

ANNUAL REPORT 2014 - 2015





Contents



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Falkirk Community Trust gratefully acknowledges the support of Falkirk Council.

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Welcome

This fourth year has been an extremely busy one with a particular focus on our objective of helping to secure recognition for the Falkirk area as a vibrant place. We made the most of the great national and international opportunities offered by 2014 Year of Homecoming and the Glasgow Commonwealth Games. Whilst a lot of our effort was directed to some high profile events we ensured that grassroots participation remained a fundamental part of these.

We started the year in great style with HOME, an event to launch the Kelpies and celebrate the opening of the John Muir Way, now running through the heart of our area. Seven celebratory events for the Glasgow Commonwealth Games, all held in one day generated a tremendous community response when the Queens Baton Relay visited. We made a huge effort to successfully secure a new track for Grangemouth Stadium as a legacy of Glasgow 2014. Smaller events in communities, notably the Laurieston School Album project, began the WW1 commemorative programme.

Our first full season as operator of the Helix, a transformed landscape connecting Falkirk and Grangemouth, exceeded all expectations. The unusually good summer weather saw visitor numbers nearly double the



lan Scott Chairman

anticipated. We were delighted with this response, although staff had to work hard to deal with the challenges of visitor management in a new area of operation. Visitor feedback was very positive. The Kelpie tours secured great responses on Tripadvisor and the Kelpies were rated number 1 attraction in the area. The Helix and Callendar House both received 5 star Tripadvisor reviews.

Revitalisation of venues, be they parks, museums or sports centres, play a central role in transforming places. So too does the engagement of people; our work to improve Muiravonside Country Park involved communities in planning and developing ideas; Creative Place projects brought many local performers together; 700 young people broke a Guinness World Record to celebrate opening new tennis courts. Quality and depth of engagement is important to us. Sometimes that means working with small target groups, and we continued our good track record of working with vulnerable groups in the arts and libraries.

Meeting our primary purpose of engaging people in culture and sport requires us to have a strong offer in attractive venues and despite reductions in our core funding. developing our strategic sites and improving customer experience remain a priority. Working closely with Falkirk Council continues to be crucial to ensuring success. The year ahead presents some exciting opportunities. With investment from the Council we look forward to opening a new gym at Stenhousemuir in September 2015, one of the first Trusts to locate a gym in a non-Council owned building. Plans for the Council's redevelopment of the Municipal Buildings will be an opportunity to consider options for a new arts venue.

As always I'd like to thank everyone involved in our work, my colleagues on the Board who give so generously of their time and enthusiasm, as well as the management team and all the staff for their great contribution. This year volunteers played an increasing role in supporting service delivery and so I extend a particular thanks to all of them.



Introduction from the Chief Executive

Our report this year sets out activity under the themes of *Inspiring Active Lives*. We launched this Culture & Sport Strategy for the Falkirk area at the beginning of the year and it now governs our approach to how we develop our services and work with others. Motivating people to participate and lead more active and fulfilled lives is the main thrust of the Strategy and delivering it is about quality of services and venues and working in partnership.

We began to implement the Strategy through the creation of delivery plans for Physical Activity and Wellbeing, Library Development as well as a Masterplan for Kinneil Estate and management plans for Muiravonside Country Park and Callendar Park. The delivery plans are important foundations for change, to address core funding challenges and to deal with an aging asset base. Through the plans we need to clearly define priorities and articulate opportunities both for us and our partners.

Our fundraising efforts in 14/15 were successful and we were awarded over $\mathfrak{L}500,000$ from competitive grant making bodies. Clear priorities and partner endorsed plans will help us to compete in many of the more significant funding programmes. Along with funding for Active Schools and the Youth Music Initiative we received external grants of $\mathfrak{L}1,183,000$, a very positive result.

Continuing to deliver our core services, whilst at the same time growing our capacity to adapt to change, is vital to our sustainability. Following a very strong first 3 years of growth the strategy of growing customer income as the primary mechanism for offsetting a decline in our core funding had mixed results this year. It was challenging for many of our indoor services particularly the main sports centres which underperformed in the face of a very hot summer, the opening of Helix Park and closures for essential repairs.

We made some good progress to address the challenge of improving venues to attract customers. In an effort to make swimming more fun we chose to invest capital funding from Falkirk Council in improving the wave machine at the Mariner Centre and the planned flumes at Grangemouth Sports Complex. There has already been a great customer response and positive financial return at the Mariner and the upgraded flumes are due to open later in 2015.

We need to up the pace of change to find ways to mitigate against further core funding reductions. Our Business Plan for 15/16 will see an increase in our borrowing limit from £200,000 to £1m. We propose to develop business cases for projects that will better meet customer expectations and reduce potential for significant facility closure. Core to the proposition will be generating ideas that will make a venue break even and ideally generate a 'return on investment'.

It is a challenging time for all who work in the public sector but despite the difficult circumstances I believe exciting opportunities for the Trust and our customers lie ahead.



Maureen Campbell Chief Executive

Thank You

The following organisations supported the work of the Trust during 14/15 either through a grant award, sponsorship or providing in kind support.

A&M Imaging Action Earth Amodo Mio ABP Displays Ltd

Avondale Environmental Ltd

Bank of Scotland Foundation

Big Lottery Fund

Blackhall Ladies Probus Club

Bo'net

Bo'ness and Kinneil Railway

Cargo Publishing Ltd
Cashback for Creativity
Caledonian Produce

Central Sporting Partnership

Children and the Arts

Community Schools 2008 Charity

Corbie Inn

Creative Scotland
Cycling Scotland

Education Scotland - Creative Learning

Networks

Eastern Exhibition and Display

EventScotland

Falkirk Common Good Fund

Falkirk Council Falkirk Delivers Falkirk Environment Trust

Film Hub Scotland
Forth Valley College
Frankie and Benny's
Friends of Kinneil

Friends of Muiravonside Country Park

Friends of Scottish Rugby
Goethe Institut Glasgow
Greentrax Recordings Ltd
Heritage Lottery Fund

Kicks for Kids

Maddiston Community Council

Metro

National Library of Scotland

Network Rail

People's Postcode Trust Prentice Westwood Richmond Park Hotel

RJM Sports

Sainsbury's (Denny)

Scottish Football Association
Scottish Library and Information

Council (SLIC)

Scottish Government Scottish Screen Archive

Sisters Boutique

sportscotland

Tapside

Tennis Scotland The Malcolm Group

Veolia Environmental Trust

VisitFalkirk
VisitScotland
West End Gallery
Woodland Trust
Youthlink Scotland
Xtreme Karting

Who We Are

Falkirk Community Trust has charitable status and is a not-for-profit organisation part funded by Falkirk Council.

