CVS Falkirk
The Third Sector Interface for Falkirk and District

CVS Falkirk & District Registered Scottish Charity No. SC000312

CVS Falkirk & District

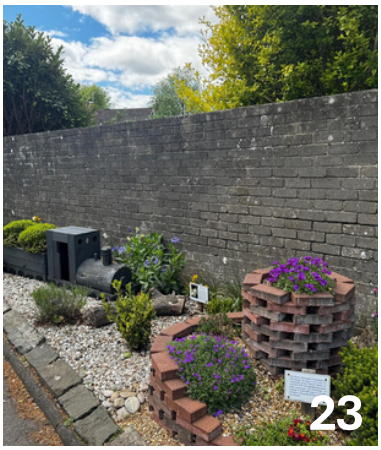
ANNUAL REPORT



31 March 2025 - 1 April 2026

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Welcome to our Annual Review, celebrating another year of collaboration, innovation and community impact across the Falkirk District.

As I reflect on the past year, I am incredibly proud of what we have achieved together. Every success highlighted in these pages reflects the dedication of our staff, volunteers, Board of Directors, members, partners and funders, united by a shared commitment to building stronger, more resilient communities.
The challenges facing the third sector continue to grow. Rising demand, financial pressures and increasing complexity have placed significant demands on organisations across Scotland. Yet we have continued to see the remarkable resilience, compassion and determination of the third sector. Communities have come together, volunteers have given their time generously, and organisations have adapted with creativity and commitment to meet changing needs.

As Falkirk's Third Sector Interface, CVS Falkirk & District is proud to support and strengthen this vital work. Throughout the year, we have developed volunteering opportunities, provided tailored capacity building support, administered significant grant funding, facilitated strategic partnerships, supported community ownership, and ensured community voices help shape local decision-making. Together, these efforts are contributing to a stronger, more connected and sustainable third sector.

My sincere thanks go to our staff team and Board of Directors for their professionalism, leadership and unwavering commitment. Their expertise, passion and guidance ensure we remain focused on our strategic vision while delivering high-quality support to community organisations, volunteers and partners.

To our members, partners and funders, thank you for your trust, collaboration and continued investment. The relationships we have built enable us to achieve far more together than we could ever achieve alone. Through partnership, we are strengthening communities, improving lives and creating opportunities for people across Falkirk District.

As you read this Annual Review, I hope you see more than figures and achievements. Behind every project, grant and partnership are people, families and communities whose lives are being positively changed through collective action.

Challenges remain, but I am confident about the future. The passion, resilience and commitment across our sector give us every reason to be optimistic about what we can achieve together.

Thank you for being part of our journey. Together, we are building stronger organisations, empowering communities and creating a brighter future for Falkirk District.

Victoria McRae
CEO, CVS FALKIRK & DISTRICT



Meet Our Team

At the heart of CVS Falkirk & District are our people. Our team brings together a wealth of experience, skills and, most importantly, a genuine commitment to making a difference for the third sector and communities across Falkirk District. From supporting organisations and volunteers to building partnerships and creating new opportunities, our people are at the centre of everything we do. Here, we introduce the team behind the work and recognise the passion, dedication and expertise they bring to CVS Falkirk & District every day (October 2026).



Victoria McRae
Chief Executive Officer



Lisa Wardlaw
Deputy Chief Executive Officer



Eloise Wilson
Partnership Development Manager



Marnie Kavanagh
Community Participation & Engagement Manager



Rachel McRae
Communications and Events Officer



Ashleigh Gillespie
Volunteering Development Officer



Mhairi MacRaild
Community Development Officer



Adam Gillies
Community Development Officer



Iain MacIntyre
Community Ownership Development Officer



Euan Robertson
Capacity Building Development Officer



Pam Dixon
Finance Officer

Board of Directors

Our Board of Directors are a valued and integral part of the team, with their knowledge and experience making a significant contribution to our work. We are grateful for the time, expertise and dedication each Board member brings.













Derek Allison; Wendy Turner; David Henderson; Martin Hall; Richard Totten; Stephen Sutton



Strategic Plan 2025 - 2030

CVS Falkirk & District is proud to be the Third Sector Interface (TSI) for the Falkirk Council area and a trusted Anchor Organisation. Our role extends beyond delivering services: we provide leadership, build partnerships, strengthen organisations and champion community voices to help the third sector thrive.

As an Anchor Organisation, we use our expertise, influence and relationships to build capacity, connect people and organisations, and create the conditions for sustainable, community-led change. Whether supporting new groups, helping organisations secure funding, developing volunteering, facilitating partnerships or influencing policy, our focus is on enabling communities to realise their ambitions.

Throughout the year, we invested in third sector resilience through organisational development, volunteering support, grant administration, facilitating training, partnership working and strategic representation. We also demonstrated our commitment to Fair Work as a Real Living Wage Employer, while supporting future talent through placements, internships and mentoring.



We launched our Strategic Plan 2025–2030.

Setting out an ambitious vision to foster social inclusion, empower communities and drive positive, lasting change through innovative and sustainable solutions.

Five roles shape how we work:

- **Brokers and Balancers** – bringing diverse perspectives together to find shared solutions.
- **Catalysts and Enablers** – helping organisations and communities achieve their ambitions.
- **Facilitators** – creating opportunities for collaboration, learning and development.
- **Champions and Advocates** – ensuring community and third sector voices influence decisions.
- **Connectors** – building relationships that strengthen communities and improve outcomes.

These roles are underpinned by five strategic priorities:

- **Capacity** – building stronger organisations, volunteers and communities.
- **Collaboration** – developing partnerships for greater collective impact.
- **Community Voice** – ensuring local people shape decisions that affect them.
- **Community-Led Change** – enabling communities to develop their own solutions.
- **Creativity and Innovation** – embracing new approaches to emerging challenges.

This Annual Review celebrates progress against our Strategic Plan and the achievements of those we support. Together, we are building a stronger, fairer and more connected Falkirk District, with community at its heart.



Strategic Priority 1: Capacity

Building Stronger Organisations Through Learning and Development



A resilient third sector depends on confident leaders, skilled volunteers and well-supported staff.

Throughout the year, we invested in the capacity and sustainability of voluntary organisations, community groups and social enterprises through a diverse programme of learning and development.

Our programme covered four key areas:

- **Governance, Leadership & Compliance** – including New Trustee, Good Conversations and Conflict Management.
- **Funding & Sustainability** – including Capital and Revenue Funding, strong funding applications, AI and Get Funding Ready sessions supporting CMHWB and KVF CLLD applicants.
- **Health, Safety & Wellbeing** – including First Aid, PAT Testing, Fire Warden training and Creating Hope.
- **Volunteer Management & Organisational Development** – including First Steps, Developing Your Volunteer Programme, Involving Young Volunteers and a Third Sector Approach to Human Rights.

The value of our learning programme extends beyond skills and knowledge. Training provides opportunities for staff, trustees and volunteers to connect, share experience and learn from one another. These relationships strengthen peer networks, encourage collaboration and help organisations build confidence and resilience.

By investing in people and organisational development, we are helping create a stronger, more capable and sustainable third sector, better equipped to respond to changing needs and deliver positive outcomes for communities across Falkirk District.

Through a blend of in-person and online sessions, we ensured accessible, practical learning opportunities for organisations across Falkirk District. We delivered 19 training courses to 328 participants, providing 825 hours of learning.

SEALOCK INFINITY SEALOCK CENTRE

For SeaLock Infinity SeaLock Centre, taking on a community building meant more than receiving the keys. It meant developing the knowledge, skills and confidence to manage a facility, work through challenges and create a welcoming space for local people.

SeaLock Infinity SeaLock Centre's journey began with CVS Falkirk & District's Empowering Communities Team, who helped them understand the Community Asset Transfer process, navigate its requirements and identify the support needed to make their plans achievable.

