

Citizens Panel



CITIZENS PANEL 15 contained questions on the Local Development Plan, the Local Housing Strategy, and Health and Social Care Integration. There were 493 responses to the survey, with 174 postal returns and 319 online completions. 39% of respondents were male, 42% were female and 19% did not specify their gender.

Over a third of respondents (38%) were aged 65 years or over and nearly three-quarters (72%) were aged 45 years or older. 12% were aged 25 to 44 years old and 15% did not specify their age. 15% of respondents identified themselves as disabled, with 69% stating they were not disabled. 16% did not answer the question.

We also asked about respondents' houses in this survey. Most respondents (81%) either owned their house outright or had a mortgage. 18% lived in rented accommodation, while 1% lived rent-free. We asked this question because of the Local Housing Strategy.

Local Housing Strategy (LHS)

We Asked... a number of questions about the housing market in the Falkirk Council area.

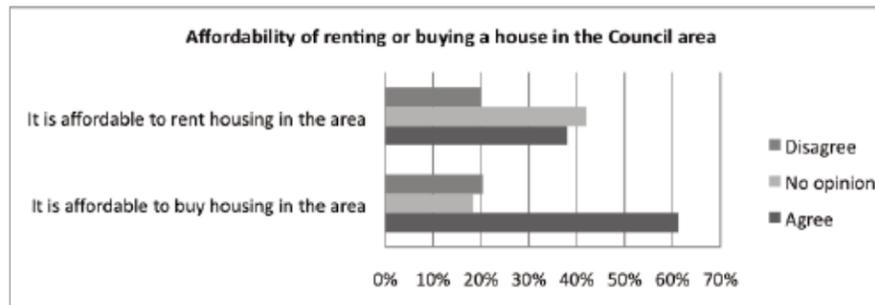
You Said... Most of you (72%) agreed that for economic and social reasons the population of the Falkirk Council area should continue to grow. 15% of you disagreed with this. Two thirds (66%) of you agreed that people are willing to move to new areas to get the type of housing they want. 13% of you disagreed with this statement.

Just over half of you felt that more housing is needed in your area. Nearly a third (29%) disagreed with this. Nearly two thirds of you (62%) agreed there should be more social housing in your area. 13% disagreed with this.

80% of you agreed there should be specialist housing for older people in your area. Only 4% disagreed with this. Nearly three quarters of you (73%) agreed there should be more specialist properties for people with disabilities in your area. 5% of you disagreed with this.

We Asked... a number of questions about affordable housing in the Falkirk Council area.

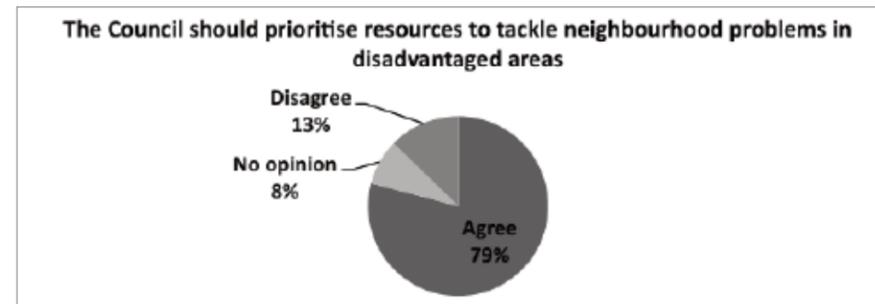
You Said... Nearly two thirds of you (61%) agreed that it is affordable to buy housing in the area (and 20% disagreed). In contrast, 38% agreed that renting is affordable in the area. 20% disagreed that rents are affordable.



We Asked... you some questions about housing regeneration, including whether or not we should prioritise resources in disadvantaged areas and where you would rather live when you are older or if you became disabled.

You Said... Over two-thirds (79%) of you agree that the Council should prioritise resources in deprived areas. Only 13% of you disagreed with this and 8% had no opinion.