Our Vision:

Falkirk's communities are the most creative and active they can be

Our Mission:

To lead culture and sport to enrich people's lives in the Falkirk area

Our Values

- > Valuing the positive difference people make
- > Acting with integrity
- > Placing people's needs at the heart of everything we do
- > Being proud of what we can achieve together

Results at a glance

Highlights

Helix visitors exceeded expectation at 952,506 57,340 Kelpie tour tickets sold Bo'ness Recreation Centre admissions up by 14% Lowlights

by 12%

Grangemouth

Sports Complex

admissions down

M ac by by

Mariner Centre admissions down by 16% and gym by 18%

Grangemouth
Stadium
admissions up
by 2%
despite an 8 week
closure for new track

Grangemouth
Gym admissions
up by 4%

Kinneil Museum visits up by 15% despite 8 week closure for refurbishment Community use high schools admissions down by 8% Hippodrome admissions down by over 4%

Active Schools participation up by 12%

Active borrowers from public libraries up by 2%

74,319

Downloadable

services activity

participation

Cultural

Sports
development
course places
booked down by
22%

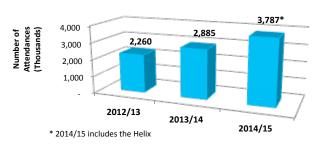
Visits to public libraries down by over 8%

Library activity participation by young people up by 36%

Followers on twitter up by 63% Downloadable e-book issues up by 7% Visits to Callendar House down by 19% Downloadable e-magazine issues down by 29%

Results at a glance

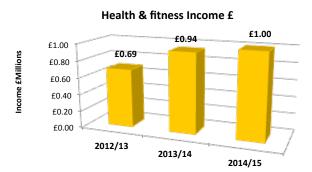
Number of attendances across all venues

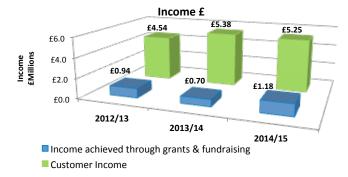


Number of admissions by young people & via concessions

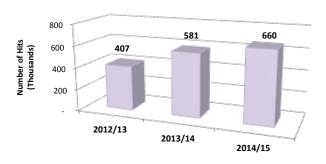


Admissions supported to paid activities via concessionAdmissions by young people

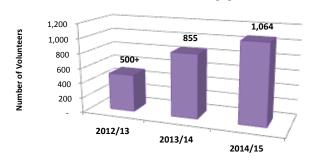




Visits to the trust website (Hits)



Number of volunteers engaged



Meeting Our Objectives

Our ambition is that by 2019:

- We will be operating from venues that people want to use, with a more responsive programme offering better quality for our customers.
- We will be a trusted and valued organisation, secure in our role as a leader for culture and sport and with diminishing reliance on Council funding; we will be more flexible, entrepreneurial and commercially minded.
- We will have created champions for culture and sport and have loyal volunteers and a workforce who motivate a huge cross section of the community to take part in culture and sport that improves their lives.

Meeting our Objectives

We are working to deliver this ambition through 3 objectives. Achievements this year included:

Meeting customer needs

- Made visible improvements for customers at Grangemouth Sports Complex, the Mariner Centre, Grangemouth Stadium and Callendar House Shop
- Established a 'Friends' group for Muiravonside Country Park to help shape the future of this park.
- Increased communications via digital media channels where 70% of our audience are females aged 25-44 and a target family market.
- Implemented a new library management system with significant improvement to the online catalogue.
- Introduced a direct debit swimming lesson membership with added unlimited swimming for members in our pools, offering good value along with easier payment method.
- > Rolled out the new "Go-Card" concessionary access scheme with wider access to activities and greater customer eligibility.
- Secured 5 star reviews on tripadvisor.

Organisational Development

- Increased the range of volunteering activity on offer and grew the number of volunteers working with us.
- Took a learning and development approach to developing the Trust's Vision Mission and Values with all our Team Leaders.
- Our second employee survey demonstrated positive results in satisfaction with working for the Trust; recommending the Trust as a good place to work; working as part of a successful team; and the Trust caring about the health and wellbeing of its employees.
- Created, and consulted on, a plan for the delivery of Physical Activity and Wellbeing in the Falkirk area, with a particular focus on those for whom the health benefits of participation will be greatest.
- Our archives service was the first Scottish archives to be awarded Archive Service Accreditation, a new UK-wide quality standard recognising good performance in all areas of service.

Financial Sustainability

- Upped our Fitness income to over £1m for the first time.
- Took forward our business plan for expanding fitness services and commissioned work to create a state of the art new gym at Stenhousemuir.
- > Secured agreement from Falkirk Council to increase our borrowing limit from £200,000 to £1m with effect from 2015/16.
- > Reviewed our Fees and Charges with a market approach, applying appropriate revisions tailored to the service provided.
- Worked with customer groups to introduce new and appropriate charges for under-16 Club's use of Community Schools.
- Continued to encourage a culture of donating and introduced a new donations box at Newparks Farm in Muiravonside Country Park.
- > Exceeded our £300,000 target for attracting funds from competitive grant making bodies and sponsors with £536,000 of awards made to us.



"Inspirational and achieved so much across Falkirk Schools"



"Well thought out and run programme which we embraced in school"







"Great success and very beneficial for staff and pupils"

Participation

People participating in a wide range of sporting and cultural activity sits at the heart of what we do.

Going for Glasgow - Inspiring young people

With funding from the Big Lottery Fund's Celebrate programme the Active Schools team delivered Going for Glasgow to involve primary schools in learning about the Commonwealth and the Games, as well as to kickstart Commonwealth legacy in the Falkirk area. It was a great success and we received resoundingly positive feedback from schools.

The team took learning from a similar 2012 Olympic project and set out to encourage primary schools to participate over a 12 month period to achieve bronze, silver or gold awards. All Active Schools co-ordinators were involved in the project and in addition to organising and delivering activity, they supported their schools, advised on how best to complete the project and assessed performance throughout. Reflecting the spirit of Glasgow 2014 and the Commonwealth movement, elements of culture and heritage were incorporated along with sport.

44 out of 50 schools took part in two distinct phases – The Games and The Legacy.

