



First

Fife Intensive Rehabilitation
& Substance Use Team



2024 - 2025

Annual Report

Fife Intensive Rehabilitation & Substance Use Team (FIRST) provides a Fife wide community-based rehabilitation service to clients with substance use issues via one to one, groupwork and volunteer support. FIRST also assesses, prepares and supports clients through residential rehabilitation.



REGISTERED OFFICE

Carlyle House
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AUDITORS

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31 Townsend Place
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BANKERS

Royal Bank of Scotland
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FUNDERS

Fife Alcohol & Drug
Partnership
Fife Health & Social
Care Partnership

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FIRST is a Charity and Company Limited by Guarantee registered in Scotland
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Contents

Welcome to the FIRST Team	4
Chairperson's Report	5
Service Manager's Report	7
Referral Statistics	9
FIRST/Addictions Psychological Therapies Service	10
Groupwork Activities	12
Residential Rehabilitation Report	16
Referral Statistics	17
FIRST/Phoenix Family Support Group	18
Client Feedback	19



Welcome to the FIRST Team

Service Manager
April Adam

Mental Health Co-ordinator
Nadia Lessels

Business Manager
Jeanie Nowland

**Social Prescribing Groupwork/
Volunteer Co-ordinator**
Paul Watson

Administration Team
Kayleigh Gourlay, Office Manager
Sharon Barker, Service Administrator

Community Rehabilitation Team
Co-ordinators
Arlene Hanafin
Rebecca Lee
Rehabilitation Workers
Cara Brophy
Bill Dorman
Tori Hardie – from 06.01.2025
Kareen McGowan
Tracy Murray (MIWFF) – until 08.11.2024
David Penman
Gemma Simpson
Mark Young

Residential Rehabilitation Team
Co-ordinator
Liz Nardone
Rehabilitation Worker
Lauren Murphy

Board of Directors
Joan Lamie, Chairperson
Donald Mackay, Director
Jenny MacLeod, Director
Paul Coleman, Director

Link Officer
Paul Faloona

"I have felt listened to and I have learnt new skills and coping strategies to help in times of distress and different emotions. I have felt valued and I don't feel like that very often."

Chairperson's Report

FIRST has received a high level of referrals across the service and has strived to meet the demands of an ever-changing environment. I have always been inspired by the commitment shown by everyone involved in FIRST to support clients on their journey of recovery.

This report highlights the achievements and the good practice we have made over the last year.

We celebrated ten years of the Residential Rehabilitation Service at an event held on the 16th May 2025. This was an opportunity to hear the personal accounts of clients and their family members and the difference FIRST has made to them on their recovery journey. I would urge you all to read the brochure that was produced to mark this milestone and find out more about this life changing service.

The Groupwork programme has offered some interesting activities for our clients. The latest is the Viking Heat Experience at Balmalcolm Den where clients are offered a sauna experience followed by ice cold baths. Such has been the demand that two sessions have been arranged each week so everyone can secure a place. The Summer Activities programme goes from strength to strength with positive feedback received about the range of options on offer. The Peer Support Group has also been a success and offers participants a feeling of togetherness and mutual support.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Service Manager, April Adam for her continued dedication and professionalism. This has gone a long way to making FIRST an outstanding organisation in its field. It is important to recognise we cannot achieve the life transforming results for our clients without the dedication and hard work of our staff team and volunteers – my heartfelt thanks to you all. Everyone involved with FIRST is committed to making a real difference.

I am also grateful to my fellow Board Members for generously sharing their time and expertise. A special mention to Michael Petrie who has recently joined the Board and is also a volunteer at FIRST. Michael completed a sponsored thirty-one mile run last year and this included ascending Ben Nevis. The funds raised were used to provide hot meals over the winter months to clients who were attending Peer Support meetings.

Paul Faloona is our new Fife Council Link Officer and I would also like to thank him for his guidance and support over the last year.

