

COVID-19 Third Sector Response Forum
Wednesday 29th June 2022
3pm – 5pm
Zoom Meeting

Present:

Lynsey Hansford (LH) (Chairperson)
Laura Jamieson (LJ) (Minute Taker)
Victoria McRae (VM)

CVS Falkirk and District
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CVS Falkirk and District

Alan Grey (AIG)
Allan Robertson (AR)
Ania Sandland (ASa)
Avi
Barry Jordan (BJ)
Chris Gunn (CG)
Donald Johnston (DJ)
Donna Laidlaw (DL)
Duncan Hearsom (DH)
Fiona
Jessie-Anne Malcolm
Julie Ryan (JR)
Kirsty McEwen (KM)
Linsey Stocks (LS)
Lorna Finalyson (LF)
Lorraine Love (LL)
Marie Kennedy (MK)
Mairi Wright (MW)
Paul Barrowman (PB)
Sidra Tariq (ST)
Steve McQueen (SMc)
Susan Docherty (SD)

Forth Valley Migrant Support Network
Social Security Scotland
Central Wellbeing SCIO
Sustainable Thinking Scotland CIC
LGBT Youth Scotland
Falkirk Foundation
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS)
Strathcarron Hospice
Dial-a-Journey
[Unknown]
NHS Forth Valley
Forth Environment Link
LinkLiving
Forth Valley Sensory Centre
[Unknown]
Royal Voluntary Service Forth Valley
NHS Forth Valley
NHS Forth Valley
SDS Forth Valley
Rainbow Muslim Women's Group
Sustainable Thinking Scotland CIC
Falkirk and Clackmannanshire Carers Centre

Apologies:

Diane Cairns (DiC)
Jackie Turnbull (JT)
Kelly Tulloch (KT)
Margaret Coutts (MC)

Transform Forth Valley
NHS Forth Valley
Healthcare Improvement Scotland
Falkirk and Central Scotland Samaritans

1. Welcome and Introductions

LH introduced herself, welcomed forum members present and advised the meeting was recorded via Zoom. Introductions were made via the Zoom chat function.

2. Review of Previous Minutes (Wednesday 16/3/2022)

The minutes had previously been sent to members, who were asked to email LH with any updates of edits.

- LH noted that MC had submitted her apologies for today's meeting, as she was attending a Royal Garden Party as part of her being awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM) in the Queen's 2020 Birthday Honours.

3. NHS Forth Valley Community Grants Scheme and Health Improvement Resource Service (HIRS)

MK was due to deliver a presentation with information on the Community Grants Scheme, which would soon reopen for applications, and the new Health Improvement Resource Service (HIRS); however, due to technical issues, she instead spoke about the scheme and will send the presentation and video to LJ and LH.

- Community Grants Scheme

Since 2020, the Community Grants Scheme has supported over 130 groups in Forth Valley, with over a third of those from Falkirk. MK noted that most awardees were third sector groups, but grants had also been awarded to schools, amongst others.

Reopening on Monday 11th July, the Scheme will now welcome applications from local groups and organisations who are helping to reduce health inequalities and improve health and wellbeing in their communities. However, applications for activity supporting and connecting communities in response to COVID-19 will still be considered.

The Scheme would particularly welcome applications which aim to support people around:

- fuel poverty or cost of living crisis
- domestic abuse
- homelessness
- ethnic minority communities and other underrepresented groups (eg. LGBTQ)
- refugees
- Gypsy, Romani, and Travelling (GRT) communities
- living with a disability
- substance use (eg. based around Scottish Government's Tobacco Control Strategy in achieving the 2034 target of a smoking population of less than 5%)

There is currently no deadline; the Health Promotion Service will consider applications every 4 weeks, and applicants will be informed by email of the outcome within 2 months of their application.

For further information on how to apply, please visit the [CVS Falkirk](https://www.cvsfalkirk.org.uk/) website.

- HIRS

HIRS provides people who work in Forth Valley access to a range of health improvement resources and information in a range of formats.