The Games phase comprised participation in 10 categories ranging from taking part in commonwealth sports, through Global Citizenship to Junior Journalists. Sports activity was additional to curriculum PE. The new Junior Journalists activity to encourage communications about Going for Glasgow was really well received and responses included, roving reporters, radio stations, newspaper articles, live streams, web site updates and noticeboard information. Global Citizenship forged links with commonwealth countries, via live skype chats, letters, emails and in some cases visits. We're delighted that many schools have maintained these links as part of their legacy.

The team arranged local sports festivals to encourage competition and schools turned out in force to welcome the Queens Baton Relay to the area. Future generations of athletes were motivated and inspired by visits to schools from local athletes, meetings with professional sports people, previous commonwealth medalists, and senior pupils competing at up to international level.

The Legacy phase asked schools to create their own plans which would have an impact for years to come. The team designed an event to enable schools to share thoughts, ideas and best practice at the outset of this phase. Examples being taken forward include setting up a schools sports council, creating new sports teams to enter schools leagues and developing new sports infrastructure in school grounds.

A fabulous awards night rounded off a year of hard work and unforgettable experiences. Schools received accreditation plaques and a trophy went to the overall winning school – Antonine PS from Bonnybridge.



Participation

Breaking a record on our superb new tennis courts - Zetland Park

Over the last 2-3 years demand and interest in playing tennis has grown significantly within the Falkirk Council area. As a result of collective effort a primary schools programme means every young person in P5-P6 receives tennis lessons in school and clubs in the area have reached LTA (Lawn Tennis Association) recommended membership: court capacity ratios. Falkirk Community Trust's U10 indoor programme is at 85% capacity, the Beacon Site at Dollar Park has seen community access increase by 260% (from June 2010 to June 2012), and the coaching programme has reached capacity.

To help support tennis development and meet this growing demand, the Sports Development team sought funding to upgrade 3 existing but rather neglected courts within Zetland Park Grangemouth. The plan was to refurbish the courts, deliver a range of accessible coaching and training programmes and develop a player membership scheme. Partnership

with local clubs was important to ensure a pathway from school through recreational play to performance level.

Tennis Scotland were supportive of the proposal as it fitted with their strategy for tennis development and the proposal also complemented the LTA's Blueprint for British Tennis Strategy. With £15,000 from the Council's capital programme the team were successful in levering in an additional £108,000 of competitive grant funding from **sport**scotand, Falkirk Environment Trust and the Lawn Tennis Association.

The superb new courts at Zetland Park opened in October 2014 having been upgraded to full LTA size specification with porous acrylic painted surfacing in glorious purple and green and secure perimeter fencing.

Over 700 local school children celebrated the opening in style by breaking the Guinness World Record for the most people continuously "keepy upping" a tennis ball with a racquet for ten seconds. The record of 675 people set in Times Square New York, was broken by 679 young people from Grangemouth.

The initial winter 6 month free membership attracted 300 people. Looking forward the team will be running programmes of activity at the courts including a free tennis Tuesday initiative in the summer school holidays as well as a regular tennis4free programme every Saturday.

MAY The Park Gallery hosted a wonderful exhibition that literally had hands on participation built in. As part of Homecoming 2014 Let's Make ART was internationally acclaimed, award-winning illustrator Marion Deuchars' first exhibition in her home area. Marion who was born in Grangemouth said "Much of the exhibition is interactive, but not in the digital sense! So roll up your sleeves and get your hands messy: Let's get drawing, painting, sticking and cutting. Let's Make ART" The result was great fun and hugely well received by young and old alike.

"Great idea – now I want to rediscover my inner child again."

"The children have loved the art and are reluctant to leave!"

"Couple of hours very well spent! We will be back."

JUNE It was a tremendous day of celebration when the Queen's Baton Relay visited the Falkirk area. Thousands of people gave a great reception to the seven events we organised starting in Denny, journeying via Blackness and Bo'ness and culminating in a memorable and atmospheric evening in Helix Park. Throughout the day participants from local schools, clubs, arts and sports organisations as well 102 local athletes, sports people and 'pillars of the community' carried the baton and generated a great community spirit and enthusiasm. As always we were grateful to the emergency services organisations that helped make the whole day successful and safe.

september We are keen to ensure that people have the chance to participate in shaping our plans. This year we led the development of a Masterplan for Kinneil Estate and as well as meeting with many local groups we hosted four dropin events at Kinneil Museum and online consultation. A presentation to the Bo'ness community from Jura Consultants on the findings of their feasibility study of Kinneil House was a key element of the consultation.

NOVEMBER Strictly Botanical curated by internationally renowned local artist Fiona Strickland brought together a stunning collection of botanical watercolours and works in pencil by a dedicated group of artists, passionate and committed to documenting plants in minute detail. The exhibition garnered lots of lovely comments from visitors. We developed a bespoke range of merchandise using one of the images and our botanical painting workshops were fully booked.



DECEMBER As part of our Christmas offer we devised a brand new event in Callendar House taking place in the run up to Christmas day. Brunch and afternoon tea with Santa was a sell out and proved a hit with the very young and young at heart. Delivered by our Heritage Learning team, children had a fun and engaging time helping Santa's elves prepare for the big event.

Participation



Commemorating The First World War Centenary

Under the umbrella title of Memorial, Reflection, Restoration the response to commemorating Falkirk in the First World War has been to facilitate participation of both young and older members of the community. In the first year of commemorations, and with Heritage Lottery funding support, young people from Laurieston Primary School worked with the Archives and Heritage Learning teams on the Laurieston School Album project. Following the fortunes of over 160 former pupils during 1914-1918

originally captured in an album made by the then headmaster, the modern day pupils researched stories and turned their research into an exhibition. This unique project featured in the Glasgow Herald and was included in a TV broadcast for Armistice Day.

Further work with adults and the young people from Laurieston Primary School, led to the creation of 'memory boxes' telling local stories of life during the First World War. The project was designed specifically to bring

generations together and the exhibition will be touring around the Falkirk area throughout 2015.

Arts and Heritage teams marked the anniversary of the outbreak of war in August 1914 with two exhibitions in Callendar House. War: a Conversation with Objects placed contemporary pottery using images and motifs from Falkirk's collections, alongside actual artefacts from the war and more recent conflicts to create a potent starting point for a debate on war. Refractory and Refrigeration was a contemporary take on memory and the language of war, showing as part of GENERATION, a major nation-wide exhibition programme showcasing some of the best and most significant artists to have emerged from Scotland over the last 25 years. They delivered 8 well received outreach sessions associated with this exhibition, when the artist John Shankie visited schools and community groups.





