

# Visit Falkirk and the surrounding area

Falkirk is the perfect destination for a day trip, a weekend away or a longer stay. With its rich history, family friendly attractions, canal boat rides, quality shopping and stunning scenery over the Firth of Forth, you'll be tempted to stay a while. With cosy cottages, national hotel chains, canal barges and B&Bs, there's somewhere to suit every taste and budget.

Mid way between Edinburgh and Glasgow, Falkirk is right in the heart of Scotland. Served by junctions 5 and 6 of the M9, with excellent rail links, a ferry terminal at Rosyth and two international airports within striking distance, the Falkirk area is truly well connected.

With an extensive range of indoor and outdoor attractions on offer, you'll find something to do whatever the weather and with many being free of charge, your visit needn't break the bank! Whether you're seeking peace and quiet, exciting activities, culture and heritage or green spaces you can find them all in the Falkirk area. Let us guide you through the Falkirk experience...

## The Great Outdoors

2002 saw the opening of the Falkirk Wheel, the world's first and only rotating boatlift. This truly fantastic feat of modern engineering is not to be missed. Designed to connect the Union Canal with the Forth and Clyde Canal 115ft below, the Falkirk Wheel provides a spectacular centrepiece of the Millennium Link, which links the East and West coasts of Scotland. For a unique experience, take a boat ride and sail through the air, or watch the wheel turn from the impressive visitor centre, shop and cafe.

Hire a canal barge and enjoy the peace and tranquility of a holiday afloat, heading to Edinburgh on the Union Canal or to Glasgow on the Forth and Clyde Canal. Or, make the most of the canal tow paths for a leisurely walk or bike ride. If the outdoor life is for you, don't miss Muiravonside Country Park, where 170 acres of woodland, parkland and gardens await you. Children love visiting the animals in the restored farm buildings. Passing through Muiravonside Country Park is the Avon Gorge Trail. Nine miles in all, it links Avonbridge with Linlithgow, taking you through some stunning scenery.

In future there'll be even more greenery to enjoy, thanks to the innovative Helix project. This lottery funded scheme aims to transform 300 hectares of under-used land between Grangemouth and Falkirk into an impressive green space for the community and visitors alike. The focal point will be the creation of two huge 30m Kelpies' heads, one of which will rock to and fro to operate the lock of the canal basin. These Scottish mythological creatures will be in place in 2012 with the site as a whole being completed by 2013.

## Bringing History to Life

Close to the Falkirk Wheel is one of the Antonine Wall sites, Roughcastle. Stretching from Bo'ness to Old Kilpatrick, the Antonine Wall covered some 37 miles and was built under the orders of the Emperor Antoninus Pius in 142AD to protect the Roman Empire. Today, many of the best preserved parts of the wall are in the Falkirk area. Along with Roughcastle, you can also see visible remains at Callendar Park, Kinneil Estate, Watling Lodge and Seabegs Wood (see map overleaf for locations). Kinneil Museum in Bo'ness and Callendar House in Falkirk both feature exhibitions on this UNESCO World Heritage Site and can be visited free of charge.

Callendar House is one of Scotland's finest baronial mansions, built in the style of a French chateau. Over 600 years of history await you, including the house's connections to great historical figures such as Mary, Queen of Scots, Oliver Cromwell and Bonnie Prince Charlie. Costumed interpreters bring the past to life and the Georgian Kitchen, open daily, forms the centrepiece of this interactive experience.

The house is situated in the magnificent setting of Callendar Park, which is well worth exploring. With a par 3 golf course, children's play area, crazy golf, boating lake and woodland walks you can easily while away a pleasant afternoon in this beautiful 18th century parkland. Both Callendar House and Park and Kinneil Museum are open all year round and are free of charge.

