

FALKIRK LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN MONITORING REPORT



Falkirk Council

June 2020

Contents

1. Introduction	Page 01
2. Key Trends at a Glance...	Page 03
3. Monitoring Indicators	Page 05

Thriving Communities Page 05

- Population and household numbers by settlement
- Annual housing completions
- 5 year effective land supply
- Delivery of affordable housing
- Delivery of Strategic Growth Areas and other housing sites
- Briefs/masterplans prepared
- Quality of development on the ground against masterplan/brief objectives
- Delivery of strategic infrastructure projects
- Levels of developer contributions secured and used
- School rolls/capacity/projections
- Capacity pressures on primary healthcare facilities
- Quantity/quality/accessibility of open space in settlements
- Road accident statistics

Growing Economy Page 19

- Levels of employment/unemployment
- Employment land supply and take up
- Delivery of Strategic Business Locations and constituent sites
- Briefs/masterplans prepared for strategic sites
- Visitor numbers/expenditure
- Delivery of strategic trunk and local transport projects
- Delivery of Town Centre opportunities
- Investment in Town centre improvements
- Town centre vitality/viability indicators (floorspace, vacancies, expenditure leakage/retention, property rental/yields, pedestrian flows, CACA rankings etc)

Sustainable Place Page 29

- Traffic growth
- Modal share of sustainable travel modes
- Rail/bus patronage
- No of schools covered by school travel plans
- Renewable energy installed capacity (strategic and domestic)
- Accessibility levels of new housing to facilities and public transport
- Number of flooding events
- Investment in flood management/alleviation
- Amount of new development in flood risk areas
- Reduction in pluvial flooding through on site management
- Delivery of greenspace projects contributing to green network
- Allotments created
- Number/length of paths maintained/created
- Status/coverage of LBAP priority habitats and species
- Status/coverage of international, national and locally designated nature conservation sites
- Local nature reserves designated
- Incidence of invasive species
- Overall level of vacant and derelict land, and amount brought back into productive use
- Old mineral/landfill sites restored
- Investment in placemaking priority areas
- Investment in building restoration/public realm improvements in Conservation Areas
- Listed buildings brought back into use/ demolished
- Damage to/loss of archaeological sites through development

- Investment in positive management/promotion of Antonine Wall WHS
- New development impacting on the integrity/setting of the Antonine Wall WHS
- New development impacting on integrity/setting of historic gardens and designed landscapes
- New development impacting on setting of battlefield sites
- Operational/consented mineral sites
- Air quality and numbers of AQMAs
- Noise/odour complaints
- Loss of prime agricultural land, carbon-rich soils or rare soils
- Water quality/waterbody status
- Levels of waste arising/recycling levels
- Landfill capacity

1. Introduction

The Falkirk Council area is situated right at the centre of Scotland, at the heart of the road and rail network. It has a growing population (160,130 in 2018) and comprises a network of towns and villages, each with its own strong identity, Falkirk being the principal administrative and service centre. The area retains a strong manufacturing base within a diverse economy. Grangemouth hosts the largest petrochemical complex in Scotland and is also the country's busiest container port. The area has a diverse landscape character and a proud history stretching back to Roman times. The Falkirk Council area is dynamic and forward looking with new popular tourist destinations such as the Falkirk Wheel, the Kelpies and Helix Park.

The Spatial Strategy in the LDP indicates how the area is intended to grow and develop over the lifetime of the plan in terms of housing, infrastructure, countryside and green belt. The overall strategy is one of sustainable growth. This includes:

- 675 new homes per year across the Council area;
- 4 Strategic Business Locations and a range of transport, education healthcare and flooding drainage infrastructure;
- Focus on the network of centres for retailing and leisure; and
- An interconnected Falkirk Green Network.

Falkirk Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2) is at a relatively advanced stage, and the Council has now received the examination report. LDP2 is due for adoption in summer 2020.



2.Key Trends at a Glance...

Population -

Growth Slowing

The population of the area is at its highest level, with the current mid 2018 estimate at 160,340. This represents a 10.3% rise over the 2001 census population of 145,270. However, population growth experienced since the last monitoring report in 2014 has slowed compared with the previous period. Estimated growth in population during the period from mid-2014 to mid-2018 was 1.7%. This is compared with 2.9% for the period mid-2010 to mid-2014. High levels of growth experienced over the last 20 years has had a number of implications for the area, notably in terms of infrastructure capacity, including the transport network and education, which the Council continues to attempt to address.



Housing -

Completions falling short of LDP target

Over the past five years some 2,485 homes have been built. Annual housing completions have declined from 578 in 2014/15 to 392 in 2018/19, falling well short of the LDP target of 675. There has also been an ongoing shortfall in the effective 5-year housing land supply. This is due in large part to delays or lack of movement on a number of key allocated sites, which in turn is attributable to infrastructure constraints and lack of funding. 390 affordable homes have been developed in this period, about 15% of the total, but again there has been a sharp decline in annual completions over the period due to delay in bringing increasingly complex sites forward.

Nonetheless, seven of the LDP's 12 Strategic Growth Areas are under construction. Design and preparatory work on the upgrading of the M80 Junction 7 slip roads, for which the Council has secured £1.5m from the Housing Infrastructure Fund, is ongoing, and is an example of innovative funding mechanisms designed to unlock growth. This scheme will help to unlock the two stalled Strategic Growth Areas at Banknock and Dennyloanhead. The Council has also committed to front funding the remaining phases of the Denny Eastern Access Road, which will facilitate further development at the Denny South East Strategic Growth Area.



2.Key Trends at a Glance...

Employment -

TIF helping to unlock key sites

The total amount of land allocated for business and industry in the LDP is around 350 hectares of which 42% is immediately available, and 53% marketable with constraints. A considerable amount of investment is needed to make sites ready for development. The Council has taken steps over the last 5 years to unlock the development potential of sites such as the Falkirk Gateway through the Tax Incremental Finance Initiative (TIF), an ongoing £67m programme of site enabling works, local and strategic road network improvements, and flood prevention measures. The Council's Investment Zone bid is aiming to take this level of infrastructure investment to a new level.

Employment land take up in the period 2014-19 is 17.7 hectares, including various retail, business, logistics and energy developments. Particularly notable is investment in Grangemouth, with Ineos, Forth Ports and Calchem all developing their businesses and looking to unlock further opportunities.

Town Centres -

Continuing to face major challenges

Our town centres continue to face major challenges adjusting to social and economic changes in the way people shop. Falkirk Town Centre in particular has seen increased vacancy levels and the departure of national multiples from the High Street. Nonetheless, work continues to improve our centres and help them adapt and diversify. The Townscape Heritage Initiative in Falkirk Town Centre has now concluded with around £5.5 million invested in heritage and regeneration projects. The planned procurement of a new Council HQ/Arts Centre in the town centre provides a major opportunity for regeneration. Phase 1 of the redevelopment of Denny Town Centre is now complete, with consideration being given to the best way forward for Phase 2. Extensive consultation work with the community has been undertaken with regard to the future of Grangemouth Town Centre. £2 million of Town Centre Regeneration Fund money has also been secured for further investment in projects across the various centres.



2.Key Trends at a Glance...

Tourism -

Continuing its upward trend

The Council has seen continued growth in tourism throughout this monitoring period, building on the success of Helix Park and, the Kelpies and the John Muir Way. These, together with the Falkirk Wheel, the Antonine Wall and other attractions have led to a considerably strengthened tourist offering and stimulated further investment on tourist accommodation and services.

Green Network -

Continuing to win awards and deliver multiple community benefits

Under the Falkirk Greenspace Strategy, there has been continued successful investment in new and improved open spaces, habitats, and paths across the area. The area won the Ramblers' Association 'Best Walking Neighbourhood in the UK' award and greenspace projects continue to enjoy success at the Scottish Awards for Quality in Planning.



GREENSPACE PROGRESS



15 open spaces improved including priority open spaces and national/regional level open spaces and 6 green network opportunities delivered.

£5 million invested in Core Path Network since 2014.

Crowdfunding projects launched through the MyParkScotland website for greenspace.



PROJECTS DELIVERED SINCE 2014

Carron Dams Nature Reserve - Overall Winner of Scottish Awards for Quality in Planning.

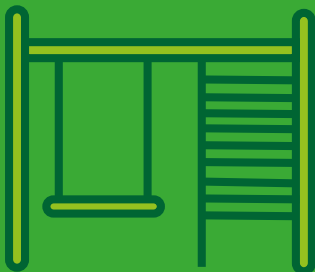
Creation of 5.5. ha of new wildflower meadow and enhancement of 5.3ha of wildflower meadow at 11 locations along the John Muir Way as part of the Pollinator Way Project in partnership with Buglife and CSGNT.

Play park improvements and greenspace at Valley Park, Maddiston. Park improvements at Key Open Space Assets in Ash Park, Banknock (around £40K invested) and Gairdoch Park, Carronshore (around £30k invested).

Enhancement at Kinneil Local Nature Reserve in Bo'ness including completion of the Bo'ness Buoy project and habitat enhancement.

New 3G pitches in Bo'ness and Denny.

Abbotshaugh Bridge completed linking Abbotshaugh to Carron completed in 2018.



3. Monitoring Indicators

This section of the monitoring report will examine how policies in the LDP are performing in relation to monitoring indicators set out in Appendix 5 of the LDP.

Thriving Communities

Strategic Objective:

To facilitate continued population and household growth, and the delivery of housing to meet the full range of housing needs.

Population and Households

Policy HSG01 Housing Growth reflects the strategic vision of population and household growth. The policy sets out our annual housing targets and seeks to ensure that the Council maintains a 5 year effective land supply, with an average growth of 675 dwellings per year. The Housing Land Audit, produced annually is the main mechanism through which we can monitor the effectiveness of our policy, and the targets within it. The annual HLA identifies whether or not there is a shortfall in the housing land supply. Population estimates and household projections monitor the change in population and settlement areas to allow us to assess how our population is changing.

One of the strategic objectives of the LDP was to allow for population growth to 168,000 by 2034. Our population continues to grow, albeit at a slower rate. The population estimate for the Council area is 160,340 for mid-2018, our highest ever population, compared with 157,690 in 2014. This represents a change of 1.7% compared with 2.9% for the previous four years, indicating a slowing of the growth rate. Growth from 2001 to 2011, and from 2011 to 2018, with a Scottish comparison, is illustrated below.



3. Monitoring Indicators

Population change across each of the LDP settlement areas in the period 2011-2017 is shown in the table below. Areas which have seen substantial new development such as the urban areas of the Braes and Larbert/ Stenhousemuir have shown substantial continued population growth. Falkirk, Denny and Bonnybridge have seen slight increases. Grangemouth continues to experience decline. The rural areas present a mixed picture, with the northern villages, and the countryside outwith settlements, showing significant growth, but the southern Braes villages showing slight decline. It should be noted that the figures only go up to 2017, so the effects of more recent housebuilding will not be captured.

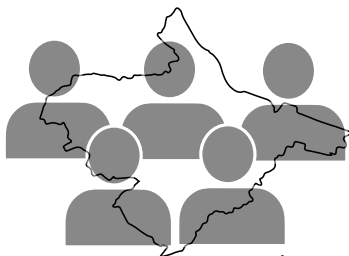


POPULATION TRENDS



FALKIRK 2011
CENSUS
POPULATION
155,990

+7% SINCE 2001



FALKIRK MID-2018
POPULATION ESTIMATE
160,340

**+2.8% SINCE
2011 CENSUS**



SCOTLAND MID-2018
POPULATION ESTIMATE
5,438,100

**+2.7% SINCE
2011 CENSUS**

Source: National Records of Scotland and Falkirk Council Research and Information Team

3. Monitoring Indicators

LDP Settlement Area Population	2011 (Census)	2017 (Estimate)	% Change 2011-2017
Falkirk	38,675	39,069	+1.0
Bo'ness	15,053	14,852	-1.3
Bonnybridge and Banknock	12,944	13,143	+1.5
Braes Urban Area	22,117	24,566	+11.1
Denny and Dunipace	12,761	12,819	+0.5
Grangemouth	17,373	16,535	4.8
Larbert and Stenhousemuir	24,722	26,180	+5.9
Rural South Villages	7,083	6,947	-2.0
Rural North Villages	2,745	3,044	+10.9
Rural Remainder	2,618	3,063	+17.0

Source: National Records of Scotland

The estimated number of households and houses in the Falkirk Council area for the years 2011-2018 is shown below:

Year	Housing Stock	Increase over previous year	Households	Increase over previous year
2011	71,303		68,860	
2012	71,742	+439	69,230	+370
2013	72,128	+386	69,443	+213
2014	72,624	+496	69,693	+250
2015	73,290	+666	70,431	+738
2016	73,767	+477	71,072	+641
2017	74,361	+594	71,800	+728
2018	74,826	+465	72,267	+466

(Source: National Records of Scotland and Falkirk Council Performance and Intelligence team.

