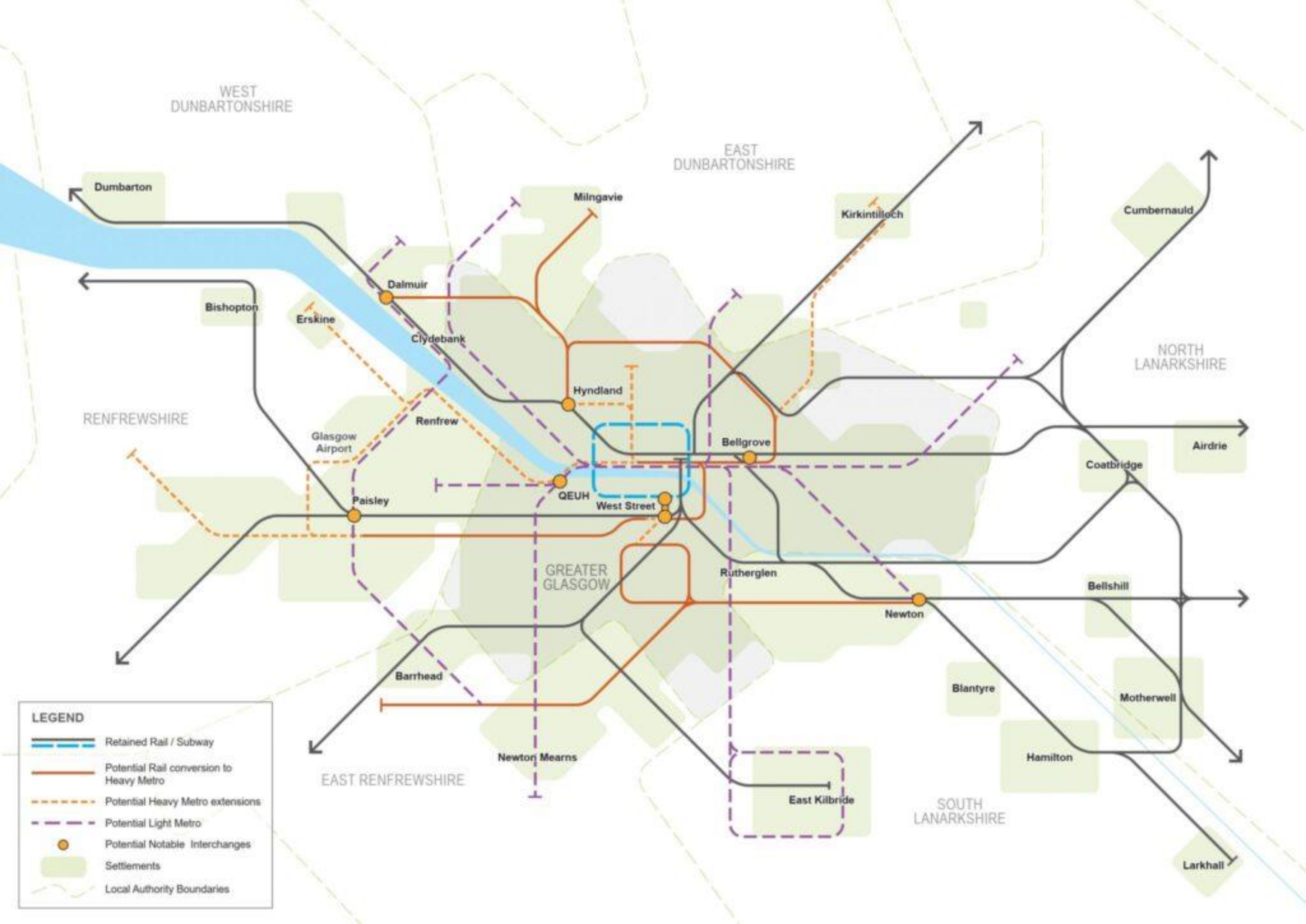
Investment = £150 million

Cultural Facilities and Heritage Investment

Investment = c. £113 million

Clyde Metro

Investment = TBC



