



Falkirk Council

**Community Learning and Development
Strategy**

Falkirk Council Area

2005 - 2008

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Strategy outlines the Falkirk Council area Community Learning and Development Partnership's approach to meeting the Community learning and Development (CLD) needs of the local community. It reflects the priorities of the Strategic Community Plan and it recognises and builds upon the good practice undertaken by partners through the previous Community Learning Strategy.
- 1.2 Similarly, this Strategy reflects the Working and Learning Together (WALT) Guidance published by the Scottish Executive in February 2004. This guidance replaced the Scottish Office Community Education Circular 4/99, which had laid the foundations for the first Community Learning Partnerships and Strategies.
- 1.3 The new Guidance was prepared in response to the changing policy context, particularly in relation to Community Planning. Identified within the Guidance are the Executive's three national priorities for community learning and development, which will support its overall priorities of closing the opportunity gap, achieving social justice and encouraging community regeneration, lifelong learning and active citizenship.

2. NATIONAL PRIORITIES FOR CLD

- **Achievement through Learning for Adults**
Raising standards of achievement in learning for adults through community based lifelong learning opportunities, incorporating the core skills of literacy, numeracy, communication, working with others, problem solving and information communications technology (ICT).
 - **Achievement through Learning for Young People**
Engaging with young people to facilitate their personal, social and educational development and enable them to gain a voice, influence and place in society.
 - **Achievement through Building Community Capacity**
Building community capacity and influence by enabling people to develop the confidence, understanding and skills required to influence decision-making and service delivery. This could include enabling communities to provide and manage services to meet community needs.
- 2.1 The three national priorities for CLD apply equally to urban and rural area and are intended to focus on the needs of disadvantaged individuals and communities. The Guidance accepts that this priority means that less disadvantaged communities may receive a "lower level of CLD resources".

3. COMMUNITY LEARNING STRATEGY 2000 – 2003

- 3.1 The Falkirk Community Learning Partnership was set up in response to Circular 4/99. It has been meeting on a regular basis since 2000 and led the development and implementation of the previous Community Learning Strategy for 2000 – 2003.
- 3.2 One of the key achievements of this group has been to embrace the idea of partnership working, so that it has become the recognised way to work within the field of community learning and development. This aspect has been enhanced by an innovative training programme, developed in partnership with the University of Dundee, “Community Learning and Development Approaches”, which has enabled participants from partner agencies and the community to come together and better understand the principles and practice of community learning and development and to learn from each others’ experiences.
- 3.3 The Partnership has also worked together to prepare and deliver key pieces of work such as the Action Plan for Adult Literacy and Numeracy. This is fully integrated with a range of partners either referring clients or offering provision.
- 3.4 The Partnership developed three community learning plans, two on a geographic basis and one thematic. One of these was based around learning needs in Grangemouth, where a successful Learner’s Fair, organised by the Grangemouth Community Learning Partnership Group, was held in September 2002. This provided opportunities for partners and clients to come together and contribute to the future planning and development of learning activities.

*“The support group had quite a few promising enquiries on the day. We also picked up a few new contacts for speakers and demonstrators from some of the other exhibitors who were there “ **Grangemouth Support Group for Parents.**”*

- 3.5 Another example of partnership working has been the Community Access to Lifelong Learning Project, which has drawn down funding of £349,631 from the New Opportunities Fund, to develop and enhance learning facilities across the area.
- 3.6 As a result, this Strategy is viewed by the Partnership as a continuation and development of previous and current practice. The Partnership has underpinned its development and initiatives by a set of values and principles. These continue to be fundamental to the progress of the Partnership.

3.7 Values

- Respecting and valuing diversity and equality
- Encouraging effective partnership working, the sharing of information, skills, resources and collective action
- Supporting active citizenship and participative democracy
- Promoting learning as a lifelong process

3.8 Principles

- The Partnership should be creative in its approach to providing learning and development opportunities
- The Partnership should create an increased demand for participation, information and access to quality services
- Learning opportunities should be delivered in places and at times to suit learners
- Participants should be involved in planning and developing how and what they wish to learn
- There should be a planned approach between partners in order to ensure learner progression and to maximise resources and skills
- Support should be available to the participant to enable them to engage at an appropriate level and to enable them to achieve their full potential
- Barriers to participation should be removed

3.9 Examples of Good Practice

Examples of projects throughout this document illustrate areas of good practice.

STEP INTO LEARNING

From HMle Report 18 June 2004, page 13

“The (Falkirk) College has designed several introductory programmes to suit vulnerable learners. The Pathfinder; Step into Learning and Newstart programmes, set at Intermediate 1 and below, provided learners with project based activities which incorporated opportunities for accreditation in all five core skill areas...These approaches allowed learners to build confidence and become accustomed to a successful learning process before progressing to full-time vocational programmes”.

It was noted that the success of these programmes was rooted in the partnerships formed through the Community Learning Strategy and the added value that this partnership work brought. Learners were attracted to and supported on programmes by partner organisations such as Falkirk Council and the Salvation Army.

4. THE FALKIRK COMMUNITY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

- 4.1 The Falkirk Community Learning and Development Partnership has the responsibility for shaping, developing and delivering the Community Learning and Development Strategy for the Falkirk Council area.
- 4.2 The main partners who have formed a working group to take forward this Strategy are:
- Careers Scotland
 - Council for Voluntary Sector – Falkirk and District
 - Falkirk College of Further and Higher Education
 - NHS Forth Valley – Health Promotion
 - NHS Forth Valley, Primary Care Operating Division, South Community Health Partnership
 - Workers Educational Association
 - Falkirk Council – Community Services, Corporate and Commercial Services, Education Services and Integrated Learning Communities

Their role in providing community learning and development opportunities across the Falkirk Council area is described in Appendix 1.

