

Tenant Talk

STRATHGARRON HOSPICE



FALKIRK COUNCIL

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Eight hundred and
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Rent Feedback Generates Donation

£828.00

Win
£50
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Win £50
Smyths
Toys/Asda
Vouchers
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How to... Rent Increase Consultation Survey 2023

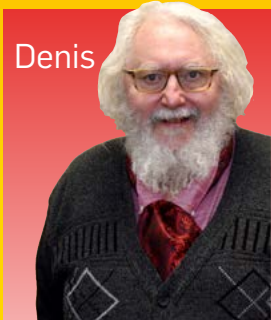
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Editorial

Welcome to the 26th edition of Tenant Talk. Panel members Liz and Sharon visited the ROOTS project in Bonnybridge, they enjoyed a Christmas lunch and entertainment. We visited the Community Choir and have shared information on this, Denis who is a member of the choir encourages all singers at any level to join. Katrina has shared a delicious recipe for cake with readers. The panel have been busy indeed. We are keen to hear from readers and hope to conduct a survey in the next edition to get ideas on how we can improve the magazine and cover stories that readers want to hear more about. The panel are always looking for new volunteers, to help write and research articles. If you would like to join them please email tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk or call 01324 590858.

Denis



Katrina



Liz J



Sharon



Vacancy for Editorial Panel

If you are interested in helping us pull together articles that share information about communities and council services, please contact us.

To join the Editorial Panel you need to be:

- Be over 16
- Live in the Falkirk area
- Have an interest in writing and researching articles
- Have an interest graphics/desktop publishing

We have four panel members but there is room for more!

Housing works in partnership with several Registered Tenants and Residents Associations. These groups are made up of volunteers and are supported by the Community Engagement Team. Many organise social activities and are well known to their community.

What are Housing Works



Camelon Residents Talk to Community Planning Officer

The Falkirk Community Planning Partnership held a Halloween-themed event in Camelon Education Centre on 30 October 2023. There were lots of activities for children and young people to get involved in, such as face painting, pumpkin carving, a treasure trail, and cookie decorating.



The event marked the start of a crucial phase in Camelon's community planning process: the development of a Community Action Plan (CAP). It provided a platform for everyone to receive essential information and kickstart conversations. Over one hundred residents attended and discussed what they like about

the area, what they think could be improved, and any ideas they may have for change.

Moving forward in the community planning process, the feedback from the event and the responses from the survey will be used to inform decision-making and the long-term vision for Camelon.

For those who could not make the event, there is still an opportunity to contribute to Camelon's future by joining the Camelon CAP Working Group or volunteering to take part in future focus groups and workshops.

If you would like to be involved, please email communityplanning@falkirk.gov.uk.

You can find out more about the Camelon Community Action Plan (CAP) online here: <https://participateplus.falkirk.gov.uk/en-GB/projects/camelon-community-action-plan>

New Shelter Wraps in Bantaskin



Bantaskin Tenants and Residents Association have secured funding from Community Choices to build a community space, they have also worked closely with the local High School in designing logos for bus shelters. The group meet in the evening, first Wednesday of the month. If you would like to know more or come along to their meetings, please contact Jakki at Bantaskin. residents@outlook.com



Callendar park

The Callendar Park Tenants and Residents Association are looking to develop a programme of events for the year, they have hosted a number of events in the clubroom, which is open to all who live in Callendar Park. The group meet the first Monday of the month in the morning. If you would like to know more, come along to their meetings or volunteer please contact Maggie at maggiebreen@blueyonder.co.uk or Ian at falman-13@hotmail.co.uk

Local Housing Groups up to?



Join in the Fun at Parkfoot Court

Following the passing of their chairperson, the Parkfoot Court Tenants and Residents Organisation has swung back into action arranging trips and having dialogue with housing. Bingo nights are extremely popular as was the Christmas Lunch at the Three Kings. Here is what is happening in the clubroom.

The group are looking for someone who has experience in bookkeeping, if you would like to know more please contact ParkfootCourt@outlook.com or leave your contact details in the clubroom. Please also contact David if you fancy joining their committee or to help organise activities, they are always looking for new members and suggestions.



Parkfoot Court Events

Bingo
Tues/Thurs from 7 - 8.30 pm

Coffee Afternoon
starts at 12.30 pm

The Committee has arranged day trips

29 May Dundee

14 Aug North Berwick

Members pay £3 non-members pay £6

Entertainment Nights for 2024

from 7pm onwards

24th Feb Alan and Duncan

27th April Alex Anderson

22nd June Alan and Duncan

7 September Alan and Duncan

30 November Alex Anderson

If you want to book a place, want to know more, or have any suggestions please contact them at parkfootcourt@outlook.com or nip into the club room when its open.