## About Town

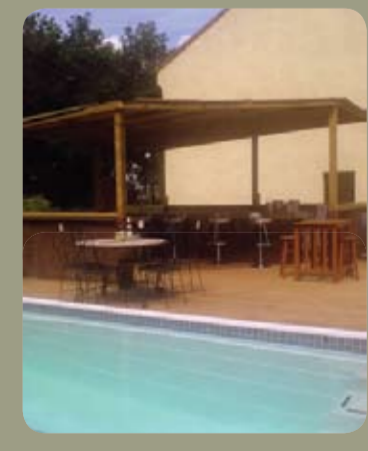
If shopping is your pleasure, you won't be disappointed in Falkirk. With two large shopping centres, dozens of independent retailers and a large retail park, there's plenty to keep you busy. Whilst in town there are plenty of points of interest for visitors. The Steeple is a notable landmark right on the high street and dates back to 1814, although there has actually been a steeple in town since the 15th century, this being the third.

The church is also important for its connections to the Battle of Falkirk. In 1298 Sir John de Graham, William Wallace's right hand man, lost his life in the war for Scottish independence and was buried in the churchyard. Another notable casualty, Sir John Stewart, is also buried in the graveyard. As he lay wounded, his Men of Bute surrounded him and were all killed. The Celtic Cross monument in the churchyard was erected as a memorial to these brave men.

Behind the Steeple is Tolbooth Street, said to be Britain's shortest street at just 5ft long. Overlooking the High Street is Falkirk Old and St Modan's Parish Church. Falkirk is believed to take its name from this church, "Faw" "Kirk", meaning "speckled church", over time becoming "Falkirk".

When all the sightseeing and shopping is done, there are a selection of good pubs, bars and restaurants to keep your taste buds satisfied and if you fancy dancing the night away, you can always check out a nightclub or two, including City, the largest nightclub in Scotland.

Alternatively, for something more cultural, Falkirk Town Hall (FTH) has an excellent programme of entertainment, from dance to drama, comedians to music and family orientated events. The FTH cinema screens a broad range of films from mainstream to art house and classics.



## Where to Stay

In and around Falkirk, there is a wide choice of accommodation to suit every taste and pocket. If you are looking for a hotel, you will find several 4 star hotels with luxurious spa facilities; a great range of modern budget hotels on the main approach roads to Falkirk, plus many good quality hotels in Falkirk town centre, Grangemouth, Bo'ness and other local towns.

There is also a wide selection of welcoming guest houses and B&Bs where the personal touch and local knowledge is assured. If you prefer self-catering, you will find some beautifully situated and well-appointed houses, cottages and chalets in the area.

Most hotels have excellent restaurants which are well patronised by local people too. The area has a further vast array of restaurants, bistros, cafes and bars in town and countryside locations.

Search for accommodation at [www.falkirkstayandplay.co.uk](http://www.falkirkstayandplay.co.uk) or [www.visitscotland.com](http://www.visitscotland.com)



## How to Get Here

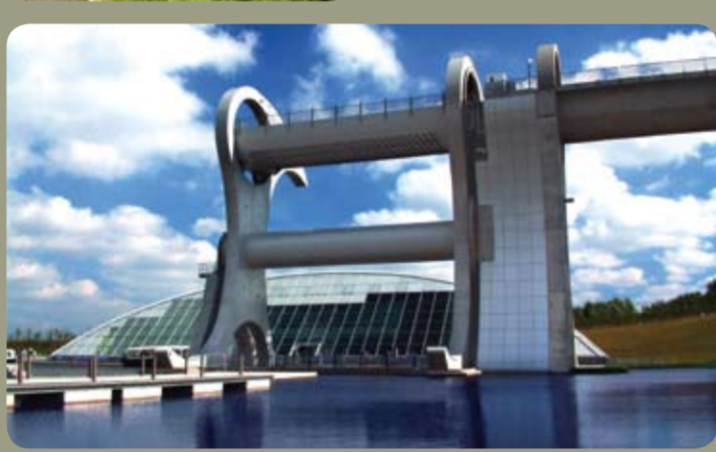
By car from Carlisle and the south, it's motorway all the way via the M6, M74, M73 and M80. Equally well connected are Edinburgh via the M9, Glasgow via the M80 and Stirling, Perth and Inverness via the M9 / A9.

By train, there are direct day and sleeper services to Falkirk from London, a fast and frequent service to Edinburgh and Glasgow and services north to Stirling, Perth and beyond.