The continued success of FIRST can be attributed to its ability to adapt to change and through responding to the view of clients and staff who are best placed to tell us how we can improve our services. We will always focus on changing the lives of those who need us most and ensure our clients are at the heart of everything we do! I look forward to your continued support in the year ahead as we endeavour to provide a first-class service



Joan Lamie
Chairperson

Service Manager's Report

FIRST is a trauma-informed service. Our highly skilled team have continued to deliver Tier One and Tier Two psychological interventions to the clients we support. Figures for the year shows that in terms of Tier One, 2826 sessions were delivered to 338 clients and in terms of Tier Two, 1287 sessions were delivered to 186 clients. We have an excellent professional relationship with the staff from the NHS Fife Addictions Psychological Therapies Service (APTS) and have a Psychologist embedded in our service. We continue to have monthly coaching sessions for all frontline staff at FIRST, with sessions led by APTS every second month. These sessions are crucial to ensure that staff are supported in their jobs and working in a safe way, as well as ensuring there is equity across the service in terms of service delivery.

We were invited to participate at the daily online referral meetings with NHS Fife Addiction Service and since January 2025, have attended each morning to help the decision-making process for all new referrals. These meetings have brought services closer together and have helped us all to work in a more joined up way.

Last summer (2024) we hit a milestone of ten years managing the Residential Rehabilitation Service. This service has proved to be very successful and we have people in recovery ten years post rehab. Feedback from both clients and their families say it all, in that their lives have been transformed thanks to this service. There has been huge financial investment in this service and we sincerely hope that funding will continue beyond 2026 when the National Mission funding comes to an end.

FIRST always receives a lot of interest from S1-5 pupils from local High Schools who are involved in the Youth Philanthropy Initiative (YPI). Once again, we were recipients of the £3,000 award for the winning charity thanks to a group of pupils from Kirkcaldy High School. It is encouraging to see that so many young people want to support a service such as ours and show real empathy when they visit us and hear of the struggles some of our clients experience on a daily basis.

We continue to work in partnership with Clued Up, Gingerbread and Citizens Advice and Rights Fife in delivering the Making It Work For Families (MIWFF) Service, with FIRST staff supporting the adults with substance use issues within the family.

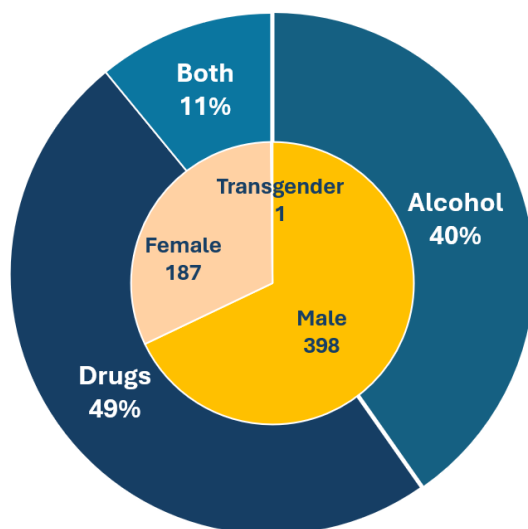
As always, I'd like to thank all the staff, volunteers and peer leaders for their hard work and dedication to FIRST over the past twelve months. I'd also like to thank the Directors for their continued support, particularly to me and last but by no means least, our clients who work hard to achieve recovery which is no mean feat. We will strive to ensure that we continue to deliver a trauma informed, person centred service and support our clients for as long as they need us.



