

Falkirk Council - Employment and Training Unit (ETU)

ETU has led on a range of initiatives designed to improve employability and skills, with a particular focus on young people. Within the broader Employability and Skills Action Plan, the funding is utilised alongside other funds to deliver Modern Apprenticeships, the Falkirk Jobs Programme, improved opportunities for care leavers, life skills for people furthest from the labour market, and other approaches commissioned from the third sector. The interventions supported by FFF have directly contributed to improved outcomes for school leavers and a positive trend in stemming and reducing the numbers of young people entering and remaining unemployed. The projects have also contributed to increasing the skills levels and qualifications of young people most disadvantaged in the labour market. An example of the additional value added by the FFF, it has supported the “Get Ready for Work” for young people to undertake the “Falkirk Employability Award” which could only be funded with additional FFF resources helping to deliver at 40% above the Scottish average

Real Jobs Scotland – The Action Group

The project aims to help young people leaving Carrongrange School to enter employment and to support people through the benefit process and help families get benefits they are entitled to when children go to college. The project has exceeded its targets in relation to the number of ex pupils taking part in work experience or voluntary work and those undertaking supported work experience at Steadings Café in Muiravonside Country Park.

Axis - Barnardos

This project works with vulnerable young people to help them tackle their substance misuse and to move towards sustainable employment by supporting them through education and training. FFF has provided an increased capacity to provide an enhanced focus on providing support in relation to employment, education or training through, for example, liaising with Skills development Scotland, facilitating and coordinating planning meetings, supporting the engagement with a key worker, focusing motivation and providing support to attend interviews and training programmes. The FFF contribution adds considerable value to the work of the Service and ensures they are able to take a holistic approach where alcohol and drug issues are part of a bigger picture.

Positive Transitions – Falkirk Council Education Services

This project provides an alternative curriculum for pupils in their final year of school to help them develop the skills for work. It is a joint initiative to assist young people to make better transitions from high school through to developing effective pre school leaving activities. The project has linked with 8 high schools responsible for the young people who require this type of intervention and from August 2011 to June 2012 these schools have targeted and utilised Fairer Falkirk funding to support some of our most vulnerable young people and this has had a significant impact on leaving destinations. 152 pupils participated in the programme and around 94% of these pupils were expected to move to a positive destination.

Financial Inclusion Project – Citizens Advice Bureaux (Denny, Grangemouth, Falkirk & Bo’ness)

This project aims to improve the financial wellbeing of those in disadvantaged communities, identified in Falkirk Council’s anti poverty strategy, by providing debt and benefit advice. FFF has added capacity to CABx to enable them to target vulnerable groups and areas in all aspects of work that they do. They have also increased community based provision such as outreach and financial education.

Credit Union Development – Falkirk Council, Community Education Services (in partnership with local Credit Unions)

Project aims to support the development of credit unions in the Falkirk Council area by providing a dedicated Credit Union Development Officer to increase the membership of the credit unions and the number of areas with a local branch. An additional 275 Falkirk citizens have benefited from membership of the Credit Union. The total membership is now 1269. Shares and loans have both increased and the number of Junior Depositors has doubled.

Older People’s Advice Project (OPAS) – Link Group Ltd.

The project aims to increase the number of older people claiming benefits. Clients are referred to OPAS through the Community Advice Service as part of work on charging for Social Services. FFF has allowed 1252 visits to over 60s in the Falkirk Council area resulting in increased benefits to the value of £1,266,629. 196 referrals were made to other services.

Enhanced Benefit and Debt Advice Service – Falkirk Council Community Advice and Housing Services

This project is aimed at helping alleviate poverty, hardship and disadvantage by maximising income and reducing debt. It provides advice on money, debt and benefits to people throughout the council area and provides representation at Appeal Tribunals and representation on debt and money related issues. FFF has enabled an increased debt advice provision and benefits advice in relation to working age clients. The services have seen an increase in the volume of work compared to the last financial year as a result of Welfare Reforms.

Sport 4 Youth – Falkirk Council, Community Recreation Services

Project provides a range of sporting activities for young people in deprived areas aimed at tackling barriers to sport. It provides a series of physical activity sessions for young people aimed at reducing the levels of boredom and antisocial behaviour. Weekly sessions are now delivered in nine venues across the Falkirk Council area and provide young people from poorer communities with opportunities and positive experiences. The project is free of charge and open to all. On average, each quarter 200 young people attend the sessions.