

MONTHLY LABOUR MARKET UPDATE

AUGUST 2018

This is a monthly update on the performance of the Fife labour market produced by Fife Council on behalf of the Fife Economy Partnership.

Please note the Office for National Statistics (ONS) has re-classified the Claimant Count figures as experimental statistics. Care should therefore be taken when analysing and interpreting these figures. More information on this can be found at the end of this briefing.

Universal Credit statistics are provisional and are revised on a monthly basis.

CLAIMANT RATE (AUGUST 2018)

% of working age (16-64) residents claiming Jobseeker's Allowance or Universal Credit



Source: ONS Claimant Count

Fife's claimant rate has been steadily increasing since the introduction of Universal Credit (figure 3.1). Between July and August 2018, Fife's claimant rate increased by 0.1 percentage point. This has been driven by the increasing number of claimants on Universal Credit (figure 2.1) as more people are added to the new benefits system and/or removed from Jobseeker's Allowance.

PROFILE OF FIFE CLAIMANTS

2.1 Breakdown of Fife's total Claimants

AUGUST 2018	Claimant Rate	Claimant Count	Claimant Count - monthly change
People searching for work on Universal Credit	2.8%	6,561	5.6% 
Jobseeker's Allowance claimants	0.9%	2,009	-6.1% 

Source: Department for Work & Pensions; ONS Jobseeker's Allowance

2.2 Breakdown by Age

AUGUST 2018	Claimant Rate	Claimant Count	Claimant Count - monthly change
16-24 year olds claiming benefits	4.8%	1,985	3.4% ↑
25-49 year olds claiming benefits	4.0%	4,550	3.1% ↑
50+ year olds claiming benefits	2.6%	2,010	0.8% ↑

Source: ONS Claimant Count

2.3 Breakdown by Gender

AUGUST 2018	Claimant Rate	Claimant Count	Claimant Count - monthly change
Male claimants	4.7%	5,300	0.5% ↑
Female claimants	2.7%	3,270	6.3% ↑

Source: ONS Claimant Count

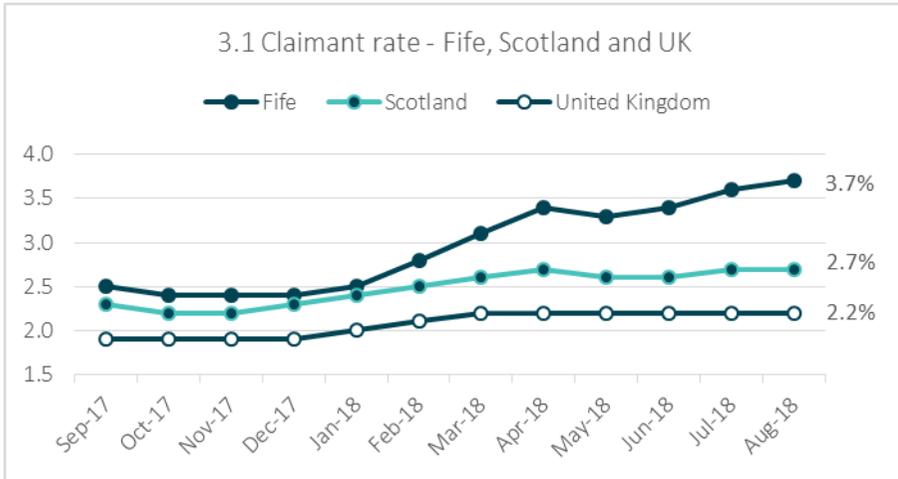
2.4 Area Committee Summary (August 2018)

In this area summary, a monthly change is given for both the claimant count and rate. For the claimant rate, the change represents the difference in percentage points between this month's claimant rate and last month's rate.

