

Inspiring Active Lives

A Culture and Sport
Strategy for Falkirk
2014-2024

March 2014



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FOREWORD

There is a growing sense of confidence and belief in the Falkirk area and in our ambition to be recognised as the “place to be”. A place to visit, stay and play where our cultural attractions contribute to the tourism economy. A place which offers the best possible quality of life for our communities, a place of opportunity for everyone and a place where our citizens have the chance to reach their full potential. Culture and Sport play a major part in achieving this ambition – promoting our assets, helping people to learn, be effective contributors, be more active and strive for achievement in all parts of their life.

Falkirk Council established Falkirk Community Trust in 2011 to lead the development of Culture and Sport in this area, deliver inspiring services and encourage widespread participation. The Council has tasked the Trust with leading the creation of a strategy that will help guide work across the area for the next 10 years.

The Strategy comes at a time when there is understandable concern about the challenges facing public sector funding and the impact of the economic climate on our citizens.

The challenges we face require us to be flexible and work effectively with a wide range of partners. We welcome the support of all who are engaged in culture and sport and delivering services to our communities, to work together to inspire active lives.

Councillor Craig Martin
LEADER
FALKIRK COUNCIL

Falkirk Community Trust is delighted to be leading the creation of this Strategy. We are determined to make the case for Culture and Sport and to argue strongly for support and funding. The process of developing the Strategy has provided a powerful tool for raising awareness of the roles for culture and sport. But there is much to do to modernise and improve venues, motivate and support people to be more active and to work more effectively across organisations.

We know that no single organisation can deliver the Strategy alone. The Strategy will serve as a framework for a wide range of interested bodies to work together more collaboratively whilst providing a common goal.

The Strategy is a call to action. Sector specific delivery plans with prioritised projects and programmes will identify individual actions for each organisation. This means relevant local culture and sport organisations will work in partnership with each other, and with the Trust and Council, to deliver the vision and objectives of the Strategy.

We would particularly like to promote a greater role for the voluntary sector including clubs and societies to shape the plans that will deliver this Strategy.

Along with Falkirk Council we seek your endorsement of the Strategy and commitment to work with us over the next 10 years.

Ian Scott
CHAIRMAN
FALKIRK COMMUNITY TRUST

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The vision for culture and sport in the Falkirk area is:

**A place with
vibrant culture
and sporting
opportunities
where people
can achieve
fulfilled and
active
lifestyles**

Theme One | PARTICIPATION

Improving sense of well-being, enriching lives of people of all ages and ensuring co-ordinated structures are in place to enable participation from the 'grass roots', we will:

- Develop accessible **programmes** that make full use of all available resources, facilities, and respond to community need.
- Establish clear development pathways between schools and colleges and the charitable and voluntary sector to give **young people** culture and sport experiences that enhance the curriculum and their overall quality of life.
- Develop mechanisms to improve **collaboration** to co-ordinate programmes and develop skill bases.

Theme Two | MOTIVATION

Connecting with people and motivating them to take part in opportunities that are relevant, accessible, affordable and meet expectations, we will:

- Develop and promote role models to **inspire** a new generation to participate and find ways to effectively communicate well-being and lifestyle benefits.
- Tailor **marketing** strategies, informed through improved customer knowledge, to develop new audiences and target more effectively.
- Ensure **fairness** by targeting subsidy more accurately at individuals based on need.

Theme Three | VENUES

Providing a focal point for participation and community cohesion, attracting visitors and enhancing the image of the area and ensuring fit for purpose venues that meet expectations, we will:

- Consider **spread** of venues and opportunities for rationalisation which balance benefits of local access with financial sustainability of centralised provision.
- Plan and prioritise future **investment** to make best use of limited available finances to attract additional funds.
- Address the decline in **quality** of existing culture and sport venues and approach asset management in a planned way across all sites.

Theme Four | PARTNERSHIP

Making sure all forward plans are aligned to partner expectations, we will:

- Ensure culture and sport services contribute to the local **outcomes** developed by strategic stakeholders across the Falkirk area.
 - **Engage** with national and regional agencies and partnerships to seek inward investment for the Falkirk area.
 - **Support** national strategy delivery through locally co-ordinated action.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

People can engage with culture and sport in many different ways and at every stage in their lives from birth to well into retirement which is one of the reasons why culture and sport play key roles in delivering the ambition for the Falkirk area as the “Place to be in the 21st century”. There is a particularly active community interested in heritage, arts, sport and parks evident through a large number of local clubs, societies and groups. From the “grass roots” the area has produced many talented people who have gone on to pursue professional careers in the arts or achieve sporting excellence.

Like most areas there are many agencies and organisations across Falkirk involved in culture and sport, all with a common purpose of improving people’s lives. There are a large number of potential delivery bodies - public, charitable, voluntary, clubs. An increasing need for infrastructure investment locally and the financial challenges facing the public sector and the community, form the backdrop to creating the culture and sport strategy.

The Strategy makes a strong case that all the culture and sport sectors need more than ever to plan together and speak with one voice and deliver co-ordinated and integrated services in order to make sure the value that we bring continues to be recognised and rewarded. Working together we can promote collaboration, inspire participation, and better target investment.

The Strategy highlights that individuals themselves need to take greater personal responsibility for their own health and well-being. Motivation is one of the themes and along with the need for greater investment in culture and sport venues these are the key challenges for the Strategy.

Naturally the Strategy builds on the area’s achievements over the last decade and more. The purpose is to steer the development of culture and sport across the Falkirk area over the next 10 years in a way that will help continue the positive transformation of the area. It sets out a vision and framework which it is hoped all interests can identify with. The Strategy sets the scene for future service, public policy development and investment and for collaborative work to take this forward.

It has two main aims:

To increase and broaden participation in culture and sport

To help secure recognition for the Falkirk area as a vibrant place

The development of the Culture and Sport Strategy has been led by Falkirk Community Trust with support from Falkirk Council. The support and commitment of others is now sought, and all partners are asked to examine the role they can play in the overall delivery of the Strategy. Working together to create Delivery Plans will be the next step.



Adding
value
to parks

Case Study

An agreement between Falkirk Community Trust and the Action Group to operate 'The Steadings' Café in Muiravonside Country Park from Monday's through to Friday's provides supported work placements and work experience opportunities for pupils and leavers from Carrongrange School.

The Action Group is a third sector organisation who work with children and adults, and their families, who need additional support to live in the community. Real Jobs Falkirk is part of The Action Group's Real Jobs Service funded by the Fairer Falkirk Fund to help pupils leaving Carrongrange School to make a successful transition into work, training or further education. This partnership keeps the café in the Country Park open during the week and provides a service to visitors that may not otherwise be available.



“Naturally the Strategy builds on the area’s achievements over the last decade and more.”



ONE: CULTURE AND SPORT STRATEGY

INTRODUCTION

The Falkirk area sits at the centre of Scotland and is steeped in history. Falkirk was at the heart of Scotland's industrial revolution. The Forth and Clyde and the Union Canals meet in Falkirk, now at the Falkirk Wheel one of Scotland's most visited attractions. The Antonine Wall, the largest relic of Roman occupation of Scotland crosses the area, now part of the Frontiers of the Roman Empire World Heritage Site. As a strategic meeting place the area was home to one of Europe's greatest cattle markets and a number of significant battles between the Scots and English armies.

This unique history and pivotal location has contributed to the spirit of the place and people who live and work in the area today. Developments over the last 30 years have resulted in a wide range of opportunity in culture and in sport. Facilities, including Libraries, Parks, Sports Centres, Schools, Community Centres and Arts and Heritage venues, offer good access for communities across the area.

Through greater collective effort, over the last 10 years the area has moved from one that was declining to one of growth, with an increasing population and more visitors. Nonetheless the area needs to operate within the challenging national and global economic climate and restricted public spending. This context is set out in The Falkirk Area Strategic Community Plan - Moving Forward Together, which calls on all agencies, local communities, businesses and the voluntary sector to work in partnership

and to be creative and innovative to meet the challenges. The Plan sets out to secure an area that is sustainable and fairer, where businesses grow and people are prosperous, where communities are safer, where young people are both confident and successful and people are healthier.