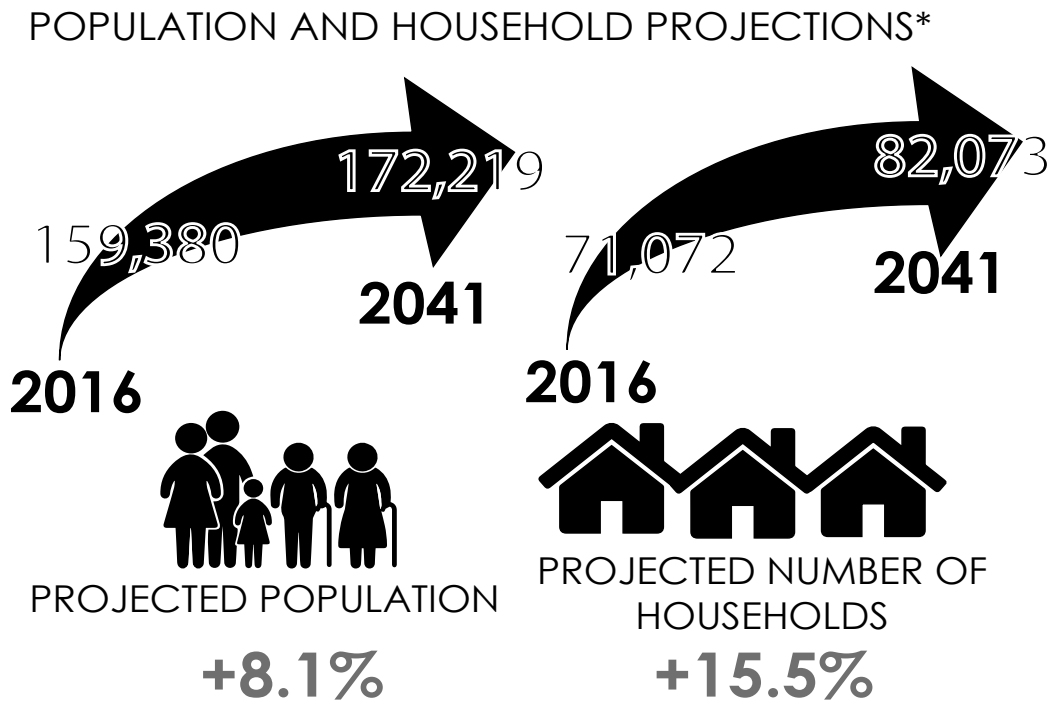
Over the period from 2014-2018, there been in an estimated 3% increase in the number of households, compared to a 1.2% increase in the previous equivalent 3 year period.

(Source: National Records of Scotland and Falkirk Council Performance and Intelligence team.

3. Monitoring Indicators

Household and Population Projections

Between 2016 and 2041, the number of households in the Council area is projected to rise by 14%, which is above the average of 13% Scotland-wide.



*produced July 2018 by Falkirk Council Performance and Intelligence Team

There is also projected to be an increase in the total number of single person households, rising from 33% of the total number of households in 2016 to 36% in 2041, and a continuing fall in average household size. In line with the Scotland-wide trend, the proportion of older people will continue to rise along with increased life expectancy. The percentage of the population over the age of 65 is projected to increase from 18% in 2016 to 26% in 2041. (Source: National Records of Scotland Population and Household Statistics)

The housing market, as well as the need for health and social care facilities and other related infrastructure will need to respond to these trends.



3. Monitoring Indicators

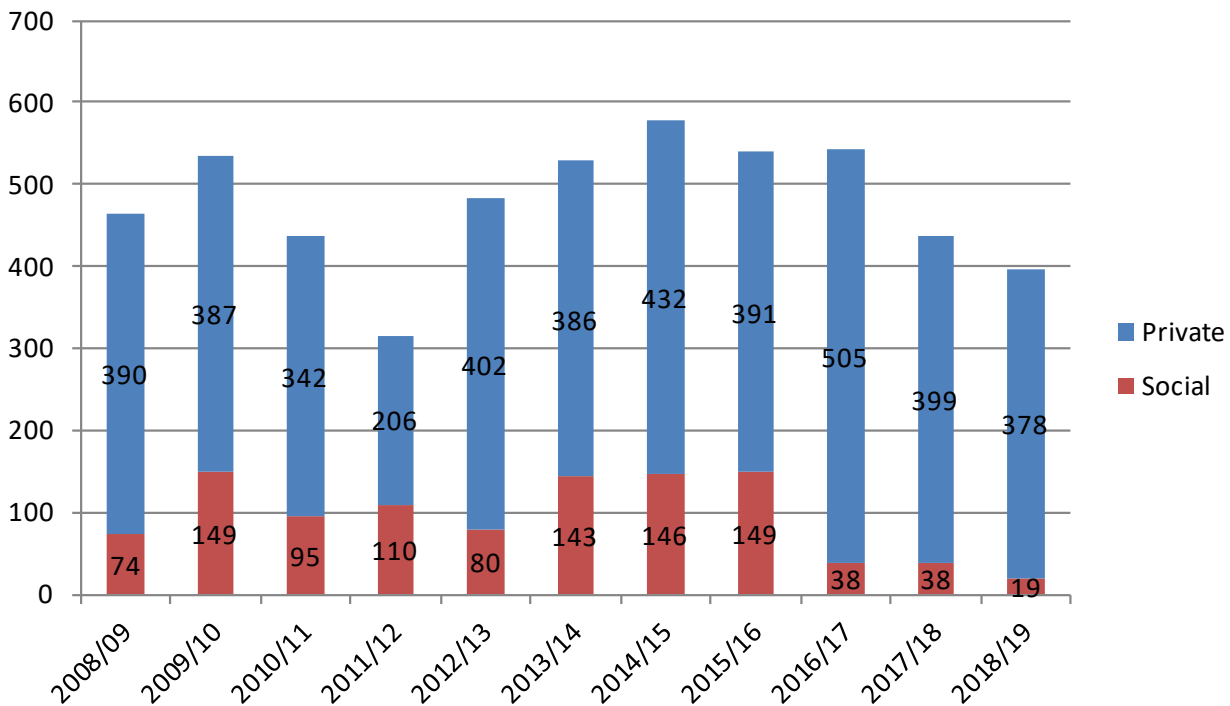
Annual Housing Completions

The graph below shows housing completions between 2008 and 2019, and illustrates the marked difference in annual housing completions between the pre- and post- recession years. Post-recession, annual completions have generally fluctuated between 316 and 578.

Over the past five years, some 2,485 homes have been built. Annual housing completions have declined from 578 in 2014/15 to 392 in 2018/19, falling well short of the LDP target of 675. This is due in large part to delays or lack of movement on a number of key allocated sites, which in turn is attributable to infrastructure constraints and lack of funding. Meanwhile, several large sites which have been delivering units over the past few years are now completed or nearing completion.



Housing Completions

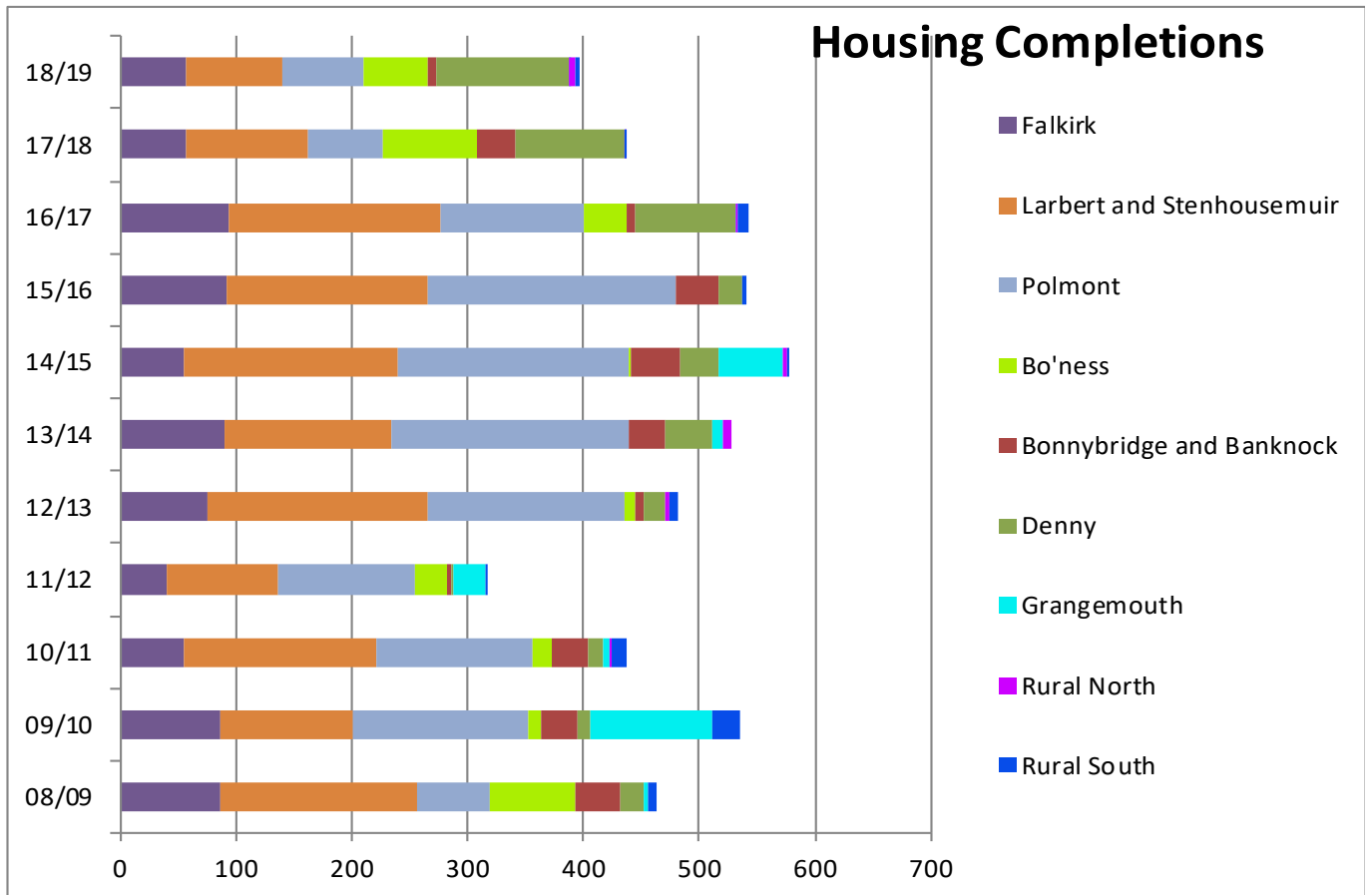


Source: Falkirk Council Housing Land Audit

3. Monitoring Indicators

The level of completions by settlement over the period 2008 to 2018 is illustrated in the chart below. The most active areas are Larbert/ Stenhousemuir, the Braes and, to a lesser extent, Falkirk. However, delivery of strategic sites within Bo'ness, Denny and Banknock is now moving forward and is likely to see a more balanced pattern of development in the years ahead.

Completions on an area basis are summarised in the graph below:



Source: Planning and Environment Unit

3. Monitoring Indicators

Five Year Effective Housing Land Supply

Scottish Planning Policy requires the Council to maintain an effective 5 year housing land supply at all times. As indicated in the table below, housing delivery in the Council area has not achieved this since the adoption of LDP1.

	5 Year Effective Land Supply	Equivalent Years	Established Land Supply
2015 - 2016	3,047	4.5	8,842
2016 - 2017	2,611	3.9	7,912
2017 - 2018	2,893	4.3	5,865
2018 -2019	2,776	4.1	5,743

Source: Planning and Environment Unit

Currently, the figure, as identified from the 2018/19 Housing Land Audit, is 4.1 years (shortfall of 599 units). There are a number of reasons behind this, but the scale of the LDP housing land target (which was probably unrealistic in relation to current market conditions) and delays in the progress of large sites within the LDP are probably the most important factors. In relation to delays in progressing sites, it is worth noting that, whilst the Council can allocate effective sites for development, it has little or no control over their actual delivery. The number of non-contributing sites in the Housing Land Audit has increased from 11 to 35. These are sites which while allocated as housing sites in the LDP or occasionally with planning permission face such uncertainty in delivery that they are excluded from the land supply calculations. These sites total 2767 units.

The current shortfall in the 5-year effective housing land supply has seen the submission of a significant number of planning applications for larger housing developments contrary to the LDP, in a range of locations across the Council area. These have been promoted by the applicants on the basis that they will help to address the shortfall. Clearly, the current situation is unsatisfactory, with the weight given to the LDP being reduced, and a danger of 'planning by appeal'. Moving forward, LDP2 provides an opportunity to address the situation through resetting the target and bringing forward further planned allocations.



3. Monitoring Indicators

Delivery of Affordable Housing

Policy HSG02 Affordable Housing requires new housing developments of 20 units and over to provide a proportion of the units as affordable or special needs housing of between 15-25% depending on settlement area. The effectiveness of the policy can be monitored through the amount and mechanism which affordable housing is delivered annually.

There has been a substantial output of affordable housing over the past five years, with 390 social housing units completed, although delivery has slowed since its peak in 2015-16.



	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019
Affordable Housing Completions	146	149	38	38	19

Source: 2018/19 Falkirk Council Housing Land Audit

Sites have been delivered by both housing associations and the Council through its new build programme. Since the last Monitoring Report, significant social housing developments completed have included:

- Merchiston Avenue, Falkirk (Phase 2) - 27 units
- Tinto Drive, Grangemouth - 56 units
- Kinnaird Park, Larbert - 62 units
- Bissett Court, Hallglen - 26 units
- Falkirk Road, Bonnybridge (Link) - 35 units
- Duke Street, Denny - 19 units

In addition, buy back of former Council properties has yielded some 485 additional affordable units since the buy back scheme was introduced in 2013.

The contribution which Policy HSG02 has made to delivery of affordable housing has been limited by the slow rate at which new sites have come forward. Since 2012, some 176 affordable housing units have been delivered on private sites, although a minority of these have come directly through the application of HSG02. In some cases, commuted sums have been sought in lieu of on-site units, and these resources are being used to offset costs of the Council's new-build programme. Commuted sums secured since 2014 amount to some £1.4m.

The Council approved its latest Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) for 2020/21 - 2024/5 in October 2019. It seeks to deliver 1,806 additional affordable properties over the five-year period including 613 Council new builds, 743 RSL new builds, and 450 buy backs.

Year	Housing Association (No. of Units)	Council Housing (No. of Units)	Buy Backs	Total Scottish Government Grant
2020/2021	475	24	95	£41.5m
2021/2022	185	275	95	£32.1m
2022/2023	63	213	95	£18.1m
2023/2024	0	0	95	£2.37m
2024/2025	0	101	95	£8.33m

Source: Falkirk Council Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2019

3. Monitoring Indicators

Strategic Objective:

To build sustainable attractive communities which retain a strong identity and sense of place.

Delivery of Strategic Growth Areas and other Housing Sites

The LDP Spatial Strategy identifies 12 Strategic Growth Areas across the Council. Policy HSG01 identifies these as the focus for significant growth. These are also intended to deliver placemaking, greenspace and infrastructure alongside new development.