April Adam
Service Manager

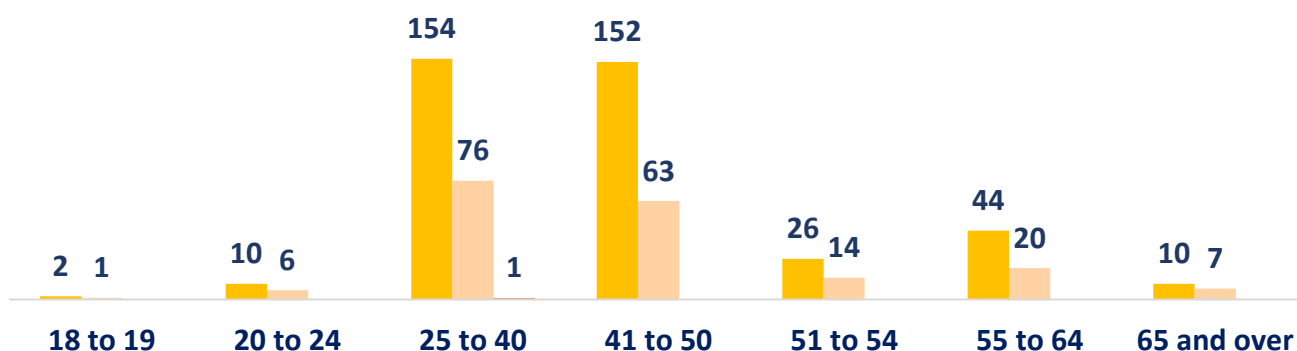
Referral Statistics

A total of **586** referrals were received for **Community Rehabilitation** between 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025.

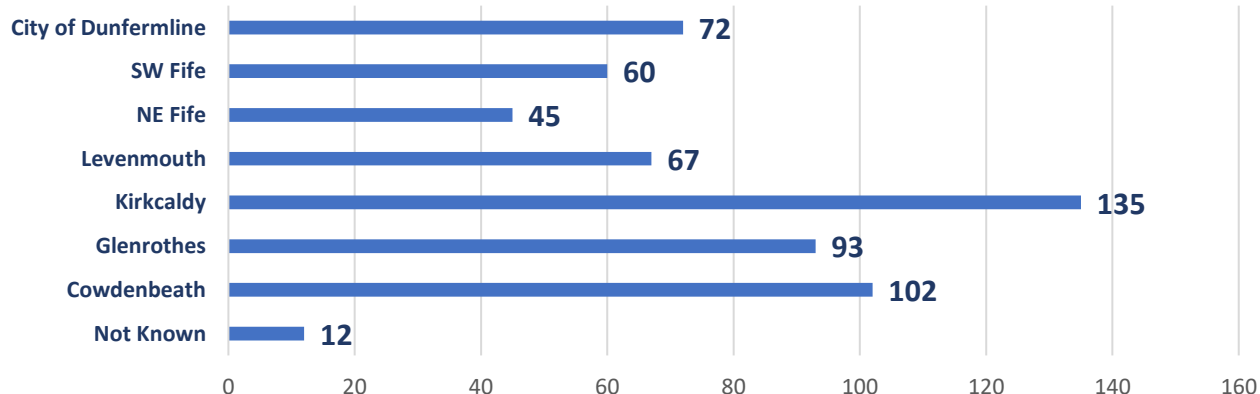


Age Breakdown

Male Female Transgender



Locality Breakdown



FIRST/Addictions Psychological Therapies Service

We work in partnership with Dr Isabel Traynor and her team, in particular James Chamberlain, Counselling Psychologist who has a presence in our service each week to give staff advice and support with their clients if needed and our staff also have a direct referral route to James so clients are supported timeously. James also supports our mandatory Coaching Sessions that takes place on a monthly basis.

Staff training is crucial so everyone is equipped to support the clients. FIRST's frontline staff therefore complete the following essential training, enabling them to competently deliver a range of psychological interventions in a trauma informed way. This training starts with Tier One Interventions which consist of (a) Endings and Boundaries (b) Formulation and Goal Setting and (c) Decider Skills. On completion of these three elements staff then go on to complete Tier Two Interventions which are (d) Motivational Interviewing (e) Emotional Regulation and (f) Safety and Stabilisation.

Results from this process for the period April 2024 to March 2025 are listed below.