Culture and sport plays a key role in delivering the ambition for the area which traditionally enjoys a good reputation for the quality of life that it offers. There is an active community interested in heritage, arts, sport and parks evident through many local clubs, societies and groups. Falkirk Council recognises that “the transformation of the area will continue if we make the most of our natural assets, location and strength of community spirit”. Crucially though, improving people's lives requires people to take greater personal responsibility for their own health and well-being. Motivating, encouraging and informing people are key aspects of this Strategy.

The Culture and Sport Strategy sets out a vision and framework that will help those with shared interests to work together to continue the positive transformation and further develop the vision for the area as the “Place to be in the 21st Century.” The Strategy is therefore aimed at all public and voluntary sector agencies and organisations involved in delivering or benefitting from culture and sport.

“the transformation of the area will continue if we make the most of our natural assets, location and strength of community spirit”.



Generating community pride

Case Study

Winning the accolade of Creative Place 2014 is a significant milestone in the area's journey of transformation. The result of collaboration between cultural organisations, led by the Community Trust, the bid acknowledged the area's creative track record. This includes over ten years of national and international commissioning through Big in Falkirk, Helix Day, and the forthcoming 'Home', and public art projects including the Heart of Stenhousemuir and two Helix commissions, Love and Kisses and the iconic Kelpies.

An example of the creative approach includes a programme of public art which boosted Council led regeneration projects across the area with funding from Creative Scotland and others. For each public art project the Community Trust and local communities work together from the outset on brief writing and artist commissioning right through to delivery of major installations.

Recent work has expanded to include Primary School collaboration at brief development stage for a commission celebrating the centenary of the Hippodrome Cinema. As well as enhancing town centres and greenspaces, community participants have gained confidence and have helped establish models of good practice for the commissioning of art in the public realm in the area.

Improving people's lives unites and is a common purpose:

Learning – helping to raise educational and personal attainment and develop young people who are confident, successful, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

Health – contributing to people having more active, less sedentary lifestyles and taking positive action and early intervention to support people to help themselves to improved physical and mental well-being.

Fairness – supporting vulnerable people to access services and maintaining equality of opportunity to help improve their lives and develop their individual talents and potential.

Society – encouraging and involving communities to become more active, volunteer, engage across generations, including through sport, arts, history and natural heritage to bring a sense of belonging and civic pride.

Sustainability – managing the impact of actions on future generations; promoting culture and sport venues, especially our parks, as attractive places to visit, play, exercise in and travel through; encouraging action to reduce environmental impact.

Economy – promoting prosperity, enhancing the area's tourist offering and encouraging more visitors to come and stay in the area for a longer period; helping develop skills, imagination and confidence needed for employment.



TWO: CULTURE AND SPORT STRATEGY

DEFINITIONS AND PROCESS

DEFINITIONS

The prime focus of this Strategy is on those aspects of culture and sport which are relevant to public policy and investment. The Strategy covers a breadth of activity that contributes to vibrant communities and at its heart are the people who live, work and visit in our area and the place that they create:

Individuals

Their chosen discipline, talent or interest is part of what defines the individual. Participation in culture and sport enables people to develop their talents, understanding and enjoyment of life, to express themselves, relax, learn, compete, to be creative and active.

Communities

Taking part helps an individual connect to the people and places around them. People coming together to compete, celebrate, learn and share common experiences can create a community, and a common identity is also often found through connecting with their local heritage and environment.

Place

The wider culture of a place is the product of people's sense of pride and connectedness and the inherited ideas, beliefs, values and knowledge which is how people understand themselves and their worlds. Ambition in culture and sport, be it through people following local teams, valuing their surroundings or taking part in something, can have the power to help transform communities, contribute to confidence and economic growth of the area.

The Strategy refers to sectors. For example Arts, Heritage, Libraries, Health & Fitness, Sport and Recreation are all distinct but related sectors. Below is a good flavour of the breadth of organisations, interests and activities across the sectors in Falkirk that the Culture and Sport Strategy needs to consider. Of course this list is not exhaustive and we recognise that interests can be very wide ranging:

Organisations

Falkirk Council, Falkirk Community Trust, Schools and Nurseries, professional, private and voluntary sports clubs, cultural clubs and societies, orchestras, choirs, voluntary organisations, friends of parks groups, youth clubs and uniformed groups, local health services, canal groups, further education and training providers;

Venues

Sport Centres, Gyms, Schools, Sports Stadia, Ski Slope, Golf Course, Arts Centres, Museums, Galleries, Libraries, Parks, Sports Pitches, Halls and meeting places;

Events

Festivals, parks events, matches, competitions, performances, premieres, recitals, shows, exhibitions, competitors, audiences, spectators, performers;

Activities

Entertainment, leisure, reading, guided walks, play, fitness, litter picks, bands, holiday programmes, parties, midnight league;

Learning

Workshops, courses, coaching, classes, reading groups, archives, local history, information, apprenticeships;

Environment

Culture and sport buildings, woodland, parkland, playing fields, public golf course, natural heritage, archaeology, outdoor activities, recycling, energy use, travel.

PROCESS

Culture and sport activities are delivered and organised through the public sector, charitable sector, volunteers, clubs, societies etc. The Culture and Sport Strategy needs to set out a vision and framework for culture and sport development which all these interests can identify with, commit and contribute to. It sets the scene for future service, public policy development and investment and for collaborative work to create a number of sector specific delivery plans. The commercial sector in Falkirk is small and for that reason has not been directly engaged in the process.

The strategy process outlined opposite has been facilitated by Falkirk Community Trust, a charitable company delivering services on behalf of Falkirk Council to develop and manage a wide range of Arts, Heritage, Libraries, Sport, Fitness, Outdoors and Strategic Parks services across the Falkirk Council area. The Strategy has been drawn together from commissioned research and consultation carried out by KKP Management Consultants.

Review

Existing national and local policies and strategies; Council and Strategic Community Planning Partners objectives and outcomes; Falkirk Community Trust performance.

Interviews

Key individuals from local organisations, representatives of main local clubs and societies, link representatives from relevant national agencies.

Focus groups

Sector specific teams from Falkirk Community Trust and other strategic partners.

Vision Consultation

Feedback on KKP's vision document from all of the above.

Consultant's Report

Report from KKP formed a base document for creation of the Culture and Sport Strategy.

Culture and Sport Strategy

Consultation and development of the Culture and Sport Strategy has been led by Falkirk Community Trust with support and advice from officers of Falkirk Council.



THREE: CULTURE AND SPORT STRATEGY

VISION

The centre of Scottish life, the legacy of the past, potential for the future, a culturally diverse and distinct area, investment in learning and leisure..... These are aspirations and values for the Falkirk area that have been consistently articulated in the Strategic Community Plan over the last 10 years and remain part of the vision for the area.

The vision for Culture and Sport is:

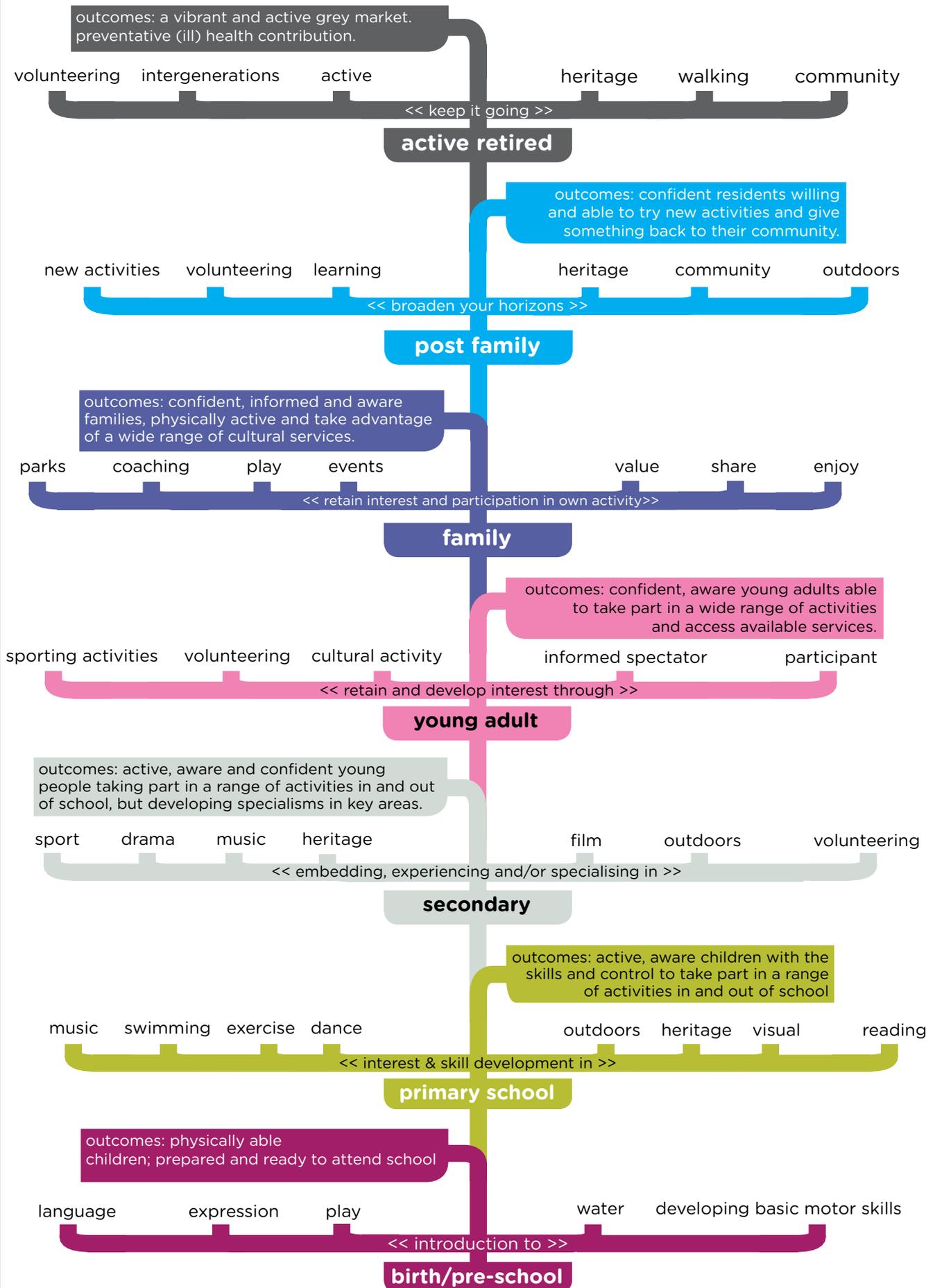
A place with vibrant culture and sporting opportunities where people can achieve fulfilled and active lifestyles

Put even more simply the vision is about

**People
and Place**



VISION IN ACTION





FOUR: CULTURE AND SPORT STRATEGY

CURRENT POSITION

PLACE

Falkirk is a great place, formed from a concentration of smaller towns in Scotland's central belt whose growth and prosperity was based on manufacturing industry, particularly iron casting, from the late 18th to the mid-20th century. Its location places it at the heart of the national transport network, within easy reach of Scotland's two largest cities. 60% of Scotland's population is within a 60 minute journey. The ambition and innovation of Falkirk's forebears continue today through the partnership "My Future's in Falkirk" initiative to capitalise on location and create a strong and successful economy.

Success includes:

- transforming the image and profile of the area through the development of the Millennium Link and the opening of the Falkirk Wheel as a key tourist attraction;
- transforming land between Falkirk and Grangemouth into a new place for people to enjoy culture and sport - the ambitious Helix project is set to substantially grow the potential of the area as a visitor destination;
- regenerating town centres to protect their heritage; bringing Scotland's first purpose built cinema back to life in Bo'ness; building a new library at Larbert and identifying cultural opportunities to enhance the evening economy.

CULTURAL ACHIEVEMENTS

It is probably true to say that Falkirk has been at the crossroads of Scottish history over many centuries, at least since Roman times. Falkirk has been described as the crucible of the industrial revolution in Scotland. As well as iron founding, the Firth of Forth ports of Grangemouth and Bo'ness and coal mining have helped shape the modern cultural landscape, evident in historic buildings and landforms that still survive. Many of these have been key to relatively recent cultural achievements:

Success includes:

- securing World Heritage status from UNESCO for the Antonine Wall as part of the pan - European Frontiers of the Roman Empire designation, the Wall is evident in many places;
- rejuvenating and conserving the grade A listed Hippodrome Cinema in Bo'ness, a rare example of pre-art deco cinema architecture, and recreating the golden age of cinema-going using 21st century technology;
- acquiring the unique chateau inspired grade A listed Callendar House and subsequently transforming it in the early 1990s as the area's focal point for telling the heritage story;
- creating a contemporary visual arts and crafts gallery to showcase work by local, national and international artists and makers with workshops and gallery talks as part of a wider emphasis on developing routes for people to directly engage in the arts;
- building new and replacement libraries at Bonnybridge, Polmont and Larbert with a replacement at Denny in development, the area has made a concentrated effort to resist the trend of closing libraries;
- retaining a strong tradition of a voluntary arts sector in the area, encompassing the performing and visual arts, literature and heritage
- securing Creative Place award 2014 for the Falkirk Community.