- 4.3 The Partnership is committed to building upon the good progress already made over the past 4 years and to developing ways in which we can work better together. As this Strategy progresses and develops it will seek to ensure representation from other agencies and organisations and from the wider community.

ADULT PEER LEARNING SUPPORT

The Volunteer Buddy Scheme was developed in 2002 to support new learners participating in the Information Technology, Community Access to Lifelong Learning Programme (CALL). The Buddy scheme provides quality peer learning support to new learners entering a Community Learning centre. Over 700 Learners each year participate in a range of basic level and certificated computing courses on a flexible part-time basis delivered within a community-based adult learning context.

The success of the scheme is attributed to the commitment of volunteers and staff. By sustaining one to one appraisals and quarterly meetings, opportunities are provided to maintain close contact with the training needs and aspirations of the volunteers. The Service has delivered awareness raising sessions in dyslexia, sight and hearing impairment and adaptive technology

5. OUR VISION

- 5.1 The Community Learning and Development Partnership for the Falkirk Council area has agreed a shared vision. This has been developed from the vision of the previous Community Learning Strategy and takes account of the current policy context and local profile.
- 5.2 “We believe that learning has the power to enrich and change lives and give confidence to individuals and communities. We will work in partnership with individuals, groups and communities to help achieve this vision by improving and developing the quality of personal, family and community life and by building stronger and more thriving communities. We will break down barriers to participation and create opportunities that promote a learning culture for all”.
- 5.3 Our vision reflects that of the Strategic Community Plan, which promotes Falkirk as an area with a raised profile, increased status, community confidence and economic and social achievement, where disadvantage and discrimination are tackled in all their forms.
- 5.4 Furthermore our vision reflects the aspirations of the Falkirk Action Plan “My Future’s in Falkirk”, which is an ambitious plan for the economic regeneration of the area based around four key themes – Innovation Falkirk, Successful Falkirk, Networking Falkirk and Experience Falkirk
- 5.5 Finally our vision, aims and priorities reflect the themes of the Strategic Community Planning Partnership’s emerging Regeneration Outcome Agreement, allowing an integrated approach to achieving targets.

COMMUNITY LEARNING RESOURCE CENTRE, FALKIRK

This multi-faceted centre works effectively in the community of Dawson, Falkirk. What is particularly noteworthy is its responsiveness and its client centred approach, with staff dedicated to providing the best service available for their client group. This is not just in formalised procedures and working arrangements, but especially through informal meetings, community access and mutual support. As one parent learner put it “having a local centre and classes to go to stopped me feeling isolated and meeting other people, especially other parents has been a lifeline .Plus it gave me the chance to learn and realise I did have a brain”

Extract from Mainstreaming Sustainable Development in Regional Regeneration (review of ESEP approach and guidance for applicants).

6. STRATEGY AIMS

6.1 The CLD Partnership has developed four broad aims to guide the development of the Strategy and Action Plans.

1. Engagement

We will engage with communities, groups and individuals to support the development of community initiatives. We will help people to extend and develop their skills to identify needs, tackle issues and improve community facilities. We will develop capacity building programmes with communities and citizens to enable them to influence decision-making, participate in community planning and create a voice for the community.

2. Lifelong Learning

We will promote lifelong learning by engaging with adults, children, young people and their families to maximise informal and formal learning opportunities. We will develop creative and innovative approaches to support and guidance. We will encourage people into learning and we will widen access for adults, particularly in personal and social development, literacy and numeracy and digital learning.

3. Cultural Diversity

We will promote the cultural diversity of our communities by engaging with groups and individuals to support the development of initiatives, which will recognise this diversity. We will engage with agencies and partners to tackle inequalities by developing creative and innovative learning opportunities to promote and support cultural diversity.

4. Partnership

We will work together to ensure a real difference is made to communities and the lives of individuals, by sharing information, skills and resources and by joint planning. We will encourage the skills development of the Community Learning and Development Partnership and all staff involved in community learning and development through guidance, training and support. We will develop the partnership by seeking to ensure representation from other organisations and from the wider community.

6.2 The Partnership will work together to promote and publicise opportunities for community learning and development across the Falkirk Council area.

6.3 Community Guidance Strategy

In the Falkirk Council area, Community Guidance is part of the Community Learning and Development Strategy. Building on the established history of partnership working, the CLDP will ensure that Community Guidance is integrated into all of its thematic plans. This will make explicit the link between lifelong learning and lifetime guidance and will demonstrate how Community Guidance can contribute to the achievement of the national priorities for Community Planning. The profile of guidance will be raised because of this approach and its importance in delivering the desired outcomes will be recognised.

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES PROJECT

This is a joint project set up by Community Education, Central Scotland Racial Equality Council and the Community Training and Development Unit. The objectives of the project are to motivate and facilitate increased participation by Black and Minority Ethnic individuals and groups in local decision making processes and community planning.

In addition it was also an objective to increase the number of people from Black and Minority Ethnic Communities qualified and involved in the delivery of Community Learning and Development by including a trainee post.

Now nearing the end of its first year the project has successfully recruited its trainee and is making inroads to engaging with local Black and Minority Ethnic communities and in encouraging them to be more active in their communities.

7. THE POLICY CONTEXT

7.1 In its Guidance for Community Learning and Development the Scottish Executive states that Community Learning and Development Strategies “should sit firmly within the wider community planning processes and relate to the strategies and development plans of partner agencies”.

7.2 The vision for Community Planning in the Falkirk Council area is reflected thus:

- **The legacy of our past and the potential of our future are protected**

We will make sure that when we invest in opportunities that support our current communities, we do so in a manner which is balanced and environmentally aware. The principle of sustainable development will underpin all our decisions and actions

- **Our area is the centre of Scottish life**

We will strive to become the focus of a new Scottish network of travel, tourism and employment opportunities.