Looking forward

Delivering for older people

The proportion of the population in Forth Valley aged 65+ is rising and we believe older adults are increasingly looking for new experiences and opportunities and will pay for a quality service and product. We will focus on developing programmes, across all our services for older people, both to promote a positive lifestyle and tackle and prevent health issues. During 2015 we intend to develop some proposals that we hope will lead to new programmes being piloted in 2016.

Making more of schools

We will be reviewing the programme and operations of our Community Access to Schools service as we believe there is scope to increase the levels of community use with increased income contributing to more efficient delivery. The 5 High Schools that we operate at public access times all offer a tremendous resource for local neighbourhoods. As well as considering programmes that will be relevant to communities we will be liaising with the Councils' Education Services to work on improving some of the building constraints such as public signage.

Supporting special needs

A tremendous success in 2014 was achieving £43,000 of external funding through the Big Lottery People's Millions Award which is determined by a public vote, and was a first for us. The award was to deliver 'Are

You Dancing?' a project that will run throughout 2015 and is to enable young disabled children to participate in stimulating and creative dance classes that will help them meet new friends, improve their confidence and most of all - just have fun! Specialist dance tutors are delivering sessions designed to encourage movement, cognitive skills and creativity, for children with additional special needs in 10 local schools. Teachers and local dancers are receiving training and each school will get a resource pack and lesson plans to ensure the longevity of the project.

Motivation

We want to motivate people to do more, try something new and get involved in culture and sport.

Creating new Arts Champions

A collaborative 2 year project, between the Trust's Arts and Libraries teams and Falkirk Council's Social Work Services with Young Start funding from the Big Lottery Fund, set out to improve long term opportunities for vulnerable young people.

Utilising arts to improve their confidence, life aspirations, social skills and develop creative talents they worked with a group of 10 young people aged 11-18 from children's homes. Issues such as separation from birth parents, neglect, abuse and experiencing the trauma of loss all contribute to poorer outcomes in relation to educational attainment and positive destinations, than their peers.

We believe that participation in a dynamic cultural programme is a great motivator for young people who may otherwise struggle to gain skills and confidence through mainstream learning.

The group have been meeting weekly at Meadowbank Library working with professional songwriters, musicians, vocalists and filmmakers to create a

series of films, documentaries and animations for screening at a special event at the Hippodrome in June 2015. A bonus of using the library is that this is somewhere the young people would be unlikely to visit of their own accord and it offers the potential to promote an interest in reading. The project has involved learning journeys to a number of other venues including the Panopticon and the BBC Studios in Glasgow, the Festival Theatre in Edinburgh as well as our own FTH to experience the annual pantomime. Discussions are ongoing with the young people to shape the second year of the project.





Motivation

Re-energising our Parks

The Friends of Kinneil Group is a well-established community body who champion the unique heritage of Kinneil Estate. Working with this group has been invaluable in developing the refurbishment of Kinneil Museum and shaping the Estate masterplan. The group regularly host guided walks, events and open doors days at Kinneil House all helping to attract visitors to the Estate.

When the Parks team set out to develop a management plan for Muiravonside Country Park no similar group existed for this site and the lack of community involvement had been identified as a weakness in a previous funding bid. So they made a determined effort early in the process of developing the plan to ask park users what they used the venue for and what they would like to see, to help the team to make the park better for the community. This consultation took the form of open sessions in the Park, direct contact with local interest groups, talking to visitors on site, questionnaires handed out at events and a web survey.

The team specifically asked people how they felt they could be involved in driving forward plans for the site and encouraged them to get involved in projects being submitted to funders. Visitors to the park, special interest recreation groups and neighbouring landowners all told the team they really valued both the park and also the opportunity to speak directly to staff responsible for managing it.

All who had left contact details were invited back to a second event at which the team presented the ideas that had been generated for improving the park. There was a lot of lively and positive interest and from this event a number of people were motivated to volunteer on site and to form a friends group.

The friends group now aims to meet four times a year in an official capacity as well as hold adhoc meetings to progress various projects such as the HLF funded community growing space. The group have drafted a constitution to help them become an organisation which funders will recognise so they can raise resources

to help carry out additional work on site on top of the scheduled projects in the management plan. The consultation process also resulted in the formation of a small practical volunteering group for the park who meet up monthly with the Countryside Ranger to help with conservation and access tasks. This highly motivated community involvement in the site makes a vital contribution to creating a flourishing park.

Highlights of the year

JUNE We held our third Primary 7 Commonwealth Games to tie in with the International Games in Glasgow. The event involving around 2,000 primary 7 pupils from all primary schools in the area and took place in Grangemouth Stadium, **Grangemouth Sports Complex** and Inchyra Park. To run the event we rely on volunteers and this year the opportunity arose for corporate volunteering with Lloyds Bank. Companies such as this encourage their work force to volunteer, releasing them from work on a particular day to support a community event, in this case our P 7 Commonwealth Games. Some 20 volunteers from Lloyds Bank helped out on the day to organise the bus drop offs, refereeing and scoring. Subsequently 2 new volunteers agreed to help steward on the route for the Queens Baton Relay and at other events.

SEPTEMBER The Steeple's 200th anniversary celebrations took place and our THI Heritage Engagement Officer with the Arts and Events teams helped pull together a wide range of activities that mixed music and entertainment with heritage. A particular highlight was the high level of commitment from volunteers.



JANUARY Our gym campaign 'Get Your Spark Back' exceeded target by 7% attracting an additional 351 members across our three main sites and we extended our fitness class programme accordingly. Once again membership prices were frozen to ensure good value for our members.



MARCH The fifth Hippodrome Festival of Silent Cinema programme secured an 82% ticket uptake which was just over our target of 80% and featured 18 events of which 11 were a sell out. Although the majority of the Festival programme was based at the Hippodrome, screenings and activities took place in a further 13 locations across the area. With core funders, Creative Scotland, Falkirk Council and VisitFalkirk, the Festival benefited from numerous project supporters including many businesses from the Bo'ness area, such as Caledonia Produce and local retailers, who have become loyal motivated advocates for the event and help so much to create a Festival atmosphere in the town.

Motivation

Looking forward

Family Friendly Falkirk

How we connect with people plays a big part in motivating and inspiring them. Most of our services provide activity for a family audience and we believe that positive intervention in early life can lay a great foundation to keep them motivated throughout life. Under the umbrella of 'Family Friendly Falkirk' we will look at our programme offer across the Trust, how we can make this more cohesive and integrated and importantly how we communicate it. We intend to develop a marketing plan for 2016/17 that will improve our planning and coordination, will set performance targets and build customer profile with delivery through a branded campaign. Being mindful of the need to ensure that we both grow our income and ensure support for those with less means, we will examine the balance between these in terms of audience numbers and income.