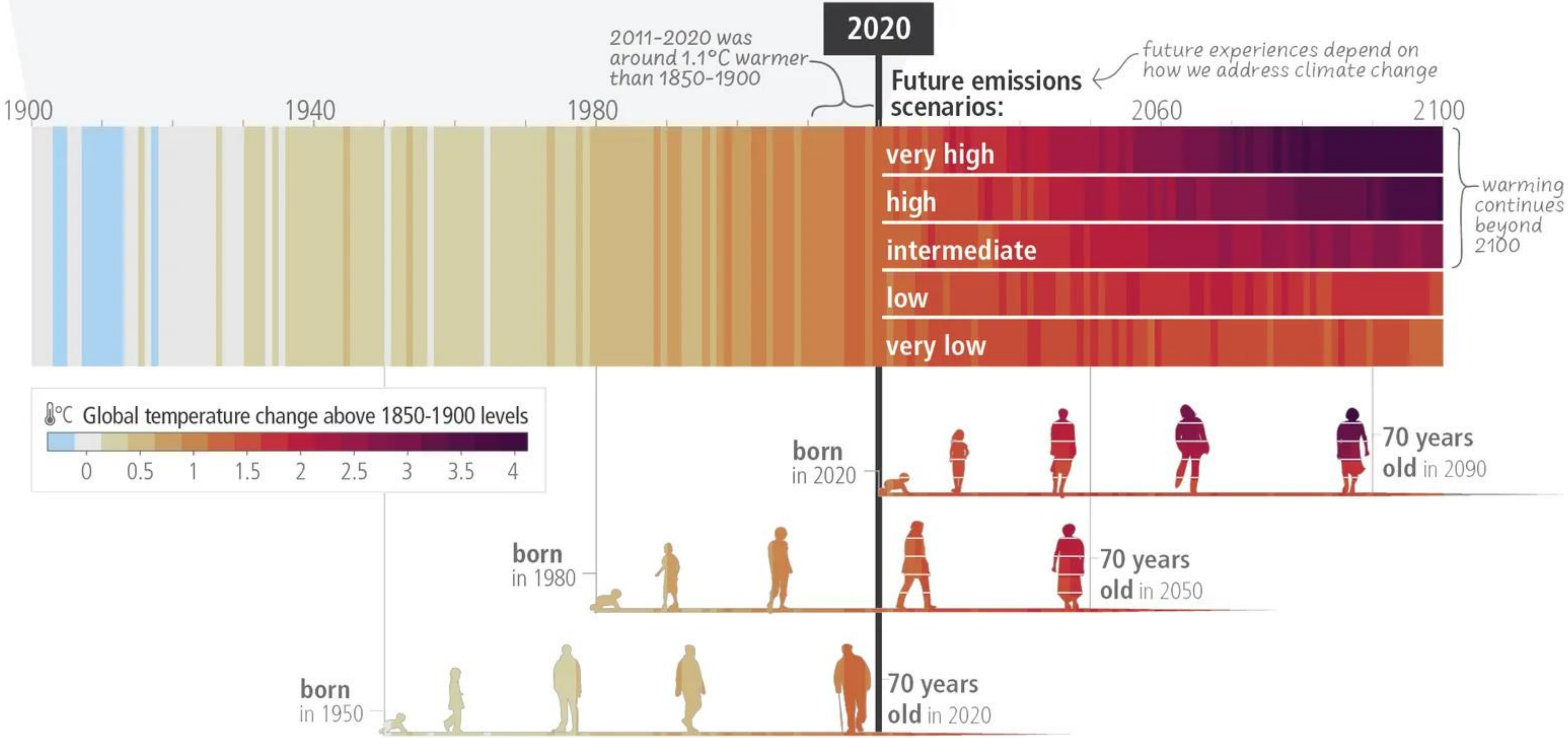
Towards a Wellbeing Economy in Renfrewshire?

Gerry McCartney
Professor of Wellbeing Economy
University of Glasgow
8th September 2026

We face a ‘polycrisis’