- **Our future is as one of the most culturally diverse and distinct areas in Scotland**

Our area has a rich Roman, Scottish, industrial and natural heritage that today has made all our communities distinctive, proud and rich in spirit. We will strive to maximise the benefits of this.

- **Our area is the place to be in the third Millennium**

We will support innovation and forward thinking to take our rightful place at the heart of Scotland.

7.3 Overall responsibility for the Strategic Community Plan lies with the **Partnership Board**, which comprises Elected Members and Board Members from key organisations. Action on monitoring progress is co-ordinated by the **Partnership Executive**, which has representation at Chief Executive level from all key partners, to ensure ownership across all partners.

7.4 In order to achieve the vision five theme groups have been established:

- Economic Development and Tourism
- Health
- Community Safety
- Community Regeneration
- Environment and Transport

Chairs of each of the theme groups and support officers are brought together in a Contact Officers Group to ensure networking between groups.

The Community Learning and Development Strategy will report to the Falkirk Partnership through the Community Regeneration Theme Group, hence the close alignment of the CLD local priorities with the priorities of the Regeneration Outcome Agreement. .

7.5 **Local Community Planning**

Integral to the Strategic Community Plan is the development of local community planning. These are in the initial stages of development and will be rolled out across the Council area on a geographic basis, using the Area Forum network. More localised neighbourhood plans will be developed for smaller communities.

It is intended that the Action Plans for Community Learning and Development will be developed alongside these and integrated on a thematic basis.

7.6 **Other Key Strategies and Policies**

As referenced in 5.4, the objectives of My Future's in Falkirk have influenced the development of this strategy. The key partners in My Future's in Falkirk are Falkirk Council, Scottish Enterprise Forth Valley and BP Grangemouth. Their aim is to see the area moving ahead positively and confidently with the benefit of a shared commitment across regeneration partners, business and the local community.

My Future's in Falkirk has four key themes:

- *Innovation Falkirk* is capitalising on manufacturing skills to develop new technologies
- *Successful Falkirk* is designed to generate new business space and develop the current business base
- *Experience Falkirk* encourages pride in the community, making the area a better place to live, work and visit
- *Networked Falkirk* exploits the physical (port, rail, road and air) and digital connections in the area

Other key strategies, policies and initiatives that impact upon Community Learning and Development include:

- Adult Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan
- Community Safety Action Plan
- Children's Services Plan
- Culture and Leisure Strategy
- Dialogue Youth
- Integrated Learning Communities (New Community Schools)
- Joint Health Improvement Plan
- Learning to Achieve
- Lifelong Learning Strategy
- Strategy for the Arts
- Town Centres Strategy
- Young People's Strategy
- Voluntary Sector Compact

WHITECROSS POWER STATION INITIATIVE

In the village of Whitecross, on the outer edge of the Council area, a small group of local people have been assisted to purchase a shop and transform it into a facility for young people, which is now being used by other parts of the community. The Power Station is managed by local people who have also been enabled to access funding to employ someone to help with caretaking and cleaning, thereby opening up further opportunities for extended use. It is now becoming well established and recognised as a community base in the area.

8. PROFILE OF THE FALKIRK COUNCIL AREA

- 8.1 The Falkirk Council area is situated right at the centre of Scotland. It has a growing population of 145,920 (2003 mid year estimate) with over 58,000 people working in the area. In terms of population size Falkirk Council is the 12th largest in Scotland, whilst in terms of geography it covers a compact area of some 295 sq. kms on the south side of the River Forth.
- 8.2 To set the context for the vision, aims and priorities for the Community Learning and Development Strategy it is useful, indeed necessary, to look at some facts, figures and future projections that will affect the delivery of services by all partners within the Falkirk Council area.
- 8.3 The largest town is Falkirk itself, but the area also contains the former burghs of Grangemouth, Bo'ness, Denny and Dunipace as well as several other towns and communities such as Bonnybridge, Larbert and Stenhousemuir. The area also contains the villages of the Braes centred on Polmont. Falkirk provides the focus of the area as a major shopping centre, along with the main hospital, college of further education and Council Headquarters.
- 8.4 Grangemouth is Scotland's largest deep-sea container port, which handles a wide range of imports and exports. The port has good rail and road connections and as a result warehousing and transportation are important employers in the area. One implication for Community Learning and Development partners is a transient population of sailors and associated workers, many from overseas, who use local Internet facilities in libraries to access their home.
- 8.5 A dynamic Town Centres Regeneration Strategy linked to the Community Plan and to the My Future's in Falkirk plan is underway. Whilst focussing on physical redevelopment, this clearly provides opportunities for both improving community engagement and community regeneration and impacts upon both the Community Learning and Development Strategy and the Community Regeneration Outcome Agreement.

The CLD Partnership recognises the need to engage with local communities, groups and individuals to support the development and improvement of community initiatives and facilities. It also recognises that it must help people to develop their skills to identify needs, tackle issues, influence decision-making and create a voice for their community.

This is reflected in our broad aims and in Local Priority 1 "Building Strong, Safe and Attractive Communities".

8.6 Population

The 2003 mid year estimates give the population of the Falkirk Council area as 145,920. This represents an increase of 360 over the figure for 2002 and is the highest population estimate there has been for the area.

This reflects the increases that have been taking place since the early 1990s, which reversed the previous decade's trend of slow decline.

The population increase is expected to grow to over 150,000 by 2018 making the area one of the fastest growing in Scotland.

