

Agenda Item 9

Community Planning Partnership Falkirk Plan 2021-2031



Falkirk Integration Joint Board

3 September 2021

Community Planning Partnership Falkirk Plan 2021-2031

Consideration and Comments

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report updates members of the Integration Joint Board on the content and timelines of Falkirk Community Planning Partnership's Local Outcome Improvement Plan called the Falkirk Plan.
- 1.2 The report details the process of development of the plan, its core findings and how it will be delivered.
- 1.3 The Falkirk Plan focuses on six main areas or themes of for the next ten years.
- 1.4 Each theme identifies a specific set of outcomes that will be delivered on by Falkirk Community Planning Partnership (CPP) members and will be reviewed every three years.
- 1.5 The Falkirk Plan has a focus on inequalities and aligns closely to the aims of Falkirk Health and Social Partnership (HSCP) Strategic Plan 2019-2022, particularly Priority 3: Focus on early intervention, prevention and harm reduction.

2. Recommendations

The Integration Joint Board is asked to consider and comment on:

- 2.1 the content of the Falkirk Plan Final Draft
- 2.2 the role of the HSCP in delivering outcomes of the Falkirk Plan in partnership with Community Planning Partners.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act (2015) places a legal duty on Community Planning Partnerships to produce a Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP).
- 3.2 It also places a shared accountability on the Falkirk Community Planning Partnership members to work together to deliver the Outcomes identified in the Falkirk Plan.

- 3.3 The initial version of the Falkirk LOIP was called the Strategic Outcomes and Local Delivery (SOLD) Plan and ran from 2016-2020.
- 3.4 The development of the new LOIP was delayed and commenced in late 2020 while Community Planning Partners and community organisations focused on pandemic response in early 2020.
- 3.5 This LOIP is known as the Falkirk Plan. (See Appendix 1)
- 3.6 It is a 10-year plan for Falkirk's Community Planning Partnership and the communities it works with. It prioritises and addresses prevalent inequalities and develops the importance and value of people, pride of place and community belonging.
- 3.7 We expect the plan's themes will remain with us for the full 10-year duration of the plan, however we will review the outcomes and delivery plans every three years.

4. Developing the Falkirk Plan

- 4.1 The Falkirk Plan was developed through a rigorous process of data research, policy analysis and engagement with community members and local professionals. The development process included:
- Evaluation of the former LOIP- Single Outcome LD Plan
 - Completion of a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) in early 2021
 - Local and national policy and partnership mapping
 - Review of recent engagement reports with a range of stakeholder groups and demographics
 - Alignment of Local Community Action Plans
 - Further engagement with public, community groups and people with lived experience of the key themes identified by the JSNA
 - Detailed thematic analysis of policy, data and what people told us
 - Detailed consideration of community discussions
 - Consideration of the impact of the Covid-19 Four Harms
 - Consultation with new and existing delivery groups and Partnership Officers.
- 4.2 The Falkirk plan sets out a range of 23 Outcomes (See Appendix 1) across 6 themes of work and is underpinned by a high-level delivery and monitoring plan that will be reported against annually to the Community Planning Board.
- 4.3 The final draft was approved for a six week public consultation period by the Community Planning Board on Thursday the 12th August 2021. During this phase, partners are also welcomed to contribute to the consultation.

- 4.4 The Final Plan will return to the Community Planning Board for approval in October 2020. Thereafter, Board members will be asked to share the plan with their respective organisation's governance processes for formal adoption.

5. Falkirk Plan Key Themes

- 5.1 The public conversations and themed engagement discussions clearly identified the need to work collaboratively with people, building on the communities that they live in, as the foundation to achieve the outcomes and goals of the Falkirk Plan.
- 5.2 It is recognised that partners are at different starting points Collaboration with communities and across the CPP will need a coordinated plan to build community capacity and engagement. Therefore, our first theme is about enabling that to happen in a way that is useful and practical for all partners and our communities
- 5.3 The following 6 themes will support this approach and enable our communities to participate across the other themes
- **Theme 1: Working in Partnership with our Communities**
Improving ways to communicate; supporting the development of strong and independent community-led organisations; co-creating and testing ways to make more decisions together and that 'place' and people are at the heart of all planning and strategies.
 - **Theme 2: Poverty**
Greater levels of digital inclusion; support for people who struggle to afford food, fuel and transport; more joined-up local support services; reducing the impact of child poverty (e.g., social exclusion or academic attainment).
 - **Theme 3: Mental Health**
Fewer deaths through suicide; involving children and young people in the design of support services; a whole person approach in mental health services; less people experiencing loneliness and social isolation.
 - **Theme 4: Substance Use**
Fewer drugs related deaths: better support for families affected by substance use; fewer young people choose to use substances; reducing the stigma attached to substance use.

- **Theme 5: Domestic Abuse and Gender-based Violence**
More joined up working between support agencies to ensure victims of domestic violence are better supported; better training for frontline staff; early, effective and inclusive interventions for those affected by domestic abuse; early identification and accountability of men who carry out domestic violence.
- **Theme 6: Economic Recovery and Employment**
Reducing economic inequalities locally; for Falkirk to be a leading contributor to achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2045 by developing a local green economy; increasing community wealth; greater access to local training and employment opportunities.

6. Falkirk Plan Delivery Structure

- 6.1 The Delivery Structure (Appendix 2) for the Falkirk Plan differs from the SOLD Plan in that it focuses on serving the delivery of the Plan's agreed outcomes rather than an entire theme of work.
- 6.2 This means that within some themes, there will be multiple delivery groups depending on where expertise and relationships are already in place for each specific outcome.
- 6.3 These partnerships may already deliver across the theme as a whole, but they have committed to incorporating the specific differences this Community Planning Partnership wishes to make and reporting regularly to the board on the progress against those outcomes.
- 6.4 Specifically, the structure does not seek to duplicate partnership groups or create additional structures where they are not necessary, while making use of expertise and collaboration networks that already exist and are well developed.
- 6.5 The proposed structure will also provide a clearer link between delivery partnerships and local Community Action Plans where relevant. It will also help us see these links
- 6.6 Lead Delivery Partnerships may therefore lead the delivery of one or more outcomes depending on their area of expertise. This role includes planning, delivery and monitoring of progress.
- 6.7 Discussions with each Lead Partnership Chair have informed the final wording of Outcomes and the Delivery Plan.
- 6.8 Terms of References will be developed to link the Lead Delivery Partnerships to the Outcomes and create a formal accountability to the Community Planning Partnership Board for those Outcomes.

7. Monitoring & Evaluation

- 7.1 We will monitor and evaluate the delivery of the Falkirk Plan and report on an annual basis against the Falkirk Plan Delivery Plan.
- 7.2 In producing our annual report, we will listen to our communities to find out on how effective we've been, and what we need to do to continue to improve. These annual reports are how the partnership will make itself accountable to the communities we serve by reporting against the Falkirk Plan Delivery and Monitoring Plan. This reporting will consist of data as well as capturing the lived experience and insight of our communities and those most affected by the specific outcome issues.
- 7.3 In addition, a small suite of outcome indicators to cover each of the themes are detailed in the Monitoring Plan. These indicators are reflective of a complexity of factors, many of which are out with the scope or control of the partnership or indeed services. We will however, demonstrate annually monitoring information on the activities and improvements undertaken within delivery groups that are within our scope and control and describe the context and correlation against these indicators.
- 7.4 We will formally review the outcomes and our actions every three years, to ensure they continue to meet the needs of local people and communities. We know these will develop and change over time. At these review points, outcomes may change or be closed if achieved and we will provide a formal review report. This provides a flexibility to ensure the Falkirk plan is continually focus on the current priorities and needs of our communities.

8. Conclusions

- 8.1 Throughout the last 10 months, the development of the Falkirk Plan has involved the engagement of the public and partners, including through first and second draft stages.
- 8.2 The Community Planning Partnership would like to thank Health and Social Care Partnership staff and colleagues for their input, time and commitment to developing and delivering on the outcomes we all want to work together to achieve with our local communities.
- 8.3 This final second draft will now be put out for public consultation and partners are welcome to continue to provide feedback during this stage.

Resource Implications

There will be ongoing implications on staff time and resources to be agreed by services as action plans are developed in detail. This may offer opportunities to external funding and joint resourcing.

The Falkirk Plan seeks to improve or mitigate the impact of inequalities across Falkirk. These same inequalities impact on health and wellbeing outcomes.

Directions

None Required

Legal & Risk Implications

The Integration Joint Board are a Statutory Partner in the Falkirk Community Planning Partnership.

Consultation

The Falkirk Plan development process involved engagement with communities of place and lived experience.

Equalities Assessment

An Equalities and Poverty Impact Assessment will be conducted for the Falkirk Plan.

9. Report Author

Jennifer Kerr, Communities and Fairer Falkirk Manager, Falkirk Council.

10. List of Background Papers

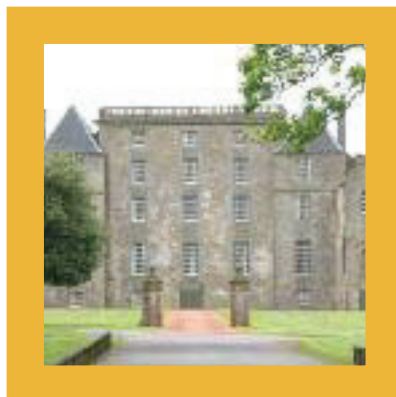
10.1 None

11. Appendices

Appendix 1:	Falkirk Plan Final Draft
Appendix 2:	Falkirk Plan Delivery Structure

The Falkirk Plan

2021-2031



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**Foreword –
Cllr. Meiklejohn, Chair of
Community Planning Board**

Falkirk is a wonderful place to live, with a vibrant and diverse array of communities. We're fortunate to have a rich heritage and some of the most iconic and instantly recognisable attractions in Scotland spanning centuries - from the Antonine Wall to the Falkirk Wheel and the world-famous Kelpies. Our greatest asset, of course, is our people.

However, we also have our challenges. Too many of us still struggle with poverty and other inequalities. The Falkirk Plan is the framework that captures the vision and commitment of the Falkirk Community Planning Partnership to work together - alongside our communities - to reduce poverty, tackle inequality, and improve the quality of life for everyone in the Falkirk Council area.

The Plan has been jointly developed by community planning partners, based on research and what our communities have told us are the issues that are most important to them. The Plan identifies six priority areas - or Themes: working in partnership with our communities; poverty; mental health and wellbeing; substance use; domestic abuse and gender-based violence; and economic recovery. These Themes will be the focus of sustained joint working to make a positive difference to our communities.

In developing the Plan, we've made sure we've listened to our communities to identify their priorities. I'd like to thank everyone who participated in those conversations. In implementing the Falkirk Plan, we're 100% committed to measure and evaluate what we do, so that we're responsive and adaptable to meet the changing needs of our communities and our most vulnerable people. We will report on the progress in meeting the targets we've set with our communities.