- Climate change

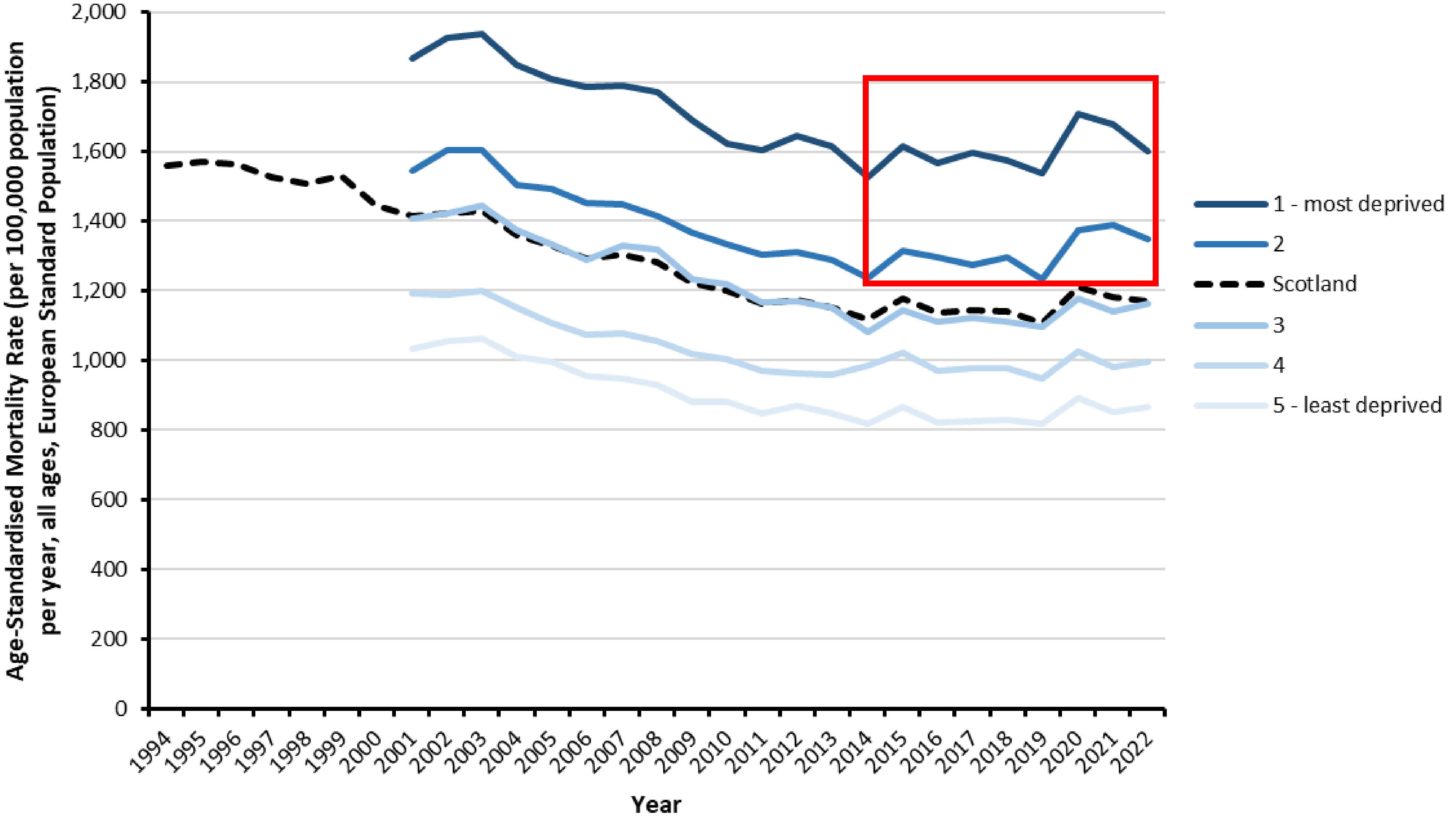
c) **The extent to which current and future generations will experience a hotter and different world depends on choices now and in the near-term**



We face a ‘polycrisis’

- Climate change
- Biodiversity loss
- Horrible life expectancy trends

Mortality trends: Scotland (total population)



Scotland, 1994-2022, Source: National Records of Scotland

We face a ‘polycrisis’

- Climate change
- Biodiversity loss
- Horrible life expectancy trends
- Threats to democracy, disinformation, rising racism
- Good evidence that these can be tracked back to our current economic design and the corrosive effects of inequality, precarity, and externalised economic spillovers

What is the Economy for?

- To create jobs?
- To generate tax revenues to pay for public services?
- To provide for our needs and the needs of our planet?

What do our Economic (and organisational) strategies aim to achieve?

- Faster economic growth?
- Economic sustainability (and/or reduced costs)?
- More, or better, jobs?
- The resources and infrastructure to make a transition to a low carbon economy and to provision for our needs?

What assumptions are made in writing such documents?

- Economic growth will ‘trickle down’ to reduce inequity and poverty?
- Economic growth and jobs will create the tax revenues needed to provide for our public services?
- Economic growth will provide the resources and technologies to make a ‘green transition’?
- Reducing service spending will enhance fiscal sustainability?
- Businesses are the ‘wealth creators’ in society?

Sources of hope?