Tamfourhill

The Tamfourhill Tenants and Residents Association are a busy group and operate from the Tamfourhill Hub, this group also work closely with housing on matters relating to estate management and represent their community views via consultation. They have employed staff to help build capacity and deliver activities for young people. If you want to know more or come along to their meetings, please contact the Committee ttra@live.co.uk

If you would like to start a Tenant and Residents Organisation in your area, please contact Dawna on 07803 898 099 or at dawna.chisholm@falkirk.gov.uk you need at least 5 members to start a group.



If you want to know more about the work Community Engagement does, please scan this QR code with your phone.

Right stuff, right bin!

You will recall that in September, Waste Services launched a campaign to tackle recycling bin contamination and provide guidance and advice on how to avoid putting the wrong things in the wrong bin.

The campaign is now well underway, with a key aim being to highlight the concept of **wishcycling** - where residents believed they were doing the right thing but unintentionally were putting the wrong things in their recycling bins.

This update lets you know what has been achieved, what is changed, lets you know how to access support and help should you need it, and importantly, lets us acknowledge your efforts as we are now seeing more **Right stuff, right bin** - Thank you!

Since September more plastics, cans and cartons are being recycled, 289 Tonnes being sent for recycling in October compared to 146 Tonnes in August. At the same time there is a significant reduction in the amount of wrong material being placed in the bins - 38% less waste being picked from the processing line in November as compared to that picked in August.

The number of red tags issued (where bins are so badly contaminated the crews leave bins full) is also significantly decreasing - 34% less red tags issued in December as compared to September.

Golden rule to keep you in the right (and avoid a bin tag) - if in doubt leave it out.

Useful **Right stuff, right bin guides**:

- A helpful recycling A to Z tool (www.falkirk.gov.uk/whatgoeswhere)
- www.falkirk.gov.uk/mybins
- Take Pride in Falkirk Facebook Page - sharing top tips about recycling www.facebook.com/TakePrideinFalkirk
- Contact waste services - wasteservices@falkirk.gov.uk
- Use our helpful guides below.

Do not get caught out!

Wrong items in any of your recycling bins = bin tag. All tags detail what the problem found was. Key statistic - December saw a 34% reduction in less tags being issued by collection crews compared to what was issued at the project start in September.

Less tags, more recyclable material being collected, and less material being picked as unsuitable during the picking process = a fantastic shift in behaviour.

Amber tag = small amount of contamination, and the bin will be emptied.

Red tag = wrong or dangerous items, for example bagged waste, needles or nappies, or your bin is overweight/too heavy to move, and the bin will not be emptied.

Top tips to help us improve even more, these are the common five materials going in the wrong bins:

Bagged general waste - a big No, No which will result in a red tag - use green bin only.

Soft plastics - such as supermarket carrier bags, fruit bags & film (ready food lids). Blue bin and Burgundy bin material should always be loose. Check with your local supermarket as some now offer plastic bag recycling in store.

Paper and Cardboard - use your Burgundy bin only.

Polystyrene - either pellets or shaped packaging - use green bin only.

Textiles - Donate to charity/swap/make available for reuse - if not suitable for reuse - use Black box or Recycling Point

Blue Bin
Right stuff, right bin
Please only place **LOOSE, CLEAN, EMPTY AND DRY** material in the bin

✓ Yes please	
	Food and drinks cans
	Aerosols
	Tubs and pots
	Cartons
	Plastic bottles, lids and tops
	Plastic trays
	Foil and foil trays
	Chocolate and biscuit tins and tubs

Burgundy Bin
Right stuff, right bin
Please only place **LOOSE, CLEAN, EMPTY AND DRY** material in the bin

✓ Yes please	
	Paper, letters and envelopes
	Cereal boxes
	Toilet and kitchen rolls
	Packaging and boxes
	Newspapers and magazines
	Egg boxes
	Books
	Brown paper



The Tenant Led Scrutiny Panel have just finished an exercise and have made recommendation to improve levels of satisfaction with the management of council housing estates. Many services are involved in maintain our estates including the bin collection service. If you would like a copy of their report please email tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk

Having home contents insurance can't prevent floods, thefts or fires from happening, but it can help you get back on your feet.

Is your stuff worth protecting from just **£0.64p a fortnight?**

Call: 01324 506356

www.falkirk.gov.uk/applyforhomeinsurance

insurance@falkirk.gov.uk



FALKIRK COUNCIL



From, your local Pharmacist

NHS PHARMACY FIRST SCOTLAND
ADVICE TREATMENT REFERRAL

Did you know your Local Pharmacy can offer a range of health services without an appointment? NHS Pharmacy First is a service offered in every pharmacy across Scotland for **free!** Next time you need medical advice, have a minor ailment, or just have a question about your health condition - **visit your local pharmacy first** before calling your GP surgery. Just ask for a consultation which can be in private if required. After your consultation we could offer you treatment, advice or a referral to another healthcare professional.