FOUR: CULTURE AND SPORT STRATEGY

CURRENT POSITION

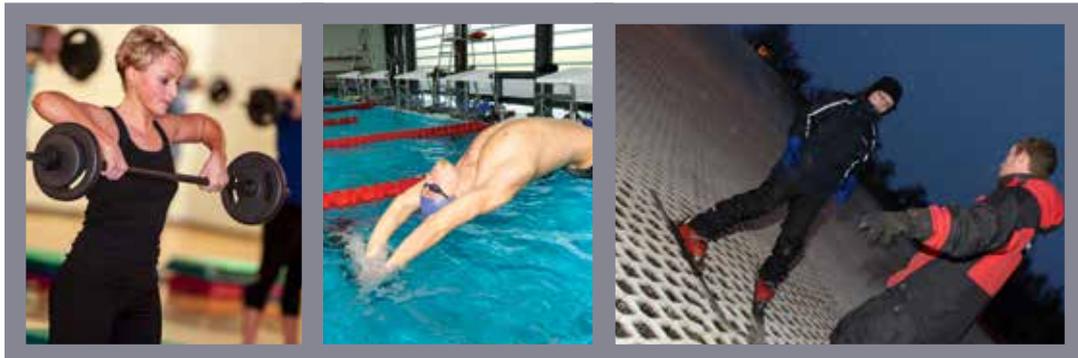
SPORTING ACHIEVEMENTS

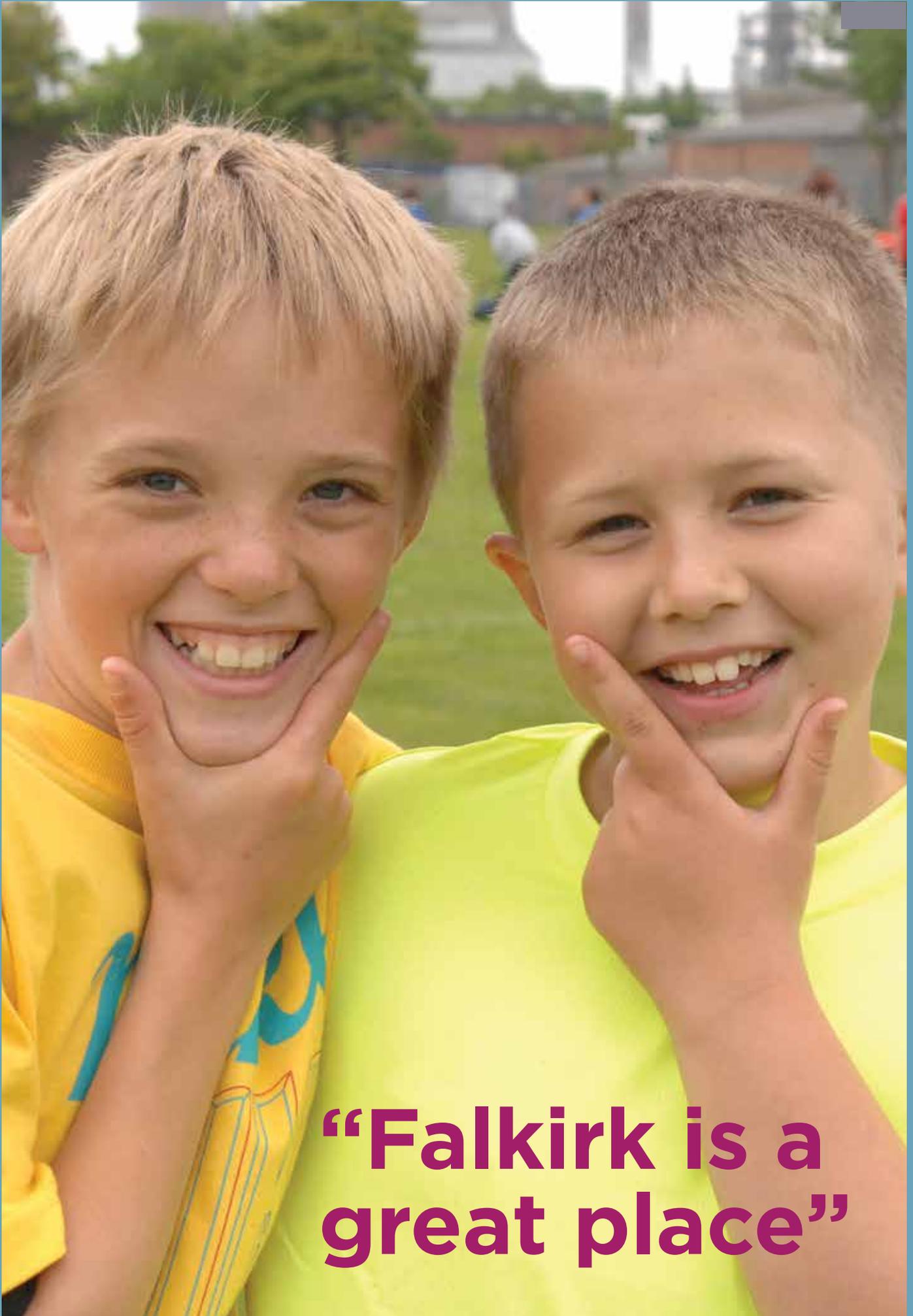
The Falkirk area was amongst the first in Scotland to invest in indoor multi-sport facilities. Grangemouth Sports Complex, Bo'ness Recreation Centre and the Mariner Centre each set new standards in leisure provision in their day. Grangemouth Stadium is home to Scotland's first purpose built indoor athletics training facility.

The centres have served the community well providing a home to the strong club infrastructure that supports people of all ages in their introduction and development across a range of sports from "grass roots" to international level. In recent times the focus has been on increasing participation and encouraging healthy active lifestyles.

Success includes:

- creating three circuit clubs across the area to increase access to low cost gym facilities, classes and support programmes, with a recent expansion in classes;
 - building eight new schools, each with sports halls and a pool, which give increased access to sport, not only for young people as part of the curriculum but also as a community resource for local neighbourhoods, clubs and teams;
 - supporting young people into sport, through no cost access initiatives; and a comprehensive development programme that offers a sporting journey from taster sessions and
- come and try events in communities and schools through to club, high performance and international representation;
 - building an indoor training facility for athletes in the 1990's that continues to play an important role in the regional sporting infrastructure;
 - moving the home of Falkirk Football Club to a new stadium on the edge of the town as an example of sport being the catalyst for new development;
 - winning health sector peer recognition in 2012 for a Falls Prevention and Older Adults Physical Activity initiative and for a Buggy Groups walking initiative; this is a great example of bringing new activity into our parks;
 - delivering more integrated sports and physical activity programmes by bringing together diverse teams which enabled better promotion, a wider range of programmes and eliminated duplication;
 - establishing Falkirk Integrated Regional Swim Team (F.I.R.S.T.) drawn from all the local swimming clubs, who were top club at the Scottish National Swimming Championships in 2012;
 - local clubs achieving national governing body quality mark awards.





“Falkirk is a great place”



Active and confident communities

Case Study

The Friends of Kinneil, a local charity, is set up to actively promote and develop Kinneil Estate. They combine a wealth of local knowledge with boundless enthusiasm and through their open days, guided walks, clean ups and promotional work have been able to attract more visitors to the Estate.

They have worked closely with the Community Trust on implementing improvements at the Museum and collaborate with Historic Scotland to open up Kinneil House, with its stunning renaissance wall paintings, to the public on selected days throughout the year.

Their work demonstrates the powerful positive impact that community members coming together can create.

PEOPLE

The area is distinct, the inhabitants of Falkirk have been known as “bairns” for several centuries. The “bairns” are more than just the local football team and residents, it’s a term that also applies to the wider Falkirk diaspora the world over and is rooted in the psyche of the place. The same is also true of Grangemouth’s “portonians”!

Falkirk and its surrounding area has produced many talented people who have gone on to pursue professional careers in drama, dance, music, writing and visual arts. Often their first encounter with culture will have been through our schools. Some, such as artist Dame Elizabeth Blackadder and writer Alan Bissett, have achieved national and international recognition.

Falkirk sports clubs have fostered talented individuals as well as achieving team successes. Notable within the area is the strength of the local Basketball, Gymnastics, Rugby and Swimming clubs. International fame has been achieved over the decades by the likes of “The Falkirk Flyer”- Olympic swimming silver medallist Bobby McGregor, Commonwealth gymnastics gold medallist Steve Frew, and 2012 Olympic competitor Jen McIntosh who is a Commonwealth gold medallist in shooting.

With three professional football clubs, many adult football clubs and a greater number of junior teams, football lies at the heart of much of sports participation. The area has produced many international players with clubs winning national trophies and awards on a regular basis. Falkirk Football Club has played in the top echelons of Scottish football for many years.

POPULATION

The nature of the population spread is quite complex. Unlike many other areas there are few dominant clusters of similar socio-economic groupings (source: Experian Mosaic Profiles) within specific locations. People with various profiles reside adjacent to one another. Recent and projected increases in population (currently 154,380) as well as the pattern referred to above are in part a result of encouraging new house

building and people to relocate to the area. The population is expected to increase by 10% in the next 25 years. At a younger age it will remain relatively constant, but older age groups will increase significantly. The 65+ range is to increase by 25% between 2010 and 2020.



Excellence through volunteering

Case Study

A local voluntary group of classical music enthusiasts organise and promote 'Classic Music Live! Falkirk', a series of concerts and recitals held in the area along with an accompanying programme of workshops with schools. With funding from Enterprise Music Scotland and venue and promotion support from the Community Trust the group have grown audiences over the past few years.

Using their passion and expertise to develop programmes and identify new talent they bring a high quality programme of live classical music to the area and provide a platform to showcase young, as well as established, professional musicians.



FIVE: CULTURE AND SPORT STRATEGY

LOOKING AHEAD

CHALLENGES

As outlined previously Falkirk has benefitted hugely from investment, but the area also faces significant challenges. For culture and sport, routine maintenance investment in venues over the past decades has been diminishing. Now, the age of the infrastructure alone means that a number of buildings are reaching the end of their viable life as well as no longer meeting community expectation. There is a very real need for investment now with significant financial implications. Additionally the need to generate increased levels of income to offset necessary reductions in expenditure levels will require the provision of a quality of product not always currently available.

This is a challenging time for public sector finance and Community Planning Partners find it difficult to predict what the impact will be for Falkirk's communities and services. The rate of unemployment at 4.3% is currently above the Scottish and UK averages. The impact of the recession means that many more individuals in our communities may experience poverty, perhaps for the first time. Some communities continue to suffer from problems of multiple deprivations with significant health inequalities where lifestyle, life circumstance, environment and economic factors all contribute to poor health. People's mental well-

being and prevalence of depression and prescription medication are issues which continue to pose a challenge. The ageing population will put pressure on public services but may also be a growing 'market' and customer base for culture and sport.

Public spending will be restricted for the foreseeable future. There will be greater emphasis on efficiency and making best use of collective resources, being imaginative in how services are delivered and how working in partnership can achieve more for the quality of life in Falkirk than working alone.