Tier 1 Interventions	Sessions	Unique Clients
Tier 1: Anxiety Management (Ad Hoc)	28	14
Tier 1: Anxiety Management (Structured)	58	18
Tier 1: Core Skills (Ad Hoc)	221	79
Tier 1: Decider Skills	83	34
Tier 1: Decider Skills (Structured)	24	4
Tier 1: Endings	54	29
Tier 1: Formulation	556	276
Tier 1: M.I. Informed	935	183
Tier 1: Psycho-education Emotions	224	83
Tier 1: Psycho-education Self Harm	5	2
Tier 1: Psycho-education Substance Use	444	143
Tier 1: Psycho-education Trauma	52	22
Tier 1: Safety and Stabilisation (Ad Hoc)	110	55
Tier 1: Trauma Disclosure	32	24
Grand Total	2826	338

Tier 2 Interventions	No of Clients completing intervention	% of Clients completing intervention
Tier 2: Core Skills (Structured)	34	30%
Tier 2: Emotional Resources Approach 1-1	10	71%
Tier 2: Safety and Stabilisation	27	29%
Tier 2 Interventions	Sessions	Unique Clients
Tier 2: Core Skills (Structured)	495	112
Tier 2: Emotional Resources Approach 1-1	90	14
Tier 2: Motivational Interviewing	365	86
Tier 2: Safety and Stabilisation	337	94
Grand Total	1287	186

Excerpt from completed Client Psychological Interventions Feedback Form:

What would you like to tell us about your experience of accessing these interventions?

Superb, my whole life has changed since working with FIRST and accessing these interventions. I can identify my emotions, and I am now able to understand what each emotion is trying to tell me. I know which tools to use depending on where I am on the window of tolerance.

What did you find most helpful about the interventions you completed?

Being able to manage situations – I am now down to 4ml of buprenorphine due to being able to use the interventions instead of coping through drugs and alcohol.

Targeting substance use, whilst targeting psychological distress, by providing psychosocial interventions produces better outcomes compared to treating either in isolation. (Shafer et al; 2019)

Groupwork Activities

As I look back on another incredible year the groups continue to grow, connect and offer support through meaningful activities and shared experiences. Whether it is in the forest, on the water or in a quiet moment of mindfulness, we've created space for people to feel valued, included and supported. We continue to offer hot food from October to March at Peer Support on a Tuesday evening which has made a massive difference to so many.

Throughout the year, we've offered a wide range of activities designed to support mental health, build confidence and learn new skills through the following:

-  Mindfulness sessions - creating calm, connection and self-awareness
-  Djembe drumming - bringing rhythm, energy and joy to the weekly group
-  Decider Skills outdoors - teaching practical tools for emotional resilience
-  Peer Support - a safe, supportive space running consistently every week
-  Conservation Group - caring for our environment while learning new skills together.

Celebrating a Decade of Peer Support



One of our proudest achievements this year was marking ten years of continuous Peer Support. Running fifty-two weeks of the year, we've only taken one week off in the past decade – a testament to the strength, commitment, and heart of everyone involved.

Thank You to our Volunteers and Partners



We want to extend our heartfelt thanks to all of our incredible volunteers and partner organisations.

To our volunteers – your kindness, time and dedication are the heartbeat of everything we do. Whether you have helped facilitate a session, supported someone in need or simply made someone feel welcome, your efforts have made a real difference. ***And a very special thank you to our volunteer Michael Petrie who by running an ultra-marathon, raised £720 which allowed us to serve hot wholesome food throughout the winter months.***

To our partner organisations – thank you for sharing your expertise, offering space and support. These collaborations have allowed us to reach more people, run more activities and continue to grow in ways we couldn't do alone. A big thank you to:

The Mindfulness Partnership
St Luke's Church, Glenrothes
Viking Heat Retreat
Centre for Positive Change, Kirkcaldy
Fife Council Outdoor Education Team, Lochore Meadows
Falkland Estate, Falkland

Paul Watson
Social Prescribing Groupwork/Volunteer Co-ordinator



“It has got me out and talking to people.”



“I love being outdoors and socializing. This group helps people and I’ll be looking into more volunteering at Falkland Estate.”

“I have been taking part with the Conservation Group for over a month and find it very beneficial. My overall health has improved vastly.”



“It has helped my moods and the skills have made me think about things.”