Alongside tailored advice on their constitution, business plan and financial projections, SeaLock Infinity SeaLock Centre also benefited from being part of CVS Falkirk & District's Community Ownership Group. Together, the group accessed formal training in First Aid and Facilities Management as well as informal training based in shared practice and experience - exploring topics such as funding readiness, booking systems, fire evacuation procedures and managing community facilities.

By subsidising training, CVS Falkirk & District helps make practical learning accessible to the third sector. For SeaLock Infinity SeaLock Centre, these opportunities helped them prepare for the responsibilities of community ownership as well as the ongoing development of their organisation beyond it. Most recently, members of SeaLock Infinity SeaLock Centre attended Conflict Management Training facilitated by CVS Falkirk & District. Reflecting on the session, Sandy Forsyth of SeaLock Infinity SeaLock Centre said:

"I really enjoyed the training and hope to be able to write something up so that it keeps me on track when dealing with situations and to stop me trying to solve the problem or difficulty and let the individual find common ground to work from."



"The training and support we received from CVS Falkirk & District has made a real difference for our group. The sessions were practical, accessible and directly relevant to what we were trying to achieve. Beyond this, the team have always been willing to share their knowledge, answer questions and help us work through challenges."



CVS Falkirk & District:
Investing in learning and development remains central to our commitment to building a stronger, more resilient third sector. By equipping organisations with the knowledge, confidence and practical skills they need to adapt and thrive, we help to ensure they are well placed to continue delivering high-quality services and making a lasting difference within their communities.

SeaLock Infinity SeaLock Centre's experience shows how subsidised training can contribute to stronger community organisations. Its value extends beyond attending a single session: it helps groups apply new knowledge, approach responsibilities with greater confidence and develop their capacity to sustain community spaces and services. For SeaLock Infinity SeaLock Centre, accessible learning has been an important part of turning community ambition into action, helping local people build both a welcoming hub and a stronger organisation to support its future.

BUILDING STRONGER ORGANISATIONS

Throughout 2025/26, CVS Falkirk & District strengthened the contribution of the third sector to Falkirk's local social economy by improving organisational sustainability, supporting social enterprise, investing in workforce development and promoting partnerships that maximise social value. As Falkirk's Third Sector Interface (TSI), we connected organisations with funding, networks, learning opportunities and strategic partnerships, helping build resilience while contributing to inclusive economic development.



The **Funding Officers Network** aims to strengthen collaboration, improve communication and maximise the impact of investment within local communities by bringing funders and community representatives together in one space. Reflecting on the value of sessions, one member notes:

"Unless we work in partnership, we're isolating ourselves, and will not be successful."

Through learning sessions and introductions to funders, sessions foster stronger relationships and improve access to resources - and for funders, it provides a valuable space to hear directly from prospective fundees about local need to ensure their investment delivers the greatest impact.

Improving access to sustainable funding, we delivered the Falkirk Funders Fayre bringing together around 300 delegates and 20 funding organisations, and creating one of the largest local opportunities for voluntary organisations, community groups and social enterprises to engage directly with funders. Participants explored new funding opportunities, strengthened relationships with funders and gained insight into investment priorities. This was supported by ongoing funding advice, targeted communications and organisational development support, helping groups diversify income and sustain community services. Throughout the day, we also facilitated a series of training opportunities to develop understanding, strengthen applications, and prepare for new investment programmes.



Investing in workforce and community development, we facilitated a series of ORCA training sessions, using our bespoke digital tool to support organisations to complete a full review, highlighting areas of strength and opportunities for development. From our membership, 31 organisations were supported to complete an initial assessment, develop their practice and governance and are now looking to re-assess their standing. Feedback showed that groups found the process straightforward and key to understanding where their next steps lay.

We also strengthened Falkirk District's social enterprise sector. During the year we continued to support the Forth Valley Social Enterprise Network, promoting collaboration, peer learning and shared practice across the region. To enhance local networking opportunities, we launched the Falkirk Social Enterprise Breakfast Club, providing a regular forum for social enterprises to build relationships, exchange ideas, identify collaboration opportunities and access business support. These initiatives increased visibility, strengthened networks and supported the growth of local social enterprises.

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE BREAKFAST CLUB

Recognising the value of peer support and collaboration, CVS Falkirk & District launched the Social Enterprise Breakfast Club to create a dedicated networking and learning space for social enterprises across Falkirk District. Meeting quarterly in community-owned venues, the initiative provides a welcoming environment where organisations can share experiences, build relationships and access tailored support.

The first two sessions brought together 27 participants from a diverse range of local social enterprises. Early discussions focused on introducing the support available through CVS Falkirk & District and the benefits of building stronger local networks. As relationships developed, the Breakfast Club evolved into a trusted forum where organisations openly discussed challenges such as securing funding, diversifying boards and staff teams, becoming an employer, and governance.



The sessions demonstrated a clear demand for regular opportunities to connect with peers, exchange ideas and explore collaborative solutions. New partnerships and opportunities began to emerge, while the discussions provided CVS Falkirk & District with valuable insight into the specific needs of local social enterprises.

Social Enterprise Breakfast Club

Euan Robertson, CVS Falkirk & District:

"Falkirk has a vibrant socially enterprising community, and the Social Enterprise Breakfast Club is turning connections into practical support – from sharing venues and resources to opening up training opportunities. It's a great example of how coming together can help organisations work smarter and strengthen what we can offer our communities."

This deeper understanding enabled more targeted follow-up support, including one-to-one advice on legal structures, establishing Community Interest Companies (CICs) and signposting organisations to specialist business and governance support.

The Social Enterprise Breakfast Club has strengthened connections across Falkirk District's social enterprise sector, creating a supportive peer network that encourages collaboration, knowledge sharing and organisational resilience. By providing a regular forum for learning and relationship building, the initiative has helped social enterprises feel better connected, better informed and more confident to address challenges together.

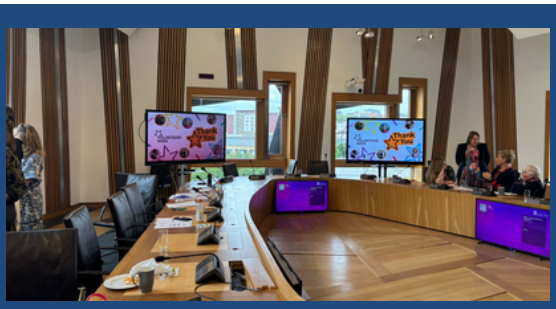
Building on this success, future sessions will focus on common sector challenges and include specialist speakers, ensuring the Breakfast Club continues to strengthen Falkirk District's social enterprise community and contribute to a more resilient and inclusive local social economy.

VOLUNTEERING AND PARTICIPATION

Recruitment, Retainment, Recognition

Volunteering is at the heart of thriving communities. It brings people together, strengthens local organisations and creates opportunities for individuals to develop skills, improve wellbeing and make a positive difference where they live.

We continued to support the ambitions of Scotland's Volunteering Action Plan, helping make volunteering more inclusive, accessible, rewarding and sustainable. During the year, we created more than 70 new inclusive volunteering opportunities, signposted over 200 volunteers and provided tailored support to 48 people new to volunteering, helping them find safe and appropriate placements.



During Volunteers' Week, some of our team visited the Scottish Parliament for a Cross-Party Group Event.

Focused on the benefits of volunteer participation, the event explored how national partnerships can amplify local voices, connect organisations with resources, and strengthen collective advocacy. These insights informed how we developed our own programme of support - with emphasis on assisting local groups to recruit, retain and recognise volunteers, while making opportunities inclusive and accessible.