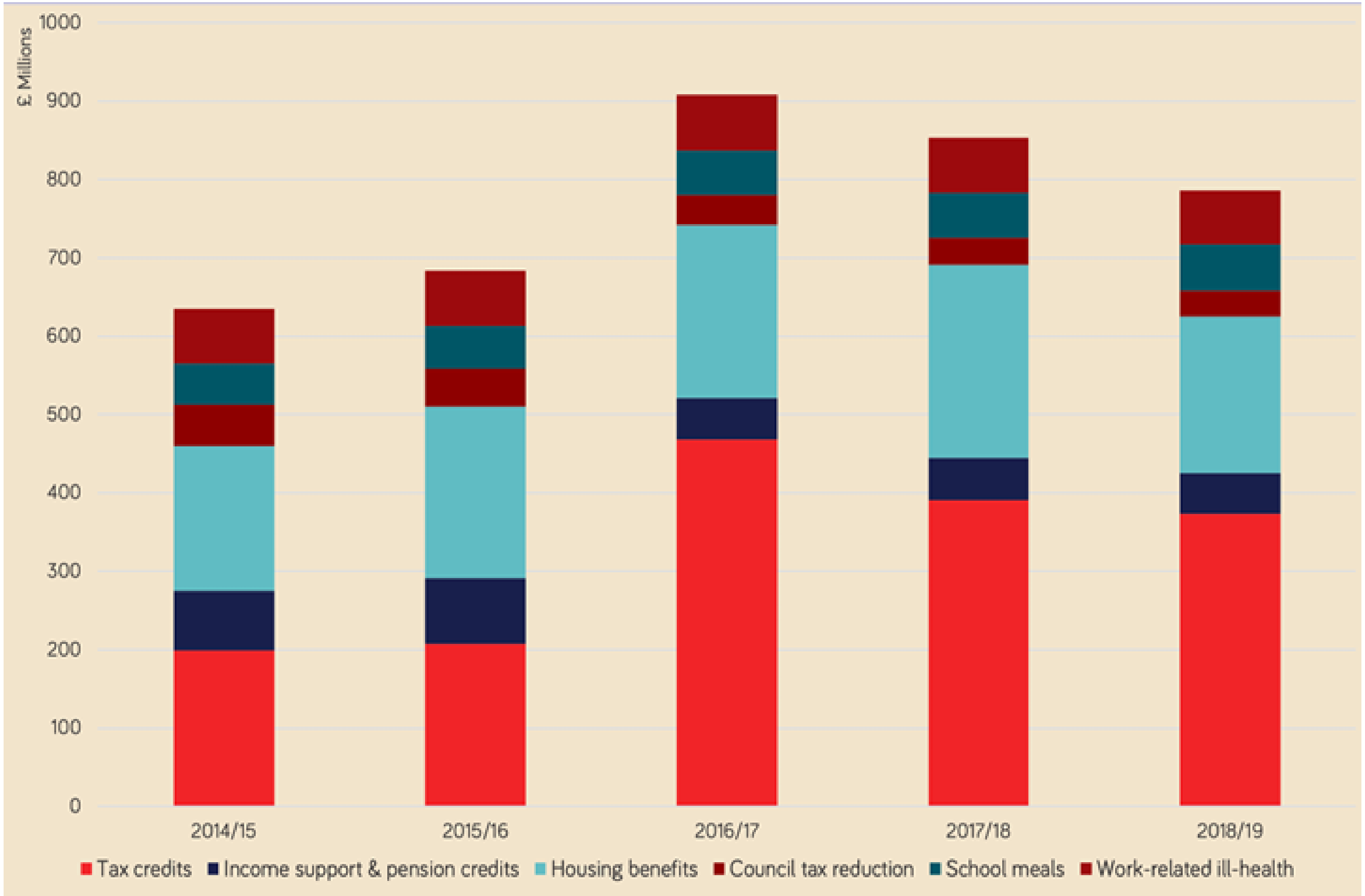
- Prevention
- Community Wealth Building
- Wellbeing Economy

The potential of prevention and reducing ‘failure demand’

- ‘Failure demand’ can be defined as the demand on public services created by our flawed economic system
- This means that we are caught up in the pursuit of economic growth to pay for the services to respond to the problems that economic model creates
- Economic designs which generate poverty, inequality, precarious work, environmental damage are worst
- This precisely describes the dominant economic design promoted for the last 40 years, and which continue today

- Poverty and all its consequences for services (education, health, social work, policing, fire, etc.)
- Environmental damage
- Subsidies for low-paid work, high rents, etc.

Direct and Indirect Government Expenditure for low-income/ precarious households in work in Scotland (Source: Chrysopoulou et al., 2021)



The potential of prevention and reducing ‘failure demand’

- Prevention has been proposed as a key means of reducing ‘failure demand’
- …but people mean different things by prevention…
- Might mean redesigning economies to be put in service of people and planet
- …and investing in services that reduce/eliminate subsequent issues (e.g. education, vaccination)
- …or quite ‘downstream’ spending to mitigate problems that are already established (important as that might be)

The potential of prevention and reducing ‘failure demand’

- Prevention is not a silver bullet
- Much public spending is not actually determined by ‘population need’
- Fixed costs and vested interests make disinvestment difficult even where spending is determined by need
- There is so much unmet need in the system, that even a very substantial amount of prevention work is unlikely to reduce need (and demand) for services to the levels that disinvestment can be safely undertaken
- Prevention is necessary to achieve better outcomes and mitigate increasing demands on services
- ...but needs combined with other approaches to reduce commodification and industry interests, as well as more fundamental economic redesign

