



**Safer and Empowered Communities Forum**  
**Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2023**  
**10am – 12pm**  
**Zoom Meeting**

**Present:**

Lynsey Hansford (LH) (Chairperson)  
Laura Jamieson (LJ) (Minute Taker)

CVS Falkirk and District  
CVS Falkirk and District

Amy Campbell (AC)  
Asha Qadir (AQ)  
Angela Reid (AR)  
Carolyn Dick (CD)  
Debbie Jupp (DJ)  
Humara Bashir (HB)  
John Hosie (JH)  
Miranda Wilson (MW)  
Pauline Smith (PS)  
Tumay Forster (TF)

Committed to Ending Abuse (CEA)  
Committed to Ending Abuse (CEA)  
Central Advocacy Partners  
dates-n-mates Falkirk  
Committed to Ending Abuse (CEA)  
Central Advocacy Partners  
Safer Streets Youth Action Project  
Falkirk Council  
Central Advocacy Partners  
Shakti Women's Aid

**Apologies:**

Nicola Bruce (NB)

Community Justice Co-ordinator

**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 and Introduction of Action Tracker**

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the previous meeting.

**3. The Falkirk Plan: Theme 5: Gender-Based Violence (GBV)**

LH gave a brief overview of Theme 5 of [the Falkirk Plan](#) (linked for your convenience), Gender-Based Violence, which is one of the key areas of focus for the Forum, and of today's meeting.

Under Theme 5, the Falkirk Plan aims to achieve the following outcomes by 2030:

- 17. Interventions for those experiencing, or at-risk of domestic abuse are early, effective, and inclusive.*
- 18. Victims of domestic abuse receive a joined-up offer of help until they are supported to safety.*
- 19. Front line staff have an increased awareness of issues related to gender-based violence.*
- 20. Men who carry out violence against women and girls are identified early and supported to change their behaviour.*

LH then introduced the meeting's key speakers, who would be presenting on their work to tackle GBV and support those affected by it.



#### 4. A Third Sector Approach to Tackling Gender-Based Violence in Falkirk District

##### 4.1 Shakti Women's Aid

TF spoke about Shakti Women's Aid's services across Scotland, and in Falkirk District specifically, and delivered a short presentation, which is available to view or download from the [CVS Falkirk](#) website. Key points are noted below:

- "Shakti" means "strength", and was established in 1986; they provide specialist GBV support for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) women and children.
- All Shakti staff are at least bilingual, as part of a multicultural team.
- They currently have outreach services across Scotland, including Falkirk District, which they are planning to expand this year to include their children and young people outreach.
  - They also have BAME appropriate refuge accommodation in Edinburgh for those leaving situations with GBV.
- Their Maitri service is a dedicated and specialised LGBTQ+ domestic abuse support service, offered to BAME women, children and young people from LGBTQ+ communities across Scotland. The service features a strong commitment to intersectionality and recognises the unique challenges people from BAME LGBTQ+ backgrounds face.
  - The service is available to people across Scotland, not just those in Shakti's outreach areas.
- Shakti also runs their Support for Migrant Victims (SMV), a Home Office pilot scheme offered across Scotland for migrant survivors of domestic (and other forms of gender-based) abuse, of all genders, and their children.
- They provide support around BAME-specific GBV types, including:
  - honour-based abuse and violence
  - forced marriage
  - female genital mutilation (FGM) and cutting
  - immigration as a tool of abuse
- Working closely with Forth Valley College, a Shakti worker is based at the Falkirk campus every Wednesday.

TF also noted the ways Shakti can offer support at community levels (safety planning and accommodation, legal assistance, signposting and advocacy) and at an institutional level, where they act as a strong activist organisation, and the voice of the BAME communities and survivors.

LH informed members that any open training sessions run by Shakti will be promoted to the forum, and through the CVS Falkirk e-bulletin and communications channels.

For further information, please visit the [Shakti Women's Aid](#) website.

##### 4.2 Central Advocacy Partners

AR, HB and PS spoke about their Survivors Project, which was created after Central Advocacy Partners identified a need amongst their partners (the people they support) for support around domestic abuse for women with learning disabilities and/or autism.



The project is funded until March 2025; one of the key points of the project is having the time to build relationships with their partners and gain their trust. Often, the team will support their partner through their main advocacy journey before addressing the domestic abuse, so trust is critical.

Weekly support groups run in Falkirk on a Wednesday and are starting soon in Clackmannanshire, offering a safe space for partners who have survived domestic abuse. The project also has an open referral process.

LH highlighted their use of the word “partner” to refer to the people they support; AR confirmed that this shows the equality in the relationship, and how important it is for their partners to know that they control the relationship.

One member asked if the team would be willing to present to a group of their male members, in order to educate them around domestic abuse and GBV. AR confirmed that they would be happy to, given the importance of educating and changing people’s perceptions as early as possible.

For further information, please visit the new [Central Advocacy Partners](#) website, or [their legacy site](#).

#### **4.3 Committed to Ending Abuse (CEA) Falkirk**

DJ spoke about CEA’s 3 stage trauma recovery model for those affected by GBV, with Stage 1 being Service, Stage 2 Psychological Therapist, and Stage 3 Reconnection Back into Communities. She also ran through what a typical day in this model looks like, and highlighted the diverse range of their clients’ needs, along with their additional services (such as those for children and young people, and at HMYOI Polmont).

CEA has just been reaccredited by [SafeLives’ Leading Lights programme](#), a mark of quality for domestic abuse services which offers services, partner agencies and commissioners a set of standards for supporting victims of domestic abuse.

For further information on the support available, please visit the [CEA](#) website.

#### **5. Forum Member 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, as well as introductions and explanations of their roles; key points are noted below.

- dates-n-mates: dates-n-mates Scotland has won the opportunity to create an advert with STV, which will be shown around September and October. The advert is currently being developed, and features some of the Falkirk members, with the final decision being made by members themselves.

#### **6. AOCB**

##### **6.1 Falkirk Community Justice Annual Report 2021/22**

On behalf of NB, LH highlighted that the latest [Falkirk Community Justice Annual Report for 2021/2022](#) has now been published and is available online (under the “Downloads” heading.)

## 6.2 Volunteers' Week 2023

In addition to this year's awards and Picnic in the Park!, CVS Falkirk is working on a special Volunteers' Week photo display to celebrate local volunteers, and groups are encouraged to get involved.

It's been an absolute joy to see volunteering opportunities reignite over the last year. With our sector busier than ever, CVS Falkirk would love to see photos of your volunteers doing what they do best – volunteering!

The display will highlight not only the impact groups make in their community, but the efforts of their volunteers and the joy and support they bring.

To submit your photos, either tag @CVSFalkirk on social media ([Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#)), or send them by email: [info@cvsfalkirk.org.uk](mailto:info@cvsfalkirk.org.uk)

**Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> August,  
10am – 12pm, via Zoom**