

The Council has, for the last seven years, monitored implementation of the Development Plan by assessing progress against a number of key indicators. The following are the key trends emerging from this year's Monitoring Report:

Population - The most recent official estimate of population is the 2009 mid-year estimate of 152,480. This continues the rising trend reported in earlier monitoring reports and is 910 more than in 2008 and almost 7,000 more than in 2002. Most of this growth remains attributable to in-migration and a recent increase in the birth rate.

House completions - the pattern of new house completions continues to decline from its peak of over 1,000 during 2003/2004 to less than 430 in 2008/2009, the lowest level since the late 1980s.

Unemployment - the June 2009 claimant count figures showed a substantial increase in unemployment, to its highest level since 1997. This is entirely due to the impact locally of the current economic recession. Figures appear to have stabilised over the last few months, but youth unemployment remains a significant concern.

Major projects - the economic downturn has led to delays in implementing major projects, notably the Falkirk Gateway development and the major regeneration projects planned for town centres. The Council continues to work with developers to progress these projects. Despite the economic climate, the Council continues to progress a number of major projects, including the Helix, a large regeneration project at Banknock, a masterplan for major regeneration at Tamfourhill, Falkirk and major residential-led regeneration at Whitecross.

Outdoor access - the Council has a strong record on outdoor access and is a lead authority in Scotland in this field. There is a network of 172 km of maintained routes of which 153 are sign-posted. The Core Paths Plan was adopted in early 2010, giving enhanced opportunities for access to the countryside for Falkirk communities.



New path link to housing under construction at Bonnyfield Nature Reserve

Environment and Biodiversity - the Council and its partners continue to undertake enhancement works to a number of designated and other sites. Notable recent achievements have been the establishment of the Council's first Local Nature Reserve at Bonnyfield Park in 2008. A new reserve at Skinflats was opened by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds in 2009, as part of a flood management project.

The full report is available at www.falkirk.gov.uk.

IN BRIEF.....

Open Space Strategy Gains Approval...

The Council in partnership with The Central Scotland Forest Trust; NHS Forth Valley; and Scottish Natural Heritage have produced an Open Space Strategy for 2009-2014. The Open Space Strategy was approved in May 2010 and identifies a strategy for the long-term improvement and management of our open spaces and parks. The Strategy sets standards for the quality, quantity and accessibility of open space as well as a set of criteria which have to be considered before the Council can dispose of any open space within its ownership. The strategy can be viewed at www.falkirk.gov.uk

Banknock SIRR Application Submitted...

Banknock and Hags SIRR Development Framework was approved by the Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance in June 2009. It was awarded a commendation for outstanding performance and quality in development planning at the Scottish Awards for Quality in Planning 2009. I&H Brown Ltd submitted a planning application for the northern site in June. This application included new residential development and a neighbourhood centre including retail and community uses, access junctions, new access roads, associated roads and infrastructure including a sustainable urban drainage scheme, hard and soft landscaping, open space, footpaths, woodland planting and temporary construction compound.

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F A L K I R K C O U N C I L

Development Plan update

Issue 11 Summer 2010



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NEW FALKIRK LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN ISSUES CONSULTATION

Although Falkirk Council is still completing the final stages of the Falkirk Council Local Plan (see over), work has already commenced on the new Local Development Plan (LDP) for the area.

LDPs are part of the new development planning system brought in by the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006. Ultimately, the Falkirk LDP will replace the Structure Plan and Local Plan, providing a single planning document to guide the future development of the area. It will contain a vision statement, and a spatial strategy for the area, comprising detailed policies and proposals for development in the area for the period 2014-2024, with a more general indication of the scale and location of development for the period 2024-2034.

The Council has set out the programme for the preparation of the Falkirk LDP in its Development Plan Scheme. The first major stage is the publication of the Main Issues Report which is timetabled for spring 2011. To help us prepare the Main Issues Report, we are currently consulting with the public, agencies and developers. Meetings and workshops with key stakeholders have already taken place, a community council training event has been held, and we are hoping to arrange a special consultation event with young people in the autumn.



Stakeholder consultation now underway

The kind of issues which are likely to be considered in the Main Issues Report include:

- ✦ How much housing growth do we need to accommodate projected new households?
- ✦ Do we want to continue to disperse growth or to concentrate it?
- ✦ Which communities can support further growth and which cannot?
- ✦ Should we continue to have a Green Belt, and if so should it be modified?
- ✦ How can we further develop a network of accessible, attractive and interlinked greenspaces in and around our towns?
- ✦ How should development be controlled or encouraged in our rural areas?
- ✦ Do we have an adequate supply of business sites, or do we need more?
- ✦ What should be the priority in terms of developing and enhancing the network of town centres?
- ✦ What problems does the transport network have, and how can they be addressed?
- ✦ How can sustainable development be particularly promoted in this area?
- ✦ How should we tackle the challenges of climate change?