Most of you (84%) want to stay in your own home when you are older or if you became disabled. 15% showed a preference for moving into specialist housing under the same circumstances. Just under 1% of respondents already live in specialist housing.



We Asked... what you think is the most pressing housing issue in the Falkirk Council area.

You Said... There were 353 responses to this question. The most popular suggestion was that more social housing is required in the Council area. 28% of respondents suggested this. Respondents also said there is a need to build affordable housing in the Council area, particularly properties for young people, either singles or couples. 22% of respondents mentioned this. 16% stated that there is a need for the Council to repair existing social housing stock or improve infrastructure before new housing developments are built. Antisocial behaviour and specialist housing for elderly and disabled people were also mentioned by a smaller number of people, 8% and 7% of respondents respectively.

What You Said

'Not enough social rented housing, the government and councils need to build more housing and properly laid out with a mix of private houses and local amenities to encourage good coherent communities.'

'I worry that people on limited incomes are forced into private rented sector and this then restricts their access to a council house. I am in favour of a vibrant social rented sector.'

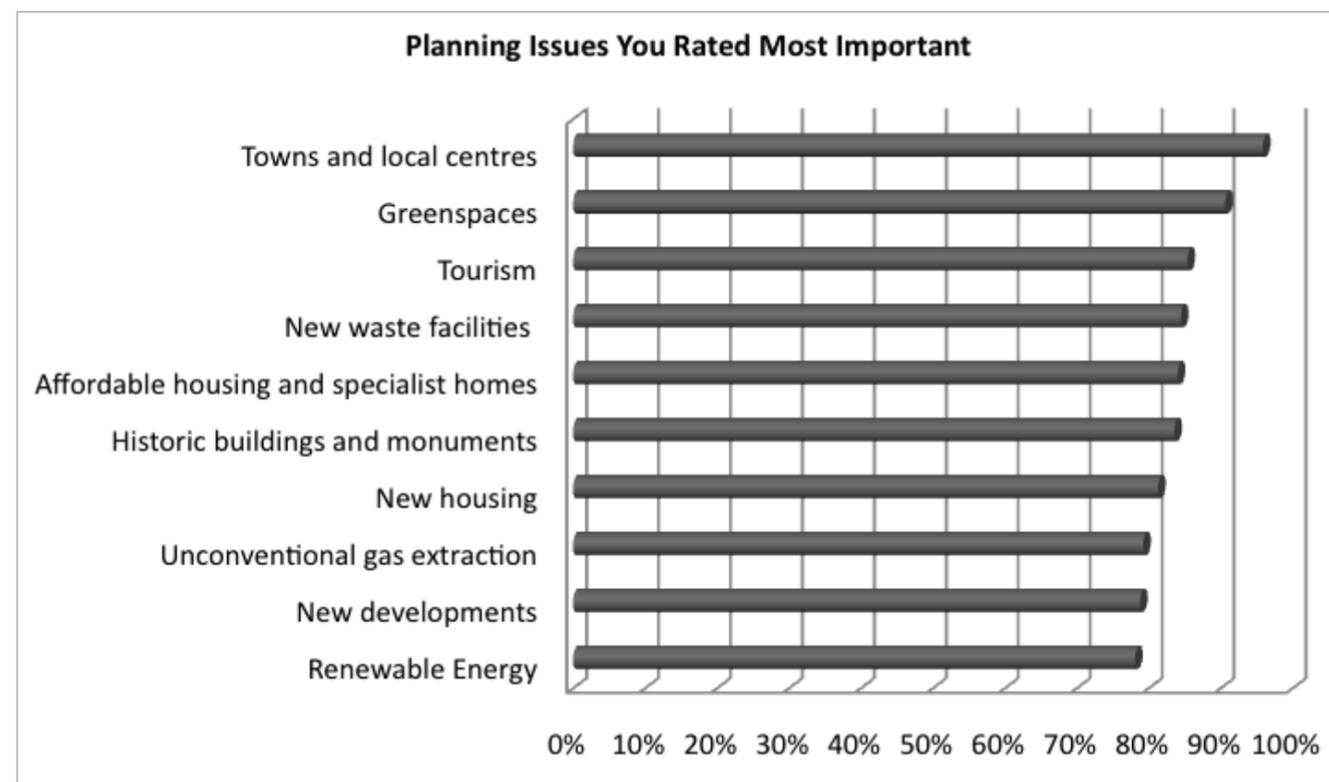
'Not enough houses for the rise in population, Falkirk is a very good area for shopping and leisure and more affordable houses would be good for the town'