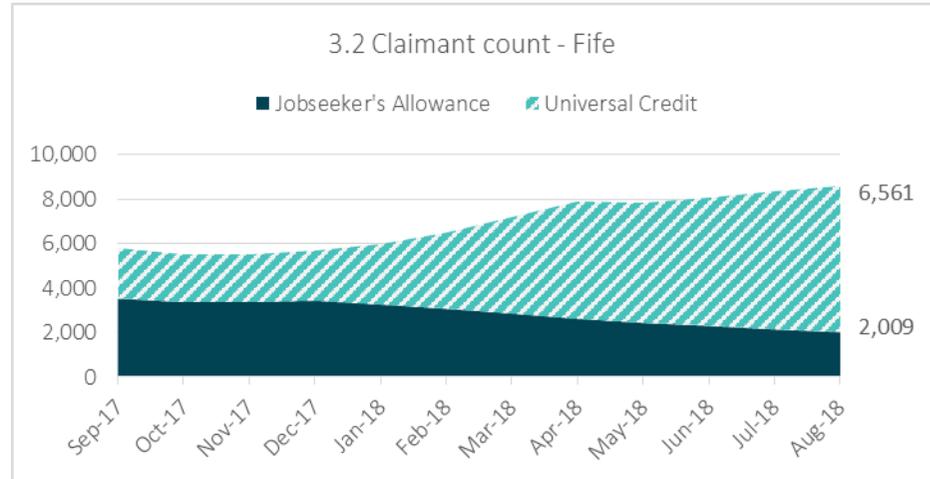
AUGUST 2018	Claimant Rate	Monthly change	Claimant Count	Monthly change	Female	Male
Cowdenbeath	5.0%	0.2 ↑	1,270	30 ↑	480	790
City of Dunfermline	3.3%	0.1 ↑	1,215	70 ↑	470	745
Glenrothes	3.5%	0.2 ↑	1,100	65 ↑	450	655
Kirkcaldy	5.1%	-0.1 ↓	1,895	-10 ↓	710	1,185
Levenmouth	6.4%	0.0 —	1,470	15 ↑	545	925
North East Fife	1.5%	0.0 —	690	5 ↑	255	435
South & West Fife	2.8%	0.2 ↑	875	45 ↑	340	535