Good progress is being made with most of the Strategic Growth Areas, with one virtually complete, construction ongoing at six others, and planning at an advanced stage at a further two. Three SGAs have significant viability and effectiveness issues and are being re-evaluated through LDP2. Detailed information on delivery progress is outlined below:

Bo'ness Foreshore (Proposal M01): The site is stalled and has no active developer interest. The Council has no intention to remarket, due to concerns regarding overall viability. The site has been deallocated in the LDP2 Proposed Plan, and the site allocation will not be considered at examination. The wider foreshore area remains a focus for recreation and outdoor access, with the John Muir Way running through the site, and a number of environmental improvements implemented including path and habitat enhancement, and restoration of the dock wall.

Bo'ness South-East (Proposals H01, H02, H03, M02): After a number of years during which delivery of the final phases of the Drum North site was stalled, progress is now being made, with development commenced at Phase 6 and a 'minded to grant' decision for Phase 4. A Proposal of Application Notice has been submitted for Drum South, where LDP2 is proposing an increase in the proportion of the site for housing. In terms of the remaining sites, development is nearly complete at Kinglass Farm 1 (H02), while permission has lapsed for Kinglass Farm 2 (H03).



The Drum, Bo'ness



Parkhall Farm, Maddiston



Redding Park, Redding

3. Monitoring Indicators

Banknock (Proposals M03 and H07): An alteration to the Banknock and Hags Development Framework was approved by the Council in January 2015. Planning permission in principle subject to S75 has been granted for Banknock North (MU03), as have MSC applications. An affordable housing element to be delivered by Link Group is included in the current SHIP. Proposals are being developed for 100 Council houses at Banknock South, a site which is also included in the current SHIP. Delivery of the Banknock sites is dependent on upgrading of the M80 Junction 9 slip roads. The Council has applied successfully to Scottish Government's Housing Infrastructure Fund for funding and this project will commence in 2020.

Dennyloanhead (Proposal H08): Planning Permission in Principle has been granted, and an MSC application submitted. The M80 Junction 7 slip road improvements will facilitate. 30 affordable housing units are identified in the Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP), to be delivered by the Link Group.

Denny South-East (Proposal H14, H15, H16, M05): Mydub 1 (H15) is currently under construction, and a Proposal of Application Notice submitted for Mydub 2 (H16). Proposals for Council housing are being prepared for the Former Denny High School, with 200 units identified in the current SHIP. A Proposal of Application Notice has been submitted. Broad Street (M05) is stalled and although a Proposal of Application Notice was submitted, there is currently no active developer interest.

Falkirk Canal Corridor (Proposals M06, H23-26): Merchiston Road (H23) is completed, and Etna Road 2 (H26) is currently under construction. Etna Road 1 (H25) is contained in the current SHIP. Progress has stalled at Portdownie (M06) due to high development costs and market conditions. The Council is expected to re-market the site once market conditions improve. Gowan Avenue (H24) has also stalled, despite being granted consent in 2016, and this consent has now lapsed.

Falkirk North (Proposals H27 and H28): Cauldhame Farm 1 (H27) is now largely complete. Cauldhame Farm 2 has not yet been marketed, but the site expected to come forward in the near future and is likely to be attractive to the market.

Larbert North (Proposals H36 and H37): Bellsdyke (H36) is now complete, and Hill of Kinnaird (H37) is entering its final phases. The planned extension to Kinnaird Primary School is also under construction. Going forward to LDP2, it is proposed that Hill of Kinnaird Business Park (ED21) will incorporate some housing into the overall mix, with a masterplan to determine scale and location.



Kinnaird, Larbert

Overton/Redding (Proposals H40-H43): These sites are virtually complete, apart from a small final phase at Redding Park (H42).

Maddiston East (Proposals H43-H48): Parkhall Farm 1 (H43) is now complete. The Council adopted the Maddiston East Development Framework in 2016, to provide guidance on access strategy and other infrastructure requirements. Since then, the southern part of Parkhall Farm 3 (H45) has been built out, although progress has stalled on the northern part of the site, largely due to land ownership issues, and the need for a co-ordinated access strategy. Parkhall Farm 2 and 4 (H44 and H46) and Toravon Farm (H48) have also made limited progress, although Parkhall Farm 4 is identified for affordable housing in the SHIP, to be delivered by the Link Group.

Slamannan (Proposal H70): Despite efforts from the Council through continued engagement with landowners and developers, there has been no development interest in the site, and the scale of development envisaged in the LDP is not considered viable. As part of LDP2, the Council has reviewed the allocation and Strategic Growth Area, with focus now on smaller, more deliverable sites in Slamannan and across other Rural South Villages.

Whitecross (Proposal M14): Lead developer Morston Assets went into administration at the end of 2014, with CWC Group eventually acquiring the Manuel Works site, and Malcolm Whitecross Ltd still promoting their element of the masterplan at Crounerland. However, the parties are not working together, and there is no immediate prospect of an integrated masterplan delivering the level of infrastructure required. The Strategic Growth Area has been reviewed as part of LDP2, with the Manuel Works site being identified for business use, and the site at Crounerland identified for housing.

3. Monitoring Indicators

Briefs/Masterplans Prepared

Policy D02 Sustainable Urban Design Principles seeks to improve design quality and create attractive, distinctive places through new development in the LDP.

A hierarchy of policies, guidance and design tools are used which include:

- Development briefs and development frameworks generally prepared by the Council;
- Masterplans generally prepared by developers; and
- Design statements prepared by developers to accompany planning applications.

The requirement for a design brief, framework or masterplan is also referenced in other design policies, as well as in individual site allocations.

Between 2000 and 2014, a significant number of briefs/masterplans were prepared by the Council which have continued to influence and shape the development of some major sites over the last five years. Examples include:

- Bellsdyke and Hill of Kinnaird , Larbert
- Drum Farm, Bo'ness
- Overton Farm
- Former Carrongrove Mill, Denny
- Former RSNH Site, Larbert

In recent years, lack of resources has meant fewer documents have been produced by the Council, with Council officers instead working closely with lead developers on the preparation of masterplans in conjunction with PPP applications. However, the Council approved the Maddiston East Development Framework in 2016, in an attempt to steer this Strategic Growth Area in multiple ownership, with no clear lead developer. The Proposed LDP2 also introduces Major Areas of Change Guidance which sets out the key design and infrastructure principles for Strategic Growth Areas. This approach is intended to ensure the need for design-led approach is clear.



Larbert House, RSNH estate



Carrongrove House, Denny



The Drum, Bo'ness

3. Monitoring Indicators

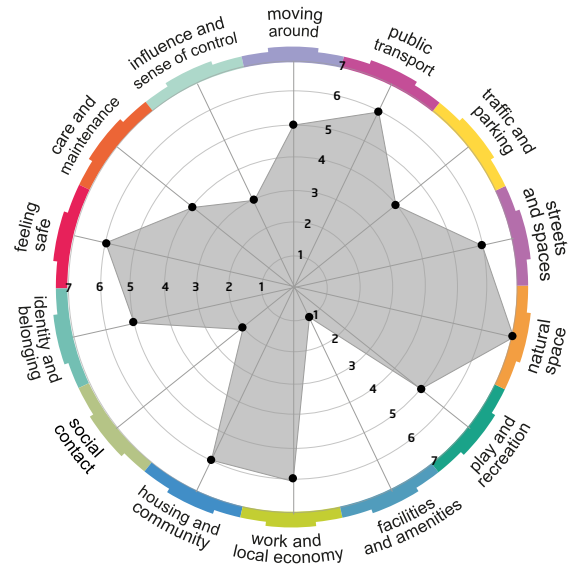
Quality of development on the ground against masterplan/brief objectives

Policies in the LDP are intended to support placemaking through new development. The main policy is **Policy D01 on Placemaking**, **Policies D02-D04** setting our broader design, layout and infrastructure requirements. **HSG04 Housing Design Policy**, **Policies HSG05 - HSG09** provide the requirements for different types of housing development. This is intended set out policy for individual types of development such as house extensions, infill plots within the urban area, care homes and gypsy traveller sites. **SG02** provides detailed advice regarding good design principles for new development. The effectiveness of the policy can be measured by assessing the quality of development on the ground by using tools such as the Place Standard to determine whether the 'six qualities of successful places' are met.

In terms of the quality of development on the ground, when compared with brief/masterplan objectives, place objectives have been met in many instances, with developments such as the Drum, Bo'ness, Kinnaird Village, Larbert and the Former RSNH site, Larbert, all illustrating key principles of good practice, which have been referred to in the Council's SG on Neighbourhood Design. Developments such as Lionthorn in South Falkirk also demonstrate the success that can be achieved through green infrastructure being embedded within new development, thereby achieving habitat and access enhancement. The benefits of masterplanning, development frameworks and briefs throughout the Council area can be seen in terms of quality of development, internal and external connections, and green network opportunities. There are, however, instances where larger strategic sites have evolved over time in response to changing market requirements, and divergence from masterplans has been unavoidable.

Since the last monitoring report, tools such as the Place Standard have evolved to engage communities and professionals to accurately assess whether a place works in terms of layout, connectivity, sense of place and safety. The Place Standard has been used in youth engagement exercises on LDP2, and in community planning, but has yet to be fully utilised a tool for informing site masterplans. Supplementary Guidance produced under the LDP has also helped to further establish design principles for new development, with SG02 on Neighbourhood Design being of particular relevance and used day to day in development management.

Place Standard – How Good is Our Place?



Source: Scottish Government Place Standard



Distinctive design in Kinnaird, Larbert



Public realm improvements in Airth

3. Monitoring Indicators

Delivery of Strategic Infrastructure Projects

Policy INF01 seeks to promote and support the provision of a range of strategic infrastructure projects within the Local Development Plan. The delivery of these projects will be through a range of agencies, in partnership with Falkirk Council. They will be funded through traditional and innovative funding mechanisms, as well as developer contributions. Delivery of key individual proposals is captured in this report below.



Tax Incremental Finance Initiative and Investment Zone Bid

The Tax Incremental Finance (TIF) initiative was launched in August 2013. This mechanism, which uses future anticipated non-domestic rates revenues to 'forward fund' essential infrastructure, is expected to play a critical role in enhancing the development potential of a number of key sites to secure significant investment. The TIF contribution of £67 million will contribute to a package leveraging in £176 million of infrastructure improvements across the Falkirk area. To date, some £6m of infrastructure works have been delivered. The Council has submitted an outline business case to the UK and Scottish Governments for an extensive package of further funding in support of its Investment Zone proposition.

Flooding and Drainage

For the purposes of flood risk management planning, Falkirk Council falls within two Local Plan Districts – Forth Estuary and Forth. Flood Risk Management Strategies and Plans have now been produced for these areas, identifying potentially vulnerable areas and actions to address flood risk.

The Grangemouth Flood Prevention Scheme (INF22), which ranks as the top priority flood risk management scheme in Scotland, is progressing. Over 1,200 residential and 99 non-residential properties including important national infrastructure are at flood risk from extreme flood events in the town. A preferred scheme has now been developed and has been subject to recent public consultation and environmental scoping. The project is a very complex one, and construction is currently scheduled to commence in 2025, with completion in 2031.

Capacity enhancements to Waste Water Treatment Works have been ongoing, with Airth (INF15) completed since the last monitoring report. Work at Torwood (INF15) is progressing. Whitecross (INF17) is dependent on review of the original masterplan proposals, and the timing of new proposals. Dalderse (INF21) is seen as a longer term project. Avonbridge, Bo'ness and Denny are no longer identified by Scottish Water as requiring upgrading.

3. Monitoring Indicators

Transport

Strategic Road Improvements: Improvements to M80 Junction 7 at Banknock (INF06) are due to start by the end of this year, funded through the Housing Infrastructure Fund. Improvements to M9 Junction 6 (INF01) are complete, with work due to commence on M9 Junction 5 (INF03) in 2020. Junction 4 upgrading is dependent on other development sites such as Whitecross and Gilston being brought forward. Delivery of M9 Junction 3 (INF03) is dependent on delivery of strategic development in West Lothian. The A801 Avon Gorge upgrade (INF07) has planning consent, with funding arrangements with West Lothian Council and the Scottish Government to be finalised.

Local Road Network Improvements: A long-awaited local road improvement, the Denny Eastern Access Road (INF14) is partially complete with the remainder to be delivered and front funded by the Council. The Falkirk A904 corridor improvements (INF12) are well advanced in terms of design, and are expected to commence in 2021. The scheme includes an elevated pedestrian/cycle bridge structure which will facilitate active travel between the Falkirk Gateway, Stadium and Helix. The A803 corridor improvements (INF11) have not progressed due to the stalling of the developments to which they are linked on the western side of the town.

Public Transport: The Edinburgh - Glasgow Improvement Project (EGIP) was identified as an infrastructure project in LDP (INF08) and is being delivered by Network Rail. The project includes modernisation and upgrades to key junctions and infrastructure as well as widespread electrification of the Scottish rail network, including the main line between Edinburgh and Glasgow and to Stirling and Dunblane. Improvements within the Falkirk area are now largely complete.

Sites at Grangemouth and Bonnybridge continue to be safeguarded for potential future rail stations (INF09/10). STAG pre-appraisal work has been carried out for Bonnybridge, and the Council has now agreed to progress to a more detailed appraisal stage which will examine transport issues in the Bonnybridge area.

In terms of the proposal to upgrade Falkirk Bus Station (INF14), the bus station has now closed and an upgrade as part of the East End redevelopment is no longer under consideration. However, as part of the Council's Investment Zone bid, proposals are under consideration for a new multi modal transport hub at Falkirk Grahamston station (to be rebranded as Falkirk Central).

Active Travel: This is considered under the green network section of the report.

Energy

Grangemouth continues to see major investment in energy projects and infrastructure. Following the granting of consent to CalaChem for a CHP plant using refuse derived fuel (RDF) at Earlsgate Park, Ineos have now also received planning permission for a new £350m power plant. Further investment of £500m is planned in the Forties Pipeline System which comes ashore at Grangemouth. Celtic Renewables' demonstrator Biofuels plant at Earlsgate Park site is now complete. The Scottish Government has also renewed the consent for the Biomass Plant in Grangemouth Docks, although the project remains on hold.