The populations of the main towns are (based on 2001 Census)

Town	Population
Falkirk	32,420
Grangemouth	17,910
Bo'ness	13,960
Stenhousemuir	10,350
Denny	7,385
Polmont	5,420
Larbert	6,425
Bonnybridge	4,745

In terms of age and gender, the largest age group is in the 35 – 39 year olds (8.3% of the population). The mean age of the population is 38, which is close to the Scottish average. Although there are slightly more children and fewer elderly than the Scottish average, the area's birth rate is decreasing slowly as there has been a fall in the number of births since 1992.

Most of the population increase will come in older age groups. In particular, there will be a 20% increase in the older working age groups with a corresponding reduction in the numbers of younger working ages. This is very much in line with national trends.

There are a small percentage (1%) of people from minority ethnic groups other than white in the Falkirk Council area. This is compared to the Scottish figures of 2%. Falkirk's largest ethnic minority groups are the Pakistani and Chinese communities. Very few people (0.67%) have any knowledge of Gaelic.

As a result of these figures the CLD Partnership recognises that it needs to develop initiatives that provide opportunities for older working age groups to engage with lifelong learning and to maintain and improve their skills. Equally, there is a need to recognise, celebrate and raise awareness of cultural diversity.

This is reflected in our broad aims and in Local Priorities 1 and 2 “Building Strong, Safe, Attractive Communities” and “Getting People Back to Work”.

8.7 Employment

Falkirk has more people employed in manufacturing than Scotland as a whole, particularly related to the chemical industry. It has the third highest proportion of men in manufacturing of all 32 Scottish councils.

Industry	Falkirk No	%	Scotland %
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	260	0.5	1.7
Mining & Utilities	295	0.5	1.8
Manufacturing – metal & metal products	2,950	5.1	5.3
Manufacturing – chemicals & other Non-metallic products	7,190	12.4	6.3
Construction	4,650	8.0	5.4
Wholesale & Retail	11,420	19.6	16.6
Hotels & Restaurants	2,920	5.0	7.4
Transport, storage & communications	2995	5.2	5.5
Financial & Business	6,360	10.9	16.6
Public Administration & Social Security	5,225	9.0	6.3
Health, education & social work	11,425	4.2	5.5
Total	58,140		

Source: Annual Business Inquiry, 2002

Average household income in the Falkirk area is £24,200, compared to a GB average of £29,000. Gross weekly pay is below the Scotland and GB average.

New housing is developing rapidly in the area. House prices are very competitive compared to surrounding areas. This is attracting people to come and live in the area. Six out of ten Falkirk residents own their own property.

However, a major challenge is to ensure that the Falkirk area can provide the environment that encourages the economically active to come and live in the area, rather than travel to and from it. One of the ways Falkirk Council and its partners is seeking to address this is through the Falkirk Action Plan “My Future’s in Falkirk”, which aims to transform the economy of the region and the lives of its citizens.

The challenge for the CLD Partnership is to ensure that local citizens have the core skills to pursue the opportunities arising from this initiative. Equally, unemployment in Falkirk is slightly above the Scottish average, but has decreased slowly over the past year. The unemployment figures for June 2004 show that Falkirk Council ranked 12th out of the 32 Scottish local authority areas.

Area	Male		Female		Total	
Falkirk	2,132	4.6%	671	1.5%	2803	3.1%
Scotland	70,324	4.4%	22,082	1.4%	92,406	2.9%
UK	625,751	3.3%	214,707	1.2%	840,458	2.3%

The Community Learning and Development Partnership recognises the need to engage with local employers, business networks, guidance and training providers to develop creative and innovative approaches. We will require to widen access to learning, guidance and progression, particularly in personal and social development, literacy and numeracy and digital learning.

This is reflected in our broad aims and in Local Priority 2 “Getting People Back to Work”.

8.8 Education

In terms of school age education there are over 21,000 pupils in 48 primary schools, 8 secondary schools, 3 special schools and 3 day units.

The level of school qualifications achieved in Falkirk is slightly below the Scottish average. This is shown below:

2003	Falkirk	Scotland
5+ Standard grades at 1 - 4	77%	79%
5+ Highers at A - C	15%	19%

The Education Service has recognised that there continues to be evidence of underachievement in boys and under-aspiration in girls, particularly amongst socially disadvantaged young people and has taken steps to overcome this.

A higher number of young people than the national average do not progress from school to higher and further education. There is also a higher figure for youth unemployment than the national average.

School Leaver Destinations 2002 - 03	Falkirk Council	Scotland
Higher Education	29%	31%
Further Education	12%	21%
Training	7%	5%
Employment	25%	23%
Unemployed and actively seeing employment or training	21%	12%
Unemployed and not actively seeking employment or training	4%	4%
Unknown	3%	4%

Education Services' strategy document for raising attainment and achievement, **Learning to Achieve**, promotes the view that personal achievement and academic attainment are of equal importance in developing the individual. Young people's abilities and aptitudes need to be recognised and nurtured whatever they happen to be. While academic success is important it is not the sole aim of a school today and every child, irrespective of academic ability, needs to be supported to maximize his/her potential and to discover their place in and contribution to their community and the wider world. In this way schools are encouraged to look outwards to their communities and draw upon the potential of those who can add to the experience and provide important next steps for learning beyond school, particularly for those suffering the effects of disadvantage.

Falkirk College of Further and Higher Education is located near to the centre of Falkirk and has over 10,000 students enrolled on its courses. It provides courses in a wide range of subjects including engineering, business administration and call centre training.

In addition to traditional course delivery, the College makes full use of ICT (Information and Communications Technology) to allow more flexible approaches to learning and to ensure the inclusion of all groups in the community. Dedicated provision is being developed for minority ethnic groups and an expansion of the literacy programmes has been agreed through the Falkirk Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan. The College also plans to develop more broad based qualifications at lower SCQF levels and to increased vocational training provision for 14 -16 year olds. The Community Access Programme and "Step into Learning" programmes are all promoted to increase access.