The impact of the UK Welfare Reform Act 2012 will introduce significant changes to the welfare system and may have consequences for individuals, their families and communities. The Scottish Government and Local Authorities are committed to do all they can to mitigate the impacts of these reforms. For culture and sport this will mean maintaining good concessionary and support mechanisms to ensure equality of access to all. Furthermore the ability to support claimants to access online services and information through libraries may become increasingly important.





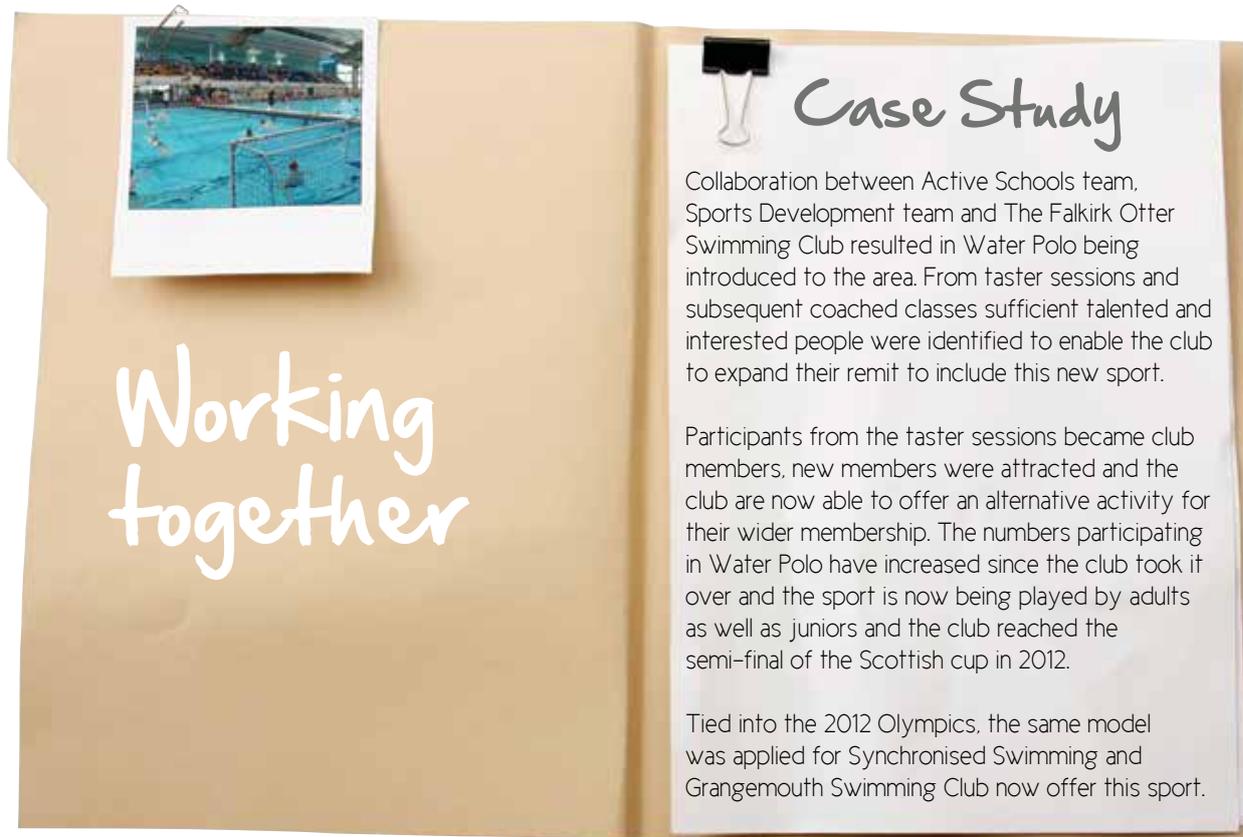
“we need more than ever to plan together in order to make sure the value that we bring continues to be recognised.”

RESPONDING TO THE CHALLENGES

People can engage with culture and sport in many different ways, many different places and at every stage in their lives from birth to well into retirement.

This is vital; it's what makes culture and sport such important contributors to the spirit, social fabric and health and well-being of the area.

It also means that culture and sport touch a vast array of service providers, across all sorts of core and voluntary services and can be delivered by different organisations each seeking different outcomes.



Working together

Case Study

Collaboration between Active Schools team, Sports Development team and The Falkirk Otter Swimming Club resulted in Water Polo being introduced to the area. From taster sessions and subsequent coached classes sufficient talented and interested people were identified to enable the club to expand their remit to include this new sport.

Participants from the taster sessions became club members, new members were attracted and the club are now able to offer an alternative activity for their wider membership. The numbers participating in Water Polo have increased since the club took it over and the sport is now being played by adults as well as juniors and the club reached the semi-final of the Scottish cup in 2012.

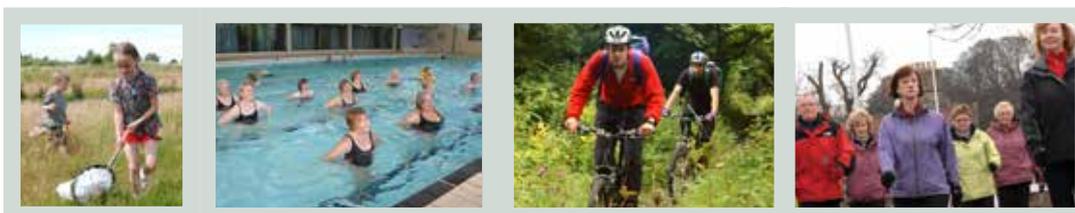
Tied into the 2012 Olympics, the same model was applied for Synchronised Swimming and Grangemouth Swimming Club now offer this sport.

However what culture and sport bring in vibrancy and variety through multiple providers can be offset by a lack of cohesion and inconsistency of knowledge. Especially about who, how and what people are participating in, which hampers ability to assess reach, measure effectiveness, challenge operations and be more efficient.

The challenges are around complexity of delivery, breadth of the culture and sports sectors, pressing need for infrastructure investment and the financial pressures facing the public sector. These mean that the culture and sport sectors need more than ever to plan together and speak with one voice in order to make sure the value that they bring continues to be recognised and rewarded. The sustainability of culture and sport is dependent heavily both on

local funding and on working strategically to secure new inward investment from a range of funders.

We are writing this strategy at a time when the spotlight on culture and sport nationally across the UK is almost unprecedented. The widespread recognition of the contribution to wider society, to individual achievement and creativity and a more person centred approach is being felt through the London 2012 legacy and being understood and taken up by policy makers more widely. The opportunity to inspire a generation continues through the Glasgow 2014 legacy with a clear desire for joined up working, input from national sport and cultural agencies and local leadership.





PRINCIPLES

The previous section summarised the background that has guided the development of the Culture and Sport Strategy. If the Strategy is to be successful it must be integrated with the area's future plans. Three guiding principles have been identified (from a review of the area's plans) to underpin a strategic framework for culture and sport.

WORKING TOGETHER

Partnership

Encourage collaboration and extend networks within and across sectors to improve communication and co-ordination, promote a greater role for community, clubs, societies and the voluntary sector to shape the direction of delivery plans.

Leadership

Develop the leadership role of the Community Trust to promote the Culture and Sport Strategy with partners and to lead its delivery as both a community enabler and major provider of public services.

Influence

Establish a strong strategic framework which can be communicated at area and national level to articulate the culture and sport message for the area, to a broad audience including funders, policy makers, sponsors and other potential investors.

UNDERSTANDING NEED

Knowledge

Improve evidence and documented knowledge about who is/ is not engaged in culture and sport and ensure there is a transparent way to measure the need for, the cost and the value of services and how people value them.

Intervention

Ensure that subsidy is accurately targeted at individuals and groups based on need, encouraging people who are 'excluded' and most in need and those identified as likely to become 'excluded' to participate.

Structure

Continue to improve access and structured progression from come and try/do/see, through value added learning to developing talent, supported by pricing structures which generate capacity to cross subsidise for those in most need.

TARGETING INVESTMENT

Planning

Plan infrastructure investment need taking account of planned growth of key settlements, wider economic development and health and well-being issues faced by communities; consider carefully whether there is a need for additional, or a reduction in, facilities.

