Stargazing Strategy

(Refresh 2026)

Fife Gingerbread

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Introduction

In 2024, Fife Gingerbread launched its Stargazing Strategy. A bold statement of intent that set out both the immediate priorities and the longer-term ambitions for our organisation. It also established our approach to systems change and Manifesto Commitments, giving voice to the policy and practice changes needed to make life better for families across Fife and beyond.

Since then, we have strengthened the foundations of who we are, with a clear North Star. We have refined our Mission, created a clear organisational tagline and introduced new Values that reflect the heart and ambition of Fife Gingerbread. The Strategy has given us momentum. Helping us grow in scale, confidence, influence and impact.

Our North Star

Creating better todays and brighter tomorrows for lone parents and families in need.

We will achieve our vision by supporting families in Fife to flourish, developing scalable solutions to tackle child poverty across Scotland and amplifying parents' voices for lasting change.

All underpinned by our values of courage, flourish, connected and genuine.

We now stand at an exciting tipping point. With strong foundations, renewed energy, purpose driven leadership and a sense of possibility we have taken the opportunity to look up, look ahead and ask ourselves - *what's next?*

In 2026, we paused to reflect and celebrate the progress made so far. We considered what has worked well, what has been achieved, what is no longer relevant and what new themes are emerging for families, communities and the wider system around them. We committed to a Strategy that is alive, purposeful and useful rather than a document that simply gathers 'virtual dust' on a website. This next iteration of the Stargazing Strategy is a renewed invitation to be brave, creative and ambitious for the future families deserve.

At every stage our criteria for decision making will be:

- Are families in Fife better able to flourish because of our support?
- Is our approach helping to test, demonstrate and scale solutions that reduce child poverty across Scotland?
- Are we meaningfully amplifying parents' voices and ensuring their lived experience shapes decisions, practice and policy?

> ***Every day, I am inspired by the strength and determination of the families we walk alongside. I am incredibly proud to be part of the Fife Gingerbread team, and what we have achieved so far. This is just the beginning. We will continue to support families in the here and now, but we know that all too often systems are trapping families in poverty. We will be relentless changemakers and grow to meet this challenge to create lasting change.***
>
> Laura Millar, CEO, Fife Gingerbread

Our long-term strategic ambition

By 2030, Fife Gingerbread will be the 'go to' family support organisation for key stakeholders in Fife, helping families flourish and strengthening communities. We will be recognised nationally for our approach and leadership in systems change, where we will continue to develop scalable solutions that tackle child poverty across Scotland. This will be underpinned by diverse, sustainable and ethical income generation in order to maximise our impact and create lasting change for families.

The enablers to achieve our strategic ambition

We have identified priorities that we anticipate will be enablers to achieving our long-term strategic ambition. Some of which are immediate priorities that we can quickly turn into focused action and others that require longer term thinking to build the conditions for Fife Gingerbread to grow with purpose. These enablers will be success indicators that will strengthen our foundations, deepen our influence and develop our infrastructure. The collective wellbeing of the organisation and our people will remain at the heart of our approach.

- We will celebrate **Fife Gingerbread's 40th birthday** in 2027 as a moment to honour our story, inspire our future, engage with key stakeholders and progress our strategic ambition.

- All decisions will be viewed as investment decisions to build a sustainable fundraising architecture, infrastructure and capacity needed to **scale Fife Gingerbread** beyond an annual turnover of £2 million.

- We will position ourselves as an **attractive proposition to diversify our income streams** and grow investment from corporate partnerships with pace, purpose and ambition, and we will actively pursue opportunities to develop trading income streams to support the organisational mission.

- Our **Social Value** will be central to our storytelling, external comms, fundraising and impact reporting which celebrates our approach.

- We will prioritise and demonstrate **operational excellence** by ensuring every area of the organisation has a clear purpose and contribution to our shared ambitions, embedding our Values across everything we do and developing a Digital Strategy that enables sustainable growth and impact.

- The voice of **lived experience** will continue to be central to decision making across Fife Gingerbread. We will proactively create opportunities for families to influence policy and practice locally and nationally, ensuring their insights, expertise and experiences help shape lasting change.