We promoted volunteering through our digital New Year, New You campaign, hosting 7 community-based information sessions and ongoing engagement with local schools. Our monthly Volunteer Bulletin reached more than 1,100 subscribers, sharing opportunities, events, training and recognition. We strengthened opportunities for young people through the Saltire Awards, with 244 certificates awarded and 9 Saltire Ambassadors recruited and trained to champion volunteering in their schools and communities.



Creating opportunities to strengthen volunteering capacity, the Connecting Volunteering Network provided peer learning, training, networking and tailored support for volunteer co-ordinators from 24 organisations. Alongside this, we also partnered with Linking Lives to deliver Good Conversations training to 21 volunteers – building their confidence and skills to develop meaningful relationships and help tackle social isolation.

Volunteers are the foundation of many community organisations, and recognising their contribution is an important part of sustaining a strong volunteering culture. During Volunteers' Week, we celebrated the remarkable commitment and achievements of 1,485 volunteers across Falkirk District, recognising the countless hours they dedicate to supporting local communities. We were delighted to reinstate our Volunteer Awards Ceremony, providing an opportunity to acknowledge the commitment of those outstanding individuals and organisations who showcase the positive difference being made locally through volunteering every day.

VOLUNTEERING AWARDS CEREMONY 2025

In June 2025, CVS Falkirk & District proudly hosted the 26th Annual Volunteering Awards, bringing together what one local community group described as *"a hall full of legends"*. The event celebrated the remarkable individuals and organisations whose dedication strengthens communities across Falkirk District, recognising the countless hours of kindness, compassion and commitment given to others.



Following several years of alternative celebrations, the return of the in-person ceremony provided an opportunity to shine a spotlight on the extraordinary contribution of local volunteers. With 111 nominations received across 6 award categories, the evening highlighted the breadth and diversity of volunteering taking place throughout the district.





Guests enjoyed performances from the Red Hot Kiddie Pipers and the Bo'ness Belles, while inspiring speeches from Falkirk Foundation and Charlotte Askham reminded all about the life-changing impact of giving time to others. Young volunteer Charlotte Askham, who has completed more than 1,000 Saltire Award volunteering hours, shared volunteering had transformed her confidence, wellbeing and sense of purpose, describing it as a journey that *"lifted me higher than I could have ever imagined"*.





Volunteering Awards for 2025 were given to:

- Green Award: 3rd Bo'ness Scout Group
- Health and Wellbeing Award: Slamannan Action Group
- Young Volunteer of the Year: Liam Landsman, Food Train
- Volunteer of the Year: John Somerville, Forth Valley Sensory Centre
- Organisation of the Year: Bailliefields Community Hub
- Lifetime Achievement Award: Murray McIntyre, Falkirk Foundation Blind Club

Judges also granted a 'Highly Commended' Award for Lifetime Achievement to Agnes Forsyth, Dalgrain Community Hall.

Award winners reflected the incredible diversity of volunteering, from environmental sustainability and community wellbeing to supporting older people, creating inclusive spaces and recognising over 25 years of dedicated service through the Lifetime Achievement Award.











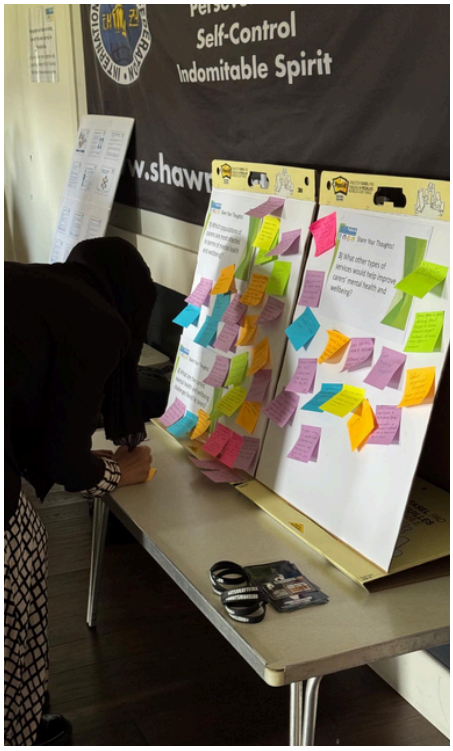


More than an awards ceremony, the evening was a celebration of the people who quietly make Falkirk District a better place every day. It reinforced the vital role volunteers play in building stronger, healthier and more connected communities, showcasing the astonishing impact volunteering can make.



Strategic Priority 2: Collaboration

Creating Space for Partnerships to Flourish



Addressing complex social challenges requires strong partnerships built on trust, shared learning and collective action.

Throughout the year, we continued to bring together the third sector, public services, communities and national organisations to improve outcomes across Falkirk District and the wider Forth Valley.

CVS Falkirk & District currently facilitate 9 thematic forums and networks, providing regular opportunities for organisations to connect, share learning, and develop collaborative responses. Sessions focus on key issues including: mental health, poverty, healthy ageing, safeguarding, community cohesion and community ownership. These spaces have become valuable sources of peer support, shared intelligence and collaborative problem-solving.

In our commitment to ensuring third sector experience and community intelligence informs local strategy and decision-making, we set up the Alcohol and Drug Partnership (ADP) Third Sector Managers Forum, creating a recognised mechanism for contributing to the ADP's new strategic plan for 2026/27. Our Health and Wellbeing Forum also contributed to the development of the Forth Valley Suicide Prevention Action Plan, bringing together 27 organisations to help identify strengths, gaps and practical actions around trauma-informed practice, workplace wellbeing, referral pathways and lived experience.

Through our leadership role within the Falkirk Community Planning Partnership, we contributed to the Outcomes Coordination Group and Community Wealth and Health Building Partnership, chaired the Empowering Communities Working Group, participated in partnership task groups and supported development of the new Partnership Engagement Strategy.

Every partnership, network and collaboration reinforces our belief that lasting change happens when organisations work together. By creating opportunities for the third sector to connect, influence and lead alongside partners, we continue to ensure that community knowledge shapes the policies, services and investment that affect people's lives.

CREATING HOPE TOGETHER

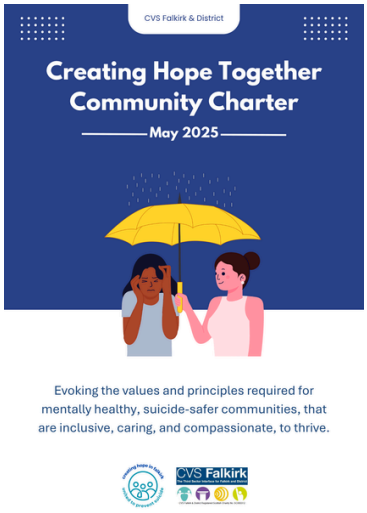
In May 2025, CVS Falkirk & District partnered with Falkirk Health and Social Care Partnership's Suicide Prevention Group to deliver Strengthening Our Community for Suicide Prevention in Denny and Bonnybridge. The event brought together community members, volunteers, local organisations, businesses and public services to strengthen community knowledge, build confidence and promote collaborative action to prevent suicide.

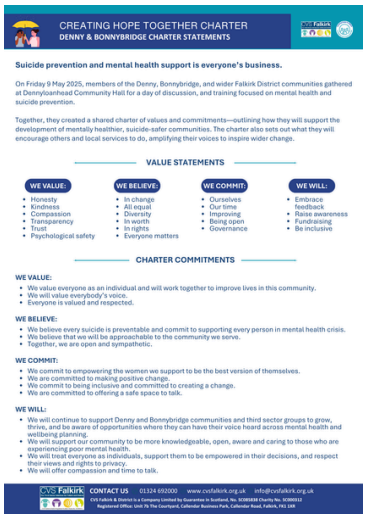
The event combined practical training with open discussion, equipping participants with the skills to recognise when someone may be struggling and to respond with Time, Space and Compassion. Alongside expert-led learning, attendees worked together to develop a Creating Hope Charter, identifying the shared values and principles they believe should underpin a mentally healthy and suicide-safer community.