Falkirk LDP Programme	
April 2011 April - June 2011	Main Issues Report published Consultation on Main Issues Report
April 2012 April - June 2012	Proposed Plan published Objection period for Proposed Plan
May 2013	Submission of Proposed Plan to Scottish Ministers
May 2013 - Jan 2014 May 2014	Examination of Proposed Plan Submission of Modified Plan to Scottish Ministers
July 2014	Adoption of Local Development Plan

We want to hear what you or your organisation think are the key planning and development issues for the area, and how you would like to see them addressed. We are also inviting developers to submit expressions of interest in developing sites, so that we can assess which are the best opportunities for growth. You can submit your views through our questionnaire which will be sent out to everyone on our mailing list, or can be filled in on-line at www.falkirk.gov.uk. All questionnaires and other submissions should be returned to the Council by **Friday 24th September 2010**.

For further information, please contact Colin Hemfrey on 01324 504720, Alistair Shaw on 01324 504739 or e-mail ldp@falkirk.gov.uk

FALKIRK COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN INQUIRY FINAL PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS

Following on from the Local Plan Inquiry which took place between April and June last year, the Reporters submitted their recommendations to the Council in April 2010. These recommendations were then considered by the Council in June 2010. Following on from this, the Council has published a number of final modifications which are currently being advertised for a period of six weeks, until 27th August 2010.

It is anticipated that adoption of the Plan will take place in late 2010/early 2011.

The Local Plan Inquiry Report, the Council's statement of decisions on Reporters' recommendations, and the proposed modifications are available online at www.falkirk.gov.uk.

Some of the key modifications arising out of the Reporters' recommendations at the Local Plan Inquiry are highlighted below;

Area Wide Policies

- ✦ The Council will produce Supplementary Planning Guidance to explain in more detail how developer contributions to the Falkirk Greenspace which are required by Policy EQ21 will be worked out.
- ✦ The affordable housing Policy SC4 is amended to introduce a sequential approach.
- ✦ A new policy on Gypsy/Traveller sites is included in the plan.
- ✦ An additional criterion is added to Policy EP18 on major hazards stating that impact on existing chemical and petrochemical establishments will be taken into account in assessing developments within consultation zones.
- ✦ Additional text is added on coal bed methane and the Council is to include a map showing the licence areas.
- ✦ Additional text is added highlighting the importance of Longannet and the proximity of coal deposits in Falkirk.

Green Belt

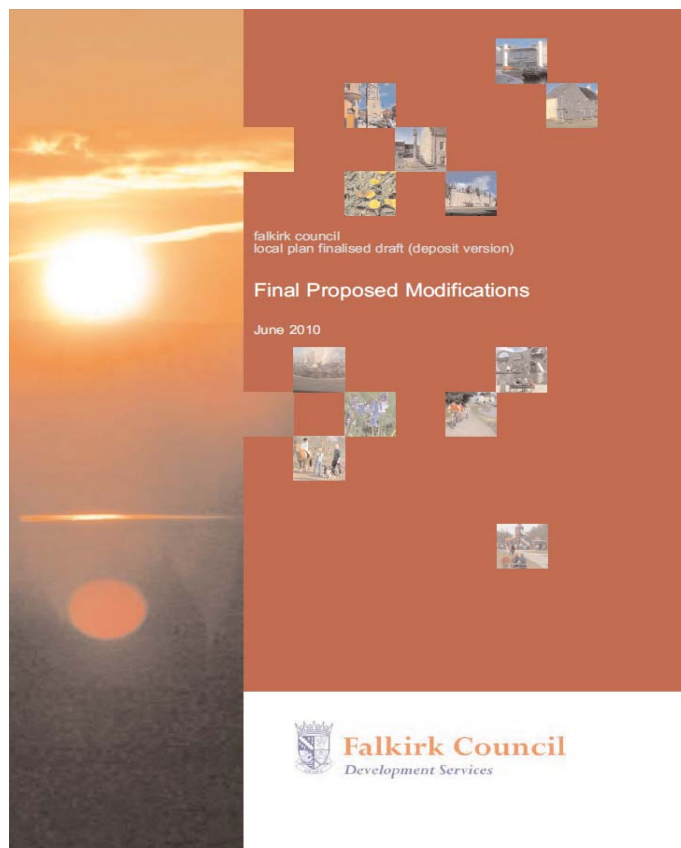
- ✦ Green Belt at Mydub in Denny is changed to fit the new line of the Denny Eastern Access Road (DEAR).
- ✦ Land immediately to the east of Falkirk Stadium is included as Green Belt (although stadium itself remains outwith the Green Belt)

Economic Development and Retail

- ✦ Proposal ED.GRA8 at Earls Road, Grangemouth is extended.
- ✦ The additional text requiring a review of the Gilston economic development site (ED.POL1) as part of the future development plan is deleted.
- ✦ Policy EP7 is modified to state that threshold for major retail be set at 500sq.m.