Sustainability

Ensure investment decisions made now contribute to a sustainable future and minimise impacts on climate change, energy use and waste generation, encourage sustainable transport and contribute to creating an attractive place.

Adding value

Link culture and sport investments more effectively with wider priorities to add value to activity such as the economy, training and education and social care, which will better attract new avenues for external funding.



Equality of access



Case Study

Visually Impaired Reading Groups In Libraries known as VIRGIL were set up in 2010 as a consortium of four library authorities sharing resources and best practice working with the sight impaired. Working with Falkirk's Sensory Centre, 10 local library members attend monthly meetings to discuss the chosen book of the month and discuss reading in general.

Books are available in both large print and Spoken Word CD. Reading for pleasure plays a key role in the lives of blind and partially sighted readers, and has significant impact on well-being and quality of life, social integration, learning and skills. Visits have been made to book festivals with authors visiting the group. Feedback comments include: "The group has totally changed what I read. I'm now reading books I would never have considered before"; "It's the social side but it's also the chance to read something I wouldn't have before"; "Losing my sight - listening to books has kept me going".



SIX: CULTURE AND SPORT STRATEGY

AIMS AND THEMES

The Culture and Sport Strategy builds on the area's achievements and its transformation agenda and takes account of known challenges and underpinning principles.

It has two main aims:

to increase and broaden participation in culture and sport

to help secure recognition for the Falkirk area as a vibrant place

The strategy framework is organised round four themes:

participation
motivation
venues
partnership



THEME ONE | PARTICIPATION

Participation is a key to improving a sense of well-being and enriching the lives of people of all ages; we need to ensure co-ordinated structures are in place to enable participation from the ‘grass roots’.

CONTEXT

As with all service industries a challenge is the degree to which people are attracted to access the ‘offer’. People face many competing priorities and it is critical that the offer, or product, is of sufficiently good quality to draw them out of their homes and to compete effectively with lifestyle alternatives. Time is one of people’s most critical and precious commodities and so the offer needs to be able to adapt and change if necessary to respond to this. These factors mean that if we gear ourselves more to the development of a flexible, attractive programme of activities it is more likely to appeal than, certainly for the Community Trust, simply focusing on facility hires and lettings. **We need to think differently about ‘what’, ‘how’ and ‘why’ we deliver services, in order to encourage the whole population to maintain active and healthy lifestyles.**

We have talked about how participation in culture and sport helps people become more confident, successful and effective contributors – outcomes shared with the Curriculum for Excellence in school education - developing the skills and attributes young people will need if they are to flourish in life, learning and work, now and in their future. The Curriculum includes the totality of experiences planned for young people through their education, wherever they are being educated.

The Scottish Government’s Getting It Right for Every Child Strategy (GIRFEC) is about putting the child or young person and their family at the centre. As children and young people progress through life some may have temporary difficulties, some may live with challenges and some may experience more complex issues. Culture and sport can enhance the curriculum and support young people who may be experiencing difficulties and struggling with school, through different learning settings for example using dance, sport and the outdoors. High achievers too, can gain greater success through participation in culture and sport.

We recognise the importance of culture and sport as potential sources of employment, training and future career opportunities especially for young people.

Improving the early years’ experience is seen by the Scottish Government as key to enabling some of Scotland’s most entrenched problems such as poverty, poor health, poor attainment and antisocial behaviour to be addressed and prevent future problems arising. Although older people need to be a growing focus and potential market for us, the above factors and the area’s unique population make up are the reasons why ‘engaging young people’ continues to be a priority objective for the area and for this Strategy.

Whilst the prime focus of publically funded services will always be on participation first and foremost, a co-ordinated approach can reduce programme overlaps, identify pathways for talented and interested people to move on to club and talent or high performance programmes. In this way core (publicly funded) services act as a springboard, channelling and moving people on in their chosen interest through the network of providers. Organisations will need to have shared understanding of performance pathways, the skills and capacity to deliver and be ready to meet best practice relative to delivery level. This is relevant both within and across sectors.

Growing capacity, especially of young people and community organisations to deliver activity to others, will be a focus for growing participation. Community participation and learning, when delivered and supported within communities can help people collaborate and deliver programmes for themselves.

OBJECTIVES

Programme

We will develop accessible programmes and events making full use of all available resources and facilities, ensuring equality of access to services for all. We will respond to community need and minimise duplication of effort, with the right partner doing the right thing and delivered within good practice guidelines

Young people

We will establish clear development pathways between schools and colleges and the charitable and voluntary sector. We will facilitate the enhancement of the Curriculum by exposing young people to wider forms of sport and cultural experiences within their community that enhances their overall quality of life.

Collaboration

We will develop mechanisms to improve joint working and co-ordinated programming. We will work together to develop our skill base - leadership, coaching, volunteering - to expand memberships, increase employment opportunities, raise quality of performance, breadth of participation and ensure longer term organisational sustainability.



Supporting vulnerable people

Case Study

NHS Forth Valley, Paths for All and the Community Trust addressed a gap in physical activity provision for older adults that had a Falls Prevention message. A Falls Prevention initiative incorporating Otago Strength and Balance exercises, health walks and gentle exercise into communities, Physical Activity Referral Schemes and Step Forth Walking for Health project was developed. Otago exercises were incorporated into group exercise classes, personal programmes and health walks and a pilot session has also been delivered in a local nursing home.

An intergenerational pilot is in development using walking and Otago exercises to engage school children and their elderly relatives to take part in physical activity together.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

Working together we will develop Delivery Plans to take forward action; opportunities identified include:

- Capitalising on the hosting of the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow in 2014 and other national and international events and grow and seek out new events for the Falkirk area.
- Rationalise sports centre programmes to make best use of available opening hours and create well-resourced sport specific specialist hubs and community sports hubs making best use of schools.
- Roll out of 'Positive Coaching Scotland' with all partners involved developing better coaches and continued development of the 'Young Leaders' and 'Future Stars' programmes.
- Programming for older people who are time rich, not only to promote a positive lifestyle and harness their contribution but also to tackle and prevent health issues.
- Connecting to national programmes such as "Years of..." and Active Schools.

THEME TWO | MOTIVATION

It is people who make culture and sport happen. Falkirk has many great culture and sport opportunities; we need to connect more with people to inspire and motivate them to take part in opportunities that are relevant, accessible, and affordable and meet their expectations.

CONTEXT

We have referred to challenges around lack of cohesion and inconsistency of knowledge about who, how and what people are participating in.

As a result of not knowing who is presently being engaged, neither the Community Trust nor key stakeholders can determine which people and communities are not being reached or catered for, to assess the effectiveness of different interventions.

The mixed population profile and pattern of spread means that greater sophistication of knowledge is required to prioritise activity, reach target groups and effectively tailor marketing. The effective use of evidence and data is central to the public service reform and community planning agendas. Additionally, funding agencies require detailed measurement of outputs and outcomes from funded initiatives as well as good information about need when bidding for funding.

Many culture and sport delivery bodies, be they local authorities or Trusts, have adopted membership systems. Under such a scheme all residents have a card to access services, which can take account of various entitlements and concessions. Using IT systems, service providers can develop far greater market intelligence and tailor offers and promotions to particular customer segments much in the way that supermarkets do.

A recent survey by the Community Trust of non-participants demonstrated that decisions to participate were most highly influenced by knowing what activities are available; cost of taking part; ease of getting to activities and having the time available. Apathy as well as time can be factors that limit participation. The survey found that

36% of respondents said that nothing would encourage them to participate. Finding ways to inspire people to change habits, try something new and help themselves is a key focus of this Strategy. Positive intervention early in life with inspiring role models can lay a great foundation for the future.

Although price is not always perceived as a barrier it is a significant factor for many, especially those on low incomes and increasingly families feeling the 'squeeze' of the recession. The Council's poverty strategy 'Towards a Fairer Falkirk', looks at focusing action on the causes of poverty but also on mitigating the impact of poverty.

Targeted health promotion interventions and ensuring charging policy and concessions include children and young people are two aspects of the poverty strategy that are particularly pertinent to culture and sport.