In addition to these, the College is part of the CAMPUS widening access partnership with the University of Stirling, the Education Services of Falkirk, Stirling, Clackmannanshire and Careers Scotland. This scheme

targets and encourages disadvantaged young people in the 4th year of secondary school currently under aspiring, but with the potential to succeed in Higher Education. They embark on a two year programme of motivational activities including an Easter and Summer School in which they are introduced to College and University life with support from students currently studying at these establishments.

All of these factors have a clear significance for the priorities of the Community Learning and Development Strategy. The CLD Partnership recognises that working with young people to provide support, guidance and opportunities is a priority for all partners

This links to our broad aims and to Local Priorities 4 and 5 “Raising Educational Attainment” and “Young People”.

8.9 Health

NHS Forth Valley has identified four key areas for promoting health and well being, linked to “Improving Health in Scotland – The Challenge”. These are:

- Early years
- Teenage transition
- Workplace
- Communities

There are five priority health risk factors for the area. These are:

- Tobacco
- Alcohol
- Low fruit and Vegetable Intake
- Physical Activity Levels
- Obesity

Local statistics show that 1 in 3 adults in the Falkirk Council area smokes and almost 28% of women smoke whilst pregnant, which is slightly higher than the national average. More young people smoke in Falkirk than the national average.

Women are more likely to eat at least one portion of fresh fruit each day (58%). This is consistent with the national position. A higher than average percentage of men are likely to have an excessive alcohol intake (39%) compared to the Scottish average (33%)

An overall priority for the CLD Partnership is therefore to promote any learning in these four key areas that helps groups and individuals address the five priority risk factors and in general improve health and well being.

This links to our broad aims and to Local Priorities 1, 3 and 5 “Building Strong, Safe and Attractive Communities”, “Improving Health” and “Young People”.

8.10 Amenities

Leisure pursuits are well catered for. There is a dry ski slope, numerous golf courses and opportunities for walking, horse riding, swimming and sailing. There are ongoing developments to increase the length of cycle tracks and renovations are taking place to the existing canal towpaths. Projects are also being developed to use the Forth and Clyde Canal for canoeing and other activities. Grangemouth has an excellent athletics stadium and a new Community Stadium is being developed in a partnership between Falkirk Football Club and Falkirk Council. These are complemented by a network of sports centre, sports development courses and activities.

In Falkirk 41% of men and 27% of women take regular exercise. Taken in conjunction with health promotion issues, the CLD partnership should help to reinforce an integrated approach to build confidence and skills and to encourage local citizens to take up these opportunities.

Over the recent past, and indeed since the publication of the first Community Learning Strategy, Falkirk has been gaining a reputation for innovative work in Culture and the Arts. This includes the annual festival, Big in Falkirk - Scotland's National Street Arts festival, the Way to Blue music festival and host of arts development opportunities for all age groups. An Arts Strategy for the Falkirk Council area has been developed and there has been particular success in working with young people in music, dance, drama and film projects. The appointment of an Access and Outreach Officer for Cultural Services is furthering the development of community engagement in heritage projects.

Falkirk Libraries have been developing the People's Network across all local libraries, giving citizens free access to the Internet and to ICT learning opportunities, as well as more traditional forms of learning via books and paper resources.

The Community Learning and Development Partnership recognises the learning and development opportunities afforded by participation in culture, libraries and the arts, as well as sport and leisure and will seek to build upon existing initiatives to maximise these.

This links with our broad aims and with Local Priorities 1, 3 and 5 “Building Strong, Safe and Attractive Communities”, “Improving Health” and “Young People”.

9. OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK

9.1 The Partnership Group

The Partnership Group will continue to meet on a regular basis (six times per annum) to monitor progress on the development of the Strategy and Action Plans. In turn, it will report progress through the Community Regeneration Theme Group of the Strategic Community Plan.

The Partnership will also take forward a role in promoting and publicising the work of partners in the field of community learning and development and ensuring that its membership represents a broad spectrum of stakeholders.

9.2 Development of Action Plans

The Partnership has considered a number of ways to take forward the development of Action Plans. It has agreed to develop **Thematic Action Plans** that will link into the geographic **Local Community Plans** being developed by the Local Community Planning Team on behalf of the Strategic Community Planning Partnership. These geographic plans will follow the boundaries of the local Area Forums and will include smaller neighbourhood plans. The intention is to produce thematic Action Plans that will overlay the geographically based local community plans and will target the community learning and development needs of priority areas within these. This decision was informed by work undertaken as part of the previous Community Learning Strategy. Here, many of the issues that come forward through geographic learning plans were local planning issues such as transport and recreation.

The first Local Community Plan will be developed around the needs of the Grangemouth Community and all six area forum areas will be covered by December 2006. By this stage there will be a portfolio of plans that will mesh the geographic plans with the thematic. An explanatory chart is attached as Appendix 2.

These Action Plans will have four broad themes that embrace the National Priorities for Community Learning and Development:

- **Learning for Adults**
- **Learning for Young People**
- **Engaging with and strengthening communities**
- **Supporting and investing in skills development**

Integral to these Action Plans will be an Action Plan for Community Guidance.

Priority areas for action have been identified through research carried out by the Community Regeneration Theme Group. These have been agreed by Community Planning partners.

As part of their discussions CLD partners have considered the profile of the Falkirk Council area and have agreed some key statements and objectives that link to each of the five Regeneration Outcome Priorities of:

- 1) **Building strong, safe and attractive communities**
- 2) **Getting people back to work**
- 3) **Improving health**
- 4) **Raising educational attainment**
- 5) **Engaging young people**

In turn, these objectives and statements will guide the targets drawn up for each of the Action Plans

Three of the four Action Plans will be taken forward by a sub group of the Community Learning Partnership. Partners will each be asked to take forward specific aspects of these Action Plans, ensuring that they mesh with other policies and strategies. The Partnership also recognises that further groups may be set up as it expands and other matters come to the fore.