Ultimately, the Falkirk Plan is about people. It's about making Falkirk the best place we can - a place where everyone is supported to achieve their full potential. The Community Planning Partnership works for the people of Falkirk. But everyone in Falkirk has a part to play. By continuing to bring together our energy, our resources and our genuine commitment, we can make Falkirk a better place for all our people.

**Cllr. Cecil Meiklejohn
Leader, Falkirk Council and Chair,
Community Planning Board**

Aug 2021

Introduction

Falkirk Community Planning Partnership brings together public agencies, the third sector, and the private sector with communities, to improve the lives of the people of Falkirk. By focusing on prevention and early intervention, we recognise the role of social disadvantage and poverty in creating inequalities in our communities. The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act (2015) requires the Partnership to publish a Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP). This Plan sets out priorities for Falkirk and describes the areas where the Partnership will work together with our communities to meet these priorities.

The Falkirk Plan:

- *sets the strategic direction for community planning in Falkirk to 2030*
- *outlines the six priorities – or Themes – we are working to achieve*
- *details how the Partnership plans to improve those Themes*
- *describes how we are going to monitor and measure our progress.*

Improving Lives

The Falkirk Plan focuses on tackling poverty and inequality in all its forms. This is driven by guidance provided through the Fairer Scotland Duty, and the requirement for public bodies to act to reduce inequalities caused by socio-economic disadvantage. It also reflects the direction provided by the Public Health Priorities for Scotland, which encourage public services, the third sector, community organisations and others to work together to address the root causes of inequalities in Scotland's health.

Falkirk has significant problems and on too many measures our communities fare worse than elsewhere in Scotland. Some of our communities are amongst the most deprived in the country – for example, almost 1 in 4 children in Falkirk live in poverty. Levels of domestic violence are above the Scottish average, and figures for drug-related deaths and suicide are also unacceptably high.

We realise there are no quick fixes. Many of

the challenges our communities face are deep-rooted and will take significant time and resource to tackle effectively. The Falkirk Plan describes how the Community Planning Partnership will work together with local people to plan services and share resources that best tackle these challenges.

There is so much good work happening that deals with the day-to-day impact of issues like poverty and substance use. However, reacting to these issues when they happen isn't enough. The Falkirk Plan seeks to put in place the actions that will prevent these issues happening in the first place.

To ensure we have the greatest impact in this, we've concentrated on a small number of themes where further joint action and delivery is needed. These are the areas which have the most clearly defined potential to improve lives.

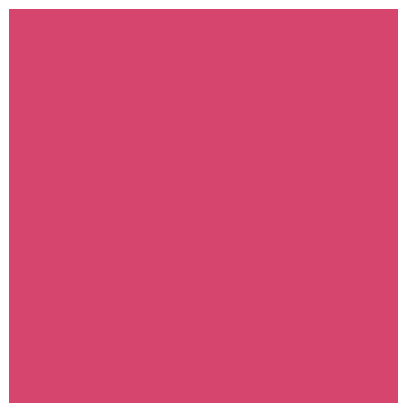
The focus of the Falkirk Plan is on improving outcomes and making positive changes in our communities. This is of primary importance. We also need to improve how we do that in partnership with our communities. We recognise that this will result in changes in our relationship with communities and partners. This will involve co-ordinating efforts across partners in a flexible, responsive and adaptive way. Who our partners are will change based on themes and priorities as they develop over time. However, throughout this process, we will seek to maximise opportunities for our communities – community representatives, third sector groups and individuals – to participate in this process.



...The Falkirk Plan focuses on tackling poverty and inequality in all its forms...

Loved the passion from community members who contribute well in their communities. Residents, organisations and services showed they can co-deliver services.

Service User Feedback





How Our Partners Shaped this Plan

The Falkirk Plan takes into account the key strategies and priorities of the various community planning partners. It considers a wide range of issues, services, and themes – all of which are important to enable safe, healthy, confident and equitable communities: housing, climate change, planning, transport, health and well-being, social isolation, digital services, community safety, economic growth and investment, and education.

There is such a wide range of activity happening across the Partnership to improve outcomes, that it would be impossible for the Falkirk Plan to record all of these in exhaustive detail. Rather, the Falkirk Plan aims to bring these together in a single framework focusing on those aspects where community planning partners can make the greatest difference and add value by working together more closely on the issues that we agree are most important. Where community planning partners do work to other plans, we will continue to share that work to ensure we contribute to wider priorities.

This Plan outlines how the Partnership will tackle the most pressing issues of deprivation and inequality. The Community Planning Partnership will report on our progress in these actions to the Community Planning Board, and to the people of Falkirk. These Outcomes are listed in Appendix 1.

**...The Falkirk Plan ...
outlines how the
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and inequality...**

How our Communities Shaped this Plan



In developing the priorities of the Falkirk Plan, we wanted to hear from the people of Falkirk what their challenges are, and within this, what their priorities are. We felt it was important to capture real life issues and challenges and to make sure that the opinion, lived experience, insight, priorities and aspirations of our communities were key elements in forming the Plan's priorities.

We reached out to our communities – particularly the most vulnerable – as much as possible. During lockdown, this presented challenges, and we worked closely with third sector partners and community groups to ensure that as many people as possible had the opportunity to participate. We held a number of public (online) meetings across the Council area. These helped us to identify what the priorities for the Falkirk Plan should be.

We held (online) discussions with groups most directly affected by the five priority areas as highlighted by the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. These meetings helped us to identify specific actions that the Partnership is committed to achieve in order to improve the lives of people affected by those issues

We also know that some groups within our communities (For example, people affected by disability, minority ethnic groups and older people) face unique challenges and inequalities. We wanted to capture those and reflect them in the Falkirk Plan. We held a number of (online) meetings with these groups to capture this lived experience and insight. Again, these meetings helped us to decide what actions need to be taken.

...We reached out to our communities ... to ensure that as many people as possible had the opportunity to participate...

Together, this range of engagement opportunities have helped ensure that people are at the heart of the Falkirk Plan.

As a partnership we have a duty to not only identify how we will improve local outcomes, but how we will support our communities to participate. Communities across Falkirk told us that they wanted to see a more visible partnership presence within local communities. They also want more transparency about how decisions are made around services and funding, and to be able to participate in making those decisions.

We want to nurture new relationships between people and public bodies that benefit the health and wellbeing of our communities. To do this, we need to decide together what we want those new relationships to look like. We'll work with our communities to agree how we co-create these relationships, and nurture them so that they are sustainable and self-sufficient.

The Impact of COVID-19

Influencing all our work in developing the Falkirk Plan, of course, is the COVID-19 pandemic, and our response to that. The people of Falkirk have felt the impact as much as anywhere. Many of the issues we've focused on in the Falkirk Plan were challenges before the pandemic. COVID-19 has made many of these worse.

While we're confident at the time of writing (Summer 2021) that we're gradually beginning to emerge from the worst of the pandemic, we know that the impact of COVID-19 on our communities will be long lasting. The Community Planning Partnership has assessed the Scottish Government's Four Harms framework, and we have a range of strategies in place to mitigate the worst effects of the pandemic: the direct health impact; secondary health impacts; societal impacts; and economic impacts. We've shaped the Falkirk Plan to reflect that and to direct services to meet the needs of those most directly impacted by the pandemic.

One of the most encouraging things to come out of the pandemic is the way our communities have rallied together to help the most vulnerable. COVID-19 has reinvigorated relationships locally and has resulted in communities working more closely with the third sector. The third sector, community groups and a large number of volunteers, worked with statutory agencies and service providers to ensure that those most at risk had the support they needed. In developing the Falkirk Plan we've noted many of these examples as platforms for ensuring that we build back our communities stronger and more resilient than before.

Planning for Place

We heard across all of the place-based discussions that people feel they have a responsibility for making where they live a better place, and for creating social places where people know and look out for one another. To do this they told us they needed strong and welcoming social networks created through opportunities for participation, places to meet and ways to make friends. They also told us they needed clear and timely information, in a format that meets their needs, as well as funds and skills invested in communities. Finally, we heard that communities need local infrastructure that can be a connecting point for taking forward community membership, action and activities.

During lockdown restrictions many services moved online. Communities told us that they valued face-to-face support. However, there was also widespread acceptance of the value of online information sources – particularly for sign-posting and referring people to the right services. The possibility of community information hubs being staffed by volunteers – as least partly – was also raised. This was seen as a potential opportunity to support training and return-to-work programmes for those who need it.

It was suggested that community information hubs could be located in existing community facilities – like schools, church halls, sports centres, libraries etc – as these are already known and used by the local community. Other suggestions were that they could be based in vacant spaces in town centres or co-located alongside other services such as community pantries, and foodbanks. We will

...We heard that communities need local infrastructure that can be a connecting point for taking forward community membership, action and activities. ...



It was so lovely to hear issues from residents with genuine concerns about their neighbourhood and positive thoughts for the future.

Service User Feedback

work with our communities to explore these opportunities to co-design multi-agency hubs.

We will promote and support communities to participate in planning for their area

The Scottish Government has a number of policies in place to support this joint planning approach and this is already happening at a local level. Grangemouth for example, has numerous ongoing plans and projects to improve social and economic outcomes and grow the economy of the town. Members of the community took part in locality planning in 2018/19 to develop the Grangemouth Community Action Plan which aims to address inequalities such as housing, employment, and poverty. This work is being integrated into the Falkirk and Grangemouth Growth Deal which will see significant investment in the town, while addressing the issues the community have voiced.

The Planning (Scotland) Act (2019) has also given new powers for communities to have their say in spatial planning through Local Place Plans. These plans give communities the opportunity to collaborate on the planning design of their town. The Partnership is working to ensure these processes are joined-up so communities and local services work together to create great places.

This will allow us to co-design the implementation of the Scottish Government's review of local governance which describes 'a scenario where people are able to come together in their communities to create new autonomous and democratically accountable decision-making bodies which can take full responsibility for a range of public services.' We're committed to designing and building this space with our communities, and to use this to develop our shared accountability to one another.

Working in Partnership to Improve Local Outcomes

We want to support local priorities as identified in numerous plans and strategies, developed both by our community planning partners and by our communities themselves. Falkirk's community planning partners already develop and deliver their services framed by numerous national, regional and local strategies. These are detailed in Appendix 3. Importantly, the Falkirk Plan doesn't seek to replicate the actions or outcomes included in each of these strategies. Rather, we've captured the additional actions needed, and the focus on renewed integration and collaboration required to make a positive change in our communities.

The Falkirk Plan details a clear strategy to shape how community planning partners will work together. We want Falkirk to be a healthier, fairer, more inclusive and more connected place, where poverty and inequality are the rare exception. The Plan provides a framework for how members of the Partnership will come together to deliver on our shared priorities.

This plan sets out the Themes and outcomes we want to improve. However, we also recognise it is important to show how we will improve these outcomes and how partners and community members can contribute to this. We'll detail this in a separate delivery plan which we'll shape in collaboration with our community planning partners and our communities.