“Since attending FIRST Peer Support Group, my mental health has greatly improved as well as overall health and I am enjoying interacting with all who attends.”





“This group has played a huge part in my recovery, the life I lead and my social skills.”



“My quality of life has improved.”



“An excellent group leaving me feeling very relaxed.”

“It’s good to be in nature.”

“Very social group. Helps distract the mind.”



“Brilliant few hours. Was anxious and slightly distressed before I came after the cold bath it dissipated as I was mindfully noticing the trees, sun, blue sky. Head feels in a good space and feel relaxed, mood greatly improved.”



Residential Rehabilitation

The Residential Rehabilitation Service has had its tenth successful year. This year has seen over a hundred people given the opportunity to be assessed and attend a residential rehab.

The success of this service has been proven time and time again by the evidence of life changes that individuals make through their experience. Their recovery journey allows them to find themselves as they create a new life, building on their lived experience and creating a positive future.

As part of the ongoing service Lauren and I attend a monthly Family Support Group. This group, in partnership with Phoenix Futures brings together service users and their families to share experiences and to gain more understanding of the impact of addiction on family members. This group is a vital part of the ongoing recovery journey for all the family.

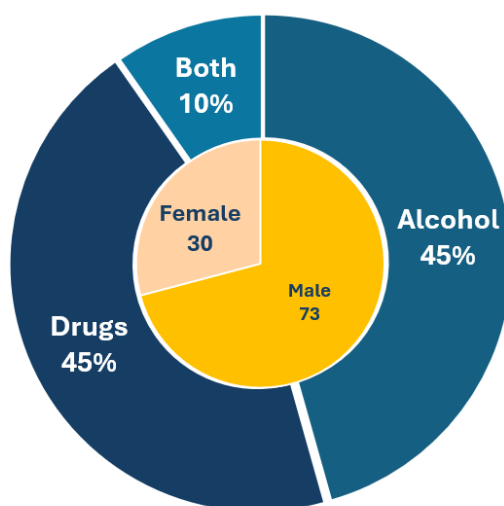
It has been an honour and privilege to be part of the recovery journey of all those who have attended residential rehab this past year and I would like to thank Phoenix Futures, The Abbeycare Foundation, Calderglen House and Jericho Dundee for their service provision and ongoing support. I would also like to thank Fife Council and Fife ADP for providing the funding that enables people to access rehab.

I want to also give special thanks to Lauren for all her hard work over the past year.

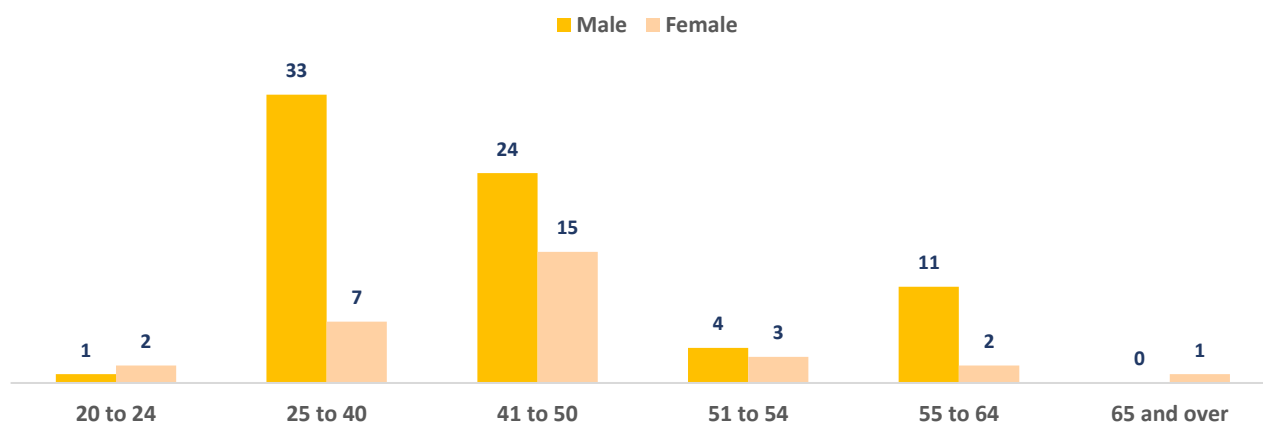
Liz Nardone
Residential Rehabilitation Co-ordinator