Participants shared the value they found in attending the event, noting each felt supported throughout the day as the compassionate approach adopted by facilitators and the availability of wellbeing support created a safe environment for discussing a sensitive topic. Enabled to contribute openly and confidently, participants reflected:

"I can now offer conversations about suicide with confidence."

"We know we are part of something bigger in the wider community."





The event demonstrated the value of bringing together people from different sectors to share knowledge, strengthen relationships and develop coordinated community responses. Participants reported increased confidence in having conversations about suicide, a greater understanding of local support services and stronger awareness of referral pathways. Many also highlighted the opportunity to network with organisations they had not previously worked alongside, helping to build lasting partnerships across the community.



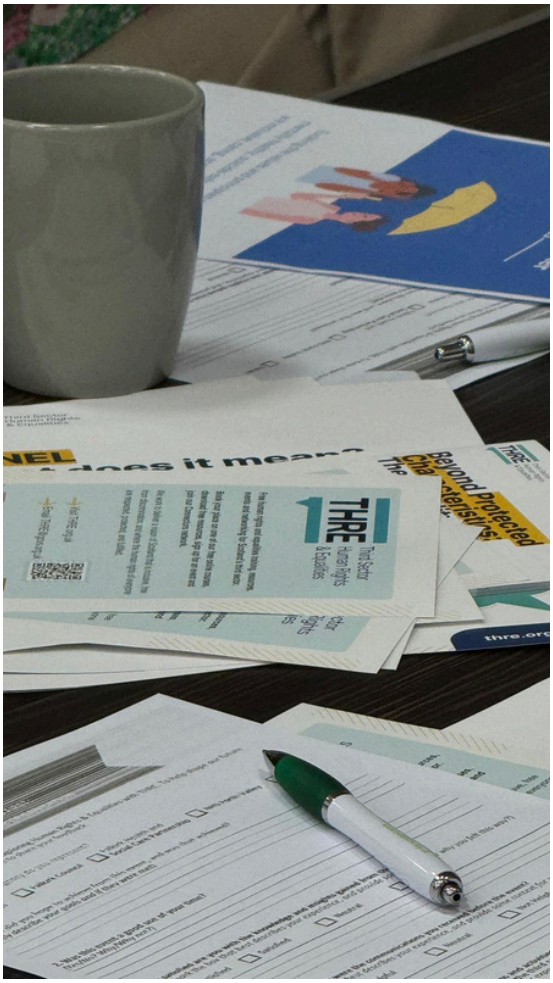
Eloise Wilson, CVS Falkirk & District:

"This event was about more than just raising awareness of suicide prevention, it was about providing local people with the skills, knowledge and confidence to respond appropriately to someone who is struggling. We hope attendees can take learning back to their communities and encourage others to join the conversation."

By creating a safe space for learning, discussion and partnership building, CVS Falkirk & District helped strengthen community resilience and demonstrated how local people and organisations can work together to improve mental wellbeing and prevent suicide. The event reinforced the importance of community-led action, shared responsibility and early intervention in creating safer, more supportive communities across Falkirk District.

THIRD SECTOR HUMAN RIGHTS & EQUALITIES

In May 2025, CVS Falkirk & District partnered with Third Sector Human Rights and Equalities (THRE) to deliver a workshop exploring "What Does a Human Rights and Equalities First Approach Mean to Your Third Sector Organisation?" The event brought together third sector organisations from across Forth Valley to strengthen understanding of how human rights and equalities can be embedded into organisational culture, governance and service delivery.



Rather than focusing solely on compliance, the workshop encouraged organisations to view human rights and equalities as fundamental principles that shape decision making, improve services and create more inclusive communities. Through expert facilitation from THRE and contributions from LGBT Youth Scotland and RISE Forth Valley, participants explored how lived experience can inform organisational development and improve outcomes for people experiencing discrimination and inequality.

The session created a valuable opportunity for organisations to reflect on their own practice, learn from specialist organisations and identify practical actions to strengthen inclusion, participation and accessibility. By bringing together organisations from different sectors, the event also encouraged peer learning, collaboration and the sharing of good practice.



Victoria McRae, CVS Falkirk & District:

"By supporting organisations to move beyond policy compliance towards a culture where human rights, dignity and equality are central to everything they do, we hope to inspire a more inclusive, resilient and responsive third sector, which contributes to fairer outcomes for people and communities across Falkirk District and the wider Forth Valley region."

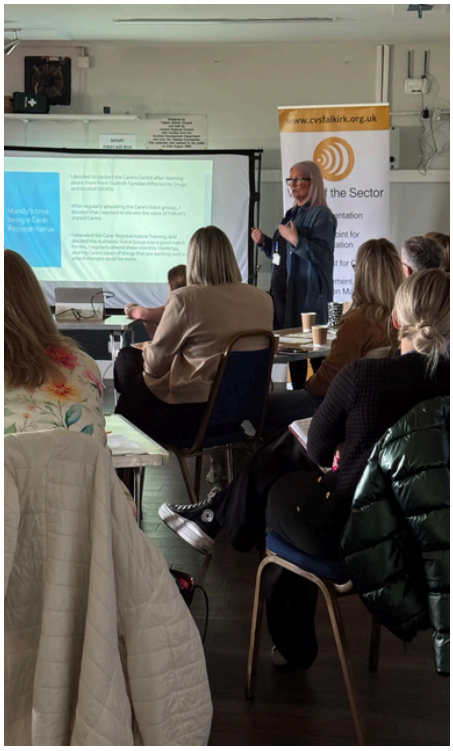
Importantly, the workshop formed part of CVS Falkirk & District's wider commitment to ensuring the third sector is equipped to deliver services that are person-centred, inclusive and responsive to the diverse needs of local communities. It also strengthened the role of the Safer and Empowered Communities Forum as a space where organisations can discuss emerging issues, influence local priorities and develop collective responses to equality and human rights challenges.

The event increased awareness of a Human Rights and Equalities First approach and provided organisations with practical tools and confidence to begin embedding these principles within their own services and governance. It strengthened connections between local organisations and national expertise while reinforcing the importance of lived experience in shaping services and decision making. All participants recorded their experience of the session as being excellent and a good use of their time, noting that they will *"embed the learning and challenge areas of concern, whether it be practices, people, communities or values"*.



Strategic Priority 3: Community Voice

Creating Space for Partnerships to Flourish

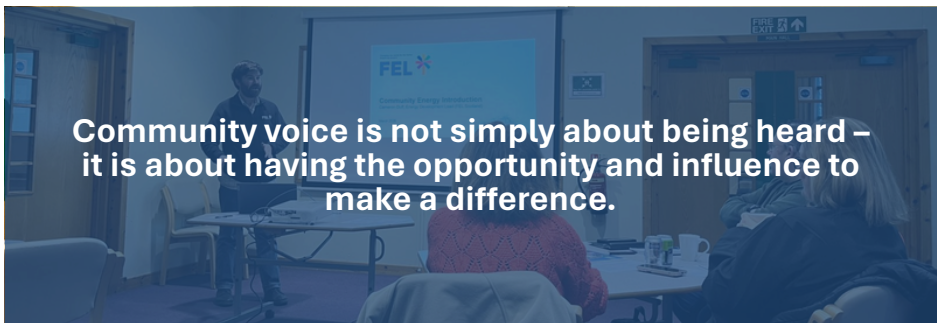


Community voice is about ensuring that people and communities have the confidence, connections and influence to shape the decisions that affect their lives. Throughout the year, CVS Falkirk & District created opportunities for people and organisations to participate, build capacity and influence local priorities.