Your Pharmacist can also assess and prescribe treatment for a number of specific conditions such as infected bites, female urinary tract infections, shingles, impetigo, hay fever, eczema and dry eyes without the need to see a GP.

For more information on any pharmacy services search for **Pharmacy First Scotland** online or visit the **NHS Inform** website.

NOW OPEN

Come and visit us at **Howard Pharmacy Grangemouth** in La Porte Precinct. Our team is ready to help you with a range of healthcare services. Unable to visit the pharmacy? We offer a **free delivery service** to support those in need.

Call us on: **01324 482 008**



Emergency Hormonal Contraception

Emergency Contraception is available in Scotland for **free**. Your local Pharmacist can offer a confidential consultation to discuss the options available. You do not need to book an appointment, just visit your local pharmacy.



Stop Smoking Service

Still undecided on a New Years Resolution? You could improve your health and save money by stopping smoking. Scottish pharmacies offer a **free** stop smoking service, all you need to do is contact your local pharmacy or search for **Quit Your Way** online.



Compliance Aid Provision

If you or a family member is struggling with their medication, a dosette box could be a helpful solution. These are prepared in store and can be delivered to your home. Contact your pharmacy team for information, or contact us at Howard Pharmacy if you are in the Grangemouth area.



Vaccination Services

Seasonal Vaccinations are available at most local pharmacies. If you are eligible for an NHS Flu or COVID vaccine, visiting a **local pharmacy** for free vaccinations can be easier. Seasonal vaccines are still available at Howard Pharmacy, get in touch for more information.



Find us on Instagram, Facebook and Google by searching **Howard Pharmacy Grangemouth**.





Tenant Information Services Delivers Training to Tenants on How their Rent Money is Spent

A group of tenants have got together to learn more about how their rent money is spent. The Community Engagement Team arranged for the group to receive training delivered by the Tenant Information Service (TIS). Over three sessions the group have learned what Council Tax pays for and what rent pays for. Also learning what the Council as a local authority are responsible for and what the Council as a landlord is responsible for. This training will equip the group to ensure that rent money is being spent delivering a Housing Service.

An area of interest for the group was shared cost communal repairs, this is when for example a roof needs to be replaced in a four in a block, any owners in the building would need to pay a share of the cost. They learned there is much to consider in this process. The group have also discussed contract work, for example the new door and window replacement programme, this is being done by a contractor and is overseen and paid for by Housing Services.

The group have now completed their training and will work with TIS to develop a work plan that will enable them to look at how rent money is spent in more detail.

If this is an area you are interested in, its never too late to join the group. Please email tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk or call Dawna on 07803898099 to register your interest.

Feedback on Rent Increase Consultation

You may remember that back in August - September 2023, we sent you a survey asking about your preferred rent increase option for 2024/25. We told you that we would donate £1.00 to Strathcarron Hospice for every survey returned. Thank you to the 828 people who responded, meaning we were able to give Strathcarron Hospice £828.00.

We asked you, our tenants, if you preferred a 4%, 4.5% or 5% increase, and gave you information on what each option included for planned housing investment.

Over the last three years, rent increased by 2% each year - well below inflation! Since we've managed to keep rents low for the last three years, at the same time costs have gone up. That means a 5% increase is now necessary so we can keep up with the investment needed to maintain housing stock to the required standard, and at the same time meet the affordable housing supply target.

Those in receipt of Housing Benefit will be protected from the increase. Tenants in receipt of Universal Credit will need to notify the DWP of the increase (and will then be protected). Those on low incomes are encouraged to use the benefit calculator to see if they qualify for additional support. To access the benefit calculator please



visit: [Where you live \(entitledto.co.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/where-you-live) or scan this QR with your phone.

Council approved the rent increase in January 2024.



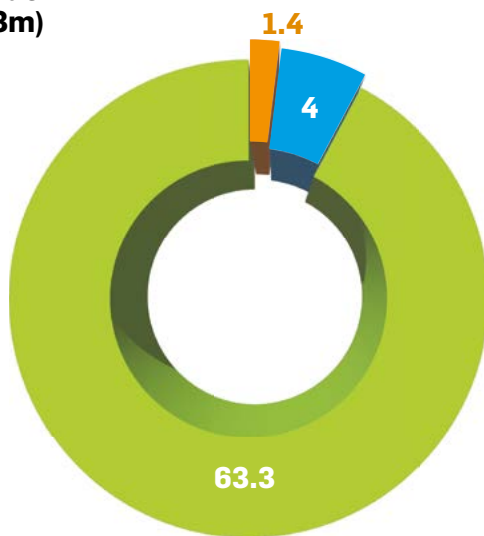
How Your Rent Money is Spent 2022/23

Here is some information Housing Services shared at the Housing Revenue Account Training Sessions, the charts show how the rent money we collect is spent.