Getting pricing right, to offer value for money, cover costs as well as provide subsidised access can be challenging. Being able to accurately target subsidy at those in need rather than a blanket approach which may be area or age based would be more effective at tackling inequality. However this requires the culture and sport sectors to have a much better understanding of need, right down to an individual level, than we have at present.

“Positive intervention early in life with inspiring role models can lay a great foundation for the future.”

OBJECTIVES

Inspiration

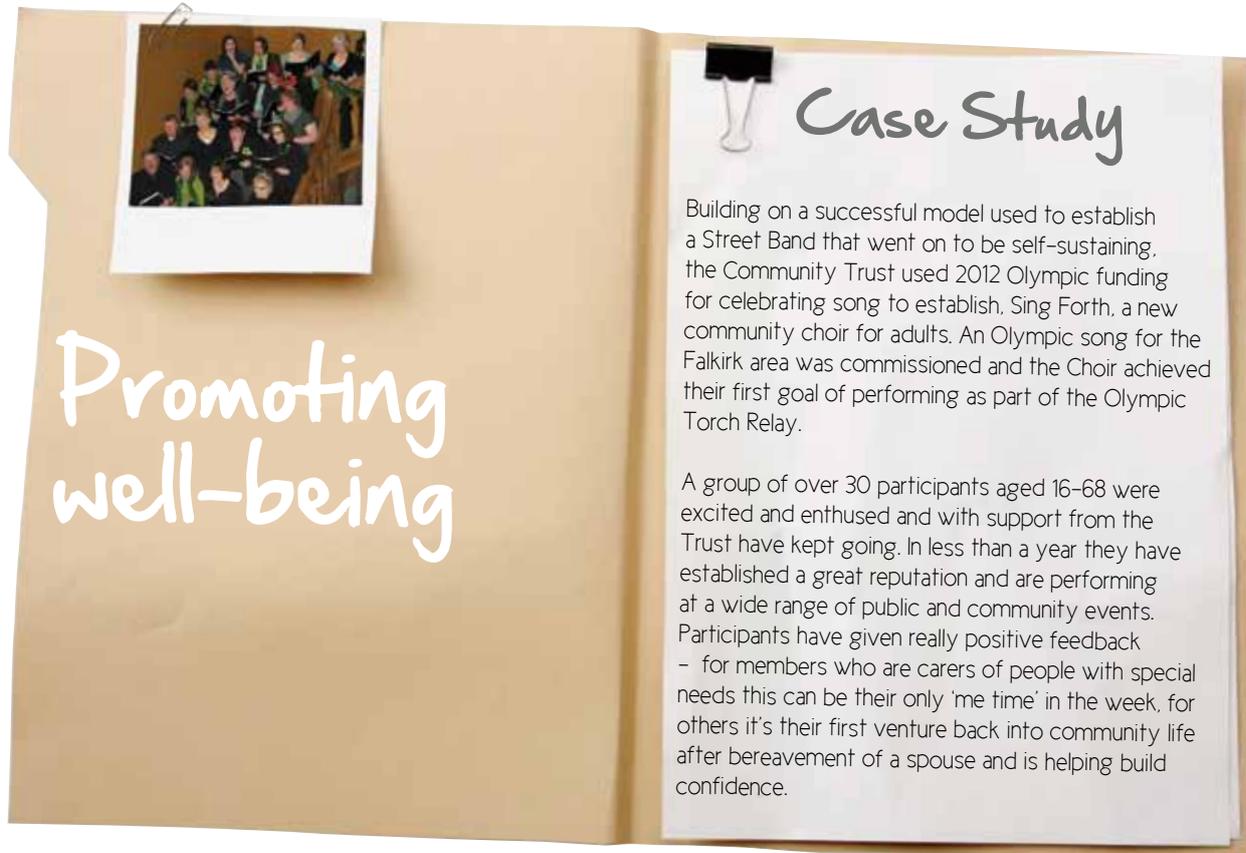
We will work together to inspire a new generation to participate, developing and promoting role models to communicate, influence and shape positive behaviour to improve lifestyles and well-being. Creating opportunity through young ambassadors and supported volunteering.

Marketing

We will develop a membership scheme that offers benefits through appropriate pricing. We will use market intelligence and customer knowledge, to tailor strategies to generate income, target effectively and develop new audiences based on knowing who all the delivery partner's audiences are.

Fairness

We will address challenges in respect of the 'value' relative to the 'cost' of activities to ensure that services are cost-effectively delivered and that subsidy is accurately targeted at individuals based on need.



THEME TWO | MOTIVATION

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

Working together we will develop Delivery Plans to take forward action; opportunities identified include:

- Marketing strategies designed to grow informed, inspired and active people that make best use of role models and consistent messaging about the benefits of participation.
- Recognising coaches and teachers as inspirational role models and delivery champions.
- Raising awareness of voluntary sector resource and opportunities.
- Celebrating success and achievement at all levels.
- Management IT systems for the Community Trust that would support a culture and sport membership card aligned to customer benefits and entitlements.
- Opportunity for clubs and others to share sales and marketing information with the Community Trust aligned to venue hire.
- Mechanisms and protocols for sharing information about need, such as free school meals and looked after young people, so that we can work together to plan interventions and programmes that best support vulnerable individuals.
- A pricing policy initially for Community Trust services, developed to maximise income and target subsidy in line with Council priorities on poverty as well as address inconsistencies between providers.

“We will work together to inspire a new generation to participate.”





THEME THREE | VENUES

Venues provide a focal point for participation and community cohesion, attract visitors and enhance the image of the area; we need to ensure they are ‘fit for purpose’, meet expectations and are of a sufficient quality to attract customers.

CONTEXT

Motivating more people to participate whether for health, fitness, well-being, learning, relaxation or sheer good fun is very reliant on attractive quality venues. The area’s main culture and sport venues are owned by Falkirk Council and leased or licenced to Falkirk Community Trust for them to operate.

Several buildings face investment requirements to address structural, mechanical and electrical issues and the Community Trust will in the future be unable to effectively manage the rising costs of utilities whilst delivering carbon emission reduction targets.

The three main sports Centres - Grangemouth Sports Complex, The Mariner Centre and Bo’ness Recreation Centre - are particularly outdated and fail to deliver a modern customer experience. The latter has been flagged as one of a small number of notably underperforming properties in the Council’s whole portfolio in terms of energy management and its carbon footprint. A recent study of sports pitch provision has confirmed that most pitches and changing pavilions are of poor quality.

Another aspect is the Community Trust’s fitness offer which, at each of the three main centres, does not supply a full coverage across the area or deliver the level of financial return that comparable Trust or local authority facilities would be expected to. Fitness is a financial sustainability as well as a health and well-being issue for the Trust. A high quality fitness offer can help underpin the financial operation and provide cross subsidy for other, less income generating activities, specifically in the cultural venues.

The performing arts venue, Falkirk Town Hall (FTH), is reaching the end of its physical life as well as not meeting the expectation of a modern ‘arts centre’. Investment in improving Libraries and upgrading the fabric of Callendar House, the main heritage venue, has kept these buildings relatively well maintained. However the layout and visitor experience at Callendar House is outdated and this venue has great potential to be a much more significant player in the area’s tourism offer. There is a positive impact from good asset management on budget and the wider economy.

The area is well served by facilities in communities, such as libraries, sports venues, parks and playing fields, to the extent that some, such as neighbourhood sports centres are underutilised at off peak times.

There is a degree of ‘competition’ and overlap with school facilities and a resultant considerable latent capacity in programmable time. Coupled with the qualitative issues and need for investment in venues this points to the need for a more strategic approach to determining spread and levels of venue provision. Within the mix are also a range of community facilities. Whilst public funding is very limited there is also an argument for public spending in the short term to save over the medium to longer term. The ability to generate additional funds via a variety of routes will be crucial to achieving the levels of investment needed to make any impact.



OBJECTIVES

Spread

We will identify opportunities for rationalising our venues and co-location with partners. We will balance the benefits of local access with financial sustainability of centralised provision, making best use of existing provision wherever possible.

Investment

We will plan and prioritise future investments to make best use of our limited available finances to attract and lever in additional funds.

Quality

We will address the decline in quality of existing culture and sport venues and tackle asset management issues in a planned way across all sites. We will critically review and appraise asset performance in terms of condition, suitability and utilisation.