National Institute Economic Review (2026), 1–15
doi:10.1017/nie.2026.10098

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ARTICLE

HOW MUCH DO WE REALLY KNOW ABOUT THE IMPLICATIONS OF DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE FOR FUTURE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE COSTS? ARTICULATING A RESEARCH AGENDA

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Abstract
Projections of health/social care spending highlight risks to future fiscal sustainability. This concern is based, in part, on six assumptions, which we argue are uncertain: (1). Populations will continue to age; (2). Health is a function of age; (3). Health/social care need is driven by health; (4). Health/social care spending is driven by need; (5). Inequalities are unimportant; (6). Increasing dependency ratios risk fiscal sustainability. We propose three hypotheses which reframe the debate: (1). Health/social care spending primarily results from political decisions on supply; (2). Prevention policies alone are unlikely to reduce fiscal pressures; (3). Fiscal sustainability is best achieved by combining prevention with decommodification and ‘realistic medicine’.

Keywords: fiscal sustainability; healthcare spending; population ageing

JEL Codes: H51; I18

1. The challenge of health and social care financial sustainability

How much we can afford to spend on public services, including health and social care, is a hot topic. In the context of fiscal tightening, widening health inequalities and an ageing population, questions inevitably turn to the impacts of demographic change on the fiscal sustainability of public services, in particular health and social care (Charlesworth and Raymond, 2025; Warner and Zaranko, 2025). Recent projections from the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) for the United Kingdom as a whole suggest that 'it will be difficult to move to a more sustainable path for public debt' (Office for Budget Responsibility, 2024). Based on their latest projections, the Scottish Fiscal Commission recently concluded that Scottish devolved public spending is unsustainable, particularly because of the projected growth of health and social care spending (Scottish Fiscal Commission, 2025). The Commission added the proviso that improvements in population health *could* ease fiscal pressures, echoing themes developed by Derek Wanless over 20 years ago, that health and spending trajectories are not the inevitable result of an inexorably ageing population (Wanless, 2002, 2004).

How much do we really know about the implications of demographic change for future health and social care costs? Models of future spending often apply current rates of spending by age to forecasts of demographic change and project rapidly rising spending due to an ageing population. Similarly, models of need and demand pressures on spending apply higher disease burdens by age to an ageing population and consequently predict rising demand (Public Health Scotland, 2022). These analyses often rely upon six important assumptions (Table 1).

The potential of Community Wealth Building

- This is within YOUR power!
- If implemented fully it offers real potential to 'rewire' the local economy
- It can change economic ownership structures, flows of income, wealth patterns, employment quality
- …but only if all pillars are taken seriously, and it is implemented across the piece (i.e. including city deal money, pension funds, municipalisation, nurturing workers co-operatives, etc.)
- We are well beyond the point where piecemeal implementation would have impact

1. Shared ownership of the local economy
2. Making financial powers work for local places
3. Fair employment and just labour markets
4. Progressive procurement of goods and services
5. Socially just and productive use of land, property and assets

When do you know are you are *en route* to a Wellbeing Economy?

1. Is the economy explicitly viewed as serving social, health, cultural, equity and nature outcomes

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1. Is the economy explicitly viewed as serving social, health, cultural, equity and nature outcomes (rather than these being put in service of the economy or economic growth?)
2. Is there a comprehensive and plausible pathway to design the economy to achieve the above outcomes?
3. Is there a clear commitment to a just transition away from economic activities which:
   - Harm nature and climate
   - Involve exploitation, domination, colonialism, extraction, social harms, militarism and rentierism

When do you know are you are *en route* to a Wellbeing Economy?

4. Are there clear mechanisms that extend democracy across all sectors of the economy (including ownership)
5. Are negative impacts between policy areas and populations assessed and avoided, and positive impacts promoted
6. Are all measures of economic success focused on social, health, cultural, equity and nature outcomes?