Falkirk Council's Housing Revenue Account 2022-23

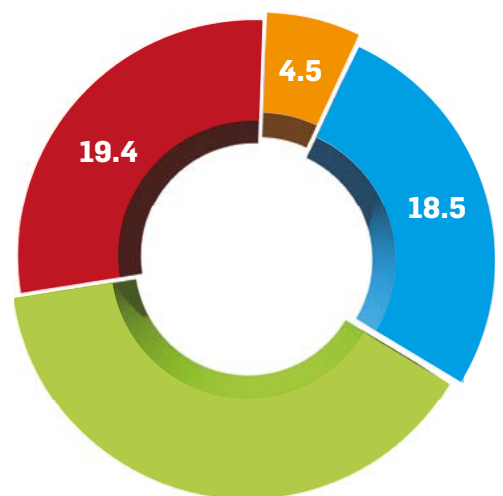
Housing Revenue Funding (£69.3m)

- Council house rents
- Other rents
- Other incomes



Housing Revenue Expenditure (£69.3m)

- Repairs & Maintenance
- Supervision & Management
- Capital Financing
- Other Costs



Expenditure for 2024 we think you might be interested in includes:

£4.45 million
on replacement kitchens and bathrooms

£2.5 million
for electrical safety checks and upgrades

£2.5 million
for heating system upgrades to around 1,100 Council homes

£12.6 million
on new builds

£8.5 million
on buy backs

£2.64 million
to install around 250 Air Source Heat Pumps

The window and door replacement programme remains a priority. Housing Services have been able to accelerate the programme during 2023 and expect to improve around 2000 homes instead of the projected 1800 per year. The window and door replacement project is in year 3 of an 8-year programme.

Keeping an eye on...

93.5%

93.5% of existing tenants satisfied with the quality of their home This indicator was last surveyed in our latest Tenant Satisfaction Survey carried out during Autumn/Winter 2021/22. We continue to invest in tenants' homes and have a £184 million capital investment programme in place for the next five years to ensure our stock is maintained in accordance with the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS).

What is dampness, and how is it identified and treated?



In the last edition of Tenant Talk we included an article on dampness and how this can be prevented, the panel wanted to know more about how dampness is identified and treated, so they submitted questions to the Asset Manager Fraser McNairney. Here is what we asked and how he responded;

At what point (during damp investigations) do Housing Services involve a specialist contractor?

Following a damp inspection, if the Technical Officer identifies any form of dampness, this is referred to our specialist contractor for a survey and report. Any recommended work in the report is instructed.

Are there different types of dampness?

There are three main types of dampness. (1) Rising damp is where there is a breakdown of the DPC (Damp Course Proofing). A chemically injected system is used to replace the defective DPC, also with this system, the contaminated wall plaster must be removed from floor level up to one metre in height and be replaced which includes a protective membrane to ensure there is no salt damage to the new plasterwork. (2) Penetrating damp, where the dampness is

caused by leaking pipes, defective gutters, flashings, missing roof tiles, defective render etc. Prior to any internal remedial works, the source of the dampness will have to be repaired. (3) Condensation damp, mostly occurs through poor heating & ventilation. Extractor fans (where possible) can be installed and guidance/advice can be provided on how to lessen the amount of moisture being produced in a property.

What does damp look like?

A darkening and / or discolouration of the internal fabrics of a building.

How is damp identified?

Firstly with a visual inspection. This is then further investigated and confirmed by electronic analysis.

Whose responsibility is it to treat and prevent dampness?

It is recommended that any proper dampness is treated by a specialist contractor. Everyone has a responsibility to prevent damp. The property must be kept wind and watertight, reporting to repair services any external/internal defects without delay, this prevents further damage. The property must be used for what its intended, be well maintained with proper heating and ventilation.

How long does it take to get rid of dampness?

Once the source of the dampness has been identified & repaired and any internal remedial work completed, there should be no more damp to these areas of repair.

What is wet rot?

Wet rot is the common term used to describe several common wood destroying fungi. The term refers more to the appearance of rotting wood.

What are the signs of wet rot?

The timber may darken in colour and can appear cracked. Some wet rots may result in bleaching of the wood, more commonly in door and window frames.

Where does wet rot grow?

Wet rots are often associated with joists or beam ends and wooden posts that rot where they meet wet walls or the ground. Leaking pipes, rising, or penetrating damp, poor ventilation and poor weather protection can lead to wet rot damage.

How to fix wet rot?

Timber that is decayed should be cut out and replaced with pre-treated timber. Any retained timber in the proximity of the repairs should be treated with fungicide/biocide.

If you need a repair carried out please email housing.repairs@falkirk.gov.uk

Your libraries are here for you!



Libraries are here for you, and are friendly, welcoming places, with helpful staff and lots of free things to do. Here is some of the things you can do in our libraries;

Read a newspaper, grab a book, and make yourself comfortable. Use their Wi-Fi and PCs if you are a member. You will find charging points around the library for your phone and other mobile devices.

Libraries offer free tea, coffee, and hot chocolate during these chilly winter months.