Throughout the process of developing the Falkirk Plan, we were exposed to a range of positive professional and work-based values and behaviours that we want to see become the norm – for example, listening more, challenging stigma, and understanding how traumatic life experiences in childhood can affect people into their adult lives. We recognise that we are learning new ways to

support people and to collaborate as partners. We're committed to equality and respect in all of our relationships.

Our Themes and Outcomes

The Falkirk Plan has six Themes - issues that we know have the most pressing and direct impact in our communities and which require the most urgent action. Theme 1 was identified through what communities told us during our engagement around the Falkirk Plan. Themes 2-6 were identified through research undertaken across the Partnership and published in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Report in March 2021. The six Themes are:

1. *Working in Partnership with Our Communities*
2. *Poverty*
3. *Mental Health and Wellbeing*
4. *Substance Use*
5. *Domestic Abuse and Gender-Based Violence*
6. *Economic Recovery*

While there are numerous other areas where the Partnership is aware focused support is required, these six Themes present the most pressing challenges in terms of poverty and inequality. As such, they will remain the focus of the Plan. We'll monitor and evaluate the delivery of the Plan on an ongoing basis and formally review the outcomes every three years, to ensure we're meeting the needs of our communities as these develop and change over time.



THEME 1: WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OUR COMMUNITIES

One of the most consistent messages we heard from our communities was that we haven't been good enough at listening to, and – importantly – acting on what they have told us. The Falkirk Plan aims to change that. Achieving this will be our most important outcome. It's the area where most needs to change, and it will underpin everything we do.

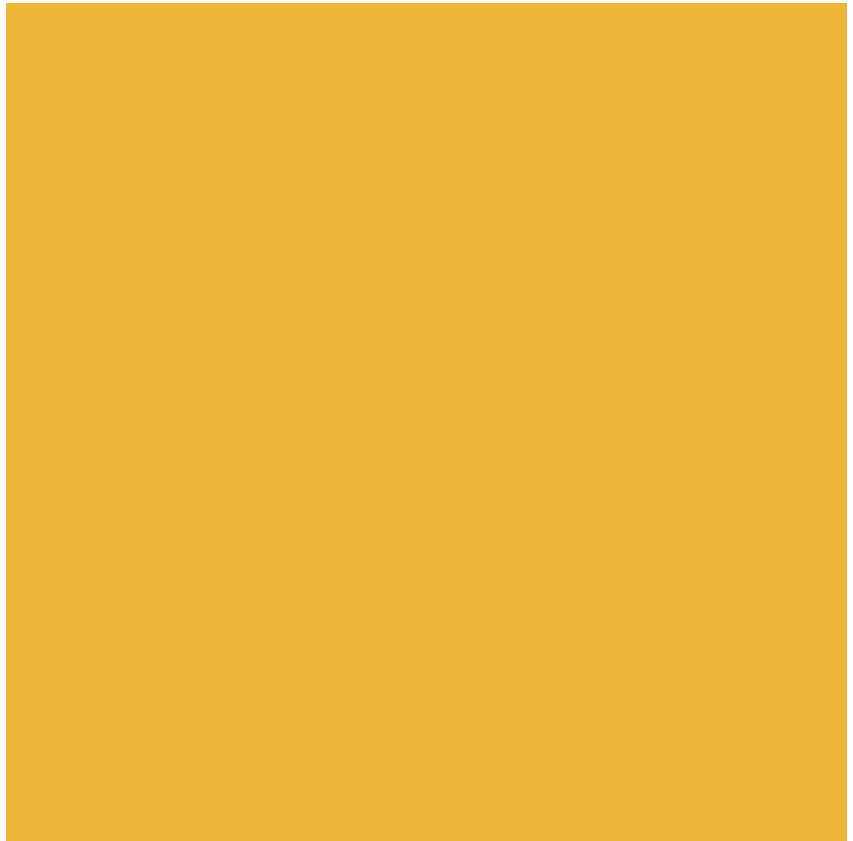
We've already started to change the way we work with our communities. This is being led by changes in the way we work across the Partnership and within individual organisations. At the heart of this will be better services that are more responsive to the needs of our communities. For example, Falkirk Council has a wide-ranging Council of the Future programme, which is driving a culture of positive organisational change within the Council and Forth Valley College has a Creative Learning Strategy which encourages academic staff to talk across different departments and disciplines to identify learning benefits and outcomes for students. These changes will have a direct benefit for our communities.

To ensure that these changes are effective and tackle the issues that are most important to you, they will be measurable and evaluated on an ongoing basis. We will work with communities in that process. We detail how we will evaluate and monitor these improvements later on in the Plan.

Listening to our communities has been a foundational element in informing the Falkirk Plan. Communities spoke together and with us and told us about their concerns and priorities for change, and this is reflected in the Plan. Examples include the suggestion for community hubs, and greater local decision-making at a community level.

...We'll work in a way that engages everyone. We will use language and a practice of collaboration, where communities are partners...





Outcome 1: Communication with our communities is improved

We heard that communities value space where conversation allows for more transparency and trust. People want to be supported to establish a shared understanding of an issue and possible solutions. We'll work in a way that engages everyone. We will use language and a practice of collaboration, where communities are partners. We will encourage deliberative discussion where everyone has access to the same information in a way that meets their needs. We will support communities to positively challenge and support one another to adapt and build shared leadership and accountability. This will focus on shared actions, rather than on consultation.

Part of this will involve changing the way we make information available. People can only make the informed decisions if they have the right information in a way that suits them. The Partnership will communicate with local people in a way that's appropriate and is shaped around what their needs are. We'll develop a genuinely two-way communications strategy, where listening to and discussing with our communities is every bit as important as making information available. We'll work with our communities to consider where innovations like information hubs and a new community planning website can improve our transparency, active understanding and trust.

It was really good to hear the different ideas on how we can help our community and help the community help each other.

Service User Feedback

Outcome 2: Community-led organisations are stronger and more independent

Our greatest asset is the people who live within Falkirk. We know there are challenges that prevent our communities being the best they can be. We'll support community groups to become robust and successful in order that they can lead their communities in being truly empowered and vibrant. Too often community groups aren't aware of the help available to get started and become sustainable. We'll support communities and community groups to access the help and resources they need to operate effectively.

There were concerns around the future of community spaces. We know, for example, that some minority groups need their own specialist facilities and resources. We'll work with communities to identify appropriate and sustainable community spaces – places they can meet and function with maximum benefit to the local community.

Underpinning much of this work, of course, is funding. Community groups told us about the difficulties they had in understanding what funding is available. We will help community groups to apply for funds to deliver on the priorities the communities themselves identify.

Outcome 3: More decisions are made together at a local level

Communities told us they want to better understand how public service decisions are made. They also told us they want to be more involved. The issues raised included: a lack of transparency and feedback; not being responsive to questions; not knowing where public funds are spent or how to influence this spend; and being consulted at the end of a process instead of being involved from the beginning. Some participants expressed concern that they do not fully represent the wider views of their community and that this needs to be addressed.

We will work with communities to determine how we can best support them to become involved in decision making on issues of service delivery that most affect them. We'll ensure we check and evaluate how effective this has been.

Community Choices, the innovative participatory budgeting initiative has been well received in its first few months of delivery. We're committed to expanding Community Choices further, so that it contributes to bringing about real change in how services are delivered in communities. Community Choices will become a mainstream part of the Council's spending process and potentially other across other Community Planning Partners. It will provide an opportunity for communities to consider their needs and priorities and consider how to make use of public funds to invest in those. Overtime, we hope the shared learning about our priorities and resources will become just how we work together.



Outcome 4. Social, community and economic planning focusses on place, and reflects the needs and aspirations of the people that live there.

People spend a lot of time in their towns and neighbourhoods, and the pandemic has highlighted the need to have access to essential services at a community level. Initial engagement for this Plan took place at a settlement-level in order to understand the issues that people felt needed to be addressed to reduce inequalities in their own neighbourhoods. Many people felt that there wasn't equal access to services, particularly if there weren't any service hubs within their town, and if it was difficult or time-consuming to access via public transport.

We recognise that people in our communities are proud of their local place identity. That's very much an asset, and many of the actions in the Falkirk Plan are based on the commitment and contribution of communities to come together to bring about positive change in local areas.

The Community Planning Partnership sees this pride in Place as a key element of community wellbeing – where a number of community groups are supported to become community anchor organisations. While we have some new and emerging organisations, we recognise that there is more work to be done on capacity building within our communities to ensure that these groups are sustainable and stable.

The Scottish Government and COSLA have adopted the place principle, which takes a more collaborative, person-focused approach to a place's buildings, land and public services to better suit the needs of the community. This means that spatial planning, community planning and any local support services work with the community to consider their needs as a whole. We will work together to develop these approaches locally

...many of the actions in the Falkirk Plan are based on the commitment and contribution of communities to come together to bring about positive change in local areas...



THEME 2: POVERTY

Poverty is at the core of inequality and deprivation. In order to tackle inequality, we must make Falkirk a fairer place to live, so people can participate in life and achieve their goals. During our community engagement for this plan, people told us that they were concerned about poverty; it was the second most talked about issue overall.

The Fairer Falkirk Delivery Group will deliver on priorities and actions for poverty through our poverty strategy Towards a Fairer Falkirk and Falkirk's Child Poverty Action Report. The Community Planning Board will focus on key outcomes which it will monitor and report on progress annually to the community.

Outcome 5. People of all ages have equal opportunity to access digital services and have the skills and confidence to safely participate online.

During the Covid-19 lockdown many day-to-day activities moved online. Education, food shopping, work, even social connections with friends and family were suddenly carried out through a screen. Rural infrastructure and societal inequalities mean that people in our communities do not have equal access to digital resources. The internet is no longer a luxury; it is a utility and people unable to access digital services are further disadvantaged.

Digital exclusion is linked to poverty and deprivation. Among working age adults 22.3% of people who are economically inactive due to long term sickness or disability are non-internet users compared to 1.7% who are employees, 3.0% self-employed and 2.7% unemployed.



Figure 1. Barriers to Internet access based on SIMD deprivation level, Scottish Household Survey 2018

Older people are less likely to use the internet, with an estimated 57% of those aged 75+ in Scotland not using the internet, compared to 1% of those 16-24. Barriers to access include lack of skills and security concerns which are more likely to affect older people. Additionally, older people are already more likely to be isolated and could have been further isolated during lockdown if they didn't have digital access.

The Community Planning Partnership will work together to get more people online so they can participate, and ensure people have the skills to do so safely and confidently regardless of age.

...In order to tackle inequality, we must make Falkirk a fairer place to live, so people can participate in life and achieve their goals...

Outcome 6. Children and young people have equal access to participate.

