



Falkirk District Older People's Network
Thursday 25 June 2026, 10am – 12pm
1st Falkirk Scout Hall (Pleasance Gardens, Falkirk, FK1 1BG)

Present:

David Paterson (Chairperson)
John McGhee (Treasurer)
Eloise Wilson (Minute taker)
Rachel McRae
Jennafer Syme

NHS Retirement Fellowship
Scottish Seniors Computer Club Falkirk
CVS Falkirk & District
CVS Falkirk & District
CVS Falkirk & District

Lyn Brown
Jim Brown
Janet Crawford
Julie Hayward
Carolyn Johnston
Jennifer Kightley
El Ledingham
Leah McAulay
Lorraine Mackenzie
Joe Ryan (Speaker)
Tajana Sandon (Speaker)
Mehar Shagufta
Kimberley Wyllie

Independent
Scottish Seniors Computer Club Falkirk
Freedom of Mind Community Choir
Bailliefields Community Hub
Freedom of Mind Community Choir
University of the Third Age (U3A)
Strathcarron Hospice
Royal Voluntary Service
Freedom of Mind Community Choir
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Falkirk Council
Playlist For Life
Falkirk Community Foundation

Apologies:

Cllr Alf Kelly
Gavin Johnstone
Vivienne Malcolm
Jessie-Anne Malcolm
Yvonne McIntosh

Falkirk Council
Falkirk Libraries
Solicitors for Older People Scotland
NHS Forth Valley
Maggie's



1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair, David Paterson, welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the 1st Falkirk Scout Hall for hosting.

David advised that PC Beth Paterson (Police Scotland) had been unable to attend due to operational demands and staffing pressures. Her presentation on community safety will be rearranged for a future meeting.

David thanked CVS Falkirk & District for continuing to support the Older People's Network.

He also provided a brief update on a number of current issues, including developments relating to the National Care Service, recent discussions at the Integrated Joint Board regarding grass cutting services, forthcoming NHS Health Improvement engagement on Urgent and Unscheduled Care, and planning for Older People's Day. Members were also reminded that the Network is currently seeking a Secretary and encouraged to express an interest if they would like to become more involved.

2. Home Fire Safety

Joe Ryan, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, delivered an informative presentation on home fire safety, focusing on preventing accidental fires and keeping people safe in their homes.

Joe explained that the four most common causes of accidental house fires are cooking, electrical faults, smoking materials and candles. Members viewed a short video demonstrating how quickly a fire can spread and the importance of leaving the property immediately if it is unsafe to remain inside.

The presentation covered a range of practical fire safety advice including:

- safe cooking practices and dealing with chip pan fires;
- testing and maintaining linked smoke and heat alarms;
- electrical safety, including extension leads and charging mobile phones and laptops;
- the risks associated with lithium-ion batteries and their safe disposal;
- carbon monoxide alarms and night-time fire safety routines.

Joe also spoke about the importance of keeping escape routes clear, closing internal doors before going to bed, and ensuring house keys are stored in a place that can be easily located in an emergency. Members asked a number of questions throughout the presentation covering smoke alarms, electrical appliances, swollen lithium batteries, digital telephone systems during power cuts and home escape planning.

Joe highlighted that the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service offers free Home Fire Safety Visits for anyone who would benefit, with priority given to people aged over 65 and those considered at greater risk.

Action: CVS Falkirk to enquire if they can circulate Joe's presentation and information on Home Fire Safety Visits following the meeting.

3. Community Safety

This item was postponed due to the absence of Police Scotland.

4. Comfort Break

Members took a short comfort break.

5. Digital Safety and Inclusion

Tatjana Sandon, Falkirk Council, provided an overview of Falkirk Council's Digital Inclusion Project, which supports people who are digitally excluded by providing devices, connectivity and access to digital skills support.

The project works through referrals from community organisations and offers refurbished smartphones and tablets, together with SIM cards providing six months of free calls, texts and data. Tatjana explained the eligibility criteria, referral process and timescales for receiving support.

Members discussed the benefits of helping people remain connected to family, friends and essential services, particularly those experiencing social isolation or who struggle to leave their homes. Questions were also raised regarding transferring existing mobile numbers and what happens after the free data period ends.

Tatjana encouraged organisations to promote the project and make referrals where appropriate, adding that she is happy to attend community groups to provide further information.

Action: CVS Falkirk to circulate Tatjana's presentation and referral information to members.

6. Falkirk Older People's Network Membership

John McGhee, Falkirk OPN Treasurer, provided an overview of OPN membership.

He reminded members that the Network was established in 2020 to provide a strong voice for older people across Falkirk and that membership remains free. Funding supports activities including Older People's Day and Network meetings, and increasing membership helps strengthen the influence of the Network locally and nationally.

Members were encouraged to complete a membership form if they had not already done so and to promote OPN within their own organisations and communities.



7. Community Activities and Updates

Members shared updates from their organisations, including:

- [Strathcarron Hospice Compassionate Communities](#) – bereavement hub resources [here](#). Contact ellen.ledingham@nhs.scot for more information.
- [Playlist for Life](#) – dementia resources, community resources and free webinars. Contact mehar@playlistforlife.org.uk for more information.
- [Falkirk Foundation](#) – activities supporting older adults including Walking Football, Football Memories and wellbeing programmes. Contact kimberley@falkirkfoundation.org // wellbeing@falkirkfoundation.org
- [Freedom of Mind Community Choir](#) – [dementia-friendly singing sessions from July – September 2026 and](#) community choir activities. Contact info@freedomofmindcommunitychoir.com if you would like to learn more about the choir.
- [Bailliefields Community Hub](#) – Information about walking Cricket, dementia support groups, social café and community garden activities can be found on their [Facebook page](#). Contact julie.hayward@bailliefields.onmicrosoft.com for more information.
- [Self Directed Support Forth Valley](#) – presentations available for community groups. Contact gina@sdsforthvalley.org for more information.
- [Royal Voluntary Service](#) – volunteer opportunities supporting cancer transport and befriending services. Contact leah.mcaulay@royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk

8. Closing Remarks

David thanked Joe Ryan and Tatjana Sandon for their presentations and thanked members for attending and contributing to the meeting.

Date of Next Meeting
Thursday 3 September 2026
10.00am – 12.00pm
Venue: To be confirmed.



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