Picture books, story books, graphic novels, biographies, cookery, hobbies, you name it, they have it. They have books in large print and on audio CD too. You can take books home for 4 weeks and, if you want to keep them longer, just let them know. There are no more late fees for overdue books.

Bookbug sessions are free, weekly, song, rhyme, and story sessions for little folk.

Come for the stories, stay for the chat with other parents. You may need to book.

Libraries have specific areas just for children and they do not mind if they make a bit of noise! There is lots happening for families in libraries - ask the staff or look on their website to find out more.

Listen to poetry and stories over a tea or coffee at a **Words for Wellbeing** group or reminisce with other friendly folk at a **Memories Scotland** group. Most libraries also have book clubs and craft and knitting groups.

Libraries have tables for studying and places to plug in your laptop.

If you have been issued with an iPad from a school in the Falkirk Council area, your device will automatically connect to the Wi-Fi for as long as you are in the building.

They have books in Arabic, Ukrainian, and other languages. You can also use the PressReader app/website for free giving you access to newspapers from around the world.

The Libby app has a vast selection of eBooks and eAudio for all ages. Find them both in your app store, log in with your library card and PIN and away you go!

The Home Library Service will deliver books to you if you struggle getting out and about.

For more information about any of the above, ask at your local library or browse our webpage at www.falkirkleisureandculture.org/learning/libraries

Nominate a Neighbour

Pearl nominated Marlene for a 'Good Neighbour' award - Marlene saved Pearl's life when she fell while having a heart attack, Marlene found Pearl and called an ambulance. Marlene continues to support Pearl in her recovery. We thanked Marlene on behalf of Housing Services and presented her with Marks and Spencer vouchers.

“Since we all moved here three years ago, we have become good friends as well as neighbours. She and her husband Eddie are always helping me out with shopping and fixing things.

Several weeks ago, Marlene got me to hospital after I collapsed at home.

Once in the ER room my heart rate dropped alarming low had I been at home when this

happened, I certainly would not be here today.

Since coming home, she has constantly checked in on me, fetching things and just being there for me.

I owe her so much more than just a thank you for what Marlene did for me that day. I ended up with two broken bones in my foot from hitting the floor when I collapsed and had to have a pacemaker fitted after spending two weeks in hospital.”

If you would like to nominate, please email tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk



Responsible Pet Ownership

For Cats

If you live in the FK post code area, you may be eligible for Cats Protection's £10 neutering and microchipping campaign. Eligibility criteria include having a low household income, receiving means-tested benefits (including pension credit) or being a full-time student. Forth Valley Community Engagement Team can help people get their cats neutered and microchipped, providing cat carriers, as well as transport to the vet appointment if needed.

Benefits of neutering your cat include:

- Prevents females from getting pregnant and having unplanned pregnancies.
- Prevents males from getting female cats pregnant.
- Reduces fighting injuries and vet bills.
- Reduces spraying and wailing.
- Reduced risk or cancers and other diseases through mating.
- Less likely to roam, get lost or injured on the roads.

Microchipping is the best way of identifying cats, so any cat that is lost, stolen, or injured can be reunited to their owners. With this scheme you can get your cat neutered and microchipped for £10. To get help, please have a look at Cats Protection's website, contact 07721 451 592, email communityengagementscotland@cats.org.uk or message Neuter Your Cat Scotland Facebook page.

For Dogs

Dog Aid Scotland is a dog welfare charity operating throughout Scotland. As a Charity we receive no Government funding and rely solely on generosity from donations, memberships, and Legacies.

Dog Aid Scotland runs a Neutering Scheme which is available to people who may have challenges in affording the full cost of having their female dog spayed. If accepted for this Scheme, Dog Aid Scotland shall pay £100 towards the cost of the procedure. You must apply and have been accepted for the Scheme before booking your dog in for its operation. Please note that Dog Aid Scotland will only pay the value of one valid voucher per dog. There is a limit of one voucher per household.

To apply please go to our website www.dogaidsotland.com/neutering-application



How to get a MECS System Installed in your Home

You, or someone you care for, may be able to use our Service (MECS) to help live independently at home. This service is available if you have:

- Confusion or dementia
- A physical disability or are frail
- A sensory impairment
- A predisposition to falls or other accidents at home

We can also provide Enhanced Telecare equipment which can work in a preventative or monitoring mode for people with a variety of conditions (e.g. dementia, cognitive, visual, or hearing impairments). We also offer an epilepsy monitoring service providing early help in the event of seizure.

How MECS works

We will install an alarm in your home which, when activated, connects to our Alarm Receiving Centre, via a trigger device/pendant or telecare equipment, such as door sensors or smoke alarms. The Alarm Receiving centre operates 24 hours a day.

This means you can call for emergency help when you need it - for example, if you have fallen and cannot get up.

How we can help you in an emergency

The help you get will depend on what your emergency is.