Sub Groups will be initially led by Falkirk Council, but it is recognised that as these groups progress, other agencies may wish to take on this role. The groups will be asked to report progress to the full CLD Partnership on a regular basis.

The following timescales will apply:

Action Plan	Draft for Consultation	Final Plan
Learning for Young People	July 2005	October 05
Learning for Adults	Sept.2005	Dec.2005
Supporting and Investing In skills Development	Sept.2005	Dec 2005

With regard to the Action Plan “Engaging and Strengthening Communities”, the initial task will be the development of a Community Engagement Strategy, co-ordinated by the CLDP as articulated through the Regeneration Outcome Agreement.

As a first task, Action Plan sub groups will be asked to agree objectives and identify targets for the Community Learning and Development Partnership. These targets and objectives can then be embedded in the development of Local Community Plans. The development of the Action Plan “Learning for Young People” will link closely with initiatives being developed through My Future’s in Falkirk (Engaging Young People) and through the Falkirk Children’s Commission (Integrated Children’s Services Plan and Integrated Learning Communities.)

WALK THE TALK HEALTH PROJECT

This initiative evolved from a group of young people who attended the Joint Health Improvement Plan consultation exercise. Funding was secured in partnership with NHS Forth Valley which allowed a number of separate groups to be set up around the health agenda, supported by youth workers. Training to develop personal skills and confidence has allowed a peer education approach to health issues across the Falkirk area.

10.0 LOCAL PRIORITIES FOR COMMUNITY LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

Priority 1- Building Strong, Safe & Attractive Communities

We will work with the Community Safety Theme Group to engage with local communities, groups, individuals and young people to support the development of community safety initiatives. We will help people to extend and develop their skills to identify needs, tackle issues and develop community facilities.

We will develop initiatives which recognise and raise awareness of cultural diversity and we will develop capacity building programmes with communities and citizens to enable them to influence decision-making, participate in community planning and create a voice for their community.

Priority 2 - Getting People Back into Work

We will work with the Economic Development and Tourism Theme Group to engage with employers, business networks, guidance and training providers to develop new, creative and innovative approaches to support and encourage individuals into work and to sustain employment. We will widen access to learning and training for people in and out of work, particularly in personal and social development, literacy and numeracy and digital learning. The focus of our programmes will be employability and enterprise. In achieving this target we will widen and raise awareness of guidance and progression.

Priority 3 - Improving Health

We will work with the Health Theme Group to engage with health agencies and partners tackle health inequalities by developing new, creative and innovative learning opportunities to promote and support health and well-being. We will focus on the early years, young people in transition, health in the workplace and in the community. We will do this by providing and developing community and work based information, activities and training on community health issues.

Priority 4 - Raising Educational Attainment

We will work with Integrated Learning Communities and other services and agencies to engage with adults, children, young people and their families to maximise informal and formal lifelong learning opportunities. We will do this by promoting early intervention and out of school hours care and learning. We will support and develop programmes in literacy and numeracy, personal and social development and community based adult learning. In achieving this target we will promote community guidance.

Priority 5 - Young People

We will engage with young people to extend and develop creative and lifelong learning opportunities to promote personal & social development. We will do this by promoting leisure and cultural opportunities, active citizenship and diversionary activities. We will focus on programmes to support key transition stages, cross generation activities and youth participation initiatives.

11.0 Monitoring and Evaluation

The development and performance of the CLD Strategy and Action Plans will be supported by:

- *How Good is our Community Learning and Development*
The Partnership has agreed to use this quality assurance framework. A HGIOCLD portfolio has been developed to support practitioners to use the framework. All Community Learning and Development staff have participated in HGIOCLD training, as well as several partner agencies.
- *LEAP*
Learning, Evaluation and Planning training programmes have also been developed and provided for staff and partners. This will continue to be used to record and develop community learning initiatives and projects.
- *Traffic Lights System*
In addition, Community Services, which is the lead service for the delivery of the Community Learning and Development Strategy, has adopted a “traffic light” progress monitoring system for actions contained within the Community Services Service Plan. This will be used to monitor progress of action points as the Action Plans develop and can be used to highlight both areas of good progress and areas where work has stalled. The Partnership should then be able to play a positive role in moving such matters forward.

12. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 12.1 The Working and Learning Together Guidance rightly places community engagement at the heart of the strategy development and asks partnerships to identify how they propose to take this forward.
- 12.2 The priorities for the Falkirk Community Learning and Development Partnership have been derived from several key consultations, using a variety of methods and practices. In September 2002, a Voice of Learners Conference was held in Grangemouth, attended by over 200 participants. Through surveys, those participants were able to articulate their learning journey and identify needs for the future.
- 12.3 From this conference the local Grangemouth Community Learning Plan has evolved, which has begun to address these learning needs. Consultations have been held with community groups in the Langlees/Dawson area of Falkirk, and following on from a Falkirk-wide awards evening for volunteers involved in Community Learning and Development in June 2004, a database has been established which identifies those people interested in becoming more involved in developing the Strategy and Action Plans.
- 12.4 Currently, intensive community consultations are taking place regarding the Regeneration outcome Agreement and Community Learning and Development practitioners are fully involved in helping focus groups identify their learning needs. This exercise will ensure synergy with the Community Planning Partnership's priorities for regeneration.
- 12.5 The Partnership will also take cognisance of the result of the pilot Standards for Community Engagement and will be influenced by the work of the new Community Planning Team to be established within the Community Education Service.
- 12.6 In addition to community consultations as above, the Community Learning and Development Partnership has been active in the engagement process across the National Priorities. This has been developed through the Action Plan for Literacy and Numeracy, Community Access to Lifelong Learning (CALL), the Training Consortium, Dialogue Youth, Falkirk Area Youth Clubs Network and Spinach for Popeye – an international forum for the advancement of youth learning. The Partnership intends to continue to use these mechanisms for engagement as well as developing new strands.