By air: Edinburgh Airport (19.5 miles), Glasgow Airport (33 miles) and Prestwick Airport (56 miles)

## Further Information

For more ideas about what to see and do in the Falkirk area, visit [www.falkirkstayandplay.co.uk](http://www.falkirkstayandplay.co.uk).



## Beautiful Bo'ness

Bo'ness is a beautiful historic town nestled on the Firth of Forth with lovely views over the Ochil Hills and the Forth Road Bridge. With impressive architecture, it boasts many interesting buildings, not least of which is the pre-art deco Hippodrome cinema. Originally opened in 1912, it has been lovingly restored and re-opened in 2009. Screening the latest releases and golden oldies, why not treat yourself to a film in this classic environment and combine it with a meal in one of Bo'ness's restaurants or cafes?

Whilst here, don't miss the Bo'ness and Kinneil Railway. A leisurely ride on a steam train takes you along the Firth of Forth to Birkhill Station, where you can alight for a visit to Birkhill Clay Mine. Enjoy a tour of the caverns, see 300 million year old fossils and learn about the important role of fireclay in the Industrial Revolution. Continue on the train on a newly extended line over the River Avon viaduct and return to Bo'ness in a round trip of 10 miles. Look out for special events including visits by Thomas the Tank Engine, on the railway's website - [www.srps.org.uk](http://www.srps.org.uk)

Also in Bo'ness is Kinneil House, Museum and Estate. The house is open on selected days only (see [www.kinneil.org.uk](http://www.kinneil.org.uk) for details), but the Museum is open all year round and features 2000 years of local history. Kinneil Estate has several sites of interest including a Roman Fortlet, remains of the Antonine Wall, the ruins of a medieval church - and the cottage where inventor James Watt worked on developing the steam engine.

Finally, the Bo'ness Motor Museum houses a private collection of over 20 vehicles from TV and film, many of which have a James Bond theme. A fun visit for all the family with children's soft play area, Miss Money Penny's diner and the 'Double O' bar.

A short drive from Bo'ness is Blackness Castle, a 15th century ship-shaped structure which juts out onto the River Forth. The castle was used as a film set for Franco Zeffirelli's 'Hamlet' starring Mel Gibson and is a lovely spot for a picnic and a stroll along the water's edge after exploring within the castle walls.



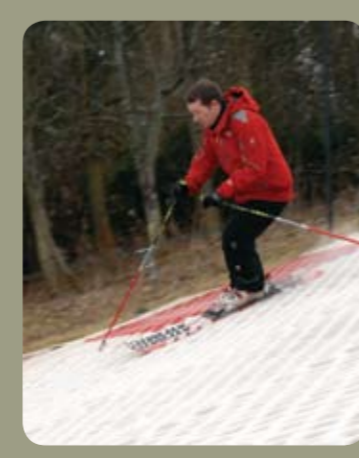
## Finally...

If it's thrills and adrenaline you require, pay a visit to Xtreme Karting in Larbert, Scotland's only 5 star indoor karting centre - great fun for both children and adults alike. Alternatively, why not try out skiing or snowboarding at Polmonthill Ski Centre? The Mariner Leisure Centre has a wave pool and chutes to keep little ones amused on even the wettest of days.

Some other local gems include Barbara Davidson Pottery at Larbert, where you can pick up a hand thrown pot or choose from a whole range of beautifully made items from a potter with over 40 years experience.

The Dunmore Pineapple near Airth is a quirky, striking piece of architecture, built in 1761 as a garden retreat. You can visit the grounds to marvel at the spectacular design, or if you wish to see inside, it's actually available to rent from the Landmark Trust as an unusual holiday let!

There's plenty to see and do all year round in the Falkirk area, but if you'd like to experience one of the local events or festivals, why not pick up a copy of our Events and Festivals in the Falkirk Area leaflet, or download a copy from [www.falkirk.gov.uk](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk).



free visitor map inside

# Visit Falkirk

and the surrounding area



Falkirk Council

# Attractions in the Falkirk Area



## 1. The Falkirk Wheel & Tourist Information

The world's first and only rotating boatlift, the Falkirk Wheel offers a unique experience, designed to connect the Union Canal with the Forth and Clyde Canal 115ft below.