Championing health & wellbeing

During 2014 we created a Physical Activity and Wellbeing Plan for the Falkirk area. This plan has a particular focus on those who do not currently participate and those for whom the benefits of participation could be greatest. Finding ways to motivate and encourage people to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing is a key theme for the plan as is communicating that activity doesn't have to be a chore; it is fun, sociable, mood enhancing and life affirming to do something positive for your wellbeing! Any activity that gets people moving, socialising and interacting has a benefit on their physical, social and mental wellbeing. The Plan covers many aspects of the Trust's activity but there are also a number of important stakeholder organisations including the health sector. Looking forward we will be seeking endorsement for the Plan from Falkirk Council and community planning partners.

Supporting volunteers

Volunteer opportunities with the Trust have increased and the potential for growth in this area is recognised. With growth comes the need to ensure that volunteers are well supported and developed and the opportunities we offer both meet our business. needs and are attractive to volunteers. With funding support from the Bank of Scotland Foundation, a new volunteering resource will work with partners such as Falkirk CVS to focus on attracting volunteers, developing volunteers through the Helix and creating pathways for them to move into culture and sport activity across all our venues.



Venues

Venues provide a focal point for participation and attracting visitors to the area.

Giving Grangemouth Stadium a future

We made a tremendous effort to successfully secure a new athletics track as part of the legacy from the Glasgow Commonwealth Games 2014.

We needed this investment because the track at Grangemouth Stadium was last renewed in 1994 when 2 additional running lanes were added to make it an 8 lane track and a new surface was laid. The lifespan of this improved track was around 10 - 12 years and so over the last few years more and more revenue budget has been required to keep the track in a usable condition. Recent surveys pointed to the inescapable need for replacement in order to continue to host athletics events.

Re-use of the Commonwealth track presented an ideal opportunity at absolutely the right time, to secure a much better quality and more enduring track surface. Glasgow 2014 installed 2 new full size athletics tracks: the competition track within the Stadium at Hampden Park and the training track at Lesser Hampden. Both tracks were constructed using the same material

- Mondo. This type of track has been

used at the last 10 Olympic Games and at other international tracks and Commonwealth Games throughout the world and has a lifespan of around 20 years.

sportscotland and Glasgow 2014 were keen that the track material from the Games venues was used as part of their legacy aspirations and the application for Grangemouth Stadium was successful along with Crownpoint in Glasgow. The Stadium received 50% of the available track material from Hampden Park and with capital funding support from Falkirk Council to meet the cost of installation the track was lifted, transferred and re-laid successfully at Grangemouth.

Further works undertaken to meet the latest requirements of the International Amateur Athletics Federation (I.A.A.F), included:

- New drainage around the high jump fan and start area
- > The west end long jump pit
- > The steeplechase take off area
- The shot putt area, pole vault landing and hammer cage improvements including to aid use by disabled athletes

Also received was £90,000 worth of sporting equipment that included javelins, cones, distance markers, hammers, boxing gloves and many more items as part of the same legacy programme.







"Welcome our Waves"



The Mariner
Centre has the
potential to be a
flagship venue for
'Family Friendly
Falkirk'.

Venues

Making waves at the Mariner Centre

The Mariner Centre opened to the public in 1985 and with its wave machine was at that time a new and exciting venue. Many similar venues have now ceased to operate and the Mariner Centre is one of the few remaining. The Sport & Leisure team saw this as an opportunity to reinvigorate it as a family destination and recapture the success that it enjoyed in the 80's and 90's. The team wanted to make swimming fun again! Looking forward, with the increased focus on the family market the Mariner Centre has the potential to be a flagship venue for 'Family Friendly Falkirk'.

The expected lifespan of much of the Centre's infrastructure was 20-25 years and investment through the Council's capital programme was directed towards replacing much of this essential equipment. The wave machine had operated with limited functionality since October 2011 and by April 2014 was effectively out of commission. Admissions to the centre declined over 2014/15 and investment needed to turn this around.

A comprehensive refurbishment of the wave machine to generate bigger and better waves and replacement of the air handling units with a new energy efficient system was undertaken in March 2015. Following a four week closure the pool reopened on Saturday 28th March to a great reception from visitors. During this period swimming lessons and swimming clubs were relocated to other venues and whilst there was a loss of pool income this was partially offset by staff savings.

A marketing campaign to "Welcome our Waves" was rolled out via the media, social media and promotional material in the weeks leading in to the opening. Opening in time for the Easter School holidays meant the Centre gained an immediate and significant boost to admissions and income. The team increased staffing at peak times to cope with the increased bather loads to ensure all customers had the best possible experience. Customers were delighted and they received many very positive comments. Increased admissions continued through May and realised a 90% increase in income secured on May 2014.

Highlights of the year

APRIL We completed a refurbishment of the gents dryside changing rooms at Grangemouth Sports Complex which included new walls, cubicles showers and sanitary wear which has been very well received by customers. Subject to capital funds from the Council we plan to tackle the ladies changing rooms in the near future.

MAY Prior to demolition of the Church Walk flats we moved Denny Library into a portacabin in Duke Street. Although 60% smaller, we continued to deliver a full range of services from this temporary site. The PCs capacity reduced by 20% (from 5 to 4) but usage only fell by 6%. Library events continued to run utilising a range of community facilities. We expect to be operating from a brand new Library in 2016

OCTOBER We reviewed how we operate our box office services and decided to combine our sports and arts booking teams to be able to offer integrated venue ticket sales. Responding to how the majority of our customers were purchasing we established a sales team at our HQ office in Falkirk Stadium to focus on telephone sales but with the ability to deal with walk up customers. We retained a box office service at the Steeple on the High Street, ensuring that this iconic building continued to fulfil a purpose.

JUNE The Adventure Zone play area opened in Helix Park, with support from funders including sportscotland and Falkirk Environment Trust. Designed to support children of all age groups and abilities to become more physically active through exploring, climbing, jumping, swinging, bouncing and balancing, it's been a huge hit and a destination in its own right for families from across central Scotland. The Adventure Zone is located close to the splash play, the lagoon with its paddle sports programme and pedallos, and the Plaza Café, creating a coherent offer for families. We plan to extend the Zone in 2015 to better cater for disabled and wheelchair bound young people.