COMMUNITY RESOURCE ROOM, CAMELON

A successful bid was made to the Empowering Communities Fund on behalf of the Camelton Community Project. This has resulted in a base resourced with both desk top and lap top computers, available for local community groups and individuals to develop their administration and decision making skills.

A course on the use of ICT and the Internet has been developed to support usage.

13. SUPPORTING AND INVESTING IN SKILLS

13.1 The Falkirk Community Learning and Development Partnership is fully committed to investing in the skills of practitioners, community activists and local people who are involved in the shaping, planning, development and delivery of community learning and development activities. It has a considerable record of achievement that has been recognised across the community learning and development sector:

- Development of Community Learning and Development Approaches Training Programme in partnership with the University of Dundee
- Lead role in developing and producing the Introductory Training for Youth Workers, a partnership initiative with the Community Education Training Network (Dundee)
- Development and delivery of training for volunteers, accredited to PDA level within the national SCQF
- Development of new pilot community activist training programme supported by Social Inclusion Strategy Funding.

13.2 The Community Learning and Development Partnership will continue to support and invest in training and development activities and will strive to meet the changing development needs for the future.

13.3 The Partnership will achieve this by continuing to support a training sub group, which will report to the Strategy Partnership. This training sub group will formulate targets and timescales for activities for the Action Plan.

COMMUNITY ACTIVIST TRAINING

A training course to enable community activists from across SIS areas to come together and discuss common issues and themes has been developed. This has allowed participants to learn from each others' experiences, increase their confidence, understand how councils and parliaments work and learn practical skills such as letter writing and using computers and the Internet.

Following a visit by the Scottish Civic Forum to the area, two visits were arranged to the SCF in Edinburgh and to the Scottish Parliament. The second of these included participants in the Community Activists Training Course. This was followed by a visit to Westminster.

Individuals commented "I have learned a lot which has encouraged me to keep involved", "I am able to express myself and take part in meetings" and "I have confidence in letter writing and talking to others".

There is now a commitment to establish information access points on the Scottish Parliament at local community level throughout the area.

14 CONCLUSION

- 14.1 The CLD Partnership has welcomed the opportunity to further articulate community learning and development activities across the Falkirk Council area.
- 14.2 In developing its vision, values and principles the Partnership recognises the challenges ahead and is committed to working together to meet these challenges.
- 14.3 It has articulated its values and aims, and has developed local priorities in accordance with the demographic information relating to the area.
- 14.4 In setting out its operational framework the Partnership has taken account of the need for CLD to be firmly rooted in the major plans and strategies of the area.
- 14.5 In taking forward the Action Plans the Partnership will actively encourage the sharing of information and skills, the development of joint activities and will ensure systems for quality assurance are embedded within the planning process.

Description and Statements from key Community Learning and Development Partners.

1. CAREERS SCOTLAND

- 1.1 Careers Scotland has a successful history of community based guidance activities in the Falkirk Council area. Its predecessor, Careers Central Ltd., developed and delivered ALIGS, the Adult Learning Information and Guidance Service. ALIGS was supported by a network of key partners and information and guidance services were delivered to individual learners in a co-ordinated and cohesive way. These services included:
- The innovative use of computerised local access sites in libraries and community centres, which provided information and advice and allowed the referral of clients for guidance, targeting particularly the non-traditional users of these services.
 - Careers Advisors linking with partner organisations from outlying rural sites to deliver guidance services on an outreach basis to those for whom distance would be a barrier to access.
 - The Take the Chance campaign, where local people could telephone a free phone helpline manned by Careers Central staff to get help with their reading, writing and number skills.
- 1.2 The Community Learning and Development Strategy will, through the development of Community Guidance, strengthen the relationship between lifetime guidance and lifelong learning in the community. Lifetime Community Guidance services will support learners in making effective and sustainable choices and will strengthen both individual and community capacity.

2. COUNCIL FOR VOLUNTARY SECTOR – FALKIRK AND DISTRICT

- 2.1 CVS Falkirk and District, the Council for the Voluntary sector serving the Falkirk Council area, is an independent voluntary organisation supporting the development of the community and voluntary sector locally.
- 2.2 CVS Falkirk and District is an integrated CVS and Volunteer Centre. Volunteer Centres exist in every local authority area in Scotland to provide a range of specific services that relate to volunteering and volunteer engaging agencies.
- 2.3 CVS Falkirk and District is committed to equal opportunities and to making our services relevant and accessible to all local organisations.

3. FALKIRK COLLEGE OF FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION

- 3.1 Falkirk College's mission is "Excellence in Lifelong Learning". It has a key role to play in the delivery of learning and skills linked to the CLD Strategy. The Strategic Plan for 2003 – 2006 states:

"the College aims to contribute fully to the social, economic and cultural life of its local communities"

One of the key strategic aims is:

"to work constructively with key local and national partners to extend opportunity through increased co-ordination of local services."

- 3.2 It is within this context that the College participates as a partner in the CLD Strategy.

4. NHS FORTH VALLEY, HEALTH PROMOTION

- 4.1 NHS Forth Valley is a single organisation comprising both primary and acute healthcare divisions along with other health services such as public health, including the health promotion department. It promotes a holistic model of health and well being whereby tackling the wider socio-economic influences on health are understood to be part of its business.
- 4.2 From April 2005 local health services are to be provided through community health partnerships, which will provide opportunities for further partnership working. The Primary Care Team and the Health Promotion team understands the value of learning as a means to increasing public understanding of specific health issues. It also has a role in partnership working on specific programmes to provide training in community development approaches and community health issues and works with local agencies to help stimulate the awareness, confidence and ability of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups to improve their health and well being.