Contrasts between a genuine wellbeing economy approach and wellbeing economy 'window dressing' (Source: McCartney et al., 2023)

Window dressing	Genuine approach

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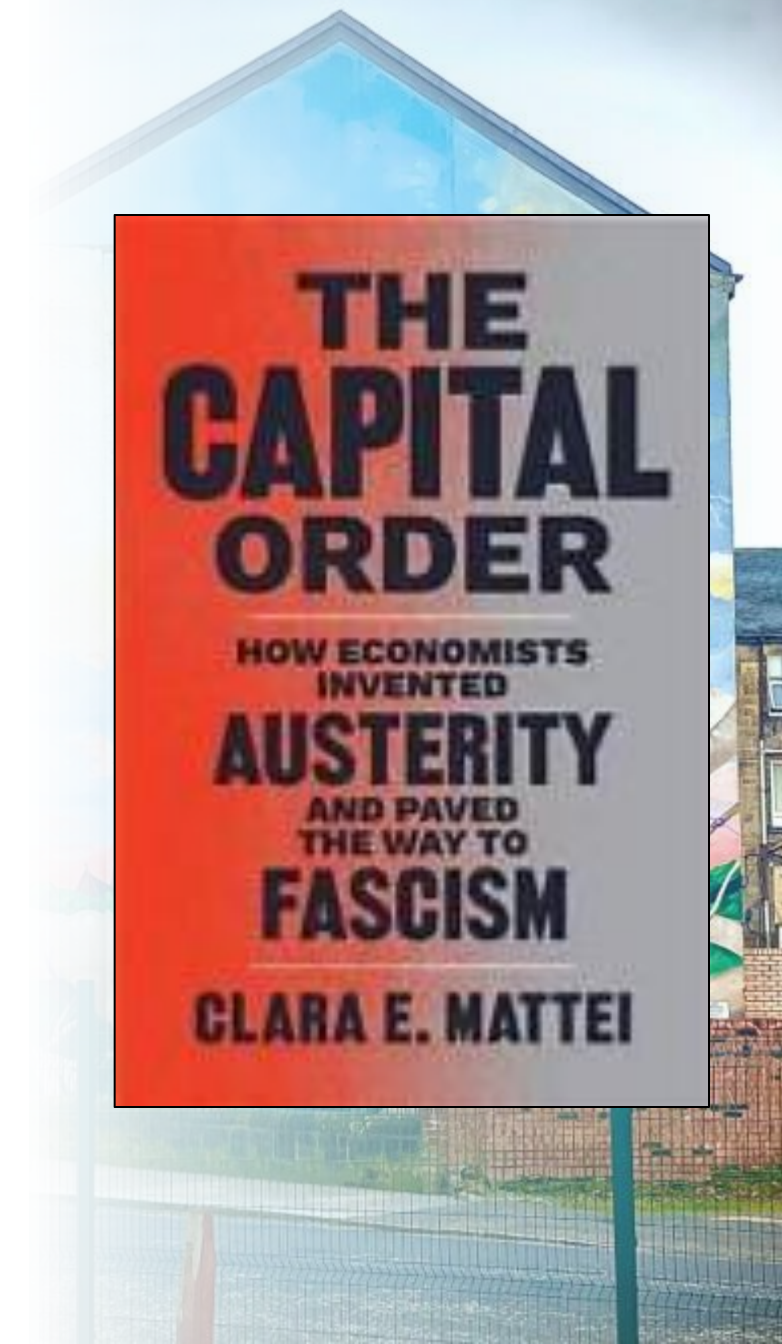
Window dressing	Genuine approach
'Democratisation' of the economy is dominated by a model of **transferring state-owned assets to arms length, community or voluntary organisations**, often **without sufficient funding** or to **reduce tax payments**, rather than democratising control of privately-held assets	

Contrasts between a genuine wellbeing economy approach and wellbeing economy 'window dressing' (Source: McCartney et al., 2023)

Window dressing	Genuine approach
'Democratisation' of the economy is dominated by a model of **transferring state-owned assets to arms length, community or voluntary organisations**, often **without sufficient funding** or to **reduce tax payments**, rather than democratising control of privately-held assets	Creation of **workers' co-operatives**; Provision of **high-quality shared goods, services and spaces in place of privately owned resources**, creating the means to move from private luxury and public sufficiency to **private sufficiency and public luxury**

The urgency of the moment

- Climate change is real, present, and rapidly worsening
- Population health trends are awful, with life expectancy going down in our poorest communities
- Public services are really struggling after prolonged austerity
- Public frustration with the economy risks fascist and racist narratives taking hold



The urgency of the moment

- To provide hope we need to create an economy that support people with:
  - High-quality public services
  - Increased economic ownership and control
  - Better quality jobs
- We need an economy that adapts and mitigates climate change and biodiversity loss
- What contribution might you make to this journey?

Thank you for listening (and not heckling*)

Key references:

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Credit to https://www.paisleymurals.co.uk/murals/01-the-kingfisher.html for the image of the Kingfisher mural.

*Written before the presentation, so may or may not apply!

The Renfrewshire We Want to Build

Stronger economy.
Better lives.
Sustainable public services.

Ruth Cooper – Community Wealth Building

Renfrewshire Economy Conference, 8th September 2026

Renfrewshire Council

Community Wealth Building

Getting more local value from what we already have, what we already spend and what we already do.