EGIP: Photo (c) Scotrail



DEAR and Chacefield, Denny



M80 Junction 7

3. Monitoring Indicators

Levels of developer contributions secured and used

Policy INF02 Developer Contributions requires new development to contribute towards the provision, upgrading and maintenance of community infrastructure, where development will create or exacerbate deficiencies on existing infrastructure. Contributions can relate to open space, outdoor access, education, healthcare and public transport and road network improvements and the need for contributions is referenced in individual policies. Effectiveness of the policy is measured by the scale of the contributions secured, and the amount spent on the relevant infrastructure.

Since the last monitoring report, a cross-service Planning Obligations Monitoring Group has been established to monitor the receipt and spend of developer contributions. Between 2014 and the start of 2019, around £4.2 million was secured in developer contributions arising from new development. These contributions relate to open space provision, outdoor access, education enhancements, road network enhancements, public transport and active travel.

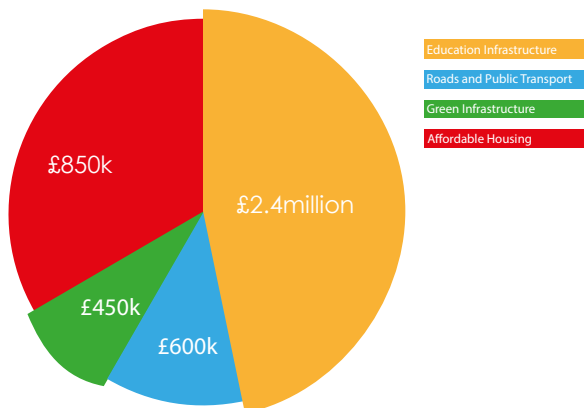


Playspace at Braes View, Denny



Active travel at Mungal Farm,, Falkirk

Developer Contributions Received



Source: Planning Obligations Monitoring Group



Larbert Village Primary School

3. Monitoring Indicators

School Rolls/Capacity/Projections

Falkirk Council has been managing an overall growth in primary and pre-school rolls for the last 10 years as a result of community growth and a sustained period of high birth rates. The birth rates have dropped back over the last 4 years and primary rolls are expected to drop overall while this continues. However, the peak in primary school rolls which has now passed, is expected to move through secondary schools over the next 5 years and secondary rolls are already increasing. Much higher occupancies in secondary schools are expected by the mid 2020s as a result.

Since the last Monitoring Report, there has been significant progress in the programme of school extensions identified as infrastructure proposals in the LDP. Recent and continuing growth in the Larbert area has put pressure on primary and secondary school capacity for the foreseeable future. Larbert High School has expanded into the adjacent Carrongrange School building 2017 (INF24) with the new Carrongrange School for additional support needs being relocated to Grangemouth. Primary capacity has also been extended in Kinnaird Village to accommodate continuing housing growth from Hill of Kinnaird.

In terms of further enhancements to deal with growth, extensions to Maddiston PS (INF32) and Denny PS (INF30) are programmed, and other primary school extensions will have to be brought forward in due course, depending on the timing of proposed housing. The capacity enhancement identified by the LDP at Denny High School (INF25) is still likely to be needed in the future, although pressures have eased at St Mungo's High School (INF26). Graeme High School and Braes High School are now likely to need extensions in the long term.

Supplementary Guidance SG10 has been recently reviewed to ensure that developer contributions are proportionate and reasonable. The Scottish Government requirement for additional nursery provision will have a significant impact on capacity of nursery facilities, and this has been factored into the revised rates in SG10.

The new £83m Forth Valley College campus in Falkirk (INF23) was opened in early 2020, with the residual land on the former campus due to be brought forward for housing and green infrastructure.

Capacity pressures on primary healthcare facilities

INF04 Healthcare and New Housing Development was introduced as a new policy under the current LDP. The policy is intended to secure developer contributions where there is an impact on capacity as a result of new development. Supplementary Guidance 'Healthcare and New Housing Development' provides further detail of how this is calculated. The effectiveness of this policy is directly measured by the delivery of infrastructure to address capacity issues.

Since the last Development Plan Monitoring Report, primary healthcare capacity issues have emerged in particular localities as highlighted by the recent primary care services and premises review undertaken by NHS Forth Valley. There are particular issues in the Braes, where Meadowbank Health Centre is at capacity, in Bonnybridge, where a new health centre is needed, and in Falkirk. Pressures are being driven, not just by housing growth, but by changes in the way primary health services are being delivered, and by GP recruitment issues. Some of these issues were not anticipated in the SG11 Healthcare and New Development, which is now out of date but will be reviewed as part of LDP2.

The redevelopment of Falkirk Community Hospital (INF33) has not yet progressed. NHS Forth Valley are currently considering what services should be delivered from the site to inform a masterplan for the physical development of the facility.



3. Monitoring Indicators

Quantity/quality/accessibility of open space in settlements

Policy INF03 Protection of Open Space seeks to protect all urban open space, including parks, playing fields and other areas of urban greenspace, which is considered to have landscape, amenity, recreational or ecological value. The policy sets out criteria for considering any proposals which would result in a loss of open space, as well as the loss of playing fields and sports pitches.

Policy INF04 Open Space and New Development requires most new housing development to contribute to open space which can be either off site contributions or on-site provision. The standards are set out in Supplementary Guidance SG13. The effectiveness of the policy can be measured through the amount of new open space delivered and the contributions receive for off-site enhancement.

Since the last monitoring report, the Falkirk Open Space Strategy was produced to set out the Council's open space standards and introduce priorities for improvement of open space provision in each settlement area. The accessibility and quality assessment in the Strategy is useful for monitoring how well our open space policies are working in terms of both provision and protection.



New Roman-themed playspace, Tamfourhill

Open Space Strategy Progress

The Falkirk area has an abundance of parks and open spaces covering over 24 square kilometres on 632 individual sites. They are vital to our physical and mental health, the quality of our environment and provide valuable habitat for wildlife. The Falkirk Open Space Strategy was approved in 2015 and is accompanied by an audit which assesses the quantity, type, accessibility and quality of the open spaces.

Work continues on the implementation of the Strategy overseen by the Council's corporate Open Space Liaison Group. Improvements have been made at 7 open spaces identified as priorities for quality improvement; 5 key open space assets; 3 national or regional level open spaces; and 6 green network opportunities. Progress has also been made with a comprehensive grounds maintenance review and with an audit of play space play value. Priority projects identified in the Strategy continue to be delivered. Projects completed since 2014 include:

- New Roman-themed play areas at Callendar Park and Tamfourhill;
- The HLF-funded redevelopment of Muiravonside Park (LDP opportunity GN27) including new paths, reopening of the visitor hub, a sculpture trail, new play equipment and habitats enhancement;
- Park improvements at Easter Carmuir's Park (£340k) and Nailer Park (£110k) in Camelon as part of the Big Lottery Funded Our Place 2 project;
- Park improvements at Key Open Space Assets in Banknock (Ash Park c£60k) and Carronshore (Gairdoch Park c£30k).

3. Monitoring Indicators

Accessibility of quality open spaces

As part of the 2015 Open Space Strategy, a review of the Council's accessibility standards was undertaken. The standards set out in the Strategy are as follows:

- 1) People should live no more than 400m (5 minutes' walk) from a surveyed open space which scores 3.0 or better in the fitness for purpose assessment.
- 2) People should live no more than 400m (5 minutes' walk) from a public park, garden or amenity space of greater than 2000m².
- 3) People should live no more than 800m (10 minutes' walk) from an open space containing a playspace.
- 4) People should live no more than 1200m (15 minutes' walk) from an open space containing sports area.
- 5) People should live no more than 1200m (15 minutes' walk) from a natural/semi natural open space.

The Open Space Strategy lowers the accessibility standard for playspaces from 400m to 800m to reflect the overall objective of having fewer playspaces but that these would be of a higher quality.

In terms of accessibility of fit for purpose open spaces (open spaces which scored 3.0 or more in the fitness for purpose assessment), this varies significantly on a settlement by settlement basis. There is a significant split between rural villages and urban settlements, scoring 34.1% and 67.7% respectively, although this is compensated for by the enhanced access to the countryside enjoyed by the rural communities. The Open Space Audit will be updated in 2022, and will provide further information on how accessibility has changed since the implementation of the Open Space Strategy in 2015.

Loss of Open Space

Since the last monitoring report, several areas of public open space have been lost. These are:

- Carrongrange School, Grangemouth;
- Glenfuir Road, Falkirk; and
- Broomhill Park, Bonnybridge.

There continues to be a minimal annual loss of areas of amenity of space to garden ground extensions. Ongoing loss arising from development sites or garden ground is an area which will require further analysis and will be reported in the next Monitoring Report.

Road accident statistics

Road accidents within the area have steadily declined over the last 10 years, with some level of annual variation. Casualty figures across Scotland have dropped 50% since 2007 to around 9500 per year. Pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists continue to be the most vulnerable groups, and improvements to off-road active travel links, and road safety enhancements will hopefully continue this trend.

Year	No. of Accidents
2007	297
2008	310
2009	303
2010	240
2011	261
2012	270
2013	248
2014	228
2015	249
2016	235
2017	215

3. Monitoring Indicators

GROWING ECONOMY

Strategic objective:

To develop the area's economic potential and establish it as a major component in the Scottish economy

Levels of employment/unemployment

Policy BUS01 promotes a number of Strategic Business Locations and National Developments within the LDP, as well as local business and industrial development and a network of tourism nodes. The effectiveness of the policy can be measured through delivery of business sites across the Council area, as well as the overall economic performance of the area.

The 2016 ONS Annual Population Survey indicates that there were 78,200 people in employment in 2016 in Falkirk which is 76.5% of those aged between 16-64. This compares to 72.9% in Scotland. The percentage of working age population (16-64) claiming unemployment support has been largely static, with a slight increase:

April 2015	2.5%
April 2016	2.2%
April 2017	2.4%
April 2018	2.5%
October 2018	3.0%

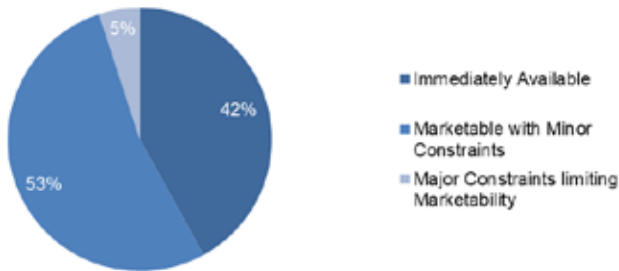
The overall number of jobs increased from 60,700 in 2013 to 66,000 in 2018, showing a significant and welcome increase through the monitoring period.



3. Monitoring Indicators

Employment land supply and take up

The Council carried out an Employment Land Audit in 2019, which identifies the total amount of land allocated for employment uses, and its marketability. This indicates that the amount of employment land is around 350 hectares of which 42% is immediately available, and 53% marketable with constraints, as illustrated in the chart below.



Source: Falkirk Council Employment Land Audit

Generally speaking, the available sites have remained static over the monitoring period, being those opportunities which were identified in the LDP. However, the notional supply has increased because the scale of the opportunities at the Ineos site in Grangemouth have increased, and could amount to in excess of 100 hectares. Although the vast majority of the supply is deemed as marketable, the amount of investment needed to make sites available for development should not be underestimated, and the constraints facing many sites are substantial and only likely to be overcome with a significant injection of public funding in infrastructure. The Council’s TIF initiative is working to deliver infrastructure which will help to improve the deliverability of some sites, whilst the Council’s investment Zone bid is designed to draw in further resources to support site effectiveness.

The total take up in employment land from 2014 to 2019 is 17.7 hectares, including various retail, business, logistics and energy developments as detailed in the table below. Of particular significance is the continuing levels of investment in Grangemouth with Ineos, Forth Ports and Calachem all developing their businesses and looking to unlock further opportunities.

Site	Take - up Year	Development	Area (ha)
ED11 Redbrae Road, Camelon	2014/2015	Aldi and Home Bargains discount stores	1.4
ED02 Church Walk, Denny	2015/2016	Library and 11 Retail Units	0.6
ED16 Ineos Development Opportunity	2015/2016	New HQ office block for INEOS	1.99
ED20 Glenberrie Business Park	2015/2016	60 bed Care Home and Training Centre	0.8
ED05 Abbotsford Business Park	2016/2017	4 speculative Workshop Units	0.62
ED15 Grangemouth Docks	2016/2017	9,400m ² Warehouse and Offices	2.3
ED12 Earls Gate Park, Grangemouth	2018/2019	New Biofuels Plant and Industrial Units	6.2
ED24 Beancross	2019/2020	Expansion of existing Garden Centre	3.8
		Total Take up	17.71

3. Monitoring Indicators

Delivery of Strategic Business Locations and constituent sites

The LDP currently promotes 4 Strategic Business Locations. Progress is as follows:

Falkirk Investment Zone:

The Falkirk Gateway (ED03) is progressing and will create a major new mixed use quarter on the eastern approach to the town. The emphasis and development mix has been reviewed and revised through LDP2. The southern sections of the site adjacent to Westfield roundabout (Zones 1 and 4) have been consolidated under the Council's ownership and marketed, with Fintry Estates Ltd selected as preferred developer on the basis of a mixed retail/leisure/tourism/housing development. Development will be enabled by TIF funded upgrading of the local road network and a new elevated pedestrian/cycle bridge which will connect the development with the Stadium and the Helix. **The Falkirk Stadium (ED04)** has seen recent development in the form of a solar powered electric vehicle charging facility, and a new synthetic training pitch for Falkirk FC.

The Council has delivered four advance workshop units as a first phase of development at **Abbotsford Business Park (ED05)**. Although take up has been slow to date, there are encouraging signs recently of an upturn in interest. No progress has been made at **Caledon Business Park (ED06)** and the planning permission there has now lapsed.