Services include [FREE leaflets](#), posters and training materials to support health promotion activities, [FREE condoms and lubricant](#), [FREE borrowable](#) resources (including books, models, games, teaching kits, and DVDs), and trained staff who support people to find the best resources available to them.

Further information, including a 30 second video, is available via the [NHS Forth Valley Health Promotion Service summer newsletter](#) (linked for your convenience).

Action: MK to Community Grants Scheme and HIRS information with LJ and LH.

Action: LH to share with members.

4. Challenges, Opportunities and Useful Resources

4.1 Falkirk Local Housing Strategy 2023 – 28 Survey

LH shared information on Falkirk Council's new Local Housing Strategy (LHS) survey, as an opportunity for members to submit their views, and to share within their own networks and newsletters, as Falkirk Council are keen to hear from as many people as possible.

The LHS sets out how the council and its partners plan to address housing issues and demand in the local area over the next 5 years.

By law, the council must develop a LHS; they would like to hear from as wide a range of local people as possible in order to include their priorities for local housing in the new strategy. To gather these views, Falkirk Council has launched an [online survey](#) (linked for your convenience).

The survey is open to a range of local groups and individuals, including: Tenants and Residents Groups, Community Councils, local clubs, support groups, families, homeowners, people who rent from a private landlord, the Council or a Housing Association, and those who live at home with family.

The deadline for responses is Sunday 31st July.

To submit your response, please visit the [Falkirk Council consultation website](#).

Alternatively, to receive a paper copy, or a copy in a different format or language, contact the Strategy and Development Team by phone: 01324 590803, or email: strategic.housing@falkirk.gov.uk

4.2 Let's Do Net Zero Community Building Fund

Scottish Government's Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES) has relaunched the [Let's Do Net Zero Community Buildings Fund](#).

Managed by Local Energy Scotland, the fund focuses on decarbonising heat in community buildings and reducing community organisations' energy costs and greenhouse gas emissions, and will run until March 2025 (subject to budget availability). This is designed to be an ongoing fund until that point; applications can be made at any time.

Funding is available for many types of self-managed community buildings, including:

- village halls
- community centres
- community hubs
- sports facilities
- faith buildings

Grant funding is available for up to 80% of eligible costs, up to a maximum of £80,000.

Applicants must be constituted non-profit distributing community organisations, including organisations with charitable status, which are established and operating across a geographically defined community, or faith groups.

For further information, including how to apply, please visit the [CVS Falkirk](https://www.cvsfalkirk.org.uk) website.

LH also encouraged members to get in touch with the CVS Falkirk team if they needed support applying for this, or any other funding.

4.3 Access to Free LFDs for the Third Sector

LH informed members that, while LFDs are no longer free for members of the public, there is an opportunity still for those running groups and activities for vulnerable people to access them for free. It is a complex process, and members were encouraged to contact LH for details on the steps they would need to take.

It was noted that, while groups and organisations registered with the Care Inspectorate would likely already have access to free LFDs, this opportunity can remove barriers for others and the people they support.

4.4 Agnes Hunter Trust Funding

Established by a testamentary deed in 1954, the Agnes Hunter Trust has 2 key areas of funding support:

- charities that help disabled people
- charities that assist with the education and training of disadvantaged people aged 16 years or over and who have left school

The Trust invests in registered charities delivering key services to these individuals, removing barriers that restrict life choices and enabling people to lead fulfilling lives. It seeks to encourage inclusion, integration and independence.

In addition, the Trust is particularly keen to hear from smaller charities with a strong local community presence, causes that do not have a strong public profile (including start-up organisations), and charities developing innovative approaches (including pilot projects).

All funding requests must be for work within Scotland. Applicants should hold reasonable but not excessive free reserves, unless there is a particular reason for holding a higher level. In the case of start-up organisations with limited reserves, applicants can provide evidence of their likely sustainability over the term of the grant. The Trust no longer offers grants to large charities with an income of over £2.5 million per year.

Grant requests to the Trust can be towards an organisation's core costs or direct project costs, including staff salaries and overheads.

The deadline for the next round of applications is Thursday 25th August (which will be decided by the Trustees in December).

For further information, including how to apply, please visit the [Agnes Hunter Trust](#) website.