By connecting people to opportunities to participate, volunteer, influence and take ownership, we are helping shift decision-making closer to communities and strengthening the capacity of local people to shape positive change.

During the year, we supported more than 28 Community Asset Transfer projects, helping communities navigate the journey towards ownership of local buildings and develop them as vibrant, sustainable hubs for local people. Our Community Ownership Group provided a trusted space for peer support, networking and practical learning, enabling communities to share experience, challenges and solutions: *"There is always knowledge to be gained, the opportunity to learn, listen or simply share experiences with like-minded people."*

A key part of CVS Falkirk & District is ensuring that lived and living experience informs strategy and decision-making. Through our forums, partnerships and engagement, we gathered insight from organisations supporting people experiencing poverty, poor mental health, social isolation, neurodiversity and barriers to accessing services. We established the Lived and Living Experience Network in January 2026, creating a new mechanism for people with direct experience to influence local priorities – with initial feedback already presented to the Community Planning Partnership Board.



FALKIRK OLDER PEOPLE'S NETWORK

Bringing Lived Experience into Decision Making

Effective decision-making starts with understanding the experiences of the people most affected. Through the Falkirk Older People's Network (OPN), CVS Falkirk & District is helping ensure that older people's voices directly inform research, planning and service development.

In August 2025, the Network brought together 30 older people, community organisations, researchers and public sector partners to explore the experience of ageing in different places and communities. Supported by CVS Falkirk & District and the Inclusive Spaces and Place-Based Ageing (ISPA) project, the event created space for older residents to share experiences directly with those researching and shaping local policy.



The session reflected on the Network's development, from its origins with CVS Falkirk & District through its response to the isolation experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic, to its ongoing advocacy around healthcare, social care and the cost of living. Research from Dr Lisa Davison, University of Stirling, explored how ageing, disability, deprivation and housing intersect, providing a valuable opportunity to consider academic evidence alongside lived experience.

The strengthened partnership between the OPN, University of Stirling and local stakeholders provides an ongoing route for evidence and lived experience to inform discussions on age-friendly communities, housing, transport and public services.



Dr Lisa Davison, University of Stirling:
"Presenting at the Falkirk Older Persons Network meeting was a wonderful opportunity to share the Intersectional Stigma of Place-based Ageing (ISPA) project and to hear feedback directly from people with lived experience as well as those working in relevant organisations. It was also lovely to meet so many people and make new connections. The thoughtful questions and discussions reinforced the importance of ISPA's work, while the way it resonated with so many people highlighted both the value of involving lived experience in research and the importance of building strong community connections."

As the trusted Third Sector Interface, we enabled partners who would not ordinarily connect to come together, creating a richer understanding of the issues affecting older people across Falkirk District. Participants reported feeling more connected, more confident to raise issues and reassured that their experiences were being valued.

This case study demonstrates the unique contribution of the third sector: using trusted relationships and local knowledge to connect communities with researchers and decision-makers, amplify voices that can be underrepresented, and ensure that planning is informed not only by data, but by the people and communities those decisions affect.

STRATEGIC DECISION MAKING

Meaningful community voice is essential to effective strategic decision-making. It ensures that policies, investment and regeneration plans reflect the realities, priorities and aspirations of the people they are intended to benefit. The Grangemouth Community Engagement and Participation Programme (CEPM) demonstrates the value of this approach.



Emphasising the importance of community voices within strategic decision making, Victoria and Marnie attended Scotland's Just Transition Commission, where Marnie spoke on a panel about **People and Place** – with a specific emphasis of showing how people experience the transition at local levels.

Bringing together leaders from politics, business, trade unions, environmental groups and communities, the event aimed to find common ground upon which we could ensure the costs and benefits of the climate and nature transition are shared equitably across Scotland.

Reflecting on the event, Marnie stated:

"Opportunities to speak at a national level are so important because they bring communities' everyday experiences into the decisions shaping their future. To me, it was important to emphasise that communities are more than another statistic, they are the families, businesses and workers facing the reality of transition across both Grangemouth, and Scotland. To achieve this, community voices are vital as they are the ones who are affected everyday."

In a community experiencing significant levels of engagement activity, consultation fatigue can become a barrier to participation. Drawing on strong local relationships and learning from its first year, CEPM has embedded engagement within existing community events, schools, businesses, networks and local activities. This has created opportunities to reach people who may not otherwise participate in discussions about the Grangemouth Just Transition, including families, young people and the elderly.

Importantly, community voice is being translated into strategic influence. CEPM now contributes to multiple Grangemouth Future Industry Board (GFIB) workstreams and programme activity, while CVS Falkirk & District provides representation at Falkirk & Grangemouth Growth Deal and GFIB Leadership and Programme Boards. This has enabled community perspectives to inform areas such as infrastructure, jobs and skills, communications and investment – including raising local concerns about the impact of heavy goods vehicles on residential communities.







CEPM has also prioritised supporting local activities which strengthen community relationships and encourage participation. Part of the Grangemouth Community Council's Christmas Celebrations, the Grangemouth Elf Trail saw CVS Falkirk & District partner with community groups and local businesses to facilitate a festive scavenger hunt in Grangemouth Town Centre. The Trail was designed to increase footfall for local businesses while creating informal opportunities for residents to connect with CVS Falkirk & District and become more familiar with our work.

These everyday interactions help build the relationships and trust that support sustained engagement. By contributing to local activities, CEPM demonstrates its commitment to the community while creating opportunities for people to become involved in wider discussions about the Grangemouth Just Transition. This approach shows how practical community activity can benefit residents and businesses while strengthening the foundations for meaningful participation in longer-term change.



Strategic Priority 4: Community Led Change

Developing New Community Connections



Strong communities are built through local leadership, collaboration and the confidence to turn ideas into action.

Alongside practical support, we continued to invest in community leadership by providing access to mentoring, funding advice, training and networking opportunities.

Through our Denny and District Community Development Programme, funded by Foundation Scotland, this year we have engaged 20 third sector organisations, supported over 300 volunteers, and contributed to community events attended by more than 3,200 local residents. By encouraging collaboration and creating opportunities for shared learning and partnership working, we have helped build stronger community networks and increased local confidence to enact community-led change.

At the heart of the programme is our dedicated Community Development Officer, providing tailored mentoring, practical advice and dedicated development support to strengthen local capacity. Taking a flexible, person-centred approach has enabled organisations to improve governance, secure funding, recruit volunteers and develop their services. With her guidance, organisations completed our Organisational Resilience and Capacity Assessment (ORCA), helping them identify strengths, improve resilience and plan for long-term sustainability, while others began their journey towards charitable incorporation and community ownership.

The programme also played an important role in supporting delivery of the Denny, Dunipace and Dennyloanhead Community Action Plan, ensuring community voices informed local planning and decision-making through close partnership working with Falkirk Community Planning Partnership and other stakeholders.

Community Led Change is recognising the wealth of expertise held by local people and empowering them to turn ideas into action. CVS Falkirk & District aims to champion that change, creating the connections and conditions which shape the future of our Falkirk District.

DENNY & DISTRICT CHRISTMAS EXTRAVAGANZA

Celebrating Local Pride and Partnership

The Denny and District Christmas Extravaganza was a successful community-led festival held in Denny town centre, bringing together residents, local organisations, businesses, and volunteers to celebrate the festive season. The event involved around 32 organisations and attracted approximately 6,000 attendees. Volunteers contributed an estimated 1,400 hours, demonstrating the strong community spirit fostered through effective partnership working and community development support.

Central to the development of the event was the support of the Community Development Officer, Mhairi, whose role was instrumental in guiding and strengthening the organising group, connecting partners, and supporting the delivery of a large-scale community event.