Grangemouth Investment Zone

The Grangemouth Investment Zone, which includes **Grangemouth Docks, the Chemical Cluster, Earls Gate Park and INEOS**, has continued to progress. It is recognised as a National Development within National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3), the aim being to support the port, logistics, manufacturing, chemicals and energy sectors including extensive opportunities for 'co-location' taking advantage of the existing petrochemical/chemical cluster. The Investment Zone also seeks to support diversification into low-carbon businesses through investment in infrastructure.

INEOS (ED16) has continued to invest in its business, including new ethane storage, expansion of its ethylene production capacity, acquisition of the Forties Pipeline System (which is undergoing a major upgrade), a new HQ building, and new CHP plant. A rationalisation and clearance programme has resulted in around 100 hectares of land being freed up for redevelopment. INEOS has produced a masterplan for their sites which will form the basis for further development and opportunities for co-location. A co-ordinated approach to new development is needed to deliver benefits to the community and address the cumulative impact of redevelopment on the local community, looking at air pollution, noise and the road network.



Throughout the monitoring period, **Earls Gate Park (ED12)** has seen the continued development of plots. An energy from waste CHP Plant was consented to replace existing Calachem plant. A Biofuels demonstration plant is also nearing completion.

Forth Ports also continue to invest at **Grangemouth Docks (ED15)** including new warehousing and freight handling facilities. Its land is subject to a programme of rationalisation, as part of assessment for further port related development. The site includes land with consent for a biomass energy plant, with the period of consent having recently been extended.

Larbert Gateway

There has been no progress at Glenbervie (ED19). Although the site remains well located in relation to the motorway network, appraisal by Scottish Enterprise points to high development costs in relation to returns. Support may become available through the Council's Investment Zone bid. There is also no progress at Hill of Kinnaird business site (ED21) due to apparent lack of demand, with the focus as part of LDP2 being a shift from business to mixed use, with some limited residential development being promoted on the site. Central/Glenbervie Business Park (ED20) is largely complete, with a just two serviced plots remaining.



3. Monitoring Indicators

Eastern Gateway

Gilston (ED23) occupies a strategic location adjacent to Junction 4 of the M9 motorway and represents a major opportunity for employment growth. During the previous monitoring period, planning consent was granted in October 2012 for a masterplan showing a mixed use development of land for Classes 4, 5 and 6, car showroom, hotel, restaurant and neighbourhood centre. The formation of a new access, and roundabout from the A803 was completed during 2013 and the details approved for a first phase of development. However, the owner has aspirations for housing on the majority of the site. A planning application for housing and business was refused by the Council in 2019. However, the recent examination report of recommends up to 500 units as part of the mix of uses on the site.

Land owned and occupied by Klondyke Garden Centre at **Beancross (ED24)** is now progressing. Planning permission was granted in 2018 for substantial extension and remodelling of existing garden centre and café, including new office space for the company HQ. Construction has now started.

Whitecross (M14) has stalled during the monitoring period. This major regeneration project includes redevelopment of the former Manual Brickworks and expansion of the adjacent community at Whitecross. The LDP allocation comprises 1500 residential units, community facilities including a new school, enterprise facilities, employment land and infrastructure. Lead developer Morston Assets went into administration at the end of 2014, with CWC Group eventually acquiring the Manuel Works site, and Malcolm Whitecross Ltd still promoting their element of the masterplan at Crounerland. However, the parties are not working together, and there is no immediate prospect of an integrated masterplan delivering the level of infrastructure required. The Strategic Growth Area has been reviewed as part of LDP2, with the Manuel Works site being identified for business use, and the site at Crounerland identified for housing.

Drum Farm South (M02) was subject to the original masterplan prepared in 1999 for the wider Drum site. Limited progress has been made in progressing the opportunity as a strategic business site over the last 5 years. The strategy under LDP2 is to introduce a greater element of housing into the mix of uses on the site, whilst at the same time reserving land for a new neighbourhood centre, providing a community focus and services for the wider Drum community.



Gilston, Polmont

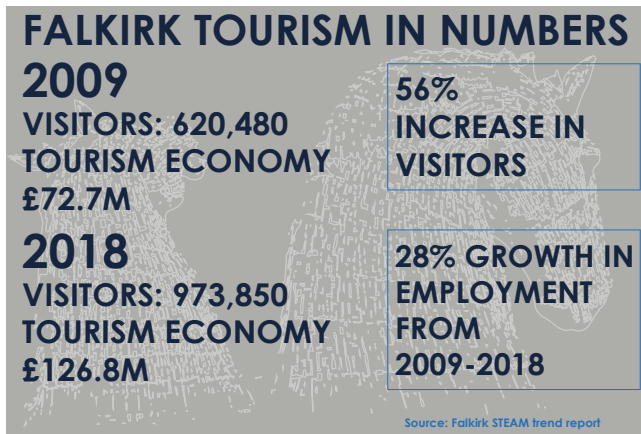
Briefs/masterplans prepared for strategic sites

Many of the sites within the Council's portfolio of strategic business land identified in the LDP are covered by a masterplan, development framework or development brief either individually or as a strategic group of sites. Sites covered by a masterplan include canal-side development at Portdownie, the Drum, Bo'ness and Gilston, Polmont. A number of key masterplans/development frameworks are under preparation such as at Falkirk Gateway. Many of these are longstanding sites, and the original masterplans require to be updated as the developments progress in response to market conditions. Examples include updating of the Drum Farm South masterplan to reflect emerging mix of uses, and updating the existing INEOS/Forth Ports masterplans within the Grangemouth Investment Zone.

3. Monitoring Indicators

Tourism: Visitor numbers/expenditure

The Falkirk area has seen a dramatic development of the leisure and tourism industry since the last monitoring report. Attractions including the Kelpies and Helix, the Falkirk Wheel, Callender House, Bo’ness and Kinneil Railway and the Bo’ness Hippodrome have had a significant impact on visitor numbers and visitor spend, as indicated in the graphic below. The Falkirk Tourism Strategy was published in 2015, and set out a vision for the growth of the tourism industry locally to 2020.



Bo’ness and Kinneil Steam Railway



Blackness Castle from the John Muir Way

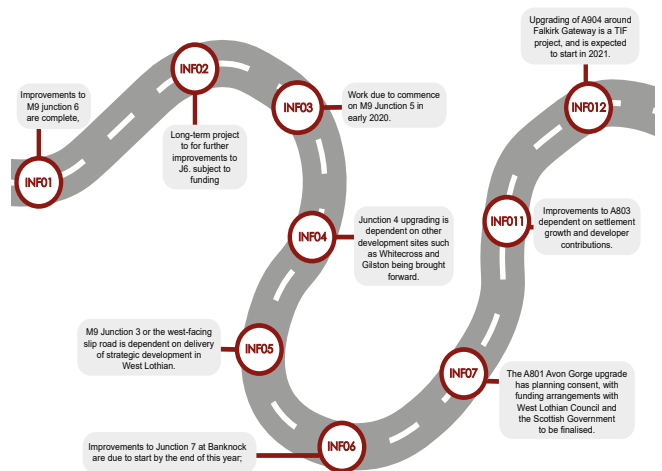
Strategic Objective:

To strengthen the area’s transport connections to the rest of Scotland and global markets

Delivery of strategic trunk and local transport projects

Progress with the delivery of the key transport projects in the area has been outlined previously, but is summarised below.

LDP STRATEGIC AND LOCAL ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE OPPORTUNITIES PROGRESS



M9 Junction 6 improvements
Photo (c) Wills Bros. Contractors

3. Monitoring Indicators

Strategic Objective:

To make our town centres vibrant and economically viable focal points within our communities

Policy TC01 identifies a network of centres within the area, and requires new development to not undermine the role of any centre in the network. It sets out new priorities for local and district centres across the area, and aims to support development, regeneration and enhancement in the centres. The policy can effectively be monitored by undertaking regular Town Centre Health Checks which look at a number of key indicators of how our centres are functioning. Delivery of key individual proposals in the LDP will provide further evidence of the effectiveness of town centre policies.

Town Centres

In 2019 the Council prepared an updated Town Centre Health Check, which looked at the vitality and viability of Falkirk Town centre and the four District Centres in terms of certain key indicators. This was backed up by an updated floorspace survey which identified changes in uses and activities within the centres. The conclusions of the Health Check are summarised below.

Falkirk Town Centre

Activities and Uses

- Comparison floorspace and number of units continues to reduce, while service uses are on the increase;
- Convenience shopping is stable and remains an important component of the town centre's role and vitality;
- Representation of national retailers on the High Street continues to decrease, in contrast to Central Retail Park;
- The town centre supports a wide range of independent retailers;
- The Howgate and Callendar Square shopping centres continue to try diversify and innovate as they face lower retail demand;
- The leisure and tourism function of the Town Centre continues to develop, but there is much untapped potential in terms of drawing visitors to the outlying attractions into the centre;
- The town centre has a small resident population, but there are a number of small residential schemes being promoted, including conversions of upper storeys.

Accessibility

- Walking is a mixed experience for those accessing the Town Centre on foot, the pedestrianised centre contrasting with the barriers presented by the busy peripheral roads;
- Few people access the Town Centre by bike, probably reflecting the relatively hostile environment for cycling on the main roads coming in to the centre;
- Access to the Town Centre by public transport is good, reflected in a high level of access by bus in particular. However, the main bus station has recently closed, and buses can be affected by congestion at peak times;
- Access by car is generally good, subject to congestion at peak times. Parking is generous and relatively cheap, particularly given the large, free surface car parks provided by the Retail Park and the supermarkets. Parking demand has decreased between 2006 and 2015;
- Signage in and around the Town Centre has seen recent improvement, and most people say they find it easy to navigate the Town Centre on foot.

3. Monitoring Indicators

Falkirk Town Centre

Environment

- Traditional town centre with pedestrianised High Street encompassing two indoor shopping centres and an edge of centre retail park; Conservation area status and concentration of listed buildings provide valuable historic and architectural interest;
- £5.5 million has been invested in the town centre by Falkirk's THI improving its physical appearance and enhancing existing assets;
- Higher than national cleanliness rating by Keep Scotland Beautiful Audit;
- Designated AQMA, with air quality within the town centre currently meeting with Council objectives;
- Public perception of the town centre environment is very good apart from vacant shop units.

Commercial Viability

- The number of vacant units has reduced since 2014, although the amount of actual vacant floorspace has increased slightly;
- Retail expenditure leakage to other major centres is a continuing trend;
- The relationship between Central Retail Park and the traditional town centre remains a matter of contention;
- The Town Centre has a successful Business Improvement District which was first introduced in 2008;
- The LDP identifies two large scale redevelopment opportunities in the Town Centre at Grahamston and Falkirk East End, with the west end of the High Street, including the vacant Marks & Spencer Unit, presenting a further opportunity;
- The proposed new Council HQ and Arts Centre represents a key opportunity to strengthen the vitality and viability of the Town Centre.



3. Monitoring Indicators

District Centres

Bo'ness Town Centre

- Overall, the picture is one of relative stability since 2014, with the level of retail floorspace relatively unchanged;
- Convenience floorspace has increased slightly since 2014. The main convenience anchors remain Tesco and Lidl at the eastern edge of the Town Centre, with Farmfoods in the middle;
- Comparison floorspace has reduced slightly since 2014. Although the comparison offer is limited, there are a number of independent niche shops which add to the centre's attractiveness;
- Service floorspace has also reduced slightly, through the loss of the Bank of Scotland and the Council one stop shop, although the centre still benefits from a good range of services;
- Tourism potential remains substantial, given the presence of the Hippodrome, the SRPS, the John Muir Way, and other attractions in the town, but there is limited restaurant provision or accommodation in the Town Centre to support the tourism product;
- Residential use is a more prominent part of the make-up of the Town Centre than some other centres. There is interest in new homes both as conversions of existing vacant shops and upper storeys as well as the allocated housing site in Main Street, although HSE restrictions arising from the BP Forties pipeline are an issue;
- The historic environment is a major asset, which was enhanced through the recent THI. Most, although not all, new shopfronts, are of good quality, suggesting that the THI has had some lasting effect in terms of raising the quality of design;
- Vacancies have increased back up to 2009 levels (13%), with the former Woolworths store being the most prominent addition;
- Accessibility is hampered by the location of the Town Centre and the topography of the town.



Denny Town Centre

- The Town Centre retains a convenience shopping function, although only a minority of residents do their main shopping there;
- The comparison sector is characterised by a reducing number of mainly small independent shops with a limited overall offer;
- There is a good range of services provided within the centre, which has been further enhanced by the conversion of Carronbank House into the west locality advice and support hub, although all the banks in the town centre have now closed;
- Vacancy levels remain moderately low at around 10% of both units and floorspace;
- Phase 1 of Denny Town Centre's redevelopment has provided a new library, modern shop units and a new public square which has enhanced the character and appearance of the centre;
- Phases 2 and 3 have attracted little commercial interest, and are now more likely to be developed for residential or community uses;
- Accessibility to the Town Centre is hampered by congestion at Denny Cross, but this should be addressed by the Denny Eastern Access Road.



3. Monitoring Indicators



Grangemouth Town Centre

- Town Centre still provides a variety of services for local residents including both convenience and comparison goods as well as local services;
- Vacant floorspace has risen significantly from 5% in 2014 to 14% in 2018;
- The 1960s design of the precinct is dated and would benefit from redevelopment however this is unlikely in the current economic climate;
- There is a perception that the centre has too much retail floorspace, and needs to contract, with other uses (potentially housing) taking its place;
- The centre is a key focus of the community action plan being developed for the town.

Stenhousemuir Town Centre

- The overall perception of Stenhousemuir is of a stable town centre;
- Total retail and service floorspace has doubled since 1996, which can be mainly attributed to the redevelopment of the town centre in 2010;
- The relocation of B&M Bargains to the edge of the town centre in 2018 has increased the amount of vacant floorspace, although the actual number of vacant units remains low;
- Despite the loss of the Royal Bank of Scotland, service floorspace has increased slightly;
- There are a number of national retailers as well as independent shops;
- Highly accessible to a large catchment population;
- Physical environment of new and old shopping areas do not integrate well.