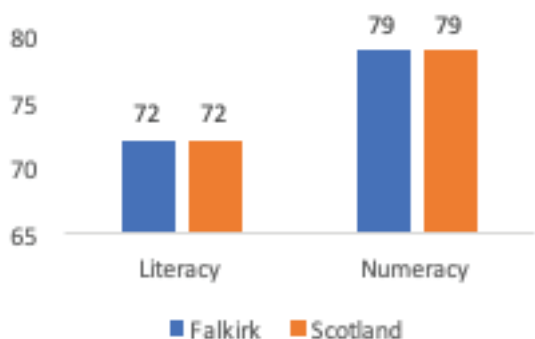
There are around 6,980 children living in poverty in Falkirk right now. That is almost 1 in every 4 children in Falkirk that cannot afford to take part in the same activities as some of their friends and classmates. They may not even be able to afford the same school supplies. This needs to change.

Towards a Fairer Falkirk highlights the impact that poverty has on children – for example, children can sometimes purposely exclude themselves knowing that their family can't afford for them to take part in some activities. People across Falkirk have told us that some local services are unaffordable and have highlighted children's activities in particular.

Child poverty not only affects the ability of a child to participate in social activities but also the attainment of children in both primary and secondary school.



P1, P4, P7 achieving expected CFE level 2018/19



Attainment gap (P1, 4, 7 combined) between most and least deprived pupils

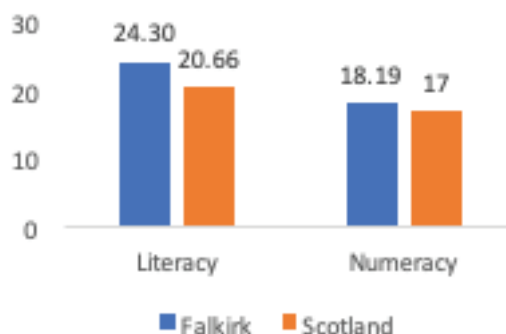


Figure 2. Primary School Pupils Attainment in literacy and numeracy, Falkirk School Pupil Census, 2019

...Falkirk Community Planning Partnership will work together to ensure poverty becomes less of a barrier for children and young people's education, training, and social activities...

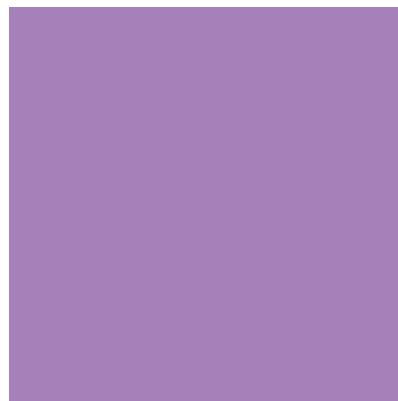
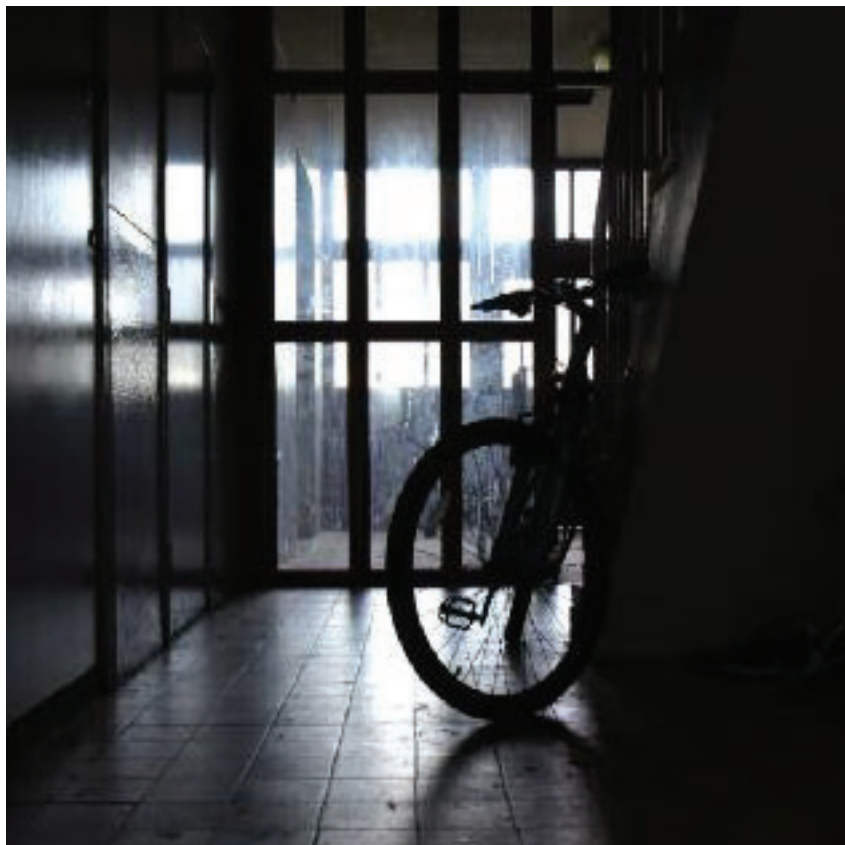
Falkirk has the same attainment for primary children achieving levels of literacy and numeracy as Scotland. However, in Falkirk, there is a bigger gap in achievement between those living in the most and least deprived areas for both literacy and numeracy.

For secondary school attainment, the average tariff score for a child living in the least deprived areas is 1,172, but for the most deprived areas this is 703. School attainment will have an impact on a child's access to work and training, and they could be excluded from accessing the type of job they want.

Falkirk Community Planning Partnership will work together to ensure poverty becomes less of a barrier for children and young people's education, training, and social activities.

Outcome 7. Individuals and families affected by poverty have access to joined-up, multi-agency support services, and know how and where to access them.

In response to the pandemic, Falkirk Council set up the Support for People service to assist people who needed help to access food, prescriptions, and other essential services. This included referrals to food banks, local volunteers, and crisis payments or grants. In many cases it was simply a signpost to another organisation for advice. This service was simple, but it meant people had a central place to reach out to for support. It provided a trained advisor to make the connections and reduced the stress and difficulty that would otherwise have been experienced by the person seeking help.



As a partnership, we want to build on this model, to ensure people are able to connect into the services they need. However, we need to progress into being more pro-active about reaching people who could be struggling.

During the public engagement for this plan, people raised concerns about hidden poverty. They highlighted that some people who are struggling aren't already known to local services – for example unpaid carers, those experiencing in-work poverty, or disadvantaged groups.

The table below shows how priority groups are affected by poverty. Ethnic minority households are most likely to experience relative and absolute poverty, while lone parents are most likely to experience low income and material deprivation.



Percentage of children living in poverty after housing costs (2016-2019)

Household	Relative poverty	Absolute poverty	Low income and material deprivation
<i>Disabled person</i>	30%	27%	20%
<i>3+ children</i>	31%	28%	18%
<i>Baby aged under 1</i>	32%	30%	13%
<i>Minority ethnic</i>	44%	41%	23%
<i>Lone parent</i>	39%	34%	27%
<i>All children</i>	24%	21%	12%

Table 1: Children living in poverty after housing costs, Local Child Poverty Indicators Report, End Child Poverty 2020

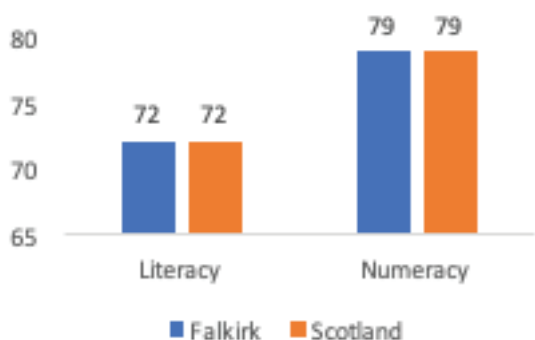
The Partnership wants to focus on delivering joined up services, that are pro-active about providing support, and are designed through listening to people's lived experiences.

Outcome 8. Fewer people struggle with the costs of food, fuel, and transport.

There are now more foodbanks in the UK than McDonald's, which is a stark reality. People have told us that food poverty has always been an issue, but now the existing foodbanks are struggling to cope. Local foodbanks were at the forefront of the COVID-19 response and volunteers have been heavily relied on.

Fuel poverty and extreme fuel poverty is more prevalent in social housing than in owner/occupier properties. A smaller percentage of people in Falkirk struggle with fuel poverty than Scotland but the rates are still very high, with 23% of people in Falkirk struggling with fuel poverty.

Fuel Poverty by Household Type 2016-2018



Great opportunity for discussion on important topics!

Service User Feedback

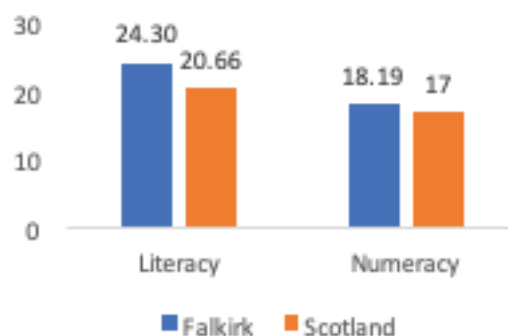


Figure 3. Fuel Poverty by household type 2016-2018, Scottish House Condition Survey, 2019

Food and fuel poverty were discussed often during the engagement with local communities. Another major issue for people is the affordability and accessibility of local transport. People were particularly concerned with the ability to access health services on public transport. If people can't afford to use public transport, or don't have the additional time needed to get to certain places on existing transport routes, this can exacerbate health inequalities.

People should never be forced to choose between food and heat. Transport should not be a barrier to accessing essential services. The partnership will work together to reduce these barriers.

THEME 3: MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Mental health and wellbeing was raised the most during conversations with residents for this Plan. People are concerned about the impact that lockdown has had on our mental health and the impact this could have on local services. People who have not previously struggled may not be aware of what support is available. People who were previously engaged, but who experienced a break in that support due to lockdown, could be severely impacted.

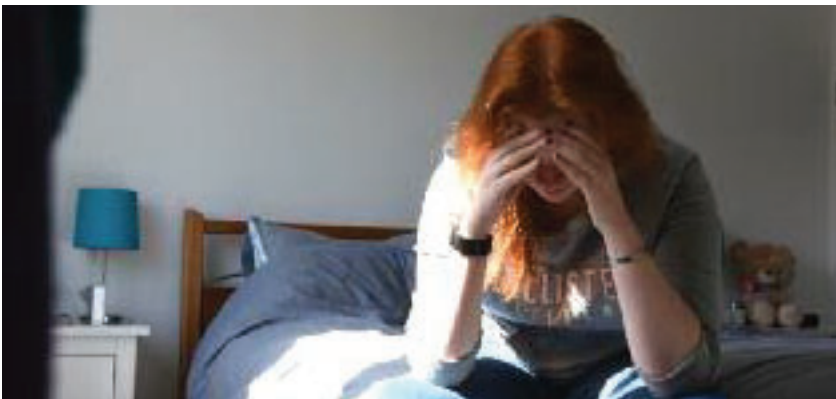
During the first lockdown in the summer of 2020, Falkirk Council asked residents what affected them most during the pandemic and the top issue was wellbeing and mental health concerns. As a partnership we must provide joined up services and commit additional resources to dealing with this issue, which is most pressing to the people who live here.