5. WORKERS EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION

- 5.1 Founded in 1903 to open up education for working people, the Workers' Educational Association is a national, democratic, voluntary organisation which seeks to encourage access to education throughout life, especially for those adults who have experienced barriers to learning as a result of economic circumstances, social isolation, limited confidence, low self esteem or lack of educational opportunity.

5.2 In Falkirk, the WEA works with a range of partner organisation to develop and deliver adult education opportunities in the workplace and in the community. In 2004/05 WEA activity includes:

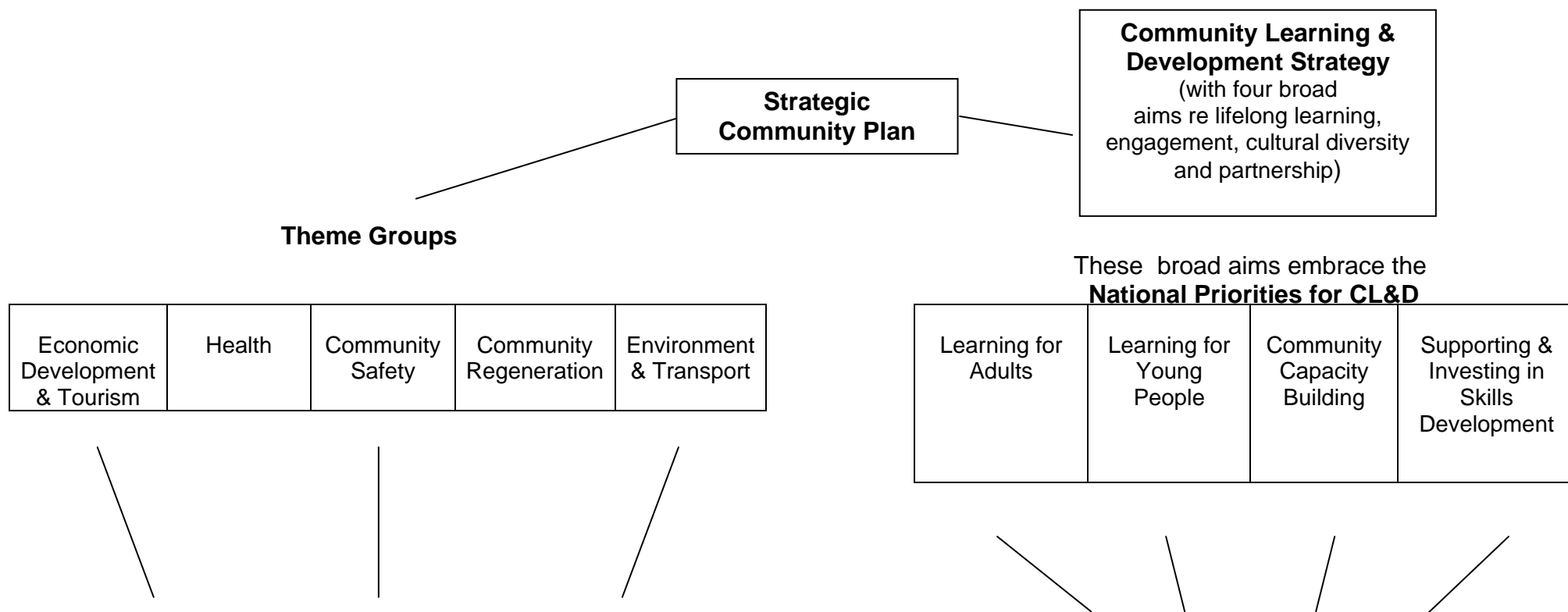
- The WEA/UNISON Return to Learn (R2L) programme for public sector workers with few or no educational qualifications to get back into learning.
- The WEA/Falkirk Council Cultural Services Women Up Front project to enable women living, working or learning in the Falkirk Council area to explore themes of change in women's lives through a range of community arts and social and political studies programmes.
- Lead responsibility for workplace literacies on behalf of the Falkirk Adult Literacy and Numeracy Partnership.

6. FALKIRK COUNCIL

6.1 **Community Services:** comprises a diverse range of services and disciplines. Key to the delivery of the CLD Strategy and Action Plans are the Community Education Service, Libraries, Cultural Services (Museums, Heritage and the Arts), Employment & Training and Sport and Leisure. Priorities for the Service include lifelong learning, engaging with young people and with communities as a whole, cultural regeneration, quality of life, economic development and opportunity and enterprise. The CLD Strategy will sit alongside a number of others e.g. Strategy for the Arts, Culture and Leisure Strategy and a Heritage Strategy, all aligned with some common objectives of social inclusion, opportunity of access and community engagement.

6.2 **Education Services:** the main impact of CLD is upon the attainment and achievement of disadvantaged young people coming through the combined forces of Integrated Learning Communities and Learning to Achieve, its flagship Strategy for raising attainment and achievement for all. As a multi-agency organisation focussed on young people and families the ILC's are able to draw upon and co-ordinate professional skills both in and outwith schools, tackling disadvantage at its source and intervening at key stages of a young person's development.

6.3 Learning to Achieve recognises the importance of the family and the wider community in the personal development of children and young people and delivered within the context of an ILC, and in partnership with Community Learning will achieve much greater impact on their lives.



Our local priorities will reflect the CL&D needs of all the SCP Theme groups, but particularly Health, Community Safety and Community Regeneration

These national priorities are embedded in our local **priorities** for CL&D regarding

- o Building strong, safe and attractive communities
- o Getting people back into work
- o Improving health
- o Raising educational attainment
- o Young people