The Christmas Extravaganza began at a Community Council meeting, when a group of individuals were granted funding to come together to action and deliver a community event. At this meeting in August, Mhairi offered her support – although initially declined, it sparked a conversation and days later, she was greeted with "I've been looking for you", and together, they arranged to explore what was needed to bring the event to life.

Planning drew on a wealth of experience, with Falkirk Delivers providing insight into their previous experiences and Denny Gala Committee sharing invaluable knowledge and contacts for licensing and road closures. With members gathering costs to inform applications, Mhairi's first task was to turn a group of residents into an established group, helping them become better prepared to event responsibilities by strengthening their constitution, and then to provide dedicated support as they explored funding opportunities and turned ideas into reality.



Speaking on support for the funding process, representatives from the Denny District Community group reflected:

"From the outset, Mhairi demonstrated exceptional professionalism, expertise, and commitment. Her deep understanding of the funding process, coupled with her ability to translate complex requirements into clear, actionable steps, made what could have been a challenging experience both structured and manageable. Beyond her technical skill, Mhairi's approachable manner, patience, and encouragement instilled confidence in our team. She consistently went above and beyond to ensure our application represented our best possible work."

Ultimately, with funding from Foundation Scotland and the Community Council, the event was a success due to being embraced by the local community with groups, organisations and businesses stepping in to support delivery, subsidise or donate materials, and volunteer to ensure everything was a success. With positive feedback from the almost 6000 participants and attendees, and inspiration gathered for the future, we can't wait to see what Denny & District can accomplish next.

UPPER BRAES COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Celebrating Local Pride and Partnership

The Upper Braes Community Development Project continues to support the communities of Limerigg, Slamannan, Avonbridge and Standburn to become stronger, more connected and resilient. Working alongside residents, volunteers, community organisations and local partners, we are helping communities identify their priorities, develop local leadership and turn ideas into lasting action.

Delivered through a dedicated Community Development Officer, the project provides tailored support that strengthens organisational capacity, encourages volunteering and empowers communities to shape their own future. By placing local people at the centre of decision-making, we are helping each village build on its unique strengths while addressing challenges faced across the wider area.



Community Action Planning remained central to our work throughout the year. The Limerigg and Slamannan Community Action Plans were reviewed and refreshed, providing a renewed vision for community development, while engagement across all four villages strengthened relationships, encouraged participation and supported local groups to influence decisions affecting their communities.

Organisations received tailored support to strengthen governance, improve long-term sustainability, secure funding, recruit volunteers, and develop projects. This personalised approach has increased confidence, strengthened leadership and enabled local groups to progress ambitious community-led initiatives.

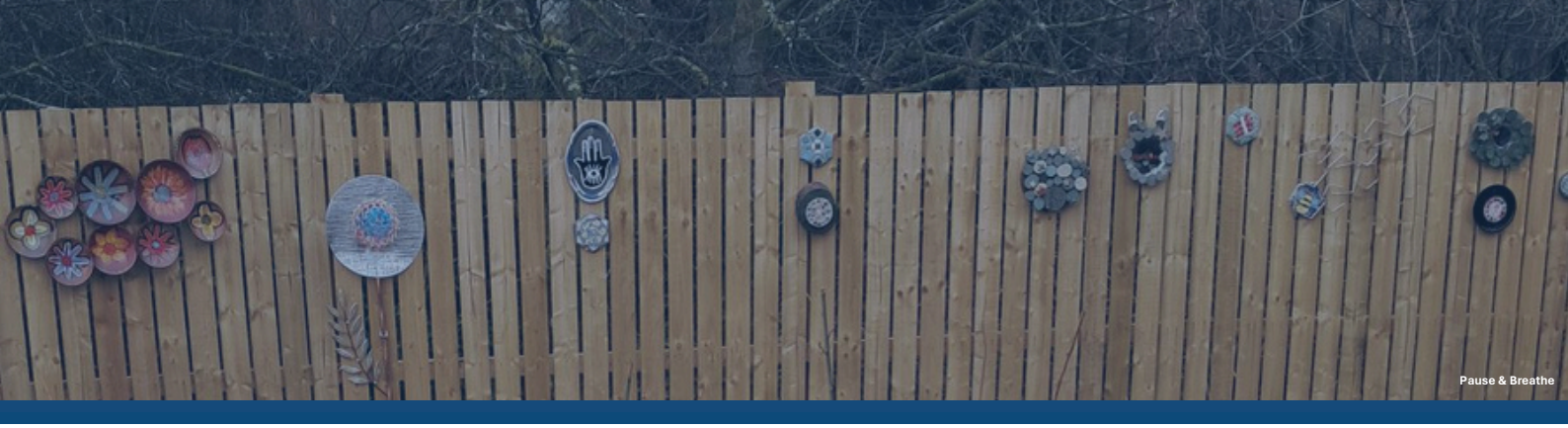


CVS Falkirk & District:

The progress achieved this year demonstrates the resilience, ambition and commitment of Upper Braes communities. By investing in local leadership, strengthening organisations and supporting community-led action, we are helping create sustainable change that will benefit rural communities for years to come.

Throughout the year, we supported projects that improved wellbeing, reduced social isolation and strengthened community life. Initiatives such as Brunch N Blether connected residents with employability, housing, wellbeing, advocacy and volunteering services, while the Kids Lunch Club provided meals, activities and safe spaces for children during school holidays.

Our work expanded across Avonbridge and Standburn, where community engagement and mapping helped identify local priorities, existing strengths and opportunities for future development. Although the lack of community facilities remains a challenge, partnership working has strengthened collaboration between communities, supporting shared events, youth activities and volunteering opportunities.



Strategic Priority 5: Creativity & Innovation

Grant Administration: Investing in Communities



Creativity and Innovation means ensuring the third sector is empowered to propose new ideas and ways of working, and have the resources to implement them.

Throughout the year, CVS Falkirk & District facilitated investment opportunities through which groups and organisations could drive forward creative solutions.

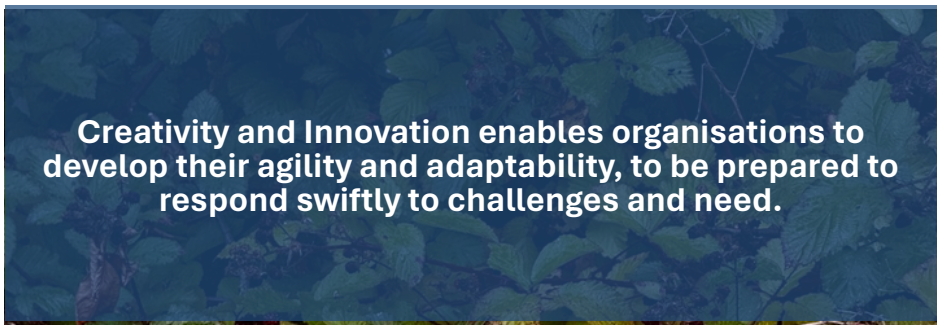
One of the greatest strengths of the third sector is its adaptability and agility in responding to community need. At a time of rising demand, limited resources, changing policy landscapes and increasingly complex social challenges, this ability to think differently and respond quickly is more important than ever.

The organisations we work with are often closest to the issues affecting their communities, and their local knowledge is vital as we work together to think differently and find practical solutions. CVS Falkirk & District supports organisations to navigate these changes, providing expertise, connections, challenge and encouragement that help turn ideas into sustainable action.

Recognising that no two organisations are the same, our team aims to provide comprehensive and bespoke development support to each group or organisation. Whether supporting a developing community group or an organisation new to the area, we deliver tailored support that reflects their ambitions, circumstances and stage of development.