The Mental Health Planning Group will deliver on priorities for Mental health and wellbeing through their delivery plan. The Community Planning Board will focus on key outcomes which they will monitor and report progress annually to the community.

Outcome 9. There are fewer deaths due to suicide.

The Scottish Government has a national suicide prevention strategy which sets out the vision of a Scotland where suicide is preventable. Suicide is a subject that people may be uncomfortable talking about but as the strategy states 'suicide prevention is everyone's business' and in order to tackle the issue it needs to be openly discussed.

Falkirk has the 9th highest suicide rate in Scotland. Since 2014 suicide rates have been reducing across Scotland but rising in Falkirk.



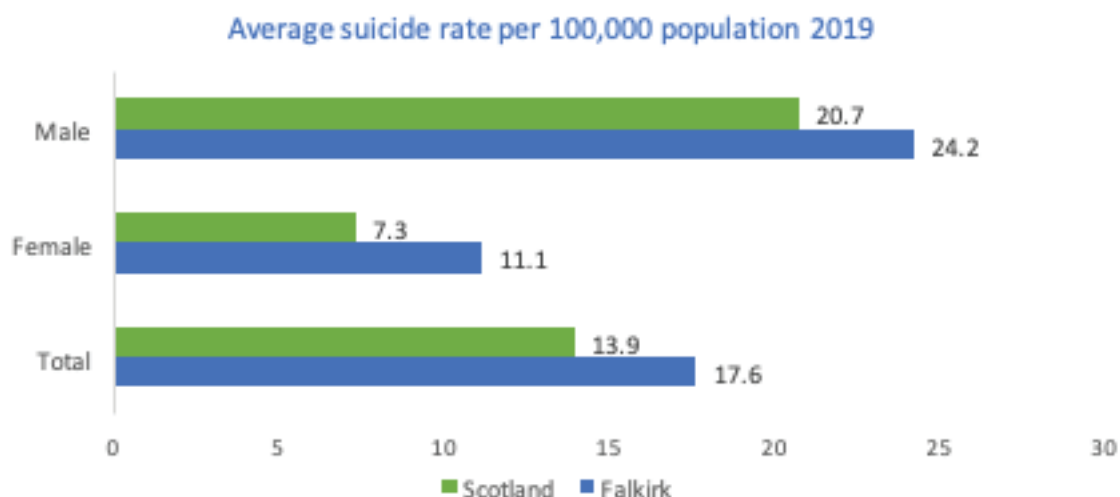


Figure 4. Average suicide rate per 100,000 population 2019, NRS 2021

During discussions that took place with communities for this plan, this issue was, unfortunately, echoed by a number of people. Members of the community raised concerns about how the lockdown has affected people's mental health, particularly young people and the potential rise in suicide if there was insufficient access to services.

A sample of cases for young people referred to Falkirk District Association for Mental Health in April 2020, showed that 30% of referrals were due to suicidal thoughts. Any life lost to suicide is unacceptable, and the partnership will target resources to improve mental health services so people have access to support as early as possible. It will also invest in preventative support and develop a Forth Valley suicide and drug-related death prevention plan.

Outcome 10. Children and young people's mental health services are well-resources and have reduced waiting times.

Last year there was national engagement with children and young people to find out about their concerns during lockdown. This 'lockdown lowdown' engagement was replicated locally to get the views from a wider cohort of young people in Falkirk. Children and young people reported that their biggest concern was for their future, followed by their mental health. As stated above, young people's mental health was raised as a concern during the public engagement sessions, with many people speaking openly about the experiences of their own family.

Many people were concerned about the length of waiting lists for mental health services, and the deterioration of young people's mental health while they are waiting. Referrals to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) continued to increase during the first lockdown, and waiting lists are already high.

Coming from a health background, this meeting was so helpful and informative hearing about issues needing addressed such as loneliness and isolation, mental health etc.

Service User Feedback

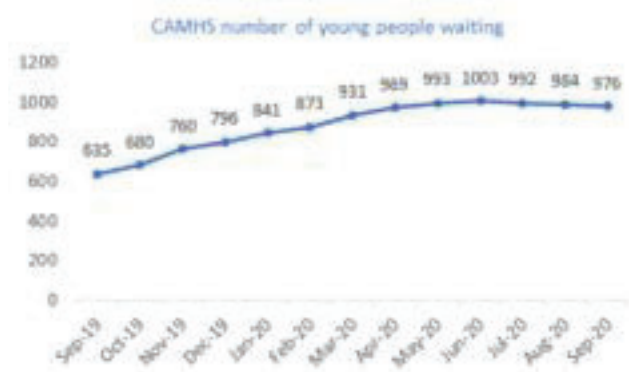


Figure 5. Public Health Scotland, Child and Adolescent Mental Health, 2019

...Members of the community raised concerns about how the lockdown has affected people's mental health, particularly young people...

A report released by Public Health Scotland in June 2021 shows young people seen within 18 weeks of a referral between January and March this year was at 72.5% in Scotland, but 34% in Forth Valley, and the average waiting time was 57 weeks compared to 9 weeks nationally. Forth Valley has the longest average waiting time of any Health Board; with the next highest 26 weeks shorter at 31 weeks.

In 2019 the Youth Commission on Mental Health, a partnership between the Scottish Government, Scottish Association for Mental Health and Young Scot, published a report on how child and adolescent mental health services can be improved. This report outlines the views of children and young people, on how they feel services for them need to improve, which the partnership will consider when reviewing services. Falkirk Council is in the process of establishing new services for children and young people aged 5-24, and the Mental Health Planning Group have set up a number of sub-groups to review mental health support.

Outcome 11. People struggling with their mental health can access support early in their journey, and services will adopt a whole-person approach.

Recent engagement shows mental health and wellbeing to be the greatest concern for people of all ages in Falkirk right now, particularly because of the lockdown. People told us that there should be more education and support for young people in schools, more resources based in the community, and more safe spaces.

The national Mental Health Strategy aims to improve access to treatment, more joined up and accessible services, and prevention and early intervention. The Partnership wants to ensure this is implemented locally, and people are able to easily access services for other issues in their life, particularly when it impacts their mental health. For example, people with mental health issues may have difficulties with employment or financial barriers which in turn exacerbates their poor mental health. Services must be joined up so people can be referred to support to help in all aspects of their life.

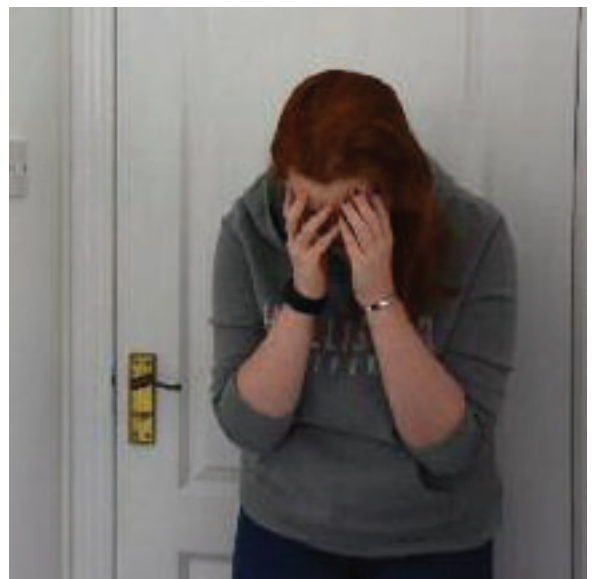
There is a causal link between mental health and substance use, and support services for these issues need to be more integrated. Local feedback both in commissioned reports and face-to-face engagement suggests that people with substance use issues may have been unable to access mental health services due to their inability to manage their substance use. However, it was noted that for some they may not have the capacity to remain sober or reduce drug-use until given appropriate support to do so. The Mental Health Planning Group and Falkirk Alcohol and Drug Partnership are currently working together to create more integrated services for people experiencing both issues.

Outcome 12. Fewer people struggle with feeling socially isolated or lonely.

People have been in various degrees of lockdown since March 2020 which has severely impacted their social interaction. Community and business establishments where people would usually meet have been closed, and people have been unable to visit each other's homes. People who live alone or rely on the support of their social networks have been greatly impacted. This could have negative wellbeing impacts for many people.

A report from Mental Health Foundation Scotland from 2020 showed that higher proportions of young people aged 18-24 (41%) and single parents (33%) reported having been lonely in the previous two weeks than the adult population overall (26%). It also highlighted higher proportions of young people aged 18-24 (26%), age 25-34 (27%), and single parents (24%) report feeling hopeless in the previous two weeks than the overall adult population (17%). People with no access to digital equipment or skills, such as older people or those experiencing poverty, could be further isolated by not having the means to interact with friends and family.

Social isolation is an existing national priority, and a national strategy was published in 2018 aiming to increase opportunities for people to connect, tackle stigma and invest resources in communities. Lockdown has meant these issues have increased, and ensuring people are supported during and post-lockdown is essential. The partnership will be proactive in reaching target groups who are more likely to be or become isolated, and ensure people get support and have activities to take part in.



...We heard from families affected by substance use.... They feel as though services are not joined-up or consistent enough and it's not always clear where to go for support...

THEME 4: SUBSTANCE USE

Substance use was a key priority of the previous Plan and continues to be a concern locally. Forth Valley has the highest weekly alcohol consumption for all health boards in Scotland, and a higher percentage of adults exceeding weekly limits than Scotland as a whole. Falkirk Alcohol and Drug Partnership estimates there are around 1,200 drug users aged 16-64 in Falkirk, based on the number of drug-related deaths. The Partnership is concerned about the potential impact the pandemic may have had on alcohol consumption.

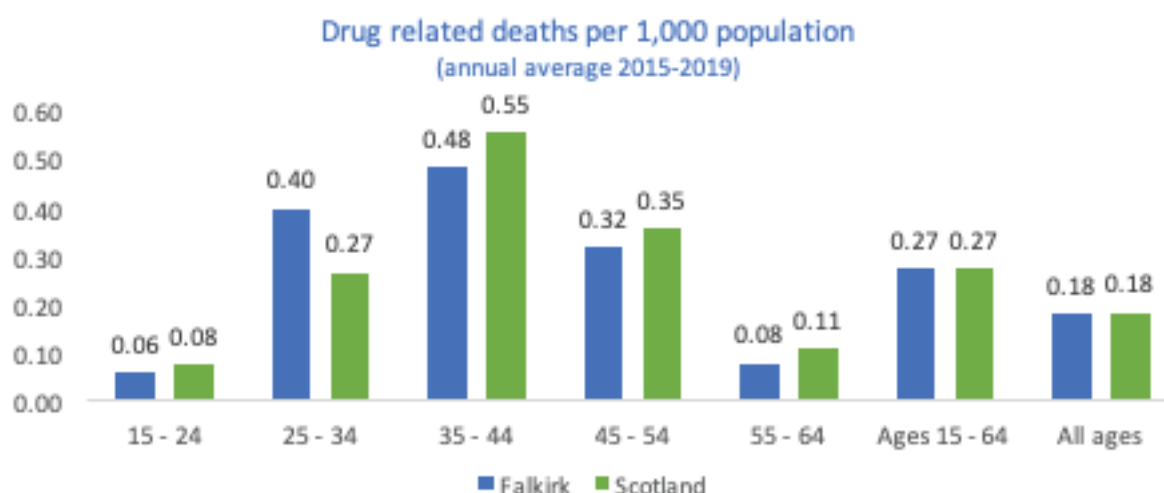
Falkirk Alcohol and Drug Partnership will deliver on priorities and actions for substance use through their delivery plan. The Community Planning Board will focus on key outcomes which they will monitor and report progress annually to the community.

