



Safer and Empowered Communities Forum
Wednesday 28 May 2025
10am – 12pm
Tamfourhill Community Hub

Present:

Eloise Wilson (Chairperson)	CVS Falkirk & District
Laura Jamieson (Minute Taker)	CVS Falkirk & District
Rachel McRae	CVS Falkirk & District

Asha Qadir	Committed to Ending Abuse (CEA)
David Keenan	Falkirk Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP)
Edwina Kilpatrick	Cyrenians
John Hosie	Safer Communities Youth Action Project
Kirsty McDonald	Alzheimer Scotland
Kyle O'Brian	Central Scotland Regional Equality Council (CSREC)
Lorraine Mackenzie	Freedom of Mind Community Choir
Lou Carberry	LGBT Youth Scotland
Mairi Wright	NHS Forth Valley (Public Health Nutrition)
Margaret-Anne MacMillan	NHS Forth Valley
Rowan Ferguson	Forth Valley Sensory Centre
Safia Ali	RISE Forth Valley
Samina Ali	Rainbow Muslim Women Group SCIO
Shafia Naz	Rainbow Muslim Women Group SCIO
Sharlene Ramage	Falkirk and Clackmannanshire Carers Centre
Sharon Frederiksen	Home-Start Falkirk

Guest Speakers:

Alice Tucker	Third Sector Human Rights & Equalities (THRE)
Olivia Richmond Ferns	Third Sector Human Rights & Equalities (THRE)

Apologies:

Eman Hani	Central Scotland Regional Equality Council (CSREC)
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1. Welcome and Introductions

Eloise introduced herself, welcomed forum members present, and introduced the guest speakers from THRE (speaking on what a Human Rights and Equalities First Approach can mean to groups and organisations in Falkirk District), along with those from LGBT Youth Scotland and RISE Forth Valley, who would be providing examples of local practice.

2. Review of Previous Minutes

As the February 2025 meeting was merged with the [Financial Harm Affecting Older Adults Conference](#) (held in partnership with Falkirk Adult Support and Protection), there are no formal meeting minutes, but members are invited to view the following notes from the event:



- [Thank You](#)
- [Photos on Facebook](#)
- [Conference Reflections](#)

**3. “Supporting Third Sector Organisations to Take a Human Rights and Equalities First Approach”:
Alice Tucker and Olivia Richmond Ferns, THRE**

Alice and Olivia provided an overview of THRE and its background, and highlighted the aims of today’s presentation, namely to give attendees an understanding of, and the definitions of, terms and principles used in a human rights and equalities first approach. They were also keen to look at attendees’ associations with these terms, especially in their own roles. Key points are noted below:

- Human rights are the basic minimum standard for everyone should be treated.
- Equality is about making sure everyone has the chance to make the most of opportunities available to them – “thrive, not survive” – and are a tool for people to access their human rights.
- Taking a human rights first approach can help groups and organisations prepare for upcoming legislation (eg. the upcoming Human Rights Bill for Scotland), and can bring prongs of work together.
- Human rights and equalities are an ongoing commitment, not a one-time exercise, including reviewing activities, and “looking both inside out *and* outside in”.
- Internal points to support teams in this work can include shared CPD logs, or an easily accessible folder (digital or physical) with resources (which can be added to), along with supportive policies.
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) can be part of this approach, and doesn’t only have to be the Equalities Act, but can be built on to be unique to the group or organisation, and their users.
- “You Said, We Did”: letting people know change happened is essential, which helps increase confidence and participation.

The following models were also discussed:

- [PANEL](#): Participation, Accountability, Non-Discrimination, Empowerment and Legality, which all link in with each other.
- [Laura Lundy Participation model](#): also known as the Lundy Model of Child Participation; this is aimed at children, and how to include them in conversations about their rights, but THRE find it useful at all levels of discussion, with a guide available on [their website](#) (linked for your convenience).

Points raised by members included: the importance of funding in carrying out this work, and the difficulties caused by funding restrictions; the involvement of, and co-production with, service users is essential, as is lived and living experience, and not making assumptions; the importance of approaches, attitudes and ways of working, so that people feel the work is being done with them, not to them. Additional discussion took place around the importance of including those with lived and living experience as part of the any process: “advantage is invisible to those who have it”.