We may:

- Contact your GP or next of kin
- Send a warden to your home

How to get a MECS system installed in your home

To get a MECS system, please contact MECS on 01324 506520 or email falkirkmeccs@falkirk.gov.uk

You will be asked to submit a referral and we will use the information you give us to prioritise your need. We want to make sure that we help people who are most vulnerable and in the greatest need.



Panel members Liz and Sharon visited the ROOTS Project in Bonnybridge to find out more about what they do and share information with our readers. The Happy Mondays group is a project that invites locals to meet up in a safe warm space where they can meet friends new or old for a cuppa and a bite to eat, nobody is charged for a meal, if you can afford to make a donation that's welcome but not mandatory. When the panel visited, folk were enjoying a Christmas Lunch, with carol singing and entertainment from the Denny Men's Shed.



Have a Happy Monday in Bonnybridge

Happy Mondays gives the opportunity to access services, play board games with others and provide support. The Happy Monday group operates from the Bonnybridge Community Centre every Monday from 11am - 2pm.

That is not all these dedicated volunteers do for their community, Roots started as an Additional Support Needs (ASN) support group for local parents/carers to get together to support one another as being a parent/carer to someone with ASN can be isolating.

Throughout covid Roots were able to expand its services, acquiring a property in Foundry Road, Bonnybridge where they opened a foodbank. Roots food bank continues to serve the local area of Bonnybridge, Denny, Banknock, Hags, Allandale and Dunipace.



'There is always a nice, relaxed atmosphere and a warm welcome to all.'



Volunteers have completed courses such as Introduction to Counselling, Autism Awareness, Disability Inclusion Training, Hygiene Courses, First Aid Training, Safeguarding and Minibus Licence, just to name a few. These opportunities may also be available to you. If you are interested in taking part / volunteering please contact ROOTS at rootsasn@group@gmail.com or call 07808054211.



Freedom of Mind Choir

The Freedom of Mind Choir is a non-audition community choir who sing to improve for good mental health. It's open to adults aged 18+ living in or near Falkirk. They operate on a pay what you can afford basis with members paying between £8 - 20 per month. After a successful funding bid, they also provide accessible transport for those members who need it to access choir.

People who are interested in joining our waiting list for membership from April 2024 can email info@freedomofmindcommunitychoir.com or text the choir phone on 07895 538 057. You can also find out more about the choir here: www.freedomofmindcommunitychoir.com

Here is what one of their members had to say:

“Before I joined the choir, I was lonely and depressed. Since joining the choir, I have met lots of new friends, who are real friends to me. I love singing! Also, since joining, I have been involved in making a CD with proper recording equipment - something I have always wanted to do. The choir arrange transport so I can come along to rehearsals and concerts; if I did not have transport, I would be isolated and housebound. I have purpose in my life now thanks to Freedom of Mind Community Choir.”

Carolyn

Debt Advice in Health Centres

This time of year is historically a difficult period financially for many people and they may benefit from advice & support from our teams.



In addition, with the current work that we do we currently have Welfare Advisers working from the following 5 GP surgeries providing advice on debt / money related issues along with signposting patients to other areas of support. They support people with money worries and help identify the right financial support and ensuring local people are getting the benefits to which they are entitled.

- Slamannan Health Centre (Monday 9am -1pm)
- Bo'ness Road Medical Practice (Thursday 9am -1pm)
- Denny Cross Medical Practice (Wednesday 9am - 1pm)
- Bonnybank Medical Practice / Banknock Health Centre (Tuesday 9am - 1pm)
- Meeks Road Surgery (Thursday 9am - 1pm)

Debt Advice Team

Tel No: 01324 506735
www.falkirk.gov.uk/moneyadvice
debtadvice@falkirk.gov.uk

Welfare Benefits Team

Tel No: 01324 506070
cas@falkirk.gov.uk
www.falkirk.gov.uk/benefithelp

Scottish Welfare Fund

Tel No: 01324 506070
scottishwelfarefund@falkirk.gov.uk



Social Housing Doesn't Always Mean a Council House

Falkirk Council can allocate between 50% to 100% of Housing Association new build properties to people who are on the Council housing list. So, it's important that you tick the box to be nominated for a housing association property when you apply for housing.

We work together with Housing Associations to deliver additional affordable homes through the five-year Strategic Housing Investment Plan. The Plan for 2024-29 was approved by Executive Committee in October 2023 and outlines how we will deliver a total of 1346 additional homes through the Council new build programme, Housing Association new build programme and the purchase of ex local authority properties. Paragon housing Association buy back their properties too.