Outcome 13. There are fewer drug-related deaths.

The rise in drug related deaths in Scotland is considered a crisis. Since 2019, drug related death in Scotland has increased by 132%. In Falkirk, over the same timeframe, they have risen from 5 to 41 deaths which is an increase of 720%.

Falkirk and Scotland have the same rate of drug related deaths for all ages (0.18). In Falkirk and Scotland, the age group with the highest rate is 35-44 year olds (0.48 and 0.55 per 1,000 population). In Falkirk, the rate of drug related deaths amongst 25-34 year olds is considerably higher than the rate in Scotland (0.40 per 1,000 population compared to 0.27).

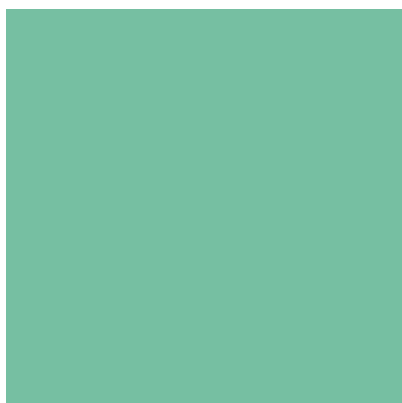
Figure 6. Drug related deaths per 1,000 population, ScotPho 2021



Falkirk Alcohol and Drug Partnership reported in 2020 on engagement carried out with people who had non-fatal overdoses. The majority of these overdoses were accidental, but almost all participants were fully aware of the risks of their substance use and had accepted the possibility of death. Many also reported a reluctance to phone an ambulance and risk police involvement.

All participants were asked what they thought could be done to reduce the high number of drug deaths in Falkirk. Almost all responses in relation to this focused on the regulation of the substances themselves and included: heroin prescribing; stopping illicit drugs from entering the country; legalisation of controlled substances; more severe actions against drug dealers; and more support for users of illicit substances.

The Scottish Government have allocated additional funds for substance use services to reduce drug-related deaths. Falkirk Community Planning Partnership will work alongside the local recovery community to design services around preventing death related to drugs. The Partnership is currently planning a suicide and drug-related death prevention plan and will invest in preventative approaches



Outcome 14. Families affected by substance use are enabled to overcome issues related to stigma which prevents access to support.

Substance use affects not only the individual, but the people around them as well. The impact on children with a parent affected by substance use can have a long-lasting effect. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) can impact into adulthood, and people who have experienced ACEs are more likely to have substance use or mental health problems as adults. A national priority for substance use is the whole family is able to access the support they need and are supported to overcome the shame they feel in order to do so.

During our local engagement events the Partnership heard from families affected by substance use who reported frustration with communication with local services, both between themselves and the service, and the services with one another. They feel as though services are not joined-up or consistent enough and it's not always clear where to go for support. Specific issues they felt need to be addressed are for thorough discharge planning and support for detoxification programmes, and reconsideration of some of the criteria for support services, such as the length of time experienced before being able to access services.

These families suggested a need for specific support and information targeted for family members, more involvement of family members, and that people should be helped at the point of access where the partnership should follow a 'no wrong door' approach.

Falkirk Community Planning Partnership will work together so families affected by substance use are informed, supported, and understand what support is available to them

Outcome 15. Fewer young people choose to use substances.

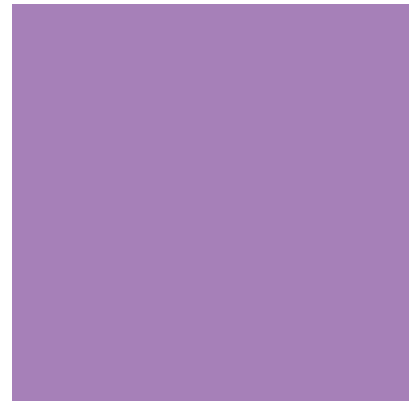
Early intervention is key to preventing people from developing substance use dependency. This early intervention needs to begin with children and young people so they can understand the effects, risks and impact of substance use.

The Social Influence Programme in Forth Valley has been tried, tested and refined in fifteen of the eighteen secondary schools in the area between 2010- 2019 by Forth Valley Alcohol and Drugs Partnership. The programme aims to challenge young people's perspectives of peers' use of substances and what they consider to be 'normal', and measure reported use of substances at the start and end of the programme. The evaluation has five years of data which shows a positive year on year reduction in reported use of tobacco, cannabis, alcohol, and drunkenness.

...There needs to be more awareness and understanding of what it means to have an addiction in order to challenge negative stereotypes...

Survey response	Numbers not using substances		Numbers using substances		Change
	<i>Baseline</i>	<i>Norm</i>	<i>Before</i>	<i>After</i>	
<i>I don't smoke cigarettes</i>	1510	88%	Tobacco Users- 210	97	113 pupils 54% improvement
<i>I don't drink alcohol</i>	1251	73%	Alcohol users - 469	235	234 pupils 50% improvement
<i>I don't get drunk</i>	1374	85%	Drunkenness - 238	122	116 pupils 48% improvement
<i>I don't use cannabis</i>	1519	94%	Cannabis users - 93	49	44 pupils 47% improvement

Table 2. Findings from Forth Valley ADP Social Influence Programme



Good to see people still really concerned about the direction of travel within their community..

Service User Feedback



Evidence for the effectiveness of this type of programme in reducing multiple risk behaviours in secondary schools is now accepted nationally and internationally. This evaluation supports that body of research evidence. Falkirk Community Planning Partnership will continue plans to monitor the roll-out programme in Falkirk secondary schools.

The Partnership will also investigate specific support for groups of children and young people who are at a higher risk of developing a substance dependency. The Falkirk Community Planning Partnership are corporate parents. Barnardo's reported that 29% of those referred to the young people's substance service are care-experienced, so additional barriers will be considered when looking at prevention programmes.

Outcome 16. There is reduced stigma related to substance use.

Stigma surrounding substance use is an issue that was raised at many different stages in the development of this plan. It is something that is difficult to address but has a huge impact on people's willingness and ability to seek support, as well as the care and support they receive.

The partnership heard from people in the recovery community, who suggested there needs to be more awareness and understanding of what it means to have an addiction in order to challenge negative stereotypes. It was suggested there could be sensitivity training for frontline staff to ensure those seeking help are treated with dignity, and partners could benefit from training from the recovery community itself. Falkirk Alcohol and Drugs Partnership have an existing workforce development programme and learning and training opportunities which the partnership will promote.

Employability was also raised and it was suggested there should be more support for employers to spot early indicators of substance use and to support employees appropriately so that employers do not default to removing the employee. Community Planning Partners are major employers in Falkirk and as such will lead by example and ensure policies are in place to support employees. Appropriate housing support is necessary for some substance use interventions particularly those that are provided out of area on a residential basis. Planning is key in order to sustain tenancy or to consider other housing options that may be appropriate on an individual basis.

THEME 5. DOMESTIC ABUSE AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Domestic abuse is a newly identified key issue for the partnership because of the higher levels reported in the Falkirk area than the national levels. At the beginning of lockdown it was anticipated there would be an increase in crimes of domestic abuse due to several factors including victims spending more time with their abusers during periods of lockdown, increased financial hardship, and lack of interaction with friends and family. However, the data shows a slight decrease in 2020.

The situation regarding domestic abuse is complicated, particularly given the circumstances of lockdown. Victims may find it more difficult to report incidents of abuse during periods of lockdown due to being confined at home with their partner and fear of repercussions. It may be that as lockdown is gradually eased and people are permitted to leave their homes, victims may have more opportunity to disclose what is happening and seek help; numbers in reporting may increase.

Domestic Abuse sits under the umbrella of Gender based violence (GBV) and is a major public health, equality and human rights issue. It covers a spectrum of violence and abuse, committed primarily but not exclusively against women by men. It is important however, to recognise that abuse also occurs in same sex relationships and can be experienced by transgender people. The newly established Gender-Based Violence Partnership will be responsible for driving overall improvement and delivery on this theme. The Partnership does not yet have a delivery plan (at June 2021), but their plan will be consistent with the outcomes of the Falkirk Plan. The Community Planning Board will focus on key outcomes which they will monitor and report progress annually to the community.

Outcome 17. Interventions for those experiencing, or at-risk of domestic abuse are early, effective, and inclusive.

The number of domestic abuse incidents reported to the police in Falkirk have remained about the same level over the last decade, which is a higher rate than for Scotland as a whole.

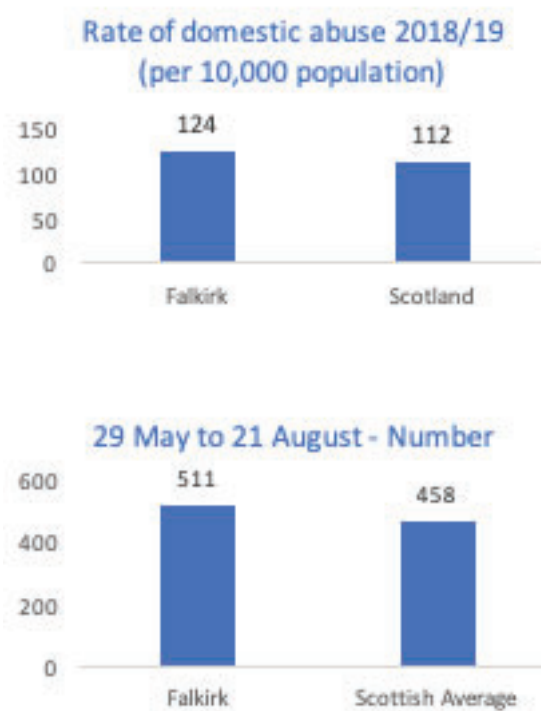
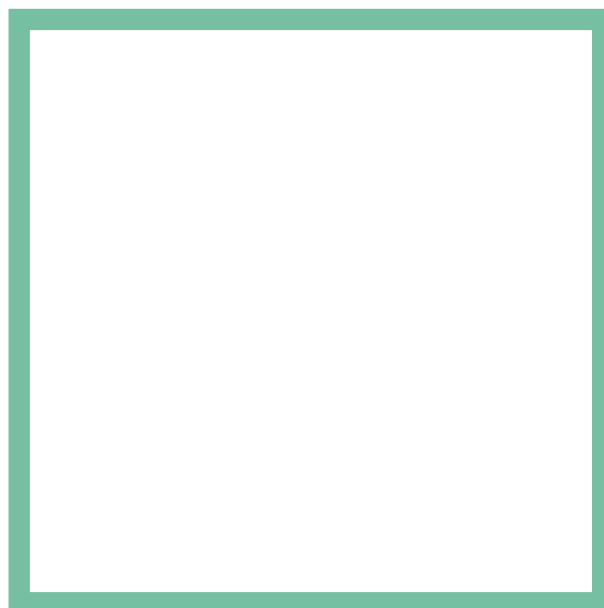


Figure 7. Domestic Abuse rates, Police Scotland 2020



There are multi-agency groups currently in place to ensure those who pose a risk of domestic abuse are managed, and to assess and safeguard victims of domestic abuse. Those at the highest risk of abuse are usually repeat victims or offenders where levels of violence and control increase over a period of time. In Falkirk, repeat victims represent around 40% of all reported incidents.