MARCH Kinneil Museum re-opened with newly refurbished ground floor displays telling a story about Bo'ness town, and presenting those features which have determined the changing character of the town over the centuries: the Romans, coal, the sea, pit props, pottery, Arts and Crafts and Art Deco architecture, cinema and 'The Best Day of the Year' – the Bo'ness Fair. It was made possible by a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, and received significant contributions from the Friends of Kinneil.

MARCH Bounce World was piloted in Neighbourhood Sports Centres. We wanted to test the assumption that there is a growing trend, and demand, for family based soft play facilities. The aim was to fill underutilised times in the centres and to make use of inflatable equipment out of season. We delivered 3 one day trials at Bankier, Polmont and Denny Sports Centres using 4 large inflatables along with soft toys, balls mats etc. We ran a social media campaign to promote Bounce World to younger families with children aged 3-8. Over the 3 days we attracted 525 customers and took the opportunity to encourage parents to book their children into our Easter programme and highlight other activity within the centres. We received very positive feedback and took much valuable learning from this pilot.

Venues

Looking forward

Attracting visitors

A Visitor Centre for the Helix is set to open in the autumn of 2015 with the Trust taking on the operation of this attractive new venue at the Kelpies Hub. It will provide an ideal orientation point for visitors to the site, with an interpretive exhibition that highlights the transformative impact of landscape, telling the story of how the area has developed over the centuries in a guirky and engaging style. Delivery of excellent visitor services through catering and retail offers will be crucial to meet our income targets, generate repeat visits and grow a loyal customer base particularly over the winter months. We will continue to engage with Scottish Canals to make sure that the visitor experience and service standards across the site are well integrated.

Opening a new gym

In our last Annual Report we were delighted to announce that our business case for a new gym at Stenhousemuir had attracted investment from Falkirk Council.

Following an intensive period of procurement, fit out and recruitment it will open in September 2015 and we are delivering a comprehensive marketing and pre-sales campaign to attract new Health and Fitness members. With state of the art new equipment and surroundings at the Stenhousemuir gym we will be making an effort to ensure as much as possible that we retain existing members at our other gyms.

Developing venues

Following on from the new gym, the development of other new business opportunities in venues will continue. During 2015 we will consider a business case for expanding our soft play provision with a medium to large scale offer, this will look at making use of underutilised buildings and the potential for income growth through secondary spend. The Bounce World pilot along with success of the Adventure Zone as an outdoor destination within the Helix has demonstrated that there is a vibrant local market and families from across central Scotland willing to travel to Falkirk.

Seeking new Arts venue

Plans for the redevelopment of the Council's Municipal Buildings complex will move on apace and an early resolution to the future of FTH will be a focus for dialogue between the Trust and the Council. We will wish to ensure all options for potential sites are considered and work will consider the optimum size and scope of a new arts space.

Planning sports facilities

Going forward asset management continues to be a challenge for the Trust and the Council. We manage a large number of assets particularly on the sports side of our business. We will commission a piece of specialist work to assess the current and future demand for sports facilities, including educational establishments, to assist in the decision making process for future planning and determine need for investment. We expect this work to involve a range of partners including gaining a perspective on the operational needs of clubs and governing bodies.



Partnership

Collaboration and partnership generated new activity, recognition and investment to the area.

Celebrating a Year of Creative Place

Falkirk was awarded Creative Place 2014 status through a successful bid co-ordinated by the Arts team on behalf of a wider partnership comprising: Falkirk Council, NHS Forth Valley, Artlink Central, Forth Valley Open Studios and Falkirk and District Arts & Civic Council. A culmination of 10 years of partnership working, they proposed a programme that would promote and brand the area as a whole as a 'Creative Place 2014' alongside three large arts and cultural projects, designed to involve local artists and help to nurture a new generation of creative people and funded by Creative Scotland.

'The Falkirk Music Pot' celebrated the area's place in the world. With creative lead from Falkirk born musician Brian McNeil, extracts from a new piece of music, the Kelpie Suite, were performed at the Queens Baton Relay event in Helix Park involving professional and amateur musicians and singers from local groups including Falkirk Folk Club, Falkirk Fiddle Orchestra, Sing Forth Community

Choir and school orchestras and wind ensembles. The performers recorded the Kelpie Suite in Forth Valley College's studio. A CD has been published with artwork selected through a High School design competition, and was launched at a live performance as part of the annual schools concert at FTH in March 2015.

The second project took the written word as the focus and Hallglen born author Alan Bisset was the creative lead. The aim was to encourage those who enjoy writing but had maybe never had their work published before as well as up and coming and more established writers and poets.

ALIGHT HERE: An Anthology of Falkirk Writing was created and includes short stories and poems, material selected from Falkirk Archives and new commissioned work from established writers connected to the area. A one man comedy play, 'What the F**kirk?' was commissioned from Alan to tour the Falkirk area.

The final project takes place during 2015 and is set to look at ways to help people find their way around the area's cultural assets. Hosting the national 2015 Creative Place Awards provides a platform for showcasing the area as a cultural destination.



Partnership



Enhancing quality of life through reading and reminiscence

The Library team developed a project in conjunction with Alzheimer Scotland's Maples Centre in Larbert to work with eight individuals with moderate levels of dementia. Whilst this affects daily living, cognitive and functioning skills, many retain the ability to read out loud as reading is a skill learned in childhood and can be retained long into the illness. The aim of the project was to combine the power of reading, story telling and literature with reminiscence to encourage participation, improve mood and increase wellbeing of the participants.

This was new work for the team who knew it would require a different approach from the traditional library group and they drew on skills developed in their other outreach work with a visually impaired reading group, storytelling in primary schools and the home library service. The Reader Organisation and The Scottish Poetry Library were helpful sources of experience in work with dementia sufferers and in care homes.

The sessions continue to take place monthly and focus on conversation and

reading aloud. What distinguishes it from other reminiscence activities in the area is that it is literature based. The sessions are thematic and the team select appropriate book excerpts, short stories and poetry. Of course with every session they got to know the group members better and could make their selection to fit with interests. Humorous stories, songs and poetry are well received - poetry especially so.

The sessions give participants the chance to share memories and experiences, likes and dislikes and as a result the Maples Centre have taken learning and built that into their support plans for individuals. The staff have said that they enjoy a break from being the focus of activity and appreciate the chance to engage in informal chat with the group members. The sessions have also given them ideas for future activities.