3. Monitoring Indicators

SUSTAINABLE PLACE

Strategic objective:

To contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Traffic growth

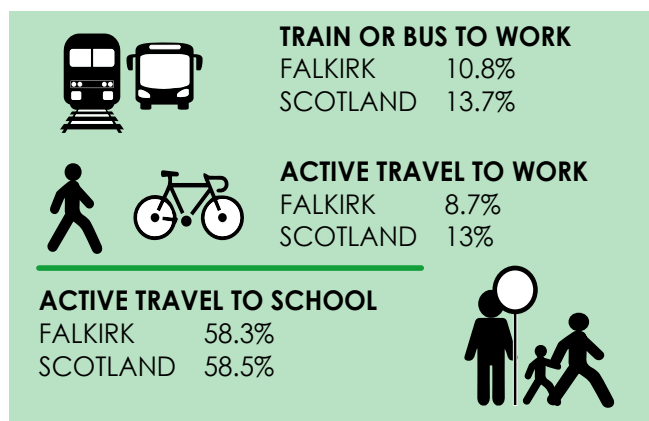
The amount of traffic on the total road network is measured in Annual Vehicle Kilometres (AVK). The total traffic on the roads was 1,584,000 AVK in 2013 rising to 1,682,000 AVK in 2016. This is a rise of around 6%, slightly below the average of 7.2% increase, nationally (Source: <https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/scottish-transport-statistics-no-37-2018-edition/>)

Sustainable Travel Modes

INF07 Walking and Cycling aims to reflect the LDP's strategic vision of promoting sustainable growth while addressing the need for promoting sustainable transport measures as part of new development. The effectiveness of the policy can be measured by the modal travel choices in the area, the growth of the Core Path network, as well as how successfully new development has integrated active travel and public transport connections.

Figures for cycle usage and pedestrian activity have proved difficult to define over the years. The 2011 Census remains the most accurate source of information and provides a number of headline figures below.

Figures for modal share for travel to schools are collated by Sustrans and produced in their annual 'Hands Up Scotland' report. Figures show that Falkirk is largely in line with national trends, and there has been a 1% increase in active travel to schools since 2014, compared with a 0.3% increase Scotland-wide.



Source: Transport Scotland and Sustrans

Rail and bus usage

Bus services are largely operated on a commercial basis and passenger numbers/journeys are reported on an area-wide basis (Falkirk, Clacks, East Lothian, Fife, Midlothian, Borders, Edinburgh and West Lothian). Rail Patronage for the stations within the Falkirk area continues to rise and showed an increase in the number of passenger journeys originating in Falkirk area stations.

- In line with the Scotland-wide trend, there has been a 3% reduction in the number of passengers traveling by bus over the last 5 years; (Source: Transport Scotland).
- In terms of rail journeys originating in Falkirk Council area stations, this stood at 3,068,000 in 2013/14 rising to 3,131,000 in 2016/17 resulting in a 2% increase. (Source: Transport Scotland)

Recent investment to the rail network in the form of improvement frequency and the EGIP electrification programme should ensure that rail travel remains a desirable transport mode.

No. of schools covered by School Travel Plans

School travel plans are intended to reduce car usage and encourage more sustainable forms of transport between school and home. In 2014, 25 out of 56 schools were the subject of a travel plan. All of the Schools are now covered by a Schools Travel Plan which is prepared in consultation with staff, pupils and parents.



3. Monitoring Indicators

Renewable energy installed capacity (strategic and domestic)

Policy RW01 Renewable Energy sets out the Council’s criteria for renewable energy development. **Policy D04 Low and Zero Carbon Development** seeks to ensure that proposals include Low and Zero-Carbon Generating Technologies and generate a specified level of reduction in CO2 emissions through LZCGT. The policy also seeks to encourage decentralised energy schemes.

Since the start of 2014, there have been 13 planning applications for wind energy (all for single turbines, aside from a proposal for two turbines). There has been a marked reduction in the number of applications, and in particular pre-application and EIA screening requests since the national government reduced feed-in tariffs substantially.

From 2010-2014, 115GWh of annual energy output were approved by the Council. Between 2014 and mid-2019, only 10.7GWh of annual energy output was approved. In terms of operational projects, only about 2MW is operational, as the lack of implementation of consents continues. The overall drop-off in uptake is largely as a result of the drop in financial subsidies such as feed-in tariffs and the Renewables Obligation.

The Grangemouth Biomass project at Forth Ports consent has been extended recently.

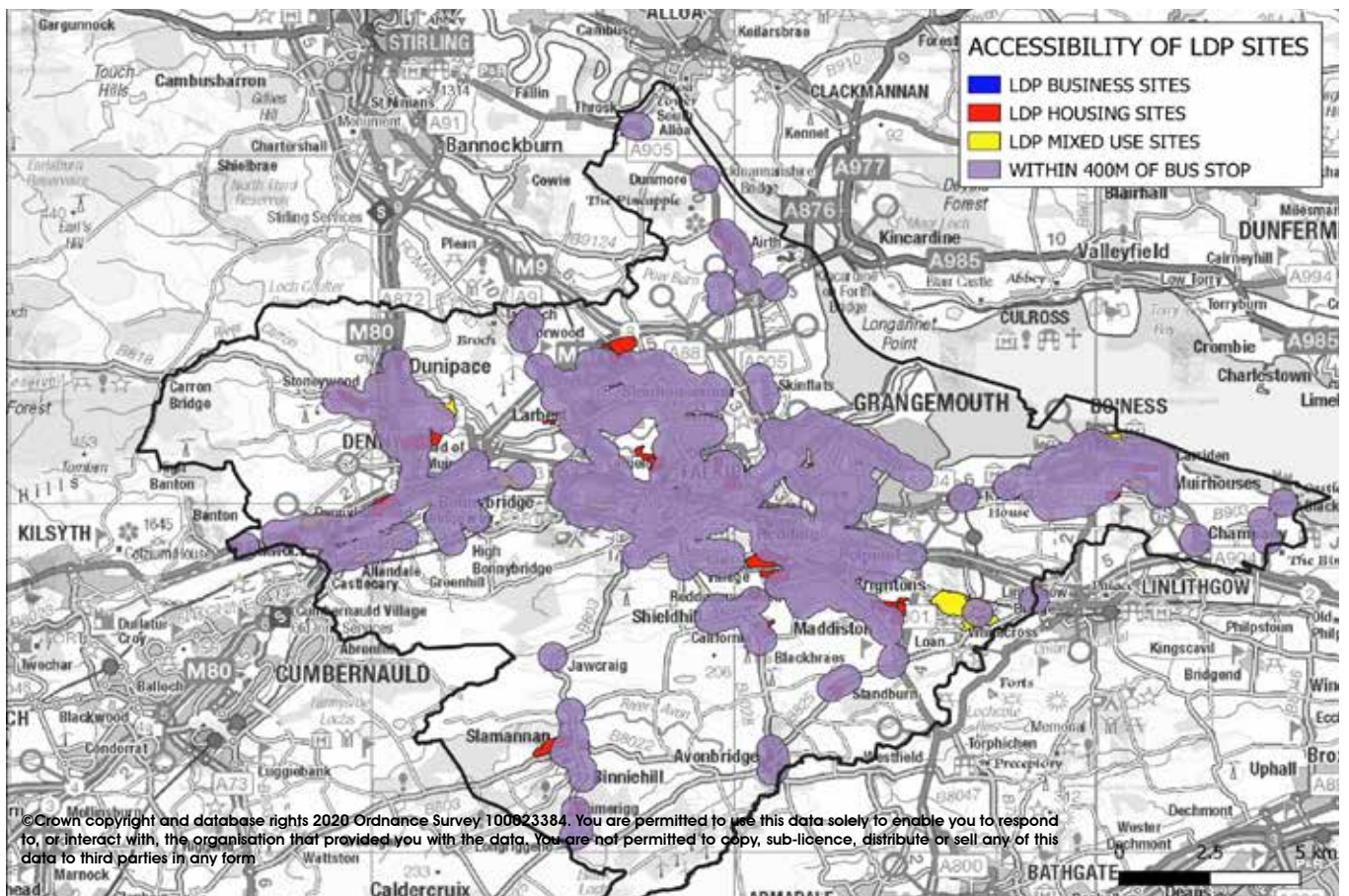
New Supplementary Guidance is being prepared for LDP2 which will include guidance for low-carbon forms of energy as well as renewables, and will include the Spatial Framework and guidance for wind energy.



3. Monitoring Indicators

Accessibility levels of new housing to facilities and public transport

Designing Streets, the Scottish Government's policy on design and placemaking describes a walkable neighbourhood as having a range of facilities within 5 minutes (up to about 400m) walking distance of residential areas which residents may access comfortably on foot. The majority of new development sites identified in the LDP are located within 400m of a bus stop. Around 200 hectares, of a total of 640 hectares of housing and mixed use sites are more than 400m from a bus stop. The majority of these sites are however strategic development areas, where additional co-ordinated public transport provision will be required for new development. In relation to sites identified as outwith 400m from public transport, these areas are largely in ongoing strategic developments such as at Overton and North Larbert, with additional public transport infrastructure being implemented in later phases of the development.



3. Monitoring Indicators

Flood Risk

Policy RW06 Flooding seeks to avoid development on the functional flood plain. There will be a presumption against new development which would:

- Be likely to be at risk of flooding;
- Increase the level of risk of flooding for existing development; or
- Result in a use more vulnerable to flooding or with a larger footprint than any previous development on site

Robust evidence in the form of a flood risk assessment and detailed mitigation must be provided for any development with the potential for flood risk. The Proposed LDP2 is more detailed in terms of the requirements for SEPAs flood risk guidance and making allowances for climate change and adaptation. The policy can be monitored by assessing the amount of new development within areas at risk of flooding, as well as the success of individual flood mitigation projects.

Number of flooding events

Since the last monitoring report, there have been a number of one-off events within the Council area. The late summer and early autumn periods of 2019 were particularly wet with long periods of persistent rainfall. This led to many incidents of surface water flooding across the Falkirk Council area, with many gardens and public open spaces being flooded. Flash flooding in August 2019 from the Polmont Burn caused disruption in the Beancross area. A high tide and storm surge combined in January 2018 to produce very high water levels in the Grange Burn and the River Carron. With continued investment in climate change resilience and flood management and alleviation, these incidents will continue to be managed.

Investment in flood management/alleviation

There has been significant progress since the last monitoring report on strategies relating to reducing and managing the impacts of flooding on our communities, economy and environment. Flood Risk Management Strategies, were published by Scottish Environment Protection Agency in December 2015 and the first Local Flood Risk Management Plans, published by lead Local Authorities in June 2016. The Forth Estuary Local Flood Risk Management Plan (FE LFRMP) was published in June 2016. It covers the period 2016-22 and sets out the proposed major flood risk management activities to be carried out in the area during this period.

The mid-term report on the FE LFRMP (Interim Report) was published in May 2019. This report discussed the status of the flood risk management actions set out in the FE LFRMP, at the time of publication, with an end of term report on the FE LFRMP being published before June 2022. Consultation on the next Flood Risk Management Strategy and FE LFRMP covering the period 2022-2028, will begin in the winter of 2020-21

Scottish Water have also completed an Integrated Catchment Study of the Falkirk area. The outputs from this study will be used to inform the content of a Surface Water Management Plan.

3. Monitoring Indicators

Reduction in pluvial flooding through on-site management

Falkirk Council continues to implement measures to reduce flood risk at locations across the Council area and the following are examples of recent schemes:

- Regular maintenance and inspection of screens, formal flood protection schemes and watercourses across the Falkirk Council;
- Sediment removal was carried out in August 2019 under Dunipace Bridge, near to the Checkbar roundabout, to improve the conveyance capabilities of the River Carron to improve road drainage;
- A contract for the reconstruction and relining of a culvert on the Craigend Burn at Maddiston is in preparation;
- Replacement of debris screens across the Falkirk Council area;
- Drainage works to several public open spaces;
- Several outfall flap valves on the River Carron have had maintenance carried out on them to maintain their functionality;
- Regular monitoring of river and coastal water levels to provide early warnings with respect to high tides and storm surges;
- A flood study for the Airth area highlighted in the last monitoring report has been completed, with priority works ongoing;
- A flood study is ongoing for the Denny/Dunipace area;
- SEPA have set up and operate a flood warning service for the Airth area.

The Grangemouth Flood Protection Scheme, which ranks as the top priority flood risk management scheme in Scotland, is progressing. A preferred scheme has now been developed and has been subject to recent public consultation.

RSPB Scotland installed a regulated tidal exchange scheme at Skinflats at the reserve that allowed for inundation of part of the reserve at high tide. Whilst this is primarily to enhance the saltmarsh habitat in the Forth Estuary, managed re-alignment also helps to manage flood risk locally.



3. Monitoring Indicators

Amount of new development in flood risk areas

Overall, the amount of new built development in areas at risk of flooding is on average fairly low. Where all or part of a site lies within an area at risk of flooding, the application is normally accompanied by a flood risk assessment to demonstrate accordance with LDP policy and SEPA guidance. The table below includes applications for new built development wholly or partly within areas at medium/high risk of flooding. It excludes the following application types:

- Residential Extensions;
- Change of use applications;
- Extensions or alterations to existing industrial buildings including minor ancillary development;
- Temporary structures;
- Hazardous substances consent;
- Engineering works;
- Advertising consent.



	Housing Applications		Business and Leisure Applications		Other (eg Infrastructure projects) Applications		Total in Flood Risk area
	Medium/high risk of river flooding	Medium/high risk of coastal flooding	Medium/high risk of river flooding	Medium/high risk of coastal flooding	Medium/high risk of river flooding	Medium/high risk of coastal flooding	
2014	2	0	6	7	2	0	17
2015	2	0	2	5	0	0	9
2016	3	1	5	3	0	0	12
2017	4	1	2	1	0	0	8
2018	3	3	4	3	0	0	13

3. Monitoring Indicators

Strategic Objective:

To extend and improve the green network and protect the area's natural heritage

Policy GN01 Falkirk Green Network seeks to promote opportunities for biodiversity, habitat connectivity, active travel, recreation, landscape quality, placemaking, sustainable economic development and climate change adaptation. The policy requires new development to deliver key strategic Green Network priorities.