Source: ONS Claimant Count

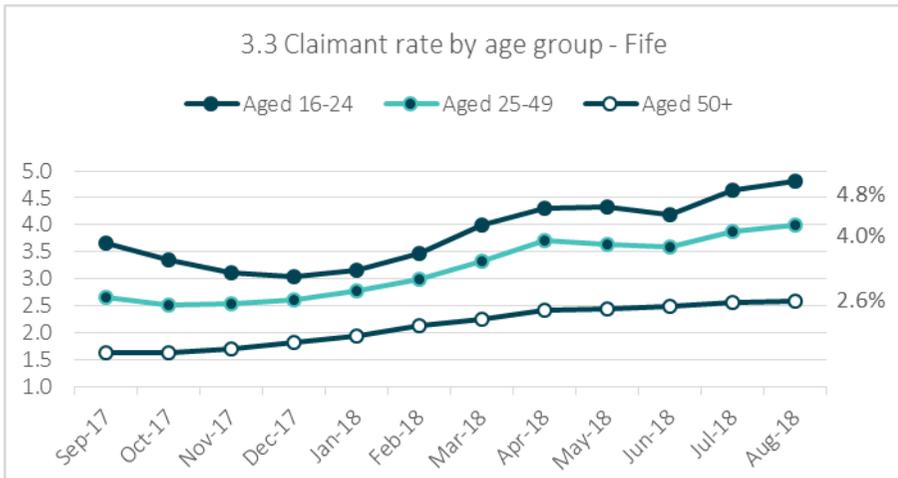
BREAKDOWN & COMPARISONS OF KEY INDICATORS



Source: ONS Claimant Count



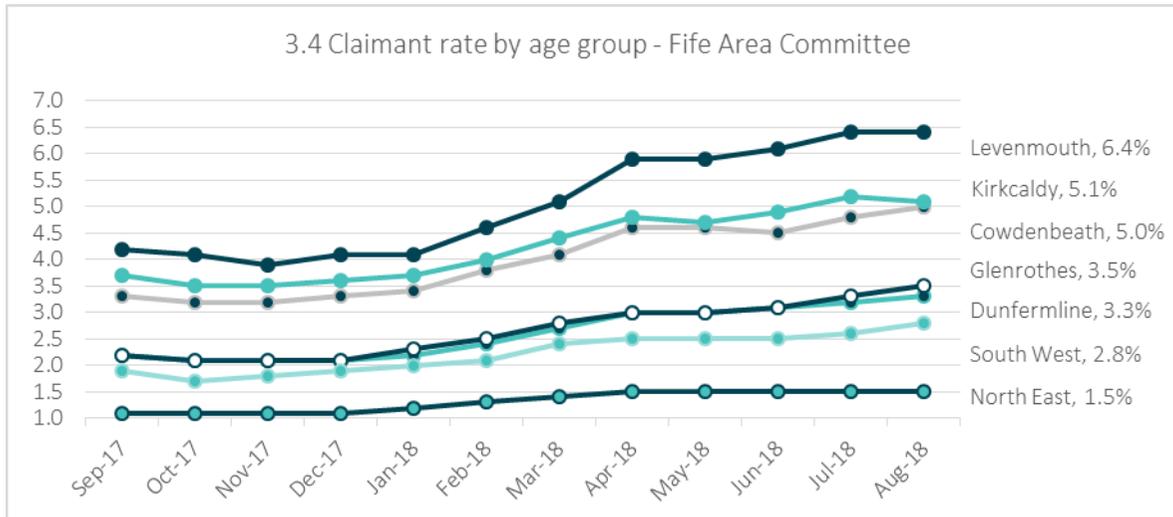
Source: ONS Jobseeker's Allowance; Department for Work and Pensions



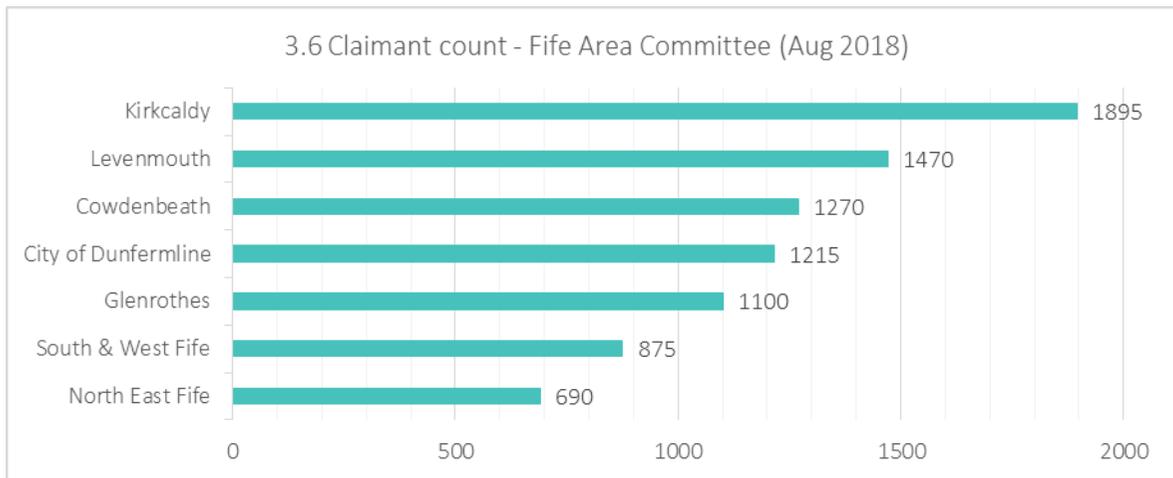
Source: ONS Claimant Count

Figure 3.2 illustrates the increase in the number of claimants on Universal Credit since the roll out of full service in December 2017. As the number of people required to search for work on Universal Credit increases, the number of JSA claimants decrease as existing claimants are moved over or new claimants added to the new benefits system.

Unemployment or a lack of participation amongst the 16-24 years age group is considered a key challenge highlighted in [Fife's Economic Strategy 2017-2027](#). With the introduction of Universal Credit, the claimant rate of this age group is continuing to increase monthly. The [Developing the Young Workforce](#) initiative aims to reduce youth unemployment by 40% by 2021 by bringing together schools, colleges and employers to provide young people with work-based learning.



Source: ONS Claimant Count



Source: ONS Claimant Count

3.5 Claimant Rate by Ward (Aug 2018)

HIGHEST	
Buckhaven, Methil and Wemyss Villages	8.4%
Kirkcaldy East	6.8%
Kirkcaldy Central	6.3%
LOWEST	
Howe of Fife and Tay Coast	1.8%
Tay Bridgehead	1.4%
St Andrews	0.5%

Source: ONS Claimant Count

There are large discrepancies across Fife's areas, with higher levels of claimants in Kirkcaldy, Levenmouth and Cowdenbeath.