Looking forward

Planning together

The Kinneil Masterplan was approved by Falkirk Council in March 2015 and we commenced dialogue with Historic Scotland the other key delivery partner on the establishment of an advisory group to take the Masterplan forward. During the consultation process we secured positive support from community organisations to be part of the advisory group. A priority for 2015 is to engage funders, specifically the Heritage Lottery Fund, to help us to shape a funding strategy that would support us to further develop and work up the ambitions within the Masterplan to attract capital investment from potentially a range of funders. We will facilitate the set-up of the Advisory Group and considering a funding strategy will be one of their first tasks.

Growing our supporters

Developing and growing relationships with supporters of the Trust is a key part of our business activity and will continue to be a priority of the Trust's Fundraising Strategy. The

Trust delivers a range of activity that benefits communities across the Council area and we need to grow the level of support from funding bodies, businesses and individuals to ensure we can continue to do this. The installation of donation boxes at key venues such as Callendar House, Kinneil Museum and Muiravonside Country Park enables visitors to support our work directly. During 2015 we will also be providing visitors with an option to Gift Aid their donation making their support go even further. In addition, new donation boxes will also be introduced at the Helix.

Placemaking through innovation

2016 has been designated as a year in which Scotland's achievements in innovation, architecture and design will be celebrated with a 12 month programme of events aimed at supporting and driving the nation's tourism. The area is renowned for industrial and landscape innovation: from the development of steam power (James Watt and William Symington) to the engineering innovation of the

Falkirk Wheel and Kelpies – all of these, and more, help make and define the area. We will be working with other public and third sector partners to create an appealing programme and ideas include exhibitions, events, workshops and talks, all of which encapsulate the theme of Creating Place – placemaking through innovation, architecture and design. We will also develop strands linked to existing programmes (Doors Open Day, the Falkirk THI, the Hippodrome and public library programmes).

Partnership

The Helix partnership and project design teams secured a number of awards throughout the year.

AUGUST saw a Scottish Green Apple Environmental Award and **JULY** a Structural Steel Design Award.

SEPTEMBER our efforts to garner public support paid off through winning the high profile National Lottery Award for Best Environmental Project, following a public vote to find the nation's favourite lottery-funded projects. **MARCH** the year rounded off with a Civic Trust Award for landscape design.

SEPTEMBER We worked with local business Eden Consultancy and the Royal Commission on the **Ancient & Historical Monuments** of Scotland (RCAHMS) to display some fascinating aerial photographs of the area spanning decades of the first half of the 20th century. This exhibition took place in a vacant shop unit in the Howgate Centre and was a pioneering 'pop up' museum. Another new departure for us was an enhanced use of volunteers to invigilate the exhibition, and in particular members of local heritage groups were able to bring their knowledge and enthusiasm to aid interpretation.

NOVEMBER The Sports Development team worked with a new partner, Network Rail, to tie in with the line upgrade and new rail bridge in Larbert. The focus of the project was to introduce safety messages to the local schools through football. There were pre & post questionnaires around rail safety and this monitored an increase in the pupil's safety knowledge after the programme. With funding from Network Rail materials were provided for schools to use to build this knowledge. and the project finished off with a football festival at Stenhousemuir FC ground where a representative from Network Rail spoke very highly of the initiative. We are encouraged to bid for further funding to deliver a similar project in other areas of Falkirk where Network Rail improvement work is planned.



DECEMBER Work started in Kinneil Woods on a replacement planting project. It included felling, thinning and clearance of trees which had blown down. 25,000 new trees were planted in this first phase of a long-term forest plan for Kinneil Estate to conserve and enhance the landscape. The £160,500 project was developed on our behalf by the Central Scotland Green Network Trust (CSGNT) and with other partners providing funding support. We could not have achieved this project without the expertise and support gained through partnership

Trading Company

Financial performance

We turned around overall trading performance across the Company and achieved a positive final position with an overall surplus of £39,690 which was passed to the parent company as a charitable payment. A considerable improvement on previous years, it was due to good performance at the Plaza Café, retail sales and a share of income received from mobile catering providers at the Helix.

We had anticipated lowering the operating deficit (excluding Helix) to £51,000 this year and put a lot of effort into working towards this. Unfortunately the outturn across trading locations (excluding Helix) was a deficit of £83,000 (£76,000 in 13/14).

This was mainly due to a fall in sales primarily in the sports facilities and in line with a drop in overall admissions. The good weather over the summer displaced customers to the newly

opened Helix and month long closures at 3 main sports centres are thought to have contributed to under performance. Arts and Heritage improved on their losses due to changes in marketing and staff movement.

Income

Turnover - £1,089,045

Expenditure

Cost of sales - £1,006,105 Administration costs - £43,250 Charitable payment - £39,690

Falkirk Community Trading Limited

Directors	Ann Cowen (Chair)	(appointed 23rd June 2011)
	Maureen Campbell	(appointed 23rd June 2011)
	lan Scott	(appointed 23rd June 2011)
	Chris Morris	(appointed 17th July 2014)
	Clive Ramsay	(appointed 17th July 2014)
Registered Office	Suite 1A	
	The Falkirk Stadium	
	4 Stadium Way	
	Falkirk	
	FK2 9EE	
Company number	400658	





Highlights over the year

Menus were developed at all sites with improvements including sandwiches, 'kids meals' and special menu of the day. A new menu at Callendar House was influenced by a mystery shop carried out in January 2015. We continued to increased use of Fair Trade products from local sources and suppliers where pricing is competitive. Vending services were returned in-house from serviced vending.

Temporary catering offers were on site at the Helix and although some complaints were received, the return was exceptional. A wide range of catering offers has been sourced for 2015. The Plaza Café operated from March – October 2014 and performed considerably better than anticipated with sales of £145,670. Enhanced by exceptional weather, the addition of the Adventure Zone and higher than expected visitors numbers to the site.



We delivered in-house World Host training sessions for trading staff to be completed by May 2015. Our staffing costs continue to have an impact on performance and we started to reduce this through vacancy management.



The food offer for birthday parties was developed and packages rolled out to five sports venues and the Hippodrome. An improved lunch/brunch offer and more marketing saw an increased uptake of this. There has been a steady increase in external catering at FTH although there has started to be a decline in alcohol sales due to the change in drink drive limits.

Discreet marketing campaigns were undertaken for retail, conferencing and wedding markets. In particular the Wedding Fair was well received and we will continue with this. As a result Callendar House experienced an increase in wedding enquiries and bookings.

Trading Company

Looking forward

Expanding operations

Trading activity in 2015/16 will expand to take on catering and retail operations at the new visitor centre at the Kelpies Hub due to open in autumn 2015.