Active Travel

Policy INF07 Walking and Cycling seeks to safeguard and promote the Core Path network, as well as requiring new development to provide pedestrian and cycle infrastructure into new development. Where, appropriate developer contributions will be sought to address this requirement. The policy can be monitored by quantifying the growth of the Core Path network, and by assessing how well new development is connected to the path network in and around the area.

Core Path network progress

Falkirk Council maintains in excess of 500km of paths throughout the area. Falkirk Council's Core Paths Plan was formally adopted in May 2010, and a review is well advanced. This identifies a network of 471km paths, the key routes for non-motorised access throughout the Falkirk Council area. Falkirk Council has signed 291 km of its core path network. The path network in the Council area has grown significantly since 2010. Between 2014 and end 2019 73km of new path network was created. This represents over £5M secured for investment through grant funding as well as developer contributions. With the national John Muir Way being officially opened around the time of the last monitoring report, Falkirk is competing on a national basis with other long-distance trails. Falkirk was crowned Britain's Best Walking Neighbourhood 2019 by the Ramblers, a charity which promotes walking throughout the country.



3. Monitoring Indicators

Falkirk Greenspace Strategy

The Falkirk Greenspace Strategy and the LDP sets out the Council's aspirations to further extend the strategic access network including the completion of the River Carron Trail; Inner Forth Access Improvements; the creation of an Antonine Wall trail; and the creation of the North Larbert – Denny – Torwood loop. The Inner Forth Landscape Initiative has created access improvements as part of the HLF-funded project. The Antonine Wall Trail is still in the early stages of inception and is identified as an opportunity in the Proposed LDP2.

Delivery of Greenspace projects

The Council maintains its excellent record on greenspace and remains a leading, award-winning authority in Scotland. The Council maintains over 500 km of paths throughout the area which link urban areas with the countryside and green spaces of Falkirk. Opportunities for increased access, landscape regeneration, urban open spaces, recreation, active travel and sustainable water management are being taken forward through the Falkirk Greenspace Strategy which was approved in 2013.

Review of the Council's Core Paths Plan: consultation took place in April to June 2019. The review identified 128 potential new Core Paths, which would result in an additional 84km of path network.

In partnership with Central Scotland Green Network Trust the Council has produced a Forest Estate Plan for all Council owned woodlands. This will allow us to apply for Woodland Improvement Grant and Sustainable Management of Forest Grant under the Scottish Government's Forestry Grant Scheme. Once implemented, the Forest Estate Plan will involve:

- Planting of nearly 40,000 trees;
- Management of existing woodland; and
- Creation of over 24,000m² of new paths and improvement of an existing 14,000m² of existing paths.



The Council continues to undertake enhancement works to a number of designated and other sites, in partnership with a variety of organisations and community groups, and made possible through a number of funding sources.

The Falkirk Great Places Partnership (incorporating Falkirk Community Trust, Falkirk Council, Scottish Canals and Central Scotland Green Network Trust) secured funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund in December 2017 for the **Falkirk: Landscape, Industry and Work** project to promote a range of opportunities to recognise Falkirk's industrial history.

The Inner Forth Landscape Partnership (IFLI) The Inner Forth Landscape Initiative was a £4m partnership programme which delivered over 50 projects designed to celebrate the Firth of Forth. The project drew to a close this year and was one of the winners of the 2019 Scottish Awards for Quality in Planning. In the Falkirk area, this included managed realignment at Skinflats, and enhancement projects at Kinneil Foreshore and Bothkennar.

Other key greenspace projects delivered since 2014 include:

- Carron Dams Local Nature reserve has transformed a former industrial site with new paths and interpretive artworks. The project won Overall Winner and the People's Choice Award at the 2019 Scottish Awards for Quality in Planning;
- Abbotshaugh Bridge completed linking Abbotshaugh to Carron completed in 2018;
- Enhancement at Kinneil Local Nature Reserve in Bo'ness including completion of the Bo'ness Buoy project and habitat enhancement;
- Creation of Roman themed playspaces at Callendar Park, Falkirk and in Tamfourhill;
- Park improvements at Easter Carmuir Park (c.£340k) and Nailier Park (c.£110k) in Camelon as part of the Big Lottery Funded Our Place 2 project;
- Park improvements at Key Open Space Assets in Banknock (Ash Park c.£60k) and Carronshore (Gairdoch Park c.£30k);
- Creation of 5.5.ha of new wildflower meadow and enhancement of 5.3ha of wildflower meadow at a 11 locations along the John Muir Way as part of the Pollinator.

3. Monitoring Indicators

Allotments created

Falkirk Allotment Society manages 36 allotment plots at Bantaskine Estate and a further 8 plots at Callander Park Walled Garden. There is also space for 34 community growing plots at Muiravonside Country Park. These are run by Muiravonside Community Growing Association.

'Dig in Falkirk: Falkirk's Community Food Growing Strategy' identifies how Falkirk Council, partner organisations, business and communities can work together to support community growing across the Council area. The Strategy will be supported by specific action plans, the first of which is an Allotments Action Plan identifies how community growing projects will be delivered.

Status/coverage of LBAP priority habitats and species

'Second Nature: a Biodiversity Action Plan for the Falkirk Council Area' was produced in October 2018. This identifies priorities for wildlife conservation and enhancement and sets out 9 themes and action plans for projects. The LBAP highlights progress over the last 10 years, as well as identifying priority projects alongside longer-term aspirations for biodiversity projects.



3. Monitoring Indicators

Status/coverage of international, national and locally designated nature conservation sites

Designation		Total area in Falkirk Council Area (ha)
Special Area for Conservation (Black Loch Moss)	1	2.5 ha
Special Protection Areas (Firth of Forth, Slamannan Plateau)	2	Firth of Forth 1440ha Slamannan Plateau 10.3ha
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (Black Loch Moss)	10	2012 ha approx.
Local Nature Reserve	3	28 ha - Bonnyfield 55 ha - Kinneil Foreshore 18 ha - Carron Dams
Wildlife Sites	62	2101 ha (including total areas of cross boundary sites)
Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation	25	345 ha



Local Nature Reserves Designated

The Council has three local nature reserves:

Bonnyfield, Bonnybridge: A former quarry close to the John Muir Way offering natural habitat to a wide range of plants and animals. One of the most important and unusual habitants is the Burnet Moth.

Kinneil Foreshore, Bo'ness: The Site of the former Kinneil Colliery is also an internationally designated site which supports breeding and overwintering birds. The site also has native woodland and a network of paths.

Carron Dams: A reservoir once used by Carron Iron works. The reservoir is now partially drained, the reservoir has become colonised by rich fen communities and scrub woodland.

There are no current plans for designation of further LNRs, as many of our most important local sites now benefit from management plans involving communities and partner organisations.

Incidence of Invasive species

Non-native species are plants or animals which are not native to the area (they have been introduced by the actions of people). A small proportion of these are 'invasive'; causing damage to the environment, the economy, our health or the way we live. The Council is working to combat invasive non-native species on its own land and across the wider area. The Council runs an Invasive Species Forum, which serves to monitor invasive species across the area and work with landowners to address the issue. The incidence of invasive species (from 2016 when formal recording took place) reported to the Council is as follows:

2016	12 counts
2017	10 counts
2018	10 counts
2019	7 counts

Source: Planning and Environment Unit

The Council runs education and awareness events to help the public and recognise incidences of invasive species which is intended to continue the reduction.

3. Monitoring Indicators

Strategic objective:

To improve the sense of place in our towns and villages and to protect, enhance and promote our historic environments.

Overall level of vacant and derelict land, and amount brought back into productive use

Since the last monitoring report in 2014, around **24 hectares** of vacant and derelict land has been brought back into use. Key sites delivered and currently being brought forward include:

- Former gas works site at Etna Road, Falkirk;
- Former High School, Blinkbonny Road, Falkirk;
- Former Rosebank Distillery (under construction).

The amount of vacant and derelict land tends to fluctuate between surveys. The most significant reduction occurred between 2002 and 2009, when Falkirk recorded a decrease of 52%, the second highest reduction in Scotland. Housing development was brought forward in large former industrial sites as the former Nobel Munitions works at Redding. In the last five years the amount of land in Falkirk which has been identified as vacant and derelict land has continued to increase by 48% between 2014 and 2018. This can be attributed to more accurate assessment of the extent of vacant and derelict land within the petrochemical operations at Grangemouth, currently undergoing significant restructuring, and the identification of Carrongrove paper mill in Denny. A number of larger stalled LDP sites, such as the Whitecross Manuel Works contribute significantly to the total figure.



Ongoing site remediation

The Council's Contaminated Land Team has an Inspection Strategy in terms of the The Environmental Protection Act 1990 and the latest review of the Contaminated Land Database has identified the following sites within the Council area:

- 2,689 sites are identified as potentially contaminated (NB not all sites are actually contaminated but have the potential to be so on the basis of historic land uses);
- Within the sites identified, 59 are identified as potentially high risk, 930 identified as potentially medium risk and 1700 identified as potentially low risk (risk to human health, water environment, ecological systems or property);
- 141 sites have undergone intrusive site investigation and risk assessments under Part IIA in the high and medium risk category - this encompasses both Council owned and privately owned sites;
- To date two sites (Summerford Park, Camelon and Gumboo Path, Denny) have undergone remediation works, with another site at Tamfourhill having undergone partial remediation works in 2007/2008;
- Due to lack of funding, no further intrusive investigations or remedial works have been undertaken in recent years as part of Part IIA inspection works.

Old mineral/landfill sites restored

Within the Falkirk Council area there are approximately 1,638 recorded mine entries and around 104 coal mining related hazards which are recorded by the Coal Authority. A significant number of mineral sites were restored during previous monitoring periods. Re-profiling and partial restoration continues at Avondale, with full restoration continuing once capacity is used up. A planning application was also granted in 2015 for the restoration of Kinneil Kerse landfill restoration. This is currently on hold pending resolution of waste licensing issues. There have also been a number of peat restoration projects such as a partnership project to restore 210 hectares of peat bog at Fannyside, within Falkirk and North Lanarkshire. The Proposed LDP2 identified a number of peatland restoration opportunities.

3. Monitoring Indicators

Investment in placemaking priority areas

Policy D01 Placemaking identifies key strategic locations for high-quality design and environmental enhancement. The effectiveness of the policy can be measured by the quality of development on the ground, and the implementation of the relevant Supplementary Guidance.

Policy D01 identifies areas which are key opportunities for placemaking. These are:

1. Strategic Housing Growth Areas & Business Locations
2. Town and Village Centres
3. Town Gateways and Major Urban Road Corridors
4. Canal Corridor
5. Central Scotland Green Network

Key achievements under this monitoring period include:

Town Centres

Public realm improvements in Falkirk town centre through the Town Centre Regeneration Funds and the Falkirk THI. The Council continues to promote regeneration opportunities in Bo'ness and Grangemouth and the first phase of a new town centre for Denny is complete.

Town Gateways

The opening of Helix Park and associated canal works has made a significant contribution towards enhancing the eastern gateway to Falkirk.

Canal Network

Scottish Canals have undertaken a range of environmental and public realm improvements along the canal corridor.

A report was produced by Peter Brett Associates, commissioned by Scottish Canals (<https://www.scottishcanals.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2018/06/PBA-Final-Monitoring-Report-2012-2015.pdf>) to examine the economic development and activity around the Forth and Clyde and Union canal corridors. In the Falkirk area this includes:

- 450 housing units;
- 471 m² of employment floorspace;
- 24 (FTE) employees;
- £88.1 million estimated investment;
- 864 construction jobs.

Key areas include ongoing enhancements at the Falkirk Wheel, the delivery of the Helix visitor centre and the ongoing construction of Rosebank Distillery.

Central Scotland Green Network

Walking and connectivity is also included in the Place Standard and Falkirk has benefits from ongoing investment in placemaking. Falkirk was voted 'Best Walking Neighbourhood'. The John Muir Way crosses the area and links an array of visitor attractions through Falkirk which include Rough Castle Roman Fort, the Falkirk Wheel, Forth & Clyde and Union Canals, Callendar Park and House, Muiravonside Country Park, Kinneil House and Estate, Bo'ness foreshore and Blackness Castle, all of which have benefited from investment during this monitoring period.



3. Monitoring Indicators

Investment in building restoration/public realm improvements in Conservation Areas

Policy D09 Listed Buildings, Policy D10 Conservation Areas and Policy D11 Areas of Townscape Value are intended to safeguard listed and historic buildings and protect the historic character and visual amenity of Conservation Areas and Areas of Townscape Value. The effectiveness of the LDP policies can be measured by the success of initiatives such as the THI, assessing the quality of development within the Conservation Areas, and quantifying the number of listed and historic buildings brought back into use.

Conservation Area Appraisals: A programme of Conservation Area Appraisals for the council's nine conservation areas was completed in 2013, together with a programme of Conservation Area Management Plans completed in 2013. These assessed the characteristics and priorities and formed the basis of ongoing improvements to the Council's nine conservation areas.

Falkirk also has 8 Areas of Townscape Heritage identified on the LDP Proposals Maps. These represent townscapes of historic or architectural merit which are not Conservation Areas. Since the last Monitoring Report, a process of review is underway to evaluate the existing AOTVs in partnership with Edinburgh College of Art's Architectural Conservation MSC students. This will further assist with gathering baseline data to assess change, and monitor the effectiveness of built heritage policies in the LDP.

Falkirk THI

The Falkirk Townscape Heritage Initiative is a £5 million grant-giving programme that helps communities to regenerate Conservation Areas displaying particular social or economic need. Falkirk THI is jointly funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), Historic Environment Scotland, Falkirk Council, and the Falkirk BID.

The scheme concluded at the end of 2018. Since the last monitoring report, over £5.5 million has been invested in the THI. This has been invested in a number of priority projects including improvements to public realm. Grants have also been given to local property owners, businesses and organisations to allow them to carry out high-quality repairs and other works to historic properties and spaces within the THI area.