The Falkirk Wheel, Lime Road, Falkirk, FK1 4RS  
 Entry: FREE access to site, charge for boat rides – see website for details  
 Website: [www.thefalkirkwheel.co.uk](http://www.thefalkirkwheel.co.uk)  
 Tel: 08700 500208  
 Tourist information  
 Tel: 08707 200614  
 Website: [www.visitscotland.com](http://www.visitscotland.com)



## 2. The Falkirk Stadium

Home to Falkirk Football Club and Amarillo bistro bar with panoramic views, open daily.  
 Westfield, Falkirk, FK2 9DX  
 Website: [www.falkirkstadium.co.uk](http://www.falkirkstadium.co.uk)  
 Tel: 01324 618740



## 3. Callendar House and Park

Over 600 years of history are waiting to be discovered. Don't miss the Georgian kitchen with costumed interpreters bringing history to life, and leave time to explore the magnificent park and woodlands, including a section of the Antonine Wall.  
 Callendar Park, Falkirk, FK1 1YR  
 Entry: FREE  
 Website: [www.falkirkonline.net/antoninewall](http://www.falkirkonline.net/antoninewall)  
 Tel: 01324 503770



## 4. Falkirk Town Hall – Theatre, Music and Cinema

Carefully selected range of live music, drama, dance, comedy and film, with activities for families, workshops and exhibitions.  
 West Bridge Street, Falkirk, FK1 5RS.  
 Entry: See programme online for details.  
 Website: [www.falkirk.gov.uk/cultural](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/cultural)  
 Tel: 01324 506850



## 5. Falkirk Steeple and Visitor Information

A local landmark since the late 15th century, the Steeple housed the town lock up and today serves as an information point and box office for Falkirk Town Hall, The Hippodrome and other local venues.  
 High Street, Falkirk, FK1 1NW  
 Website: [www.falkirk.gov.uk/cultural](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/cultural)  
 Tel: 01324 506850



## 23. The Helix

Currently under construction, the Helix is a Lottery funded project that will transform under-used land between Falkirk and Grangemouth into a thriving urban greenspace of 300 hectares. Due for completion in 2013, you can follow the project's progress at the website.

Website: [www.thehelix.co.uk](http://www.thehelix.co.uk)



## 22. Antonine Wall

Built by the Romans around AD142 as the frontier of their Empire, the Antonine Wall is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Substantial lengths of this remarkable monument can still be seen at various sites across the Falkirk area.

Website: [www.falkirkonline.net/antoninewall](http://www.falkirkonline.net/antoninewall)



## 21. Grangemouth Athletics Stadium

Venue for local, national and international athletics events

Korsiebank Avenue, Grangemouth, FK3 0EE  
 Website: [www.falkirk.gov.uk](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk)  
 Tel: 01324 504590



## 20. Polmonthill Ski Centre

All year round skiing and snowboarding with 100m long artificial ski slope and 20m nursery slope. Lessons available.

Polmont Farm, Polmont, Falkirk, FK2 0YE.  
 Website: [www.falkirk.gov.uk](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk)  
 Tel: 01324 503835



## 19. The Mariner Leisure Centre

Lagoon-shaped leisure pool with beach area and wave machine, plus soft play area and lots more.

Glasgow Road, Camelon, FK1 4HJ.  
 Website: [www.falkirk.gov.uk](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk)  
 Tel: 01324 503750



## 18. Xtreme Karting

Experience the thrill and adrenaline of indoor karting at its best at Scotland's only 5 star karting centre. (Rated by VisitScotland)

Lochlands Business Park, Larbert, Falkirk, FK5 3NS.  
 Website: [www.xtremekarting.co.uk](http://www.xtremekarting.co.uk)  
 Tel: 01324 579797



## 17. Jupiter Urban Wildlife Centre

The Scottish Wildlife Trust has created 10 acres of wildlife gardens and habitats including wetlands, woodlands and meadows.