Alice and Olivia also provided attendees with case studies and an information booklet on non-discrimination, [which are available online](#).

Further information on a human rights and equalities first approach is available on the [THRE](#) website.

4. “LGBTQ+ communities: Human Rights and Equalities”: Lou Carberry (Youth & Community Development Officer), LGBT Youth Scotland

Lou presented on LGBT Youth Scotland’s (LGBTYS) work with LGBTQ+ young people both locally and nationally (including their own work across Forth Valley), where consideration to human rights and equalities is essential.

- Lou noted that LGBTYS is predominantly known for the safe spaces it creates, as part of its Safer Spaces Agreement (which is reviewed with its groups quarterly), its digital service on Discord (designed fully by LGBTYS’ youth work team and the young people they support), and the live chat on the LGBTYS website, which is monitored by youth workers, not a bot.
- LGBTYS’ main areas of work are:
 - [youth groups](#): youth groups are not only based around being part of the LGBT community, but driven by what the young people attending would like to do or learn about, just like any other youth group
 - the [LGBT Charter](#): there are 3 levels, bronze, silver, and gold; there is a cost, with a discounted rate for other third sector organisations
 - there is also [Charter Awareness Training](#) for smaller organisations
 - annual Scotland-wide [research](#) and [policy](#), with a dedicated research team (currently focusing on abuse in LGBT communities)
 - volunteers (including full trained digital and youth work volunteers)
 - one to one support for young people (asset-based coaching, using the Grow model)
 - work in schools, in communities, with partners and the third sector
- [Recent reports](#) have included those on trans youth communities, rural LGBT youth (as part of LGBTYS’ focus on areas beyond the big cities, and how to ensure young people outside Glasgow and Edinburgh have access to services and are supported), health, and education (including a breakdown from the Charter team, and what work is being done by schools across Scotland, and therefore what skills they should have available on their teams).
- Lou stressed that LGBTYS is not a crisis organisation; they can refer or signpost young people in crisis, and their one to one conversations can include discussion on how to access crisis services.

Lou also shared a [short video](#), briefly covering the wide range of youth work at LGBTYS.

Referrals for young people in the Forth Valley area can be made directly to Lou as the Forth Valley Youth Worker, by email: lou.carberry@lgbtyouth.org.uk

5. “Promoting Racial Inclusion and Empowering Racialised Communities Across Forth Valley”: Safia Ali (CEO), RISE Forth Valley

Safia spoke about RISE Forth Valley (previously known as Al Masaar) and their long history of being embedded within the Forth Valley communities, with a focus on what their team refer to as “racialised communities”.

She stressed that RISE is not a Muslim-based organisation, though it was felt that the previous name gave that perception, which was part of the reason for the change. However, the name change was also to better reflect the organisation's focus in supporting people, the variety of their current and future work: “Racial Inclusion, Supporting Empowerment”.

- RISE Forth Valley runs a number of [support groups](#) offering a safe space for attendees, including:
 - Parent Club (currently predominantly attended by women, but not entirely, and based around what its members want to do)
 - RISE Together (offering a safe space for single mothers who are survivors of domestic abuse)
 - Carer Support (aiming to challenge the stigma and barriers around being a carer often experienced in racialised communities, and offering the opportunity for peer support)
 - Youth Group
 - Young Carers Group
- In Forth Valley, RISE has found that racialised communities are often spread out, which can be very isolating; its team aims to bring people together, especially young people: “bringing strength brings empowerment”.
- In addition, RISE’s work looks at how to promote inclusion in and for racialised communities, and how to elevate people’s voices.

Safia also touched on the topics of consultation exhaustion, racial gaslighting, racialised health, and offered support in training around inclusion and diversity for the third sector.

Further information on RISE Forth Valley and their activities is available via [its website](#).

6. AOCB

During breaks for discussion throughout the meeting, members raised the following points:

- The practice of rewriting and updating their EDI policies on a yearly basis, and if they hadn’t being met, looking at how to address this.
- Equalities versus equity, especially in regards to topics such as social justice.
- Recruiting and supporting people to access their services, ensuring everyone has access to the same.

**Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 3 September 2025,
10am – 12pm, via MS Teams**