Improvements and restoration of 36 properties are now complete. These include the Falkirk Steeple, repairs to numerous properties across the town centre, conversion of vacant properties to offices and residential use, and reinstatement of traditional shopfronts. There have also been improvements to areas of public realm including lighting and resurfacing of closes and key access routes into the town centre. The Falkirk THI was one of the Scottish Award for Quality in Planning winners in December 2019.

Listed buildings brought back into use/ demolished

Between 2014 and the end of 2019, 3 listed buildings were brought back into use. These are;

- Larbert House;
- Arnotdale House; and
- Carrongrove House

The Buildings at Risk Register has 23 entries in the Falkirk Council area: B (11), C (5), A (3), Unlisted (4). These are subject to ongoing review with the Council continuing to work with landowners and organisations such as HES to bring the properties back into use. Development Plan policy and Supplementary Guidance seeks to support the re-use of listed buildings, and allows for some level of sympathetic additional development where required to secure viability and the future of the building.

There is also a trend for change of use from either institutional, commercial or leisure uses of listed buildings to residential accommodation, and there were 11 listed building consents granted for such schemes.



3. Monitoring Indicators

Damage to/loss of archaeological sites through development

Policy D08 Sites of Archaeological Interest seeks to protect Scheduled Monuments and other identified nationally important archaeological resources and preserve them in situ, within an appropriate setting. The policy can be evaluated by assessing the number of archaeological sites wholly or partly lost. Impacts on setting are harder to assess.

There have been no archaeological sites lost in this monitoring period.

Investment in positive management/promotion of Antonine Wall WHS

The 2014-2019 Management Plan, together with the 5 year Action Plan sets out the main priorities for partners and stakeholders for enhancement and public engagement with the Antonine Wall. Since the last monitoring report, a programme of community projects, entitled Rediscovering the Antonine Wall has been launched by the five partner authorities to help people discover and enjoy the Antonine Wall. Key projects include a number of Roman themed play areas, with the playspace at Tamfourhill now delivered. A number of replica distance slabs, including the Bridgeness Slab have been delivered, as well as increased interpretation and signage along the Wall, for example at Roughcastle Fort.

Whilst policies in the LDP seek to protect the Wall and its setting, LDP2 will go further by identifying specific opportunities for enhancement such as the Antonine Wall Trail. The SPG is also currently being revised by the five partner authorities, with a further review of the World Heritage Site and its priorities post-2020.



New development impacting on the integrity/setting of the Antonine Wall WHS

Policy D07 Antonine Wall seeks to retain, protect, preserve and enhance the Antonine Wall, its associated archaeology, character and setting. Development which would impact the WHS itself, or impact the setting of the WHS, but impacting on the landscape setting of the Antonine Wall will not be supported. The policy is supported by Supplementary Planning Guidance which sets out potential impacts and how to mitigate.

The Antonine Wall, is part of the transnational Frontiers of the Roman Empire World Heritage Site. The Wall extends across Scotland for 37 miles, from Old Kilpatrick in West Dunbartonshire to Carriden in Bo'ness; it provides the largest and most important concentration of archaeological interest in the council area including sections of the wall itself, forts and camps.

Between the start of 2014 and summer 2019, around 100 planning applications were approved which were located either wholly or partly within the Antonine Wall World Heritage Site. These are largely for minor development such as replacement windows, house extensions and ancillary development. There have been several residential extensions including a house plot at Seabegs, Bonnybridge and the conversion and new build of land at the former Carmelite Monastery in Arnothill, Falkirk. Most of these proposals are located on previously developed land, whereby consultation with Historic Environment Scotland and the Council's Archaeologist are involved with protection and necessary mitigation of the WHS.

There were also around 70 applications approved within the Antonine Wall World Heritage Site Buffer Zone, which is designed to protect the landscape setting of the Wall. Again, a significant number of these applications are for minor residential applications. Where applications have been submitted for more substantial proposals, these have generally been accompanied by a cultural heritage impact assessment in order to determine potential impacts on the Wall and its setting.

3. Monitoring Indicators

New development impacting on integrity/setting of historic gardens and designed landscapes

Between the start of 2014, and mid-2019, there were 13 applications which were located within Designed Gardens and Landscapes, as identified on the Historic Environment Scotland Inventory. The majority were for minor development, and development of facilities at Callander Park. One notable decision is a longstanding legacy application for the restoration of Dunmore Park House and stables to form around 25 houses, with the erection of an additional 45 dwellings. The Glorious Gardens project was also launched researching and recording historic gardens and designed landscapes. Funding was provided by Historic Environment Scotland and the Heritage Lottery Fund. Falkirk was included as one of the pilot areas for the project. This will help to identify non-inventory designed landscapes, as well as future inventory designed landscapes.

New development impacting on setting of battlefield sites

Three sites within the 'Inventory of Historic Battlefields' lie partly or wholly within the Council area. The policy designed to protect battlefields and their setting was first introduced through the Falkirk Council Local Plan in 2010. The second Battle of Falkirk covers a substantial area to the south of the town, whilst parts of the Battles of Linlithgow Bridge and Kilsyth lie at the eastern and western end, respectively, of the Council area. 69 applications were received for development wholly or partly located within a battlefield. 55 of these applications were for house extensions, with the remainder being 3 applications for dwellinghouses as well as applications for change of use, and agricultural buildings. There has been a notable absence of major development within historic battlefield sites.

Strategic objective:

To manage natural resources and waste sustainably.

Policy RW02 Mineral resources and Policy RW03 Assessment of Mineral Proposals seek to ensure control of the scope and impact of mineral proposals in the Council area. The policy applies to proposals including coal, fireclay, coal bed methane (CBM) and aggregates (sand, gravel and hard rock).

Operational/consented mineral sites

The Falkirk area still has a range of mineral resources including coal, aggregates and coal bed methane, although only in some areas is extraction likely to be environmentally acceptable. Annual returns on mineral production are not generally made to the Council unless a specific condition of consent requires this information. Information on mineral production on a regional and national basis can be obtained from the United Kingdom Minerals Digest 2018 <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/downloads/start.cfm?id=3514>.



3. Monitoring Indicators

Site/Mineral Type	Current Situation
Deep-mined coal	None
Coal bed methane	
Sites near Letham	Application P/12/0521/FUL for development for coal bed methane production at 14 sites was the subject of an appeal to Scottish Ministers which has been withdrawn. Application P/14/0038/FUL for an exploration borehole east of Skinflats was granted consent in 2014. The Petroleum Exploration and Development Licence (PEDL 162) has been granted a 12-month extension to June 2020 by the Scottish Government. A Direction from the Scottish Government has been in place since 2015 whereby Planning Authorities cannot grant consent for unconventional oil and gas development without notifying Scottish Ministers.
Opencast coal	
Greenhill, Avonbridge	F/05/0841/VRC - minded to grant - work required on restoration bond and S75 requirements. F/06/1215/VRC - extant live consent following a material operation being carried out. No S75. Unilateral Voluntary Obligation submitted by agent to deliver bonds associated with site restoration.
Aggregates - sand and gravel	
Hillhouse Farm, by Hills of Dunipace	Inactive. Site west of M876 motorway near J1 - restoration includes infilling with inert waste. Restoration not yet complete.
Hard Rock	
Boards Quarry, Dunipace	Active. Long established workings - application F/2003/0493 to extend existing working to west. Extension started but worked intermittently.
Northfield Quarry, Dunipace	Active. Long established workings - certificate of lawfulness granted in 1998.
Cowdenhill Quarry, by Banknock	Inactive. Application P/12/0380/FUL for restoration and new access minded to grant subject to signing a S75 legal agreement. An application across boundary in North Lanarkshire Council area for additional quarrying using proposed access in Falkirk Council area 12/00729/FUL is also still under consideration.
Drumhead Quarry, Denny	Active. Application for the extraction of dimension sandstone P/11/0156/MRL granted.
Peat	
Letham Moss, by Airth	Active. Site has certificate of lawful use F/99/0125 granted in Nov. 1999.
Fireclay	
No individual workings - produced as part of open cast coal working	

Air quality and numbers of AQMAs

Policy RW07 Air Quality seeks to ensure that impacts on air quality are taken into account in assessing development proposals. The effectiveness of this policy can be monitored at application stage, to ensure that proposals which would negatively impact the local air quality are not supported. General monitoring is undertaken by the Council on an ongoing basis by assessing the levels of specific pollutants in designated areas.

The Local Air Quality Management process requires all Councils to review and assess air quality for seven pollutants in their area. As a result of this process Falkirk Council has declared four Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs).

Since the last Monitoring Report, several proposals for significant developments which were subject to an air quality assessment including:

- Combined Heat and Power (CHP) Renewable Energy Plant - CalaChem, Earls Gate, Grangemouth. The proposed new CHP energy plant is required to provide a replacement source of steam and gas-fired electrical power generation to the Grangemouth Complex;
- DKL Metals Ltd - Relocation of DK Metals Ltd facility from Avontoun to Grangemouth;
- STOR (Short Term Operating Reserve) generator application - Scottish Power, Bonnybridge.

3. Monitoring Indicators

Noise/odour complaints

Noise and odour complaints are dealt with by the Council's Environmental Health department. These can arise from a variety of sources including industrial and commercial sources, as well as residential sources. The LDP can assist in reducing the number of complaints by carefully considering co-location of developments, and managing new development which may be a source of odour or noise through the planning process.

Loss of prime agricultural land, carbon-rich soils or rare soils

Estimates point to as much as 80% of the UK's peatland landscape having been damaged. Most of that peatland is in Scotland and it is estimated that 70% of our blanket bog and 90% of our raised bog area has been damaged to some degree. Damaged bogs are a source of climate-warming greenhouse gases reduced water quality and deliver a diminished range of other services. (Source: Scotland's National Peatland Plan, SNH, 2015)

Development of greenfield sites can result in a loss of prime agricultural land, thus reducing the area available for food production. Approximately 17% of agricultural land in the area is of prime quality (Classes 1, 2, and 3.1 as defined by the Macauley Institute) Proposed development sites within the adopted LDP cover 375.5 hectares of prime quality agricultural land, which is approximately 7.4% of the total prime quality agricultural land across the Council area. Some of these sites are now complete.



Water quality/waterbody status

Policy RW05 The Water Environment seeks to safeguard the water environment which represents a valuable ecological and recreational resource. This includes: rivers, canals, lochs, estuaries, wetlands, coastal waters and water under the ground. The monitoring of the policy is shown through the water quality status of individual water bodies, which is rated from 'Bad' to 'High' by SEPA (Scottish Environment Protection Agency).

The water quality status within the Council area has remained relatively stable since 2014. Key changes to waterbodies include:

- River Avon improved from 'moderate' to 'good';
- Mains Burn improved from 'poor' to 'moderate';
- Pow Burn/Tor Burn declined from 'good' to 'moderate';
- Groundwater quality has remained stable aside from the Grangemouth catchment which was declined from 'good' to 'poor'.



Source: SEPA Water Classification Hub

3. Monitoring Indicators

Waste and Recycling

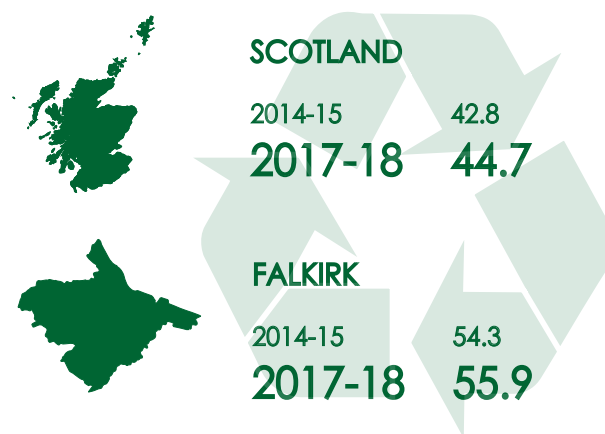
Policy RW08 Waste Management Facilities seeks to ensure safeguarding of all operational waste management facilities, and ensure that any new waste facilities are appropriately located. Waste management facilities include landfill sites, commercial recyclers, composting sites and energy from waste plants.

Policy RW09 Waste Reduction in New Development seeks to ensure that all new development minimise the production of construction waste and to recycle as much as possible. In terms of monitoring the effectiveness of this policy, most larger proposals are accompanied by a construction method statement and waste management plan, but monitoring of ongoing compliance falls outwith the scope of the planning system and is managed by Environmental Health and SEPA.



The Zero Waste Plan for Scotland (2010) proposes long term targets of recycling 70% of all Scotland’s waste, and only 5% of all waste ending up in landfill by 2025. Falkirk is currently performing well for recycling of waste, with recycling rates higher than the Scottish Average. (Source: Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2017/18).

LEVELS OF RECYCLING



The Zero Waste Plan (ZWP) requires planning authorities to support the delivery of its targets to 2025 to recycle at least 70% of Scotland’s total annual waste, treat unsorted waste materials prior to incineration/thermal treatment or landfill and landfill a maximum of 5% of Scotland’s annual waste arisings. All operational landfill is in the Falkirk Council area and the majority of other waste management sites in the Forth Valley are also in the Falkirk Council area which include civic amenity, composting sites and transfer stations.

Regional capacity calculations for Scottish Planning Policy produced by SEPA (based on Dec. 2017 data) identify additional operational waste management infrastructure capacity required for the Forth Valley area which covers Clackmannanshire, Falkirk and Stirling. Waste management facilities include landfill sites, commercial recyclers, composting sites and energy from waste plants. The Forth Valley area requires an additional 110,000 tonnes capacity to manage source segregated recyclables and unsorted waste. There is a requirement for a rolling 10 year landfill capacity for the Forth Valley area and the annual SEPA Landfill Capacity Report indicates that this is currently exceeded in the Forth Valley area. Landfill rates have reduced in recent years and this trend is expected to continue to influence the capacity requirements. Landfill capacity at December 2018 stands at over 2 million tonnes, significantly more than the required landfill capacity of 790000 tonnes.



Falkirk Council
Development Services