This year, we supported 12 new start-up groups, each bringing a distinctive response to local need - from supporting babies and families, to recovery from trauma, community participation and creating opportunities for connection and fun. Together, our work was aligned in shared passion for the potential of the Falkirk District third sector.

By nurturing ideas, building confidence and connecting people and organisations, we enable new approaches to emerge, develop and make a lasting contribution to our communities.



KELVIN VALLEY & FALKIRK COMMUNITY LED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

Now in our second year as the Accountable Body for the Kelvin Valley & Falkirk (KVF) Community Led Local Development Fund, CVS Falkirk & District supported the KVF Local Action Group to distribute community-led investment across eligible communities within Falkirk, North Lanarkshire and East Dunbartonshire, ensuring that public funds were distributed transparently, fairly and effectively.

Community Led Local Development places local people at the heart of decision-making, ensuring that investment is shaped by community priorities and supports projects that make a lasting difference.

Bonnybridge Parent & Toddler:
Thanks to the support of CVS Falkirk & District and the Kelvin Valley and Falkirk CLLD Fund, we have been able to deliver a fabulous group to help support parents, carers and their children. This has helped us maintain our let and provide new educational toys and games to help our preschool children play, learn and develop social skills.

Slamannan Action Group:
Thanks to the Kelvin Valley and Falkirk CLLD Fund, we were able to enhance what activities we can bring to our community through the buying of supplies - such as play equipment, storage boxes and a water urn - to support the running of both the adult's Brunch & Blether group and children's holiday lunch club.

Overall, 24 funding applications were submitted, with the Local Action Group approving 18 grants totalling £187,532. Applications and awards reflected a balanced and equitable spread across the eligible communities, ensuring investment supported a diverse range of local priorities.

The projects funded showcased the creativity and resilience of community organisations, with investment supporting both immediate community activity and long-term development, such as:

- Service delivery and activities for local people.
- Improving and expanding community assets.
- Feasibility studies and future planning.
- Strengthening organisational capacity and long-term sustainability.

From improving energy efficiency through insulation in a rural community centre to creating a modern, fully equipped community kitchen, the fund invested in facilities that will continue to benefit local people for many years. These improvements enable organisations to expand services, welcome more users and create inclusive spaces where communities can come together.


Limerigg Action Group


Waterside Miners


Torrance Tennis Club


New Roots

The projects supported through the Kelvin Valley & Falkirk Community Led Local Development Fund made a significant contribution to Scotland's National Performance Framework, demonstrating the broad impact that community-led investment can have.

CREATING PLACES FOR WELLBEING

Growing Together: Community Garden & Creative Sustainability

Through accessible community-based activities, Pause & Breathe encourage people to explore habits and resources that support their physical, emotional and mental health. Demonstrating the valuable contribution rural funding makes to the third sector, Pause and Breathe transformed an underused outdoor space into a thriving community garden which can support health and wellbeing activities. Shaped by community feedback which highlighted a lack of accessible green space in their community, the garden offers a safe, welcoming outdoor space to meet, learn new skills and enjoy nature.

Focused on the goal of "creating an environment that values belonging, respect, and shared ownership", Pause & Breathe built on the foundation formed through receipt of rural funding to establish a place which actively seeks to strengthen social connections between people who might not otherwise meet.



Over the winter months, a local community artist worked collaboratively with 30 participants to create artworks for the garden. Using reclaimed everyday items, including trays and mirrors donated by participants or sourced from local charity shops, the group produced decorative features for the surrounding fence. This approach combined opportunities for creativity and participation with the reuse of materials, creating focal points that reflect the community's contribution to the garden.

Alongside this work, the gardening group developed four distinct areas, supported by plant donations from gardeners and two apple trees grown from pips by one of Phil's Little Samurai's. A patio immediately outside the building provides space for outdoor classes in good weather, while a labyrinth path (highlighted by daffodils in spring) offers a focus for mindful walking. A Zen meditation garden as well as tree-stump and planted seating areas provide places to pause, enjoy the art installations and reflect.



Feedback from the grand opening:

Fabulous! The garden is looking well planned, and the different areas are looking great yet with room for further development and growth.

The artwork is inspirational - each piece is so individual and reflects the different people who created the different media pieces. This is so good for the mental wellbeing of local folks.

So nice to see everything installed in the garden. Absolutely amazing. Such a lot of hard work by the volunteers.

The project highlights how investment in rural communities enables opportunity for both individual wellbeing and collective involvement. With engagement highlighting a lack of a 'third space' within rural residencies, Pause & Breathe have addressed issues of isolation and loneliness by supporting their community to remain connected, resilient, and inspired. It is a strong example of how the third sector can, with support from funders, create the conditions for rural communities to thrive by empowering local people to shape innovative solutions.

FALKIRK COMMUNITIES MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING FUND

The Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund for Adults continues to play a vital role in supporting grassroots organisations to deliver preventative, community-based mental health and wellbeing initiatives across the Falkirk District. By investing in trusted local organisations, the Fund enables communities to design and deliver activities that ensure support is accessible, flexible and responsive, helping people improve their wellbeing before issues reach crisis point.

Within our role as Grant Giver, CVS Falkirk & District have facilitated the delivery of the Falkirk Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund since its launch in 2021, delivering over £2million in funding to various projects across the Falkirk District.

Reflecting on this, our CEO Victoria McRae states:
"Local delivery of the Falkirk Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund represents a significant investment in the Falkirk District. The fund supports local employment, volunteering, community events, direct support for individuals, supportive groups and more – all with a shared aim of improving mental health and wellbeing for local people. This is the first time CVS Falkirk & District have been able to offer 2-year awards, as part of Scottish Government's Fairer Funding pilot. We have long advocated for fairer funding models for the third sector, so being part of this pilot is a pleasure for our team."

Demand for the Fund remained exceptionally strong, with 68 applications submitted, and a total investment of £511,776 distributed in this round. Funding was split, with 25 organisations receiving one-year grants and 20 organisations receiving two-year grants.

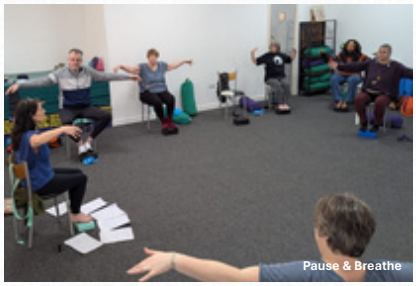
The introduction of two-year awards provides greater financial stability for organisations, enabling them to plan with confidence, retain skilled staff and volunteers, and deliver sustained support that creates lasting outcomes for local communities.

Funded projects delivered a diverse range of activities designed to improve mental health and wellbeing for adults of all ages. From peer support groups and social activities to creative programmes, physical activity, outdoor learning and community cafés, organisations created welcoming spaces where people could connect, build confidence and access support close to home.

These locally designed initiatives recognised that good mental health is influenced by strong relationships, inclusive communities and opportunities for people to participate.


Polmont Sports Centre Community Group


Home Start Falkirk


Pause & Breathe


Polmont Together

"For the people who attend our sessions, this funding removes one of the biggest barriers to support: cost. It means they can access a warm, welcoming space where they are seen, valued and able to focus on their wellbeing without financial pressure." (The Reclaim Room)

CREATING PATHWAYS TO WELLBEING

Sustainable Thinking Scotland CIC

Sustainable Thinking Scotland CIC's Pathways Programme demonstrates the valuable contribution the third sector makes to improving mental health and wellbeing across Falkirk District. Built around the simple belief that *there is a path for everyone*, the programme provides inclusive, flexible and welcoming opportunities for adults to improve their wellbeing, build confidence and develop meaningful social connections – at their own pace and in ways that work for them.