4.5 Welcome to Falkirk Event

CVS Falkirk is holding a drop-in ["Welcome to Falkirk"](#) event on Saturday 2nd July, 12pm – 2pm, at the Callandar Square, High Street, Falkirk, FK1 1JN, to welcome people new to the local area and show them what support, services and activities are available from the third sector in Falkirk.

The event will include a range of third sector groups and organisations, who will provide information about how they can help local people, as well as some fun summer activities. The event is drop-in, as are most of the activities, but please note **the Falkirk Library Bookbug session will run 12:15pm – 12:45pm with spaces for a limited number of families, and spaces will be given on a first come, first served basis.**

Attendees can also visit the [July Falkirk Producer's Market](#) on Falkirk High Street, taking place on the same day, 10am – 4pm.

This event is open to everyone, but especially those who are new to the Falkirk and district areas, including refugees and asylum seekers.

For further information, including how your third sector group or organisation can get involved, please contact LH by email: lynsey.hansford@cvsfalkirk.org.uk

5. CVS Falkirk Third Sector Forums: What Now?

As the situation regarding COVID-19 is no longer about emergency response, CVS Falkirk has been reviewing their offer with regard to third sector forums and the sector's need. LH explained that there is a need to diversify, but that CVS Falkirk is keen to have the sector's thoughts on what the future of the forums should look like, and how they fit into the points laid out in the new Falkirk Plan.

Many members spoke about the benefits and value of the COVID-19 Third Sector Response Forum, and how they would like to see it continue in some way. They also raised concerns around the current cost of living crisis, the impact of Brexit and the war in Ukraine, and that while the issues prominent in Falkirk's communities are diverse, many stem from COVID-19 and these other points.



LH also spoke to members about the upcoming Celebratory Event in August, and will be in touch with members once details of the new forums are confirmed. She then reiterated CVS Falkirk's commitment to giving everyone the best experience of the forums as possible.

6. Members' Updates

LH invited members for updates on their own work, and any points they wanted to raise or issues they had encountered. This resulted in offers of support and collaboration amongst members; key points and actions are noted below.

- Scottish Fire and Rescue Service: DJ and his team are running Fire Safety information sessions throughout the summer, and are looking for local Falkirk and District children and young people's groups who would like to engage.
 - These sessions are dedicated to informing young people on fire safety, showing them the work that happens in their community and giving them the chance to meet the SFRS team and ask them questions directly.
 - Anyone interested in the fire safety sessions should contact DJ by phone: 07917241219, or email: DonaldJohnston@firescotland.gov.uk
- LGBT Youth Scotland: the Falkirk group, FKInclude, is restarting, and the team will move to new local offices in August. Currently, the group meets every second Wednesday, but will move to weekly from August. Additionally, they also offer one to one support – they are not counsellors, but offer community asset coaching and opportunities to build connections.
 - BJ also included a link to their new [Life in Scotland](#) report – over 2,000 LGBT young people took part (their biggest response ever), though BJ noted that the environment for LGBT young people “seems to be getting worse”; in the 2017 survey, 74% of respondents felt respected, but in 2022, it was only 55%.
- Forth Valley Migrant Support Network: the network will have a stall at Welcome to Falkirk with information on the help they can provide. AIG noted their concern around the lack of understanding many people had regarding gas and electricity.
- RVS Forth Valley: similarly, LL reported the main feedback from their volunteers visiting older people is concerns around utility bills, and what help is available.
- Sustainable Thinking Scotland CIC: Avi spoke about their planned activities on food provision and cooking, including events around gardening and mental health support.
- Falkirk and Clackmannanshire Carers Centre: the Centre has returned to normal service and is again open 5 days a week. SD noted a high number of referrals, and spoke about the new Falkirk Carers Voice forum, which will meet 4 times per year in a hybrid format. There is also a new forum for parent carers.
- NHS Forth Valley: amongst updates on new activities and services at Forth Valley Royal Hospital, JAM informed members that there is a new COVID-19 strain, and asked them to continue to be vigilant.

Date of Next Meeting: to be confirmed

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