We Did... The Citizens Panel is a key part of our consultation for the Local Housing Strategy, which is ongoing. The response from this survey has also indicated to us that we need to engage further with young people in particular. Some of the issues you raised had been raised in previous consultations and addressed accordingly. For example, the consultation completed for the previous Local Housing Strategy also highlighted that you felt there was not enough affordable housing. To address this, since 2010 an additional 644 new build affordable properties have been built. 388 of these have been built by Falkirk Council and 306 have been built by Registered Social Landlords.

Local Development Plan (LDP)

We Asked... you to rate the importance of a series of planning issues. These were grouped under the headings of place, homes, jobs, infrastructure and resources.

You Said... Nearly all of you (96%) rated the future of our town and local centres as important. Around nine out of ten people (91%) rated the quality of greenspaces as important. Tourism and new waste facilities were viewed as important by 85% of you, whilst 84% saw the provision of affordable housing and safeguarding historic buildings and monuments as important. Future policies on unconventional gas extraction (79%), new developments (including housing) (79%) and renewable energies (78%) were also viewed as important by many people. These are the issues rated as important or very important by over 75% of respondents.



We Asked... you if there were any issues relating to the environment, homes, jobs, infrastructure or resources you wanted to tell us about.

You Said... 158 people gave us information on their environmental concerns. The three most common issues presented by respondents to this question were the quality of roads and pavements (15% of respondents mentioned this), the location of new housing (14%) and littering (13%). 112 people told us about issues regarding the provision of new homes. The most prevalent concern raised was the location of new housing (again). This was mentioned by 31% of respondents who answered this question. People were particularly concerned about the reduction of greenbelts and the strain placed on existing infrastructure. 106 people told us about specific concerns they had about resources. The most common concern people had here was unconventional gas extraction. 30% of respondents to that question expressed concern about fracking in particular. There were 103 responses to the question asking people if they had any issues regarding the creation of jobs. 11% of respondents to this question expressed their concern over the number of empty units in town and local centres. 11% of respondents also expressed concern about the location of new business developments.

What You Said

'There should be no further house building on green land. There are many empty buildings that could be made into houses...'

'Stop building on "green" areas - too many villages merging into one area. We need countryside...'