Transport and Infrastructure

- ✦ The objector's line for the Denny Eastern Access Road (DEAR) is accepted. The Council will produce Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) explaining how the road is to be funded and contributions worked out.
- ✦ An additional waste management facility at Avondale, Polmont is included and a site at Avonbank is safeguarded for future use.



Final modifications considered by the Council in June

Housing Sites

The main site-specific changes compared to the Council's pre-inquiry modifications of May 2008 are as follows....

Additional Sites	Capacity
Mydub, Denny (western part)	300
Broomhill Road, Bonnybridge	30
Lime Road, Falkirk (Siboro site)	Unspecified
Toravon 2, Maddiston	100-120
Lime Road, Falkirk	Unconfirmed
McLaren Park, Torwood	10
Standburn (site to be determined through SPG)	Up to 30
Church Road 2 (H.CAL4), California	50

Deleted Sites

Station Road, Polmont (H.POL20)	14
Southfield Farm, Slamannan (H.SLA5) (apart from north-east corner)	100

Site Reductions

Oxgang Road, Grangemouth (H.GRA5)	20
Slamannan Road, Avonbridge (H.AVN5)	60
Slamannan Road, Limerigg (H.LIM1)	50
Avonbridge Road, Slamannan (H.SLA2)	10
Airth Castle South, Airth	15
Castle View, Airth (H.AIR7)	115
Letham (site to be determined through SPG)	30-40

WHITECROSS SIRR UPDATE - PLANNING APPLICATION SUBMITTED

The Falkirk Council Structure Plan 2007 and the Finalised Falkirk Council Local Plan promotes Manuel Works/Whitecross as a location for major growth and regeneration. It is identified as a SIRR (Strategic Initiative for Residential Led Regeneration) for up to 1500 new houses, with associated social and physical infrastructure, including a new primary school, open space, canal-related opportunities and a Strategic Development Opportunity for major employment uses.

Morston Assets, the lead developer, produced a draft masterplan last year in consultation with the Council, the local community and a wide range of key stakeholders. Following on from the previous community consultation events last year, Morston Assets undertook further pre-application consultation in February earlier this year.

In April this year, an application for Planning Permission in Principle was lodged. This comprises a Masterplan document, and a suite of other documents including an Environmental Statement which is produced for the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The PPP will form the basis for consideration of detailed applications for delivery of the key phases and infrastructure in the future.



Whitecross planning application submitted in April

The key elements outlined in the proposals include:

- ✦ New 2-stream primary school
- ✦ Landscape improvements to existing village
- ✦ A linear park linking the new development area with the existing village
- ✦ Enhancement of Haining Castle
- ✦ Up to 1500 new homes
- ✦ Enterprise Centre which will form a multi-functional community space with training and education facilities
- ✦ Neighbourhood retail provision
- ✦ Minimum 12 hectares employment land

It is anticipated that the first phase (2013-2018 approximately) will deliver a proportion of the community facilities including the enterprise centre, the school and 1st phase of housing.

For further info please contact Alexandra Lewis on 01324 504738



Haining castle to form a focal point within village

CORE PATHS PLAN APPROVED



Core Paths Plan formally adopted May 2010

We know that paths are important to people, not just for providing good places to walk, cycle and horse-ride, but also as a means of getting to school, work or local shops and facilities. We are often asked for information about good quality paths and interesting places to visit and have therefore developed a suite of leaflets to help the public get out and about to explore their local area. However, until now, none of our documents show the extent of the overall path network across Falkirk Council's area.

As well as giving everyone a right of responsible access to most land and inland water in Scotland, the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 required that Falkirk Council prepare a Core Paths Plan. This must show a network of paths sufficient for the purpose of providing people with reasonable access throughout their area.

After extensive consultation, dating back to 1998, Falkirk Council formally adopted its Core Paths Plan on 4 May 2010. This shows nearly 400km (250 miles) of the most important routes identified by land managers, walkers, cyclists, horse riders and local residents.

If you would like more information about this, please visit www.falkirk.gov.uk/corepathsplan or contact Falkirk Council's Outdoor Access team on 01324 504950.