Entry: Free  
 Wood Street, Grangemouth, FK3 8LH.  
 Website: [www.swt.org.uk](http://www.swt.org.uk)  
 Tel: 01324 486475 or 07739 428203



## 16. Avon Gorge Trail (near Muiravonside)

Explore 9 miles of spectacular scenery between Avonbridge and Linlithgow passing through Muiravonside Country Park and under the Avon aqueduct which carries the Union Canal.

Central Scotland Forest Trust  
 Website: [www.csft.co.uk](http://www.csft.co.uk)  
 Tel: 01501 822015



## 15. Muiravonside Country Park

170 acres of woodland, parkland and garden with nature trails, picnic sites and a Visitor Centre. In and around the restored farm buildings you can see ponies, pigs, goats, ducks and chickens.

Entry: FREE  
 The Loan, By Linlithgow, EH49 6LN.  
 Website: [www.falkirk.gov.uk](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk)  
 Tel: 01506 845311



## 14. The Dunmore Pineapple

This unusual structure was built in 1761 by an unknown architect as a garden retreat. View the exterior from the walled garden and orchard. Explore the surrounding woodland and ponds which team with wildlife.

Near Airth, Stirlingshire, FK2 8LU (Signed from the A905)  
 Entry: FREE  
 Website: [www.nts.org.uk](http://www.nts.org.uk)  
 Tel: 0844 493 2132



## 13. Barbara Davidson Pottery

A working pottery which has been run by Barbara Davidson for over 40 years. There is a pottery shop and a gift shop in the old farm buildings.

Muirhall Farm, Larbert, Stirlingshire, FK5 4EW  
 Website: [www.barbara-davidson.com](http://www.barbara-davidson.com)  
 Tel: 01324 554430



## 12. Bo'ness Motor Museum

A private collection of over 20 vehicles ranging from a Baby Austin A30 to a Grand Tourer Aston Martin. Enjoy a snack in Miss Moneypenny's diner and keep the young ones amused in the soft play area, the Little Monsters Fun Factory.

Bridgeness Road, Bo'ness, EH51 9JR.  
 www.motor-museum.bo-ness.org.uk  
 Tel: 01506 827007



## 6. Old Parish Church Graveyard

The graveyard at Falkirk Old and St Modan's Parish Church contains important historical memorials from the era of William Wallace, the Battle of Falkirk in 1298 and the second Battle of Falkirk in 1746.

Manse Place, Falkirk, FK1 1JN  
 Website: [www.foasmpc.org.uk](http://www.foasmpc.org.uk)  
 Tel: 01324 611017



## 7 & 8. The Bo'ness and Kinneil Railway & Birkhill Clay Mine

Central Scotland's steam railway by the Firth of Forth, now with an extended 10 mile round trip. Visit the Scottish Railway Exhibition, take a ride on a steam train and stop off at Birkhill Clay Mine for a guided tour of underground mine workings.

Bo'ness Station, Union Street, Bo'ness, EH51 9AQ. (Birkhill Clay Mine accessible from Birkhill Station.)  
 Website: [www.srps.org.uk](http://www.srps.org.uk)  
 Tel. Station 01506 822298/ Office (weekdays) 01506 825855



## 9. Blackness Castle

Shaped like a ship and situated on a promontory which juts out into the Forth, this 15th century castle is known as the ship that never sailed.

Blackness, EH49 7NH.  
 Price: See website  
 Website: [www.historic-scotland.gov.uk](http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk)  
 Tel: 01506 834807



## 10. Kinneil House, Museum & Estate

A historic house, open on selected days and surrounded by parkland and woodland which includes remains of a Roman fortlet and the Antonine Wall. Kinneil Museum displays 2,000 years of history from Roman times to the present day.

Kinneil Estate, Bo'ness, EH51 0PR  
 Entry: FREE  
 Website: [www.kinneil.org.uk](http://www.kinneil.org.uk)  
 Tel: 01506 778530



## 11. The Hippodrome Cinema

Beautiful pre-art deco cinema dating back to 1912 screening the latest releases and golden oldies. Re-opened in 2009.

10 Hope Street, Bo'ness, EH51 0AA.  
 Website: [www.falkirk.gov.uk/hippodrome](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/hippodrome)  
 Tel: 01324 506850