Services must be inclusive, and it is important to remember that although anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, not everyone is equally at risk. Some groups are less likely to engage with services, such as ethnic minorities, people with physical or learning disabilities, people who are financially dependent on their abuser, or those with an insecure immigration status. The Gender-Based Violence Partnership is currently considering ways to ensure services are accessible to all groups within the community, so services and interventions are inclusive.

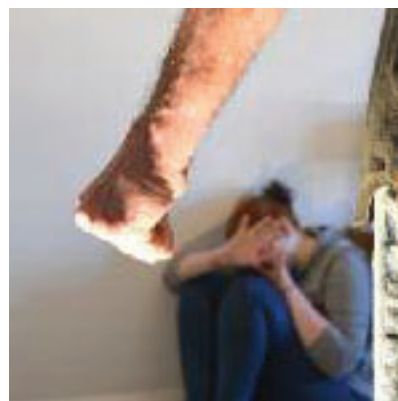
Falkirk Community Planning Partnership will support multi-agency groups to ensure interventions are accessible, and effective for anyone at risk of domestic abuse.

Outcome 18. Victims of domestic abuse receive a joined-up offer of help until they are supported to safety.

The ultimate goal of domestic abuse interventions is to ensure the victim, and any children they have, are safe. Supporting the victim to leave their abuser is only one part of this. Many victims experiencing abuse no longer live with their abuser, so leaving the home does not always bring an end to the abuse.

If there is a financial dependence of the victim on the abuser, leaving becomes even more difficult and the victim may consider the financial difficulty to be a worse alternative on them and their children than the abuse.

Falkirk Community Planning Partnership will ensure there are pathways of support for victims of domestic abuse which has mechanisms for supporting all of their needs. This means clear pathways to mental health support, financial advice, appropriate and safe housing, and counselling services.



Outcome 19. Front line staff have an increased awareness of issues related to domestic abuse and gender-based violence.

In instances of domestic abuse, or forms of harmful practices such as trafficking or forced marriage, the victim may not have sufficient opportunities to come forward. The 'One Chance' principle is that there may only be one opportunity for a victim to highlight their abuse, and so there is only one chance to find the person support.

This means as much as possible, front-line staff should be trained to spot the signs of abuse, and have the information needed to access support. In recent engagement with volunteers from support services, we heard that they believe that more training is needed for professionals who come into contact with victims – for example in schools, GPs practices and Council officers. They also believe staff should be trained to have more understanding of what the victim has gone through, and are currently going through.

Third sector support agencies have also requested that there is more joined-up working between the third sector and services. They often deal with all aspects of support for a victim and should be able to get support quickly from public services.

Falkirk Community Planning Partnership will look at training options for front-line staff across the partnership that focus on identifying and making an appropriate first response to abuse and clarifying referral pathways. This will aim to create a more understanding workforce with more likelihood of picking up on signs of abuse or harmful practices.

Outcome 20. Men who carry out violence against women and girls are identified early and supported to change their behaviour.

Intimate partner violence can happen to any sex or gender, in any type of relationship. This outcome does not diminish that, or undermine the fact that men experience abuse. However, it is important to recognise that the most common type of abuse is a male perpetrator and a female victim. In Falkirk, 91% of repeat victims of domestic abuse are female. We must also recognise that intimate partner violence is not the only type of gender-based violence that women experience, and women are more likely to be sexually assaulted or harassed by men.

An important part of preventing violence against women is by recognising the way that we talk about it. Instead of framing violence against women from the perspective of the woman - e.g. a woman was assaulted, or a woman was harassed - the focus needs to be on the man who committed the assault - making sure the male perpetrator is at the forefront, and it is not discussed as a phenomenon that happens to women. That way the focus is on helping abusive men change their behaviour so the crime does not occur, rather than teaching women how to stay safe from abuse or assault.

The Scottish Government's Equally Safe strategy aims to ensure preventative measures are taken to prevent men from becoming abusive and responding quickly if they do.

...Falkirk Community Planning Partnership will support multi-agency groups to ensure interventions are accessible, and effective for anyone at risk of domestic abuse...



THEME 6: ECONOMIC RECOVERY

The Covid-19 pandemic has had significant and likely long-term impacts on the economy. KPMG projected the impact on the economy in September 2020, which estimated the Falkirk GDP would decline by 11% in 2020 but make some recovery in 2021 with growth of 8.7%. Unemployment rose by 99% in the first 6 months of lockdown, and there are concerns that when furlough ends in September, there will be a spike in unemployment.

Falkirk Economic Partnership will deliver on priorities and actions for economic growth through Falkirk's Economic Strategy, economic recovery plan, and Local Employability Partnership Delivery Plan. The Community Planning Board will focus on key outcomes which they will monitor and report progress annually to the community.

There was really a positive tone to the meeting looking ahead to the future instead of the usual moaning.

Service User Feedback

Outcome 21. More wealth is retained within local communities and economic growth is inclusive

Community wealth building is a key policy area for the Scottish Government for its cities and regions, and local implementation will support an inclusive economic recovery. Community wealth building is a person-centred approach to economic development which aims to ensure wealth remains in the community.

The principles of community wealth building are:

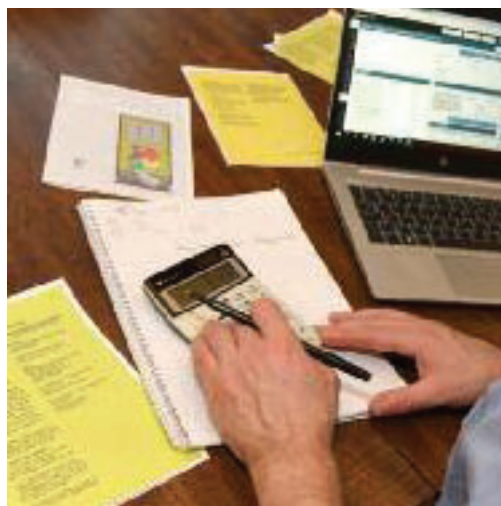
1. *Local and democratic ownership of the economy: this includes supporting business models that have the greatest benefit to local people, such as social enterprises and co-operatives; and supporting local supply chains.*
2. *Investing in local economies: this means using any invested money in local investment schemes, such as using local pensions funds to invest in local energy production.*
3. *Fair employment and labour markets: this means not only making sure our own workplaces as fair, but ensuring contractors have fair work principles, and they in-turn only sub-contract to companies that have fair work principles. It also means making an effort to advertise jobs to local people, particularly those that are unemployed or in a low-income area.*
4. *Improved local procurement: this means thinking carefully about our impact as buyers, for example instead of one big contract going to a large firm, breaking it into smaller pieces so that local companies are able to supply the work.*
5. *Using local land and assets wisely: public bodies have a lot of assets that they may not be using that could be used by communities.*

Local jobs for local people is something community members have been saying since before the pandemic. The model of community wealth building develops this so that we are considering all local assets, and how we can make these work for our community.

This model also supports inclusive growth, which aims to grow the economy whilst ensuring people experiencing inequalities and deprivation also benefit from this growth. This Plan ultimately aims to reduce deprivation across Falkirk so that economic recovery includes everyone.

NHS Forth Valley is currently leading work to develop the Forth Valley Health and Wealth Consortium to co-ordinate a body of community wealth building work which the wider partnership will support.

Falkirk Community Planning Partnership will establish a new delivery group to coordinate Community Wealth Building activities across Falkirk. This group will create an action plan and a way to monitor these actions to identify if they are increasing local wealth.



...The Falkirk / Grangemouth growth deal will enable the partnership to help the local economy be more sustainable and resilient in a changing climate...

Outcome 22. Following the declaration of a National Climate Emergency, the Partnership is leading Falkirk's contribution to Scotland's target to be net-zero by 2045 through a focus on green recovery.

The impacts of climate change are being experienced world-wide; in Falkirk some of these include increased likelihood of heatwaves, intense rain and flooding, and supply chain disruption. Coordinated action is required, at pace, to decrease levels of Greenhouse Gas emissions and to help Falkirk successfully adapt to a changing climate. The Scottish Government declared a Climate emergency in April 2019. Falkirk Council followed in August 2019 and set a target to achieve Net Zero on its building, energy and transport emissions by 2030, while making Grangemouth our first carbon neutral town. Changes to the Climate Change (Scotland) Act in 2019 amended the goals of the 2009 Act and commits Scotland to net-zero carbon emissions of greenhouse gases by 2045.

Falkirk Economic Partnership is assisting Falkirk's efforts to reach these targets with plans for a 'Just Transition' towards a net zero carbon future with investment, jobs and skills at the heart of its vision. The Falkirk / Grangemouth growth deal will enable the partnership to help the local economy be more sustainable and resilient in a changing climate. Proposals include a sustainable manufacturing campus focussing on carbon capture and biotechnology projects; a centre for excellence in green bus technology; community owned solar energy; and green routeways.

The Partnership will aim to deliver social, economic and environmental benefits to the Falkirk area making Falkirk a sustainable and resilient place to live, work and play

Outcome 23. People have equal access to training and employment that supports the local labour market.

Employment was severely impacted by the lockdown with businesses temporarily closing down to follow Government guidance. In September 2020 there were 23,000 people in Falkirk on furlough, and unemployment had risen from 3,325 to 6,420 between March and August 2020; an increase of 93%. Studies suggest certain groups have been hit harder, such as women, young people and those already on a low income.

In March 2020, there were 675 young people aged 16-25 unemployed in Falkirk. By August 2020, this had risen to 1,345; an increase of 99.4%. Young people are disproportionately likely to work in sectors that were most affected by social distancing such as retail, hospitality, and travel. Youth unemployment will have significant long-term impacts on outcomes for those who experience it, and there needs to be targeted support for this group.