Delivering this Strategy

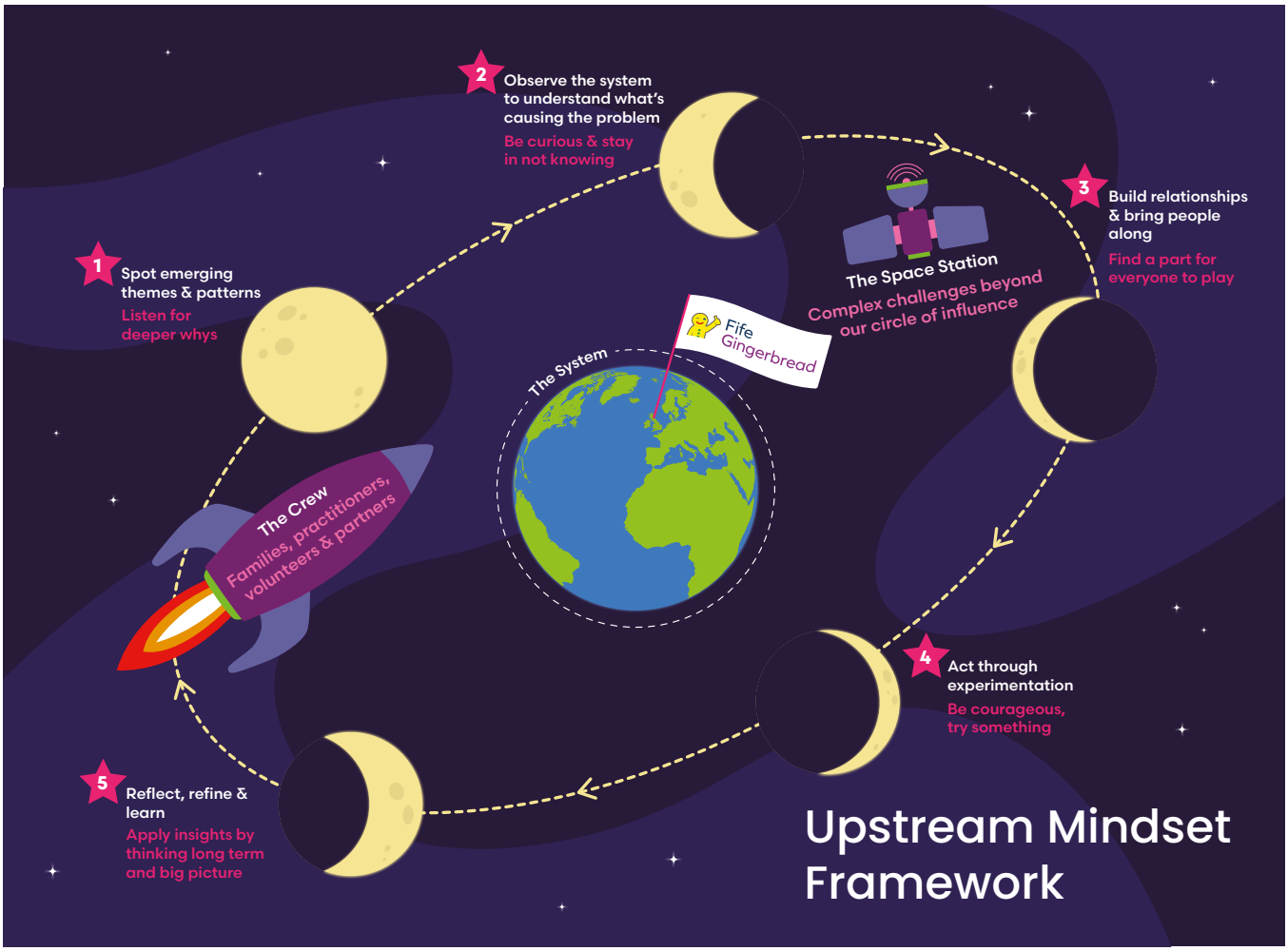
This Strategy sets out our long- term direction, but real change will come through action. Supporting delivery plans will be developed to translate our ambitions into clear priorities, measures and responsibilities. We will track our progress, demonstrate our impact and remain accountable to the families, communities and partners we serve, ensuring our vision leads to lasting change.