Investing in accessibility



Case Study

The Dolphin Swimming Club, both Scottish and Forth Valley Disability Sport, and the Community Trust's staff at Grangemouth Sports Complex worked together to secure funding from sportscotland to install equipment to make both the teaching pool and the main 25m pool more accessible to people who are wheelchair users and cannot weight bear. This has opened up a new opportunity for people of all ages, who use a wheelchair, to swim and access the health and social benefits of participation.

As well as the Dolphin Club the equipment is used by Social Work and Education Services to assist special needs groups to access the pool. Grangemouth Sports Complex is now the only fully accessible pool in the central area of Scotland.

THEME THREE | VENUES



KEY OPPORTUNITIES

Working together we will develop Delivery Plans to take forward action; opportunities identified include:

- Enhanced cultural provision secured through replacement of FTH with regeneration of Falkirk town centre.
- Callendar House and Park repositioned as a prime culture and tourism offer for the area and development of Kinneil Estate to enhance the offer at Bo'ness.
- Increased spread and quality of the Community Trust's health & fitness provision.
- Best use of schools and neighbourhood sport centres to focus on diverse and attractive programmes to encourage and attract young people who do not traditionally take part.
- A strategic approach to football developed by all local stakeholders with support from the Scottish Football Association.
- A 20 year forward plan for all Council owned culture and sport land and buildings including responding to the immediate asset management challenges at the three main sports centres which have exceeded their expected lifespan.

THEME FOUR | PARTNERSHIP

Partnership is vital for ensuring our competitiveness and providing new opportunities for individuals, communities and visitors; in these challenging times we need to make sure our forward plans are aligned to partner expectation.

CONTEXT

To be successful, development and delivery of the Strategy must be done within the context of the strategic plans and aspirations of the Scottish Government and national agencies responsible for component sectors. Through the area's Community Planning Partnership the Strategy takes account of local outcomes that contribute to the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework and associated indicators.

In a national setting, the development of culture and sport is driven through plans and policies of the following:

- Creative Scotland
- **sportscotland**
- Scottish Library and Information Council
- Museums Galleries Scotland.

The area's Community Planning Partnership is overseen by a leadership board comprising representatives of key partners which provides political and strategic direction for Community Planning in the area. The Community Trust as lead body for culture and sport in Falkirk has recently joined this group but has yet to fully find its 'voice' within the Partnership.

The work of the Partnership is progressed through the following themes:

- Sustainable Falkirk
- Fairer Falkirk
- Growing Businesses and prosperous people
- Young People Who Are Confident And Successful
- Safer Communities
- Healthier People

One of the main functions of the Community Planning Partnership is working together to determine strategic need and priorities for action that will deliver the best possible local outcomes. Community Planning Partnerships are required to develop and report against a Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) with the Scottish Government.

For culture and sport in Falkirk there are some specific partners. Falkirk Council both owns culture and sport venues in the area and is the main funder of Falkirk Community Trust as well as many other cultural and sport organisations. The Council is the lead agency for many cross cutting themes as well as the community planning processes that this Strategy needs to contribute to.

A significant partnership for this Strategy is the Antonine Wall partnership which unites Falkirk Council with Historic Scotland and with four other local authorities along the line of the Wall. The Central Sporting Partnership across Forth Valley brings together National Governing Bodies and through the regional manager, support is provided to delivery groups and organisations in the Falkirk area. Falkirk & District Arts and Civic Council (FDACC) and Falkirk Sports Council are significant local culture and sports community umbrella organisations for the array of clubs and societies in the area. The Helix project has partnership between organisations, communities, and individuals at its heart.

The diverse range of activity carried out under the collective heading of culture and sport opens up a wide range of funding opportunities which can be accessed through for example, the statutory sector, Lottery distributing bodies such as the Big Lottery and Heritage Lottery Funds, independent grant-making Trusts and corporate sponsorship.

The current focus on culture and sport through legacy opportunity should enhance funding opportunities through the lifetime of this Strategy whether it is being used to engage with specific and /or new target groups or to develop skills and enhance performance at all levels.

THEME FOUR | PARTNERSHIP

OBJECTIVES

Local outcomes

We will ensure that culture and sport services contribute to the attainment of local outcomes as outlined in the Strategic Community Plan and the Single Outcome Agreement

National engagement

We will engage with national and regional agencies to seek inward investment in the Falkirk area to deliver a range of innovative projects.

National support

We will contribute to developing national strategies and influence policy making and will support national strategy delivery through locally co-ordinated action.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

Working together we will develop Delivery Plans to take forward action; opportunities identified include:

- More effective interface with the strategic community planning partnership.
- Antonine Wall world heritage site development.
- Growth and animation of the Helix.
- Securing representation from the area on national bodies.
- Partnership working between Falkirk Community Trust, Falkirk Sports Council and Falkirk & District Arts and Civic Council.

“The breadth of culture and sport activity opens up a wide range of funding opportunities.”



SEVEN: CULTURE AND SPORT STRATEGY

DELIVERY

Falkirk Community Trust will lead delivery of this Strategy on behalf of the participating agencies and organisations in a way in which all strategic community planning partners and culture and sport bodies can be involved and support. The Community Trust will lead the development of a number of plans to initiate and co-ordinate action. Partners may also contribute to delivery through their own action plans. Strategies and plans which are led by Falkirk Council will both guide and support delivery of this Strategy.

The Community Trust is already lead body, on behalf of Falkirk Council, for a number of plans that currently exist, so will lead the review and update of these as well as the creation of new plans for service areas where none currently exist. These 3-5 year partnership action plans will deliver the vision and objectives of this Strategy. Some plans will have greater focus on some objectives and all plans will be developed in collaboration and consultation with appropriate sector stakeholders. This will require varying levels of contribution, support and commitment from the many culture and sport bodies in the Falkirk area. Each Delivery Plan will articulate outcomes to be achieved over the term of the Plan.



DELIVERY

DELIVERY PLANS

By 2015 we will:

- have collectively contributed to the review of the area's Heritage Plan and Physical Activity Plan, and creation of a Library Plan and a development plan for Kinneil Estate;

By 2016 we will:

- have collectively contributed to the review of the area's Arts Development Plan, Public Arts Development Plan, Sports Plan, and creation of an Outdoor Activity Plan, Health and Fitness Plan and development plans for Callendar Park and Muiravonside Country Park.

AIM: TO INCREASE AND BROADEN PARTICIPATION IN CULTURE AND SPORT

By 2017 we will:

- have active role models beginning to make a difference in the number of individuals participating;
- have identified viable mechanisms to improve our customer knowledge;
- have more evidence of programme collaboration delivering new opportunities;
- be delivering programmes that offer more opportunity for an older age range whilst maintaining priority focus on young people;
- have explored options to target subsidy more accurately at individuals based on need;
- be able to demonstrate that our interventions are supporting vulnerable individuals to improve their life chances;
- begin to have evidence that more people are self-selecting to participate in culture and sport for the first time.

AIM: TO HELP SECURE RECOGNITION FOR THE FALKIRK AREA AS A VIBRANT PLACE

By 2017 we will:

- have increased the level of investment in improving the quality of culture and sport venues;
- have contributed to economic growth and transformation of the area;
- have evidence that local communities value culture and sport;
- be articulating and celebrating our successes to a broad audience, including at national level;
- be more active in the Strategic Community Planning Partnership.

REVIEW

The Culture and Sport Strategy is long-term and aspires to make a difference over 10 years. We will develop a monitoring and evaluation framework to review progress of the Delivery Plans over the short (1 year) timeframe and medium (3 year) timeframe. The cumulative achievement of the Delivery Plans will measure success of the Culture and Sport Strategy.

Progress will be reported through the Community Planning Partnership's Single Outcome Agreement and through one of the Community Trust's annual public meetings.



A place with vibrant culture and sporting opportunities where people can achieve fulfilled and active lifestyles

THE FALKIRK AREA



“We need to think differently about ‘what’, ‘how’ and ‘why’ we deliver services, in order to encourage the whole population to maintain active and healthy lifestyles.”

“The transformation of the area will continue if we make the most of our natural assets, location and strength of community spirit.”