Areas that are typically considered to be in 'Mid-Fife' have higher levels of both claimant count and claimant rate. The highest claimant rate – in Buckhaven, Methil and Wemyss Villages (8.2%) – is more than double the Fife average, and is significantly higher than other areas in Fife.

St Andrews and the Tay Bridgehead, alongside areas with a higher job density, i.e. Inverkeithing and Dalgety Bay and Dunfermline, have lower claimant rates in comparison.

The [Plan for Fife 2017-2027](#) and [Fife's Economic Strategy 2017-2027](#) both aim to address these discrepancies.

3.7 Edinburgh & South East Scotland City Region

Claimant Rate by Local Authority



	Jul 2018	Aug 2018	Claimant Rate - monthly change
East Lothian	2.9%	3.0%	0.1 ↑
City of Edinburgh	1.4%	1.3%	-0.1 ↓
Fife	3.6%	3.7%	0.1 ↑
Midlothian	2.7%	2.8%	0.1 ↑
Scottish Borders	1.6%	1.8%	0.2 ↑
West Lothian	1.9%	2.0%	0.1 ↑

Source: ONS Claimant Count

As part of a key programme in the [Edinburgh & South East Scotland City Region Deal](#), the Scottish and UK Governments will invest £25 million in Employability and Skills.

The Opportunities Fife Partnership sets out in its [2018-2022 strategy](#) the need for making it easier for unemployed people, particularly from Mid-Fife, to access further education, training and jobs not only in Fife, but throughout the Edinburgh & South East Scotland City Region. The [Tay Cities Deal](#) sets out the need for a transformational skills programme to address a number of issues relating to inclusivity across the Tay Cities Region.

3.8 Tay Cities Region

Claimant Rate by Local Authority



	Jul 2018	Aug 2018	Monthly change on rate
Angus	3.0%	3.0%	0.0 —
Dundee	4.5%	4.6%	0.1 ↑
Fife	3.6%	3.7%	0.1 ↑
Perth & Kinross	1.2%	1.3%	0.1 ↑

Source: ONS Claimant Count

Fife's claimant rate is above both City Region averages (2.4% for Edinburgh & South East Scotland, and 3.2% for the Tay Cities in August 2018) with the claimant rate varying significantly across the regions.

However, this variance may be a result of the different stages in the roll out of the new benefit system as not all local authorities have full service.

NB Care should be taken when comparing these geographies.

UNIVERSAL CREDIT

The claimant count is based on [experimental](#) figures calculated by the Department for Work and Pensions and the Office for National Statistics (ONS). It is measured by the number of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance plus experimental data on the number of people on Universal Credit who are required to search for work.

Universal Credit replaces six existing legacy benefits and tax credits (including Jobseeker's Allowance and Income-related Employment and Support Allowance) and was fully introduced in Fife on 6 December 2017 after initially going live in the region in April 2016. During this period, before it was fully rolled out, Universal Credit in Fife was limited to claims which were relatively simple, whereas more complex claimants were likely to remain or be added to Jobseeker's Allowance. The introduction of Universal Credit has resulted in fluctuations in the claimant count and inconsistencies in the coverage of the claimant count across the UK due to different speeds of the roll out.

Areas across the UK that are operating full service have seen a marked increase in their claimant count. Universal Credit requires more people to look for work than was the case for legacy benefits; new claimants who are waiting on or appealing Work Capability Assessments are also required to look for work.

Due to inconsistencies, the claimant count has been re-classified by the ONS as experimental statistics. This status is likely to continue until the roll out of Universal Credit is completed - expected in 2022. Please note that care should therefore be taken when analysing and interpreting the figures.

Universal Credit statistics supplied by the Department for Work and Pensions are provisional on their date of release and may be subject to revision.

More information on Universal Credit can be found [here](#).

STATISTICS & ECONOMIC INFORMATION

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For further information about the contents of this publication, or to request any bespoke economic information, please contact:

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Visit the [Fife Economy Partnership](#) website for more information. Follow us on Twitter [@FifeEconPship](#) 

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