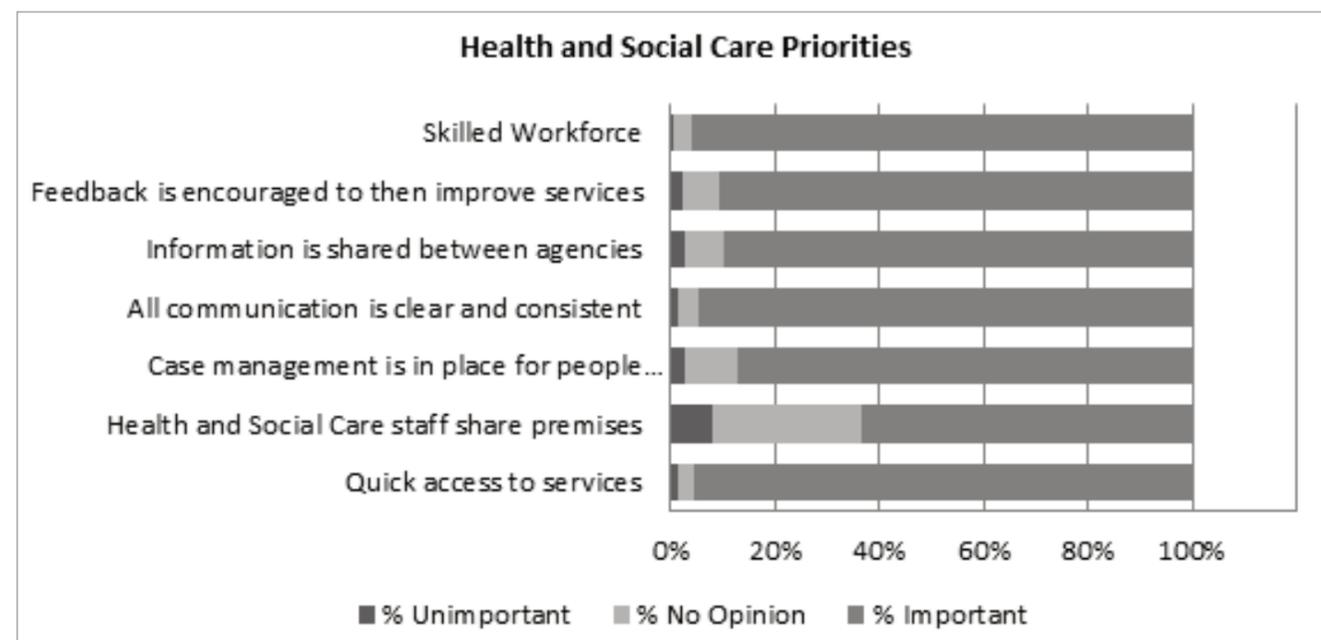
'new housing estates should not be built in isolation, there needs to be the infrastructure in place to make the estate a welcoming and friendly environment.'

We did... The planning questions in the Citizens Panel were part of a wider, year-long engagement that started in summer 2015. We have engaged with local organisations, businesses and members of the public to gather views on the content of the new LDP. This work will help us decide which issues should be the focus of in the Main Issues Report of the LDP, which will be published in the Autumn of 2016. This will provide options on where the future development of housing, businesses, shops and community facilities should and should not take place.

Health and Social Care Integration

We Asked... you how important Health and Social Care Integration (HSCI) priorities were to you and if there was any other areas of priority you felt should be incorporated into the HSCI Strategic Plan.

You said... 423 people rated the importance of the HSCI priorities. The following chart shows that most people think all themes are relatively important, with the exception of co-locating services. Quick access to services and a skilled workforce could be identified as the most important themes to respondents.



Respondents suggested alternative or additional priorities. Transport, information sharing, patient communications and GPs were the most common other priorities that people suggested. Several aspects of GP care were raised, such as the number of GPs, the waiting times or length of GP appointments.

What You Said

'More long-term doctor's at our clinic's easier appointment system week in advance not daily phone calls for appointments then being told to phone back next day etc, etc by receptionist.'

'Longer opening times at GP practices, including weekends.'

'All communication should be in plain English with no jargon.'

'At the moment it seems that information is taking a long time to reach other departments, in this technology age that should not be a problem.'

We did... The HSCI questions in the Citizens Panel were part of a wider consultation with service users and health and social care professionals. This consultation has just been the first stage in an ongoing engagement with service users, communities, staff and local partner agencies.

The Citizens Panel findings added to what the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and wider consultation process told us and allowed us to check that the outcomes and priorities within the Strategic Plan were right. The final Strategic Plan will be published by the 1st April 2016 and will be available at <http://nhsforthvalley.com/>. Also, a Participation and Engagement Strategy has been developed and this lays out how people can become and stay engaged with the work of health and social care services.

Your vote matters – don't lose it.

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Find out more at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote or call 01786 892289



Falkirk Council

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, or call 01324 506260.