Referral Statistics

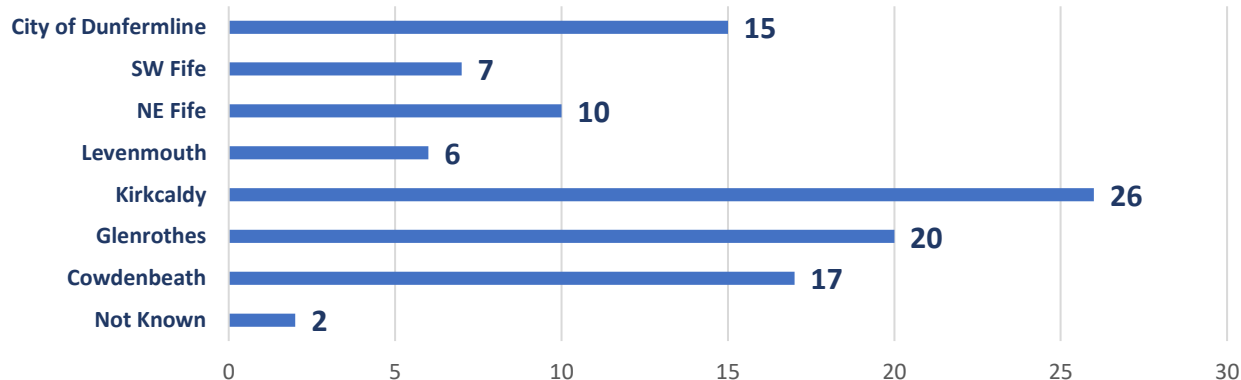
A total of **103** referrals were received for **Residential Rehabilitation** between 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025.



Age Breakdown



Locality Breakdown



FIRST/Phoenix Family Support Group

Source: Family Support Group Comment Forms

“Family Support is an amazing group that helps families heal and get an understanding of addiction recovery.”

“The meeting gives me an insight into what people feel as they go through their recovery journey and how it affects partners, friends, etc.”

“Since my sister has been in Phoenix, myself and my sister-in-law have been attending these monthly groups. I have found them to be so helpful. I have a greater understanding of addictions and what my sister has been going through. These meetings have been invaluable and we will continue to attend after my sister leaves rehab.”

“The group provides amazing support to both addicts and families. I am continually humbled hearing peoples shares and totally admire their honesty and bravery. I have found the group meetings to be very helpful and though provoking.”

Client Feedback

Source: Community & Residential Rehabilitation Client Exit Forms

“FIRST supported and encouraged me to get off the alcohol. I have not used any since November 2023 and feeling in a much better place. I liked having the weekly calls where I could talk about confidential some time sensitive information and not being judged by anything that I did say.”

“Good morning Gemma you amazing wee soul! Went into my app to do my morning reading before I head to the new summer group with Paul and ... I’m 7 months sober today. I would never have got this far without people like yourself; picking me up when I was in that horrible dark place and believing in me and most importantly making me believe in myself!

“FIRST have helped me so much. Kareen helped me set goals, gave me suggestions and ideas to try, she was someone to talk to that wasn’t family and I could be honest with without judgement. I looked forward to having meetings.”

“FIRST have always been understanding of my predicament and I felt I could speak without judgement which is important to me. I felt understood when no one else it seemed understood me. and I was supported with various issues I had going on.”



Thank you to our funders:

Fife Alcohol and Drug Partnership

Fife Health and Social Care Partnership

The Robertson Trust

CORRA Foundation (Improvement Fund)

Thank you to Michael Petrie for his kind donation.

**Thank you to Millie and her team for winning the YPI Final
for our Service.**

Thank you to those who have contributed to this Annual Report.

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