Our money | Our people | Our assets | Our influence

A Rare Opportunity

Four plans. One place. One opportunity.

COUNCIL Plan	**COMMUNITY** Plan	**HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE** Plans	**COMMUNITY WEALTH Building** Plan

Developed together. Aligned around the same ambition.

WHAT KIND OF RENFREWSHIRE DO WE WANT TO BUILD?

The economy is about people:

Opportunity

Prosperity

Wellbeing

Belonging

THE ECONOMY IS ABOUT PEOPLE

A GOOD JOB

A SECURE INCOME

A THRIVING BUSINESS

A STRONG COMMUNITY

A HEALTHY LIFE

Economic outcomes shape people's lives.

WE'VE DONE IT BEFORE.

Youth employment

27th → 4th

Renfrewshire, 2012–2015

1000 businesses involved

1,000+ new and additional jobs

3,000 young people moved into work

INVEST in Renfrewshire

WE'VE DONE IT BEFORE.

Ferguslie Park named as Scotland's most deprived area

Published 31 August 2016

9 STREETS Initiative

Ferguslie Park: ~~1st~~ → SIMD

Partners + services → targeted action → changed trajectory

We all have influence

Every organisation in this room is an economic actor

- SPEND - Where do we buy?
- EMPLOY - Who gets opportunities?
- COMMISSION - Who delivers our services?
- INVEST - Where does our money go?
- ASSETS - How do we use what we own?
- COLLABORATE - What can we achieve together?

- These are decisions we're already making.
- We all influence the economy.
- The question is whether we use that influence intentionally.

WHAT COULD WE DO DIFFERENTLY?

WHAT DO WE WANT TO CHANGE?

What do we want life to be like for people here?

What needs to change to make that happen?

What role can each of us play?

What are we prepared to do differently?

DON'T JUST TAKE AN IDEA AWAY, TAKE A RESPONSIBILITY

- THINK ABOUT THE INFLUENCE YOU HAVE.
- THINK ABOUT THE DECISIONS YOU MAKE.
- THINK ABOUT THE DIFFERENCE THEY COULD MAKE.

WE DON'T JUST WRITE BETTER PLANS.

WE CHANGE THE PLACE.

WE ADD VALUE THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE.

SMALL CHANGES.

COLLECTIVE ACTION.

BIG IMPACT.

Panel Discussion

Do you have any questions for today's speakers?

www.menti.com

Enter the code

6185 6303

Or scan the QR Code

Coffee Break – Enjoy!

Table Sessions

4 Themes
A chair and a scribe on each group
Challenge questions for response on menti
Feedback at the end (menti responses)

Table Sessions

FEEDBACK

The Renfrewshire We Want to Build: Your Voice Matters

Pauline Moss
Renfrewshire Economy Conference 2026

Renfrewshire Council

Background

- Our Council and Community Plans are coming to an end:
  - Council Plan : 2022-2027
  - Community Plan : 2017-2027
- Aligning with the Integrated Joint Board's Strategic Plan
- Two stage process for development:
  - Strategic Needs Assessment process (What Matters in Renfrewshire)
  - Consultation and Engagement campaign (Your Voice Matters)

Our context

- We're committed to getting things right for our communities and caring for those who need our support most
- We face significant challenges, including financial pressures, a changing population, and rising demand for services
- Because money is limited, we must make difficult choices:
    - deciding what's most important
    - finding new ways to deliver services
    - spending money where it makes the biggest difference
    - working closely with communities and partners to help make these choices

What you've told us

Resident Research

62% agree Renfrewshire Council is good at letting local people know about what services it provides	**54%** agree Renfrewshire Council is good at letting local people know how well it is performing	**44%** agree Renfrewshire Council is good at listening to local people's views before it takes decisions

Theme from focus groups - transparency in decision making. 'Participants want to understand how decisions are made, where money is spent and why certain things are prioritised. They want to see clear evidence that the Council has heard residents and is prioritising the things that are most important.'

‘I will listen to you, especially when we disagree.’

Barack Obama

Your Voice Matters
Menti session

Renfrewshire
Council

Reflections on the summer conversations

- Neighbourliness – connection to place and community
- Positive about having these conversations with the Council
- Some great interactions with services
- Some frustrating and challenging interactions with services
- Some worries about the future, information (misinformation?), young people and safety
- Overwhelmingly positive in tone

What comes next and how can you get involved?

- Thematic sessions
- Geographic or demographic gaps
- HSCP – three people, three questions
- Visits to groups, partners etc
- Conversations with Elected Members
- Conversations with colleagues
- Council website and 'Consul' site
- New Council and Community Plans and a new Strategic Plan for IJB

If you're not raising your voices, who will?