Improving performance

We expect to reduce net subsidy (excluding Helix) to £20,500 and return an operating profit (including Helix) of £80,750 – this is an increase from our closing position 14/15 of £41,060 operating profit. We will need to maintain a greater focus on management information and use that to effect changes immediately. A

stronger sales and marketing focus in arts and heritage will be required to drive business along with a continuous and sustained encouragement of our staff to improve the level of service they provide to customers and a greater level of awareness in relation to the commercial imperatives of the trading company.

Effective management

Our aim in 2015/16 is for the average GP to increase from 59% to 64% and staff costs to reduce from 58% of sales to 48%. Controlling our stock will continue to be an important consideration as will better staff utilisation across the operations. We

purchase within the Scotland Excel Agreement with Falkirk Council and will review this to determine its value for money. We found that the contract limited our ability to develop greater links with the small independent suppliers that we sought for the Year of Food and Drink.



Governance

Falkirk Community Trust is a company limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital. Falkirk Council is the sole member of the Company. The Company commenced trading on the 1st July 2011 and any surpluses generated by the Company are reinvested to improve the facilities and services which we provide to the communities of the Falkirk area.

The Company is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association through a Board of eleven Directors. Five independent Directors are drawn from local business, sport, culture, environmental and learning sectors. Five Directors are nominated Elected Members of Falkirk Council. There is provision for an Employee Director nominated by Trust staff.

The Board has the ability to appoint two additional co-opted Directors to allow the Trust to benefit from relevant skill sets and expertise as required. One co-opted Director is on the Board in recognition of the Trust taking on the operation of the Helix. The Chair of the Board is elected from the Independent Directors.

Falkirk Community Trust Limited

Financial Performance

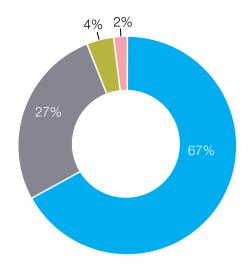
Falkirk Community Trust accounts have been prepared for the year to 31st March 2015. Turnover for the period was £19.5m and the level of customer income received was marginally down on last year. The service fee from Falkirk Council remains at 67% of our income. There was an increase in funds received from other sources through fundraising from a range of funding bodies. Grant income was for delivering the Active Schools and Youth Music initiatives as well as funding sport specific development posts.

An underlying surplus of £78,000 will contribute to the Trust's general reserves and £114,000 to restricted reserves. Due to changes in the spend profile for the interior fit out of the new Visitor Centre for the Helix a specific restricted reserve of £457,000 will enable this work to be carried forward to 2015/16.

The full accounts for 2014/15 can be viewed or downloaded from our website at www.falkirkcommunitytrust.org

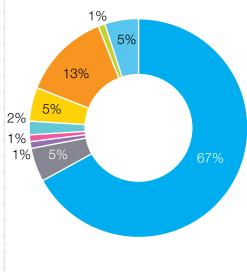
How we were funded

Total	£19.520.000	
Grants	£330,000	2%
Fundraising	£853,000	4%
Income	£5,252,000	27%
Falkirk Council	£13,085,000	67%



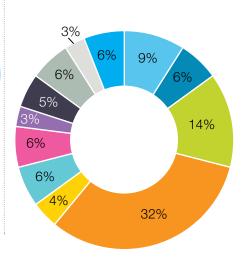
How our income was generated

Arts	£881,000	5%
Heritage	£87,000	0%
Libraries	£117,000	1%
Sport	£2,457,000	13%
Fitness	£1,000,000	5%
Helix	£381,000	2%
Parks & Golf	£248,000	1%
Courses	2240,000	1 70
Outdoors	£158,000	1%
Governance & Management	£17,000	0%
Trading Activities	£1,089,000	5%
Falkirk Council Service Fee	£13,085,000	67%
Total	£19.520.000	



How our resources were spent

	•	
Arts	£1,689,000	9%
Heritage	£1,105,000	6%
Libraries	£2,679,000	14%
Sport	£6,158,000	32%
Fitness	£781,000	4%
Helix	£1,040,000	6%
Parks & Golf Courses	£1,116,000	6%
Outdoors	£571,000	3%
Business Development	£932,000	5%
Trading Activities	£1,049,000	6%
Governance & Management	£612,000	3%
Falkirk Council Service Payments	£1,139,000	6%
Total	£18.871.000	



Our Venues and Services

With a turnover of £19.5m and 486 employees (224 full-time and 262 part-time) as at the end of March 2015, we manage over 80 sites across the Falkirk Council area and offer a huge range of programmes and activities for a wide variety of customer groups. We like to think that we are able to offer services of interest and value to all Falkirk area residents throughout their lives from preschool to retirement.

The venues we operate and manage are diverse and range from the unique heritage assets of Grade A listed Callendar House and Hippodrome Cinema, specialist facilities such as the regionally significant Grangemouth Indoor Athletics Centre to local libraries and sports venues that service neighbourhood populations.

Arts

- FTH (Falkirk Town Hall)
- Hippodrome
- Steeple Box Office
- Bo'ness Town Hall
- Grangemouth Town Hall

Heritage

- 6 Callendar House & Park
- Museum Store
- 8 Kinneil Museum
- Grangemouth Museum

Libraries

- 10 Bo'ness Library
- 11 Bonnybridge Library
- 12 Denny Library
- 13 Falkirk Library
- 14 Grangemouth Library
- 15 Larbert Library
- 16 Meadowbank Library
- 17 Slamannan Library

Fitness

- 18 Circuit Health & Fitness Club -Grangemouth Sports Complex Outdoors
- 19 Circuit Health & Fitness Club -Bo'ness Recreation Centre
- 20 Circuit Health & Fitness Club -Mariner Centre
- 21 Circuit Health & Fitness Club -Stenhousemuir

Sport

- 22 Bankier Sports Centre
- 23 Bo'ness Recreation Centre
- 24 Denny Football Centre
- 25 Denny Sports Centre
- 26 Grangemouth Golf Course
- 27 Grangemouth Sports Complex
- 28 Grangemouth Stadium
- 29 Hallglen Sports Centre
- 30 Mariner Leisure Centre
- 31 Polmont Sports Centre 32 Polmonthill Ski Centre
- 33 Stenhousemuir Sports Centre
- 34 Woodlands Games Hall

Parks

- 35 Kinneil Estate
- 36 Muiravonside Country Park
- 37 Zetland Park amenities
- 38 Dollar Park amenities
- 39 Helix Park

40 Outdoors Base