Housing Associations providing new build housing are:

Cairn, Castle Rock Edinvar, Link, Loretto and Kingdom

If you are interested in Housing Association new builds, please go to Falkirk Council website and type Housing Associations or see Housing allocations - Housing associations | Falkirk Council

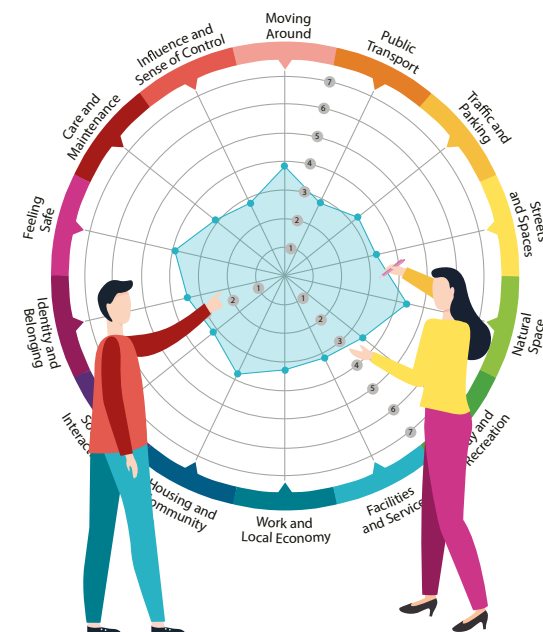


To apply for a Council house and to find out more about Registered Social Landlords please scan this QR code below with your phone.

Tell us about your place!



The planners at the Council would like to say a big **thank you** to everyone who filled in our survey 'Tell us about your place!' Overall, 353 surveys were completed which is in the region of over **4,700** discrete comments which is a fantastic response! The results are summarised in the **Consultation Feedback Report**. This data provides a valuable and welcomed insight into places within the Council area and will help us enormously as we prepare an Evidence Report on which to base the next local development plan, LDP3. There will be further opportunities to contribute to LDP3 in the future, so please keep an eye on our webpage www.falkirk.gov.uk/ldp3.



Tenants' Voices

A Tenants' and Residents' get-together

Tenants Voices Get Together - is an event organised and led by a group of tenants and residents, providing an opportunity for tenants and residents to express their views on housing services. Their aim is to ensure that tenants and residents who use Falkirk Housing Services have a voice in all aspects of service planning and delivery.

They will do this by:

- Creating opportunities for tenants and residents to voice their views and opinions on housing services.
- Engaging with decision makers and managers on housing services.
- Ensuring voices are heard during the housing services planning and policy stages.
- Making sure tenants and residents views influence housing services decisions.

Tenants Voices will provide a variety of ways to take part for example in person/online/collecting your views through survey/comment boxes. Meetings will be held in various accessible locations throughout the Falkirk District. Transport and or travel expenses will be provided if required, to and from venues. The event will be flexible in terms of times and day. The event will be open to the public.

The group would like to host meetings in a Question Time format - they are inviting tenants and residents to submit questions in advance by email or text to tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk or 07803898099 - if you have a question for the panel can you please submit this by 15th March 2024.

The topic under discussion will be the standard of homes, this includes existing, new builds and temporary accommodation. Agenda items also include updates from local tenant and community groups.

**Wednesday 20 March
6-8 pm**

**Tamfourhill
Community Hub**



Tenants' Choice

Falkirk Council's Housing Services is committed to working closely with tenants and other customers to improve the services they offer. The project award scheme, 'Community Choices - Tenants' Choice' allows you to have a say on how rent money is spent to benefit the lives of tenants and/ or the communities where they live. The scheme has been set up to encourage people to think about small projects that would not normally be done through routine service delivery. Projects done through the 'Make a Difference' project award scheme that 'Community Choices - Tenants' Choice' replaces included community gardens, refurbishment of common rooms, buying soft play equipment, providing seating in communal areas, buying digital devices, part-funding bicycles for 'Cycle Without Age' etc. The project you are applying for should aim to meet all, or some, of the following criteria: Benefit Falkirk Council tenants. Help improve the quality of life in your community. Enhance the environment and/ or improve the appearance of a housing estate where there are Falkirk Council tenants. Help solve a problem identified by your group. Applications for up to £2,500 will be considered (subject to availability).



Keep an eye on our webpage for further details and the launch date by scanning the QR code below with your phone.