Renfrewshire.gov.uk/your-voice-matters
Renfrewshire.communitychoices.scot

Pauline Moss, pauline.moss@renfrewshire.gov.uk

The Renfrewshire We Want to Build

TURNING AMBITION INTO ACTION

Making it easier to create local value
Small changes.
Collective action.
Greater local impact.

Ruth Cooper – Community Wealth Building

Renfrewshire Economy Conference, 8th September 2026

Renfrewshire Council

This Is About What We Already Have

WE DON'T NECESSARILY NEED MORE

We need to make better use of what we already have:

Our money
Our people
Our businesses
Our assets
Our influence

Information. Coordination. Connections. Different choices.

Community Benefits

FROM "WHAT CAN YOU OFFER?" to "WHAT DO OUR COMMUNITIES NEED?"

Community need

↓

Supplier commitment

↓

Local benefit

Our contracts may be individual. Our communities are shared.

YOU CAN'T BUY LOCAL IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHO'S LOCAL

Who are our local businesses?

What do they provide?

What opportunities are they interested in?

What capacity do they have?

One local business intelligence system

Give Businesses a Better Chance

MAKE THE OPPORTUNITY VISIBLE

What are we likely to buy?

When are we likely to buy it?

What kind of business might we need?

↓

Time to prepare
Time to collaborate
Time to build capacity

Not a guarantee of work. A fairer opportunity to compete.

Think Local First

Before we:

SPEND
COMMISSION
EMPLOY
INVEST
USE OUR ASSETS

Not local at any cost.

Local where it makes sense.

VALUE LOCAL

Recognise what we already have.

Support what we want to keep.

Create the conditions for what comes next.

100 YEARS

Celebrating the businesses that have helped build Renfrewshire.

100 Years Is More Than a Milestone

100 YEARS

Different generations.
Different technologies.
Different economic circumstances.
Recessions. Booms. Pandemics. Wars.

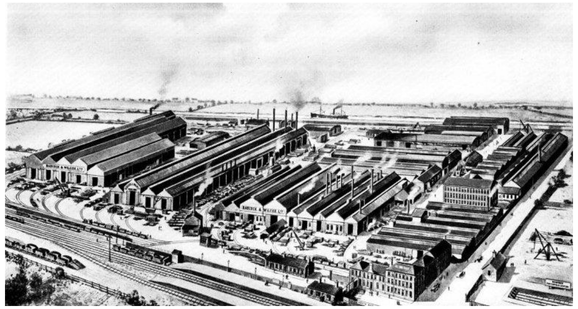
And still here.

Businesses that are part of Renfrewshire's story

Kibble Education and Care	1859

Smith & Mclaurin	1849

Altrad Babcock (Formerly Babcock & Wilcox)	1867



St Mirrin Football Club	1877

Houston Kiltmakers	1909

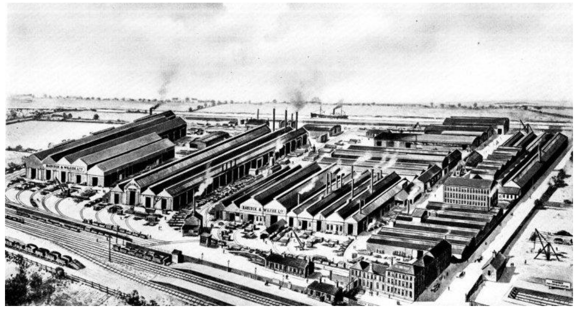
JW Filshill Ltd	1875

Value Local

Kibble Education and Care | 1859

Smith & Mclaurin | 1849

Altrad Babcock (Formerly Babcock & Wilcox) | 1867



St Mirrin Football Club | 1877

Houston Kiltmakers | 1909

JW Filshill Ltd | 1875

ONE RENFREWSHIRE APPROACH

What Could We Do Together?

One local business intelligence system

One community benefit marketplace

One pipeline of opportunities

One way of measuring local impact

WHAT COULD YOUR ORGANISATION DO DIFFERENTLY?

The Challenge:

Spend differently?
Employ differently?
Use an asset differently?
Connect a supplier to community need?
Make an opportunity more accessible?

ONE DECISION. THEN ANOTHER. THEN ANOTHER.

THINK LOCAL.

VALUE LOCAL.

CREATE LOCAL VALUE.

#RenfrewshireEconomy2026

INVEST in Renfrewshire

Renfrewshire Council

INVEST
in Renfrewshire

Conference Close

Cllr Andy Steel

Convenor, Economy and Regeneration Policy Board

#RenfrewshireEconomy2026

INVEST in Renfrewshire

Renfrewshire Council