

# Feedback

## Results from Citizens Panel 14

### Introduction

**There were 494 responses to the survey, although people did not necessarily respond to every question. There were a roughly equal number of male and female respondents. 47% were aged 65 years or older, with 85% aged 45 years or older. 13% were aged between 25 and 44 years. There were no respondents under the age of 16. One in five people considered themselves to have a disability.**



Falkirk Council

### What Matters to You

**We asked** you what it means to live in your area and be part of a community. We did this by giving you a series of statements that you could agree or disagree with. For example, if you agreed or disagreed that people had opportunities to have a say, were able to ask neighbours for help or get access to information about what was going on locally. We also gave you a series of statements that related to things to do in your area. For example, play facilities for children, training opportunities for young people and community groups for older people. Last, we asked you to tell us three things you liked and disliked about the place where you live.

**You said:** 458 respondents told us the three things they like most about the place where they live. 59% of those people said that access to urban centres, shops and services was something they like. There were plenty of specific comments about good transport links, such as rail, buses and the motorway. Nearly half (48%) of the respondents here emphasised the positive aspects of community and neighbourliness where they live.

41% said that being near open spaces was something they liked. This was expressed as having a nice view, being near a nice park, being able to walk the dog along the canal or feeling close to the countryside. 28% of people stated that their area is quiet and peaceful, with 18% noting that they feel safe where they stay. A few people suggested their home was the main thing they liked (6%), whilst 3% said there was nothing they liked about their area.

448 respondents told us what they disliked about their area. The most common dislikes were the perceived poor quality of roads and pavements (18%), inappropriate parking (16%), dog-related issues, such as fouling (14%) and littered streets (12%).

The importance of community spirit and safety was emphasised by 68% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that they could ask a neighbour for help if need be and 87% feeling safe walking around in their area during the day. 55% of people felt safe walking around their area at night.

Over three-quarters of respondents said they live near to a doctor's surgery, good local schools and nice parks (79%, 73% and 76% respectively). Two-thirds of people (67%) said there are good public transport links close to where they live. Nearly half of respondents (48%) stated there are good play facilities for children locally, whilst 26% said there are not. Around a third (30%) said there are good leisure facilities for young people, with 42% taking the opposite view. 17% of respondents said there are training opportunities for young people leaving school; a third (32%) said there are not. Over a third (37%) of people said there are community groups locally for older people during the week, but this dropped to 15% for the weekend.

**We did:** This information has been presented to the Community Planning Leadership Board and is being used in the development of the Community Plan for the Falkirk Council area. The findings will also inform a number of other strategic documents, including the Local Development Plan, Local Housing Strategy and Open Space Strategy.

## Community Planning

**We asked** you to identify your top four priorities for Community Planning in the Falkirk Council area. We also asked you to explain your choices.

**You said:** The top ranked priority was increasing employment opportunities, followed by meeting the health and social care needs of older adults, increasing educational attainment and improving support for children and families. 446 people answered this question.

A broad range of reasons was given by people who identified increasing employment opportunities as their top priority. 45% of these respondents chose this due to the broader benefits to society of employment. 23% of these respondents identified the links between a job and self-esteem/quality of life as an important factor. Young people were also viewed as an important factor - for positive and negative reasons - by 19% of respondents here.

Meeting the health and social care needs of older adults was ranked second overall. A narrower range of explanations were presented here. 51% of the 81 people who chose this as their top priority did so simply because they are an older adult. (Nearly half of the respondents to Citizens Panel 14 were aged over 65 and 83% were aged over 45 years old.) Other issues (ranging from 10 - 13% each) included older people being 'ignored', health services being of a poor quality and good health and social care being required to meet the needs of an ageing population.

Again, a relatively narrow range of reasons were given why people chose educational attainment as their top priority. Of the 84 who selected this first, 30% suggested it was due to the broader benefits to society. These ranged from preventing young people from embarking on a life of crime, avoiding alcohol and drugs to improving communities more generally. 26% picked this as their top priority as they saw a direct relationship between educational attainment and the future life chances of children. 11% chose this first because they had children or grandchildren. 9% perceived the quality of education in the Council area to be weak.

People who selected increasing support for children and families as their top priority emphasised the immediate need to support families and also the importance of a good start in life. 49 people selected this as their top priority and 37% of them said that supporting children was the key to a better future. 31% emphasised that support for families was required to improve their immediate circumstances in a challenging economic climate.

**We did:** This evidence has been used to shape the strategic priorities within the Community Plan. The plan is currently being drafted for publication in 2016. We will report our progress towards achieving strategic outcomes and meeting local priorities on an annual basis.

## **Falkirk Community Trust**

**We asked** you a number of questions about Falkirk Community Trust. These related to your views on the Trust and your experiences of their services and facilities.

**You said:** 81% of respondents had heard of Falkirk Community Trust previously, although a lower number of people (68%) knew what the Trust does. A third of people felt informed about the Trust's activities, whilst around the same number (37%) said they were uninformed and the remainder were unsure. The most frequent way people heard about the Trust's activities was through the local press (55%) and Falkirk Council News (54%). Just under a third of respondents (29%) get information on the Trust from Trust facilities and around a quarter (23%) from the Trust's website.

Parks, museums, galleries and libraries are the most used Trust-operated facilities amongst panel members. 57% of respondents visit parks or outdoors events once a month or more and 27% a few times a year. Around half (51%) of respondents visit museums or art galleries a few times a year, with 22% visiting them once a month or more. 42% of respondents use libraries once a month or more, with 29% using them a few times a year. The majority of respondents (84%) do not go to fitness classes, just over half (54%) said they never go swimming, half do not use sports centres (49%) over a third do not attend arts performances (39%).

Various reasons were given by respondents who never use particular Trust facilities (329 people in total). 29% of those people stated they were not interested; 22% stated they were not physically able to do exercise; 18% exercised at a private gym, at home or outdoors; 8% said they were too busy due to family or work commitments (including caring responsibilities); 7% did not know what Trust facilities or activities there were; transport limitations precluded 6% of people from going and financial restrictions applied to 5% of respondents.

Most respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with parks, libraries and museums/galleries (78%, 70% and 67%, respectively). Dissatisfaction levels are low across the board. Around half of respondents were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with arts performances, swimming and sports centres (47%, 48% and 50%). This can partly be explained by a large number of respondents not using those services, as indicated above.

There were numerous suggestions on how facilities/services could be improved (206). These included the parking facilities at the Helix (23 people), toilet and café facilities in parks (23 people), promotion of venues and activities (16 people) and extending library opening times (10 people).

79% of respondents stated they had never been consulted or engaged by Falkirk Community Trust. 12% had been consulted or engaged, whilst 10% did not know if they had or not. Again, these figures can partly be explained by the low usage of some Trust facilities and services by respondents.

**We did:** These findings were presented to the Policy Development Panel of the Council, which is leading the ongoing review of the Trust's functions. This review includes an examination of how the Council and the Trust work together.

If you have any queries about the Citizens Panel questionnaire, or if you want to receive questionnaires and feedback reports in other formats (e.g. Braille, large print, a different language etc.), please contact us at [citizenspanel@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:citizenspanel@falkirk.gov.uk), or call 01324 506260.