System change

Our systems change work is how we help create a future where all families can realise their hopes, ambitions and potential. While individual support helps families navigate immediate challenges, our wider ambition is to remove the systemic and structural barriers that prevent families from flourishing.

We will be changemakers, championing our manifesto commitments that have been shaped by the priorities, experiences and aspirations that families tell us matter most. Our work will focus on tackling child poverty, strengthening prevention and promoting whole family support so that the next generation can thrive.

We will use our learning, evidence and relationships to influence policy and practice locally and nationally, creating opportunities for parents' lived experience to inspire and drive change. This work will be guided by the Upstream Mindset framework, developed and published in 2026.



Exploration

Manifesto commitments where we are deepening our understanding by spotting emerging themes, observing the system and building relationships.

- **Education**
  Education is an important preventative step to improve outcomes and life chances for our children and young people. We must ensure that children and young people have equal and inclusive access to Education regardless of factors like poverty, stigma and additional support needs. Working alongside our colleagues in Education we will work to understand the barriers to learning or inclusion, and influence policy & practice in Fife.

- **Local Government Elections (2027)**
  Elections are a key democratic opportunity where families experiencing poverty can ensure their priorities influence local policy and 2027 election agendas. Our role is to enable informed, confident participation in democracy. We will connect lived experience directly to decision-makers across all parties.

- **Diversity & Inclusion**
  There is an opportunity to improve the diversity of support offered by Fife Gingerbread, and embed equity and cultural responsiveness across everything we do. Ensuring that all families in Fife feel respective and able to engage. This means actively addressing barriers faced by underrepresented and marginalised groups. Inclusion will be designed with families, not for them. We will work collaboratively to share our learning across the sector.

Experimentation

Manifesto commitments where we are innovating through test and demonstration activity.

- **Housing and Child Homelessness**
  As part of the Shelter Scotland led Building Hope partnership we will lead Test & Demonstration activity to identify the core components of a safe trauma informed child homelessness journey. Poverty Alliance will support learning and evaluation. The Fife Housing Collective is a group of third sector community organisations and lived experience voices seeking to transform housing for families in Fife by working in a collaborative and solutions focused space.

- **Upstream Mindset Framework**
  A framework has been developed in partnership with Collaborate CIC to support an upstream mindset and systems change approach. Creating a culture (both internally and externally) of curiosity grounded in prevention. We will work to embed this approach in Fife Gingerbread and explore opportunities to scale this approach up to support partner organisations with this important cultural shift.

Scale Up

Manifesto commitments where we have reflected, refined and learned to develop scalable solutions to tackle child poverty in Scotland.

- **Child Maintenance**
  The Transforming Child Maintenance partnership is progressing to a national operational model of child maintenance support for families in Scotland. Working collaboratively with OPFS we will support the scale up of child maintenance support, following three years of test & demonstration in Fife and the launch of the Child Maintenance Explained website. Poverty Alliance will support with evaluative activity to understand the successes and learning of scale up beyond Fife. Grounded in improving outcomes for children and young people through fair financial support from both parents wherever possible.

- **Lone Parent Positive Workplaces**
  Lone Parent Positive Workplaces has evolved from existing employability approaches within both Fife Gingerbread and OPFS. The focus is on in work poverty and transforming workplaces to attract, retain and progress lone parent talent. Partnering with employers to develop a Framework for Lone Parent Positive Workplaces, underpinned by evaluation from Strathclyde University. We will begin to explore the potential of scalable solutions and business models.

Families are at the centre of everything we do at Fife Gingerbread. From service design and organisational planning to strategy development, their voices shape our decisions and priorities. Each year, our snapshot survey provides an important insight into the experiences, challenges and aspirations of the families we support, alongside valuable feedback on our services. We are grateful for the generosity of families who take the time to share their experiences and reflections. Their honesty helps us learn, improve and ensure that family voices remain at the heart of everything we do. Some of their comments from our 2026 survey are shared below.

"Gingerbread is a fantastic service. The support for myself and my son has been great. My worker has supported me through a variety of challenges and I don't know if I would have managed without his positive outlook and support."

"Absolute stars, there really is no support out there for me and don't know where I'd be without the support of FG."

"Thank you all for the open doors and open minds."

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