Wordsearch

H	T	R	P	F	B	S	Y	A	U	D	G	T	I	E	L	O	F
E	Q	A	U	D	O	J	F	S	L	R	K	S	F	A	W	H	S
G	I	S	W	P	R	I	E	N	T	B	O	A	D	U	R	N	G
D	N	A	L	R	E	D	N	O	W	G	A	S	E	J	E	T	R
O	F	D	A	S	A	O	I	W	U	H	V	L	F	T	D	A	E
Y	G	K	F	X	L	R	B	F	C	N	S	A	T	M	P	F	Y
R	N	T	H	D	I	F	G	L	D	B	W	I	R	I	N	E	J
C	I	E	P	O	S	M	T	A	U	T	M	B	H	B	C	B	O
F	Z	H	U	A	T	L	E	K	A	W	O	D	G	Y	N	R	A
A	E	G	R	I	S	C	B	E	L	Q	E	U	T	I	F	U	N
P	E	J	V	Y	K	R	H	Z	C	F	S	R	S	W	D	A	S
T	R	N	A	B	U	S	G	O	K	H	I	F	K	C	H	R	E
S	F	E	U	F	T	N	P	F	C	A	H	U	X	L	A	Y	B
G	B	D	R	A	I	E	S	I	Y	O	G	J	S	K	R	F	W
W	R	H	O	L	A	G	E	V	M	B	L	A	N	K	E	T	L
Z	I	S	R	G	J	R	D	Y	T	P	N	A	H	U	D	S	A
A	K	U	A	U	D	A	H	Q	L	O	F	S	T	C	I	O	G
S	C	E	P	R	F	T	G	I	S	A	R	D	E	E	Z	P	J

Find the following TWELVE WINTER words:

- | | |
|----------|---------------|
| AURORA | FEBRUARY |
| BALTIC | FREEZING |
| BLANKET | HOT CHOCOLATE |
| BOREALIS | MITTENS |
| CURLING | SNOWFLAKE |
| DREICH | WONDERLAND |

Once you've found them simply draw a ring round them, fill in the form below and post us your entry. Wordsearch Competition winners will receive £50 Asda Vouchers and £25 for runners up. **Closing date is 15th March.**

Name:

Address:

Daytime Tel No:

Post to: Tenant Talk Wordsearch, Community Engagement Team, The Forum, Callendar Busi Park, Falkirk FK1 1XR.

Or take a picture of your entry and send to tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk
Employees of Falkirk Council are not eligible to enter. The Editor's decision is final.

Adult Wordsearch Winners

Diane from Falkirk

Mr Davidson from Grangemouth

Janet from Falkirk



Sophie

Rosalie

Elaine

Children's Competition



Name:

Address:

.....

.....

Age Group: 3-5 6-8 9-11

Daytime Tel No:

7-11-year-olds are invited to send us their own autumn themed drawing. £50 Smyths Toys Voucher for the winners of each age category.

If you prefer, you can take a picture of your entry and send to tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk

Please send your entries to:
Community Engagement Team, Falkirk Council, The Forum,
Callendar Business Park, Falkirk FK1 1XR.

Competition closing date is the 15th March.
Winning entries from the Children's Competition will be shown in the next edition of Tenant Talk.



Have Your Say, Get Involved

Falkirk Council has introduced a new digital engagement platform called "Participate+". The platform, which replaces our previous survey tool, has been designed to provide a better online platform for people who live, work in, or visit the Falkirk area to be actively involved in local decision-making. Participate+ provides a range of participation and engagement methods that will enable you to contribute to your community and the decisions that affect it.

There will be a range of opportunities and ways for you to participate including online surveys, public voting, as well as in-person and online meetings and discussions. You can also stay informed on Participate+ you can follow the progress of engagement and consultation projects that interest you, see the results, get updates on new events, and discover opportunities to get involved.

If you want to know more, please scan the QR code below with your phone. If you don't have access to digital devices you can access this at your local library, or if you would like to learn how to use online technology you can find our more by calling Community Learning & Development who offer free digital learning courses across the Falkirk Council areas on 01324 501654.



Housing Online - User Testing

Tenants will already be using the Housing Online system; the next stage is to enable tenants to report repairs online. We need volunteers to help us test this part of the system. If you would like to help us test the system, please contact tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk if you have having problems logging onto the system please email IHMS@falkirk.gov.uk

Recipe

Will's Treacle Scones



What you need...

Self Raising Flour 2lbs

Butter (or Soft Marg) 6oz/170g

Caster Sugar 4 oz/115g

Salt Half Tsp.

Milk (Whole or semi-skimmed) 10fl. oz (half pint)/285 ml

Treacle 10fl.oz 9half pint)/285 ml

What you do...

Rub butter, flour and salt to a fine crumb

Add sugar then mix very lightly

Mix treacle and milk well before adding to mix and form to a dough

Tip onto a very well-floured board

Knead lightly till smooth
(do not over knead)

Roll out with rolling pin to approx. 1 and half inch / 3.5 cm thick

Cut out with your preferred size

Place on a silicone baking sheet or greased sheet

Brush with milk

Bake for 12 minutes in a pre-heated oven at 220c, Fan 200c, Gas 7 (425 f)

Remove and cool on a wire rack

Repairs Satisfaction Online Survey

This survey gives our tenants the opportunity to provide feedback on the repairs service. If you have had a repair carried out in the last 12 months we would like to hear from you.



Please use your phone to scan this QR code which will take you to the link.

Contact Us

One Number: **01324 506070**

Email Housing Services: housingservices@falkirk.gov.uk

Email for Housing Repairs: housing.repairs@falkirk.gov.uk

Please email tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk if this publication is required in another language or format.