Other groups, such as women and older people, may not show as severe an impact locally but could have longer lasting effects. Unemployment is higher for men than women both nationally and locally. However, studies show that women's workplaces were more likely to close than men's, and where women were still working during lockdown, they spent fewer hours carrying out paid work and more hours on childcare and housework. National organisations are concerned the lockdown could set the gender pay gap and women's equality back decades.

Similarly, older people have a lower unemployment rate, at 4.5% in August 2020, but they may experience more difficulty re-entering the job market. Older workers who do become unemployed experience more long-term unemployment. 32.4 per cent of people over 50 are unable to find a job for more than 12 months, in comparison to the UK's average of 19.7 per cent.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Community Planning Partnership Board is accountable for the delivery of the outcomes in this Plan, and will publicly report as follows:

Delivery Plans - The Board will be supported in this role through the joint actions of representatives from across the community planning partnership. Each Theme and its Outcomes will be the responsibility of a specific delivery group, consisting of community planning partners. Each delivery group will work to a comprehensive delivery plan for each outcome they are responsible for. As some areas of work are new, some of the groups and plans still need to be developed.

Details of each delivery group and its delivery plan will be made publicly available. Each delivery group will report regularly to the Board on progress against each Outcome. This information will be presented in a way that makes progress transparent and relatable to local communities. Delivery plans for each Theme and Outcome will be focused on making positive change happen. Delivery Plans will be realistic, achievable and measurable.

Annual Reports - In producing our annual report, we'll listen to our communities to find out on how effective we've been, and what we need to do to continue to improve. These annual reports are a key way that the partnership will make itself accountable to the communities we serve by reporting against a high-level Falkirk Plan delivery plan. This reporting will consist of data as well as capturing the lived experience and insight of our communities and those most affected by the specific Outcome issues. We will consider how people are being supported, and how lives are being improved. In reporting on progress against each Outcome, we will use language that communities understand. We'll make all learning and decisions around each annual review publicly available by publishing a review report against the Falkirk Plan delivery plan.

Three Yearly Reviews - The Falkirk Plan will be reviewed every three years. This will allow us to monitor how well we're doing, and to identify ways to support our communities even more effectively moving forward. The

reviews will be comprehensive and will be undertaken through detailed analysis of data, consideration of policy, and measuring the impact our actions have in local communities. We'll involve our communities in this process. This will ensure we continue to focus on the issues of most importance to our people. We will review and amend the Outcomes to reflect the evolving needs of our communities. The three yearly reviews will take into account any changes in legislation, and will reflect national and local guidelines and standards. This process will be fully transparent. We'll ensure that our communities are supported to participate in these reviews in a way that suits them. We'll make all learning and decisions around each three-yearly review publicly available by publishing a review report. In undertaking the three-yearly review of the Falkirk Plan, we'll also review our separate delivery plan for each Theme. Outcome indicators have been developed for the entire ten-year period of the Plan, in order to identify improvements on an ongoing basis. These are detailed in the Falkirk Plan delivery plan and will be reported on in the annual report.



...In producing our annual report, we'll listen to our communities to find out on how effective we've been, and what we need to do to continue to improve...

Appendix 1. Summary of Outcomes

Theme 1: Working in Partnership with Our Communities

1. *Communication with communities is improved*
2. *Community-led organisations are stronger and more independent*
3. *More decisions are made together at a local level*
4. *Social, community and economic planning focusses on place, and reflects the needs and aspirations of the people that live there.*

Theme 2: Poverty

5. *People of all ages have equal opportunity to access digital services and have the skills and confidence to safely participate online.*
6. *Children and young people have equal access to participate.*
7. *Individuals and families affected by poverty have access to joined-up, multi-agency support services, and know how and where to access them.*
8. *Fewer people struggle with the costs of food, fuel and transport.*

Theme 3: Mental Health and Wellbeing

9. *There are fewer deaths due to suicide.*
10. *Children and Young people's mental health services are well-resourced and have reduced waiting times.*
11. *People struggling with their mental health can access support early in their journey, and services will adopt a whole-person approach.*
12. *Fewer people struggle with feeling socially isolated or lonely.*

Theme 4: Substance Use

13. *There are fewer drug-related deaths.*
14. *Families affected by substance use are enabled to overcome issues related to stigma which prevents access to support.*
15. *Fewer young people choose to use substances.*
16. *There is reduced stigma related to substance use.*

Theme 5: Domestic Abuse and Gender-Based Violence

17. *Interventions for those experiencing, or at-risk of domestic abuse are early, effective, and inclusive.*
18. *Victims of domestic abuse receive a joined-up offer of help until they are supported to safety.*
19. *Front line staff have an increased awareness of issues related to domestic abuse and gender-based violence.*
20. *Men who carry out violence against women and girls are identified early and supported to change their behaviour.*

Theme 6: Economic Recovery

21. *More wealth is retained within local communities and economic growth is inclusive.*
22. *Following the declaration of a National Climate Emergency, the Partnership is leading Falkirk's contribution to Scotland's target to be net-zero by 2045 through a focus on green recovery*
23. *People have equal access to training and employment that supports the local labour market.*

Appendix 2. Falkirk Community Planning Partnership

The Community Planning Partnership is the collection of public, private, third sector and community organisations providing local service in Falkirk that serve the local community. The Partnership consists of:

1. *CVS Falkirk and District*
2. *Falkirk Community Trust*
3. *Falkirk Council*
4. *Falkirk Health and Social Care Partnership*
5. *Forth Valley College*
6. *NatureScot*
7. *NHS Forth Valley*
8. *Police Scotland*
9. *Scottish Enterprise*
10. *Scottish Fire and Rescue Service*
11. *Scottish Government*
12. *SESTran*
13. *Skills Development Scotland*



Falkirk Council



Appendix 3. Key partnership strategies and plans.

Only strategies and plans that have been finalised at June 2021 are listed. Links to other key strategies currently in development will be added when finalised.

Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 -

www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2015/6

beta.gov.scot/publications/community-empowerment-scotland-act-summary/

Fairer Scotland Duty -

www.gov.scot/FairerScotland

www.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00506841.pdf

National Performance Framework -

www.gov.scot/About/Performance/purposest-ratobj

Public Health Priorities for Scotland -

beta.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-public-health-priorities/

Social Enterprise strategy -

beta.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-social-enterprise-strategy-2016-

CVS Falkirk:

Microsoft Word - Strategy CVS Falkirk Dec 2017 v0.2.docx

Falkirk Community Trust:

<https://www.falkirkcommunitytrust.org/about-the-trust/our-strategies-policies-plans-and-document-downloads/>

Falkirk Health and Social Care Partnership:

[Falkirk-HSCP-Strategic-Plan-2019-2022-1.pdf \(falkirkhscp.org\)](http://falkirkhscp.org)

Falkirk Council

Policies & strategies - Corporate Plan 2020 - 2022 | Falkirk Council

Forth Valley College:

[strategic-plan-20172022.pdf \(forthvalley.ac.uk\)](http://strategic-plan-20172022.pdf)

Police Scotland

Falkirk - Police Scotland

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service:

Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Falkirk

SEScotland Transport

SEStran-Main-Issues-Report.pdf

Skills Development Scotland:

Falkirk | Skills Development Scotland

A number of priority action areas were identified through the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) report in early 2021.

These are: poverty; substance use; domestic abuse and gender-based violence; mental health and wellbeing; and economy recovery. In each case, the more focused and detailed plans of the agencies and delivery groups (where appropriate) have also been drawn upon:

Poverty (Fairer Falkirk):

Towards a Fairer Falkirk 2019-2024

Falkirk Child Poverty Action Report 2020-21.pdf

Substance Use (Falkirk ADP):

[Falkirk-ADP-Delivery-Plan-Final.pdf \(forthvalleyadp.org.uk\)](http://Falkirk-ADP-Delivery-Plan-Final.pdf)

Domestic Abuse:

[no current local strategy]

Mental Health and Wellbeing:

No local strategy at present. One is currently in the process of being developed and is being led by colleagues at NHS Forth Valley. The Scottish Government's National Mental Health Strategy 2017-27 provides the framework for the development of local strategies.

Mental Health Strategy 2017-2027 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot) Mental Health Strategy 2017-2027 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

Economy Recovery:

Falkirk Economic Strategy 2015-2025

FALKIRK COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP		
STRATEGIC	COORDINATION	DELIVERY
<p>Falkirk Community Planning Board</p> <p><u>Organisational Board members</u> Council Chief Executive and Council Leader Elected Member of each political party NHS Board members and/or Executive Officers Director of Public Health NHS Forth Valley -new IJB Chair HSCP Chief Executive CVS Falkirk Chief Executive and Board Member Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Police Scotland Forth Valley College Principal</p> <p><u>To be Invited to join Board</u> SESTran Scottish Enterprise Skills Development Scotland</p> <p><u>Delivery Leads</u> Chair of Outcome coordination group Chair of Locality and Place Planning Group</p> <p><i>Optional</i> - Delivery Partnership Chairs as required by Agenda</p>	<p>Locality & Place Planning Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop Locality Plans, Place plans, and partner services at a place-level To report to the Board on the progress of its sub-groups To Monitor and report to the Board against the Outcomes for Theme 1 <p>Rotating Chairs Coordinator – Community Planning Team</p> <p>Membership Includes all Partners</p>	<p>East Locality Working Group & Subject to approval; Grangemouth Place Based Investment Board</p> <p>Central Locality Working Group</p> <p>West Locality Working Group</p> <p>Empowering Communities Working Group (new) <i>Theme 1 Delivery Group</i> Chair –To be Agreed Coordinator- Community Planning Team</p>
	<p>Outcome Coordination Group Coordinators of Delivery Groups to ensure joint delivery and reporting at least one representative from each partner organisation.</p> <p>Chair – Paul Anderson, Community Planning Coordinator</p> <p>Coordinator – Community Planning Team</p>	<p>Fairer Falkirk <i>Theme 2 Delivery Group</i> Chair – To be Agreed Coordinator – Sally Buchanan, Falkirk Council</p>
		<p>Mental Health Planning Group <i>Theme 3 Delivery Group</i> Chair Julia Ferrari, NHS Forth Valley Coordinator – To be Agreed</p>
		<p>Alcohol and Drugs Partnership <i>Theme 4 Delivery Group</i> Chair Martin Thom - HSCP Coordinator Elaine Lawlor, NHS Forth Valley</p>
		<p>Gender-Based Violence Partnership <i>Theme 5 Delivery Group</i> Chair Hugh Loudon, Independent Chair Coordinator Linda Gilliland, Falkirk Council</p>
		<p>Economic Outcomes: <i>Theme 6 Delivery Group</i></p> <p>Outcome- Community Wealth Building New Group to be established within CPP Co-Chairs Hazel Meechan, NHS Forth Valley & tbc CVS Falkirk. Coordinator- Community Planning Team</p> <p>Outcome- Employment: Employability Partnership Chair- Sarah McCully, Falkirk Council Coordinator- To be Confirmed</p> <p>Outcome -Net Zero and Green Economic Recovery Economic Partnership Chair For Net Zero- To be Agreed Coordinator To be Confirmed</p>