During the year, the programme engaged with more than 4,000 people through accessible, community-based activities, including family events, wellbeing drop-ins, gardening, crafts, mindfulness and opportunities to connect with others. Participants can progress through a pathway that includes introductory sessions, regular groups, learning opportunities and volunteering, with activities ranging from planting and nature groups to coffee clubs, crafts, games, conversation, book clubs and ASN family groups.



This flexible approach is particularly important in reaching people who may be reluctant to engage with traditional services. By creating welcoming, stigma-free spaces where people can connect, learn and contribute, the programme helps tackle social isolation, support food security and improve mental wellbeing, while also connecting participants with specialist support where needed.

The Pathways Programme is a strong example of how locally rooted third sector organisations can provide early, preventative support that complements statutory services. By bringing together mental health and wellbeing, food security, environmental activity, learning and volunteering, it creates opportunities for people not only to receive support, but to belong, contribute and thrive.



Director, Sustainable Thinking Scotland CIC

"Through the Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund, our programme provides a unique opportunity for people to thrive. Our commitment to inclusion, empowerment and sustainability creates a model that addresses the root causes of social exclusion, poverty and mental health challenges."

The programme also highlights the strength of partnership working across the third sector. Sustainable Thinking Scotland CIC works alongside organisations including Falkirk District Mental Health Association and Rainbow Muslim Women's Group to reach people who may otherwise remain disconnected from support. It is a powerful illustration of the difference that community-based, person-centred approaches can make – and of the vital role of the third sector in building healthier, more connected communities across Falkirk District.



Membership

Our membership community is at the heart of strengthening the third sector - helping to drive social change, secure sustainable funding, and create lasting impact. We are proud to have over 170 member organisations whose passion, commitment and collective action make a real difference across the Falkirk District:

1st Step Development Ventures

3rd Bo'ness Scout Group

Airth Community Centre

Alpha Community Action Group

Alzheimer Scotland

Artlink Central

Bailliefields Community Hub

Banknock Community Hall Management Committee SCIO

Barnardo's Falkirk Services

Bethany Christian Trust

Bo'ness United Community Football Club

Bo'ness Car 4 U SCIO

Bo'ness Children's Fayre

Bo'ness Community Council

Bo'ness Networking Group (Bo'net)

Bo'ness Storehouse Foodbank SCIO

Braes Camera Club

Breton & Corentin Courts Residents Association

Brightons Village Hall Management Committee

Carron & Carronshore Hall Management Committee

Carronshore Heritage (Group) Forum

Cats Protection

Central Advocacy Partners

Central Football Foundation

Central Scotland Family History Society

Central Scotland Regional Equality Council Ltd (CSREC)

Central Wellbeing

Chacefield Residents Association

Chest Heart and Stroke Scotland

Committed to Ending Abuse

Communities Along The Carron Association

Community Green Initiative

Community Wellbeing and Education CIC

Cowdenhill Community Centre

Crossroads Caring Scotland

Cyrenians

Dates-n-Mates

Denny & Bonnybridge Community Shed

Denny & Dunipace Allotment Society

Denny & Dunipace Heritage Society

Denny and Dunipace Citizens Advice Bureau

Denny Community Support Group

Denny District Community Group

Dennyloanhead Community Hall

Dennyloanhead Fifty Plus

Dial-A-Journey

Drumbowie Community Park

Dunmore Village Association

Eden Animal Sanctuary & Wildlife Centre

Epilepsy Connections

Equine Outreach

Ettrick Dochart Management Committee

Falkirk & Central Scotland Samaritans

Falkirk & District Association for Mental Health (FDAMH)

Falkirk and Clackmannanshire Carers Centre

Falkirk Area Disability Access Panel

Falkirk Baptist Church SCIO

Falkirk Bohemians

Falkirk Caledonia Choir

Falkirk Camera Club

Falkirk Citizens Advice Bureau ltd

Falkirk Company of Archers

Falkirk District Credit Union

Falkirk Food Train

Falkirk Foundation

Falkirk Homeless Project

Falkirk Older People's Network

Falkirk Speakers Club

Falkirk Trinity Church of Scotland

Fankerton Hut

FEL Scotland

First 4 Kids SCIO

Forth Naturalist and Historian

Forth Valley Advocacy

Forth Valley Disability Sport

Forth Valley Macular Support Group

Forth Valley Rape Crisis

Forth Valley Talking Newspaper Association (Newsline)

Forth Valley Tridents

Forthgiving

Freedom of Mind Community Choir

Friends of Dollar Park

Friends of Dundas

Friends of Inchyra Park

Friends of Scottish Settlers

Friends of The Earth Falkirk

Friends of Tremanna and Braes

GEM in Grangemouth

Global Family Care Network

Glow Impact CIC

Go Forth and Clyde

Grahamston Community Club SCIO

Grangemouth Community Care

Grangemouth Stags Rugby Football Club

Grangemouth Triathlon Club

Greenhill Historical Society

Grow and Thrive Limited

Home-Start Falkirk

Kersiebank Community Projects

Key Community Supports

KHR Greenspace

Kiran's Trust

Laurieston Bowling Club

Laurieston Old Folks Welfare Association

Laurieston Tennis Club

Limerigg Action Group

Long Covid Cuppa Group (C19 Cafe)

MCR Pathways

Meadowbank Car 4U

Momentum for Women

New Wheelies

NHS Retirement Fellowship

One Parent Families Scotland

Paragon Housing Association

Pat's Bereavement Café

Pause and Breathe

Penumbra Falkirk Supported Living Service

Plus (Forth Valley)

Polmont Playgroup

Polmont Sports Centre Community Group

Polmonthill Community Snowsports Centre

Project Theatre

Quiet Waters

Rainbow Muslim Women's Group

Recovery Scotland

Reddingmuirhead Community Hall

RISE Forth Valley

Riverview Community SCIO

RNIB Scotland

Roots

Royal Voluntary Service

Sahelis

Salvation Army

Scots Recovery From Childhood Abuse

Scottish Ethnic Minority Autistics CIC

Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs

Scottish Seniors Computing Clubs

Scottish Women's Rural Institute

Seagull Trust Cruises

SeaLock Infinity SeaLock Centre

Self Directed Support Forth Valley

Slamannan Action Group

Slamannan Bowling Club

Snowdrop Café

Social Enterprise Accountancy Scotland

Stenhousemuir Football Club Community Foundation

Stenhousemuir Gymnastics Club

Strathcarron Hospice

Sustainable Thinking Scotland CIC

SWAN

The Barony Players

The Braveheart Association

The Conservation Volunteers

The Driving Force

The Friends of Kinneil

The Galaxy Foundation

The Hope Hub Scot CIC

The Newtown Park Association Limited

The Nifty Fifties

The Spark

Town Break

Transform Forth Valley

U3A Falkirk

Under the Trees

Vector 24

Victim Support Falkirk

Wellbeing Scotland

Westfield Park Community Centre

What'll We Do Today (The Fun Gang)

Yamarashi Judo Club



Financial Summary

CVS Falkirk & District remains in a sound financial position, underpinned by careful financial management, strong project delivery and the continued support of our core and project funders. However, the financial environment in which we operate continues to become increasingly challenging.

Our total core funding for 2025/26 remained at £353,300, and while unchanged from the previous year, we are extremely grateful to our funders for their continued financial support. This core funding provides the essential foundation for our organisation, enabling us to maintain our staffing capacity, provide infrastructure and representation, support the third sector, and respond to emerging local needs.

Project Income and Grant-Making
During the year, we secured £263,605 in project funding, supporting additional activity through funding from Falkirk Council Economic Development, Foundation Scotland and the Scottish Government's Grangemouth programme.

Our role also extends beyond delivering our own programmes. We continued to secure and distribute significant investment into Falkirk District's third sector, through the Adult Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund (£511,776) and the Community Led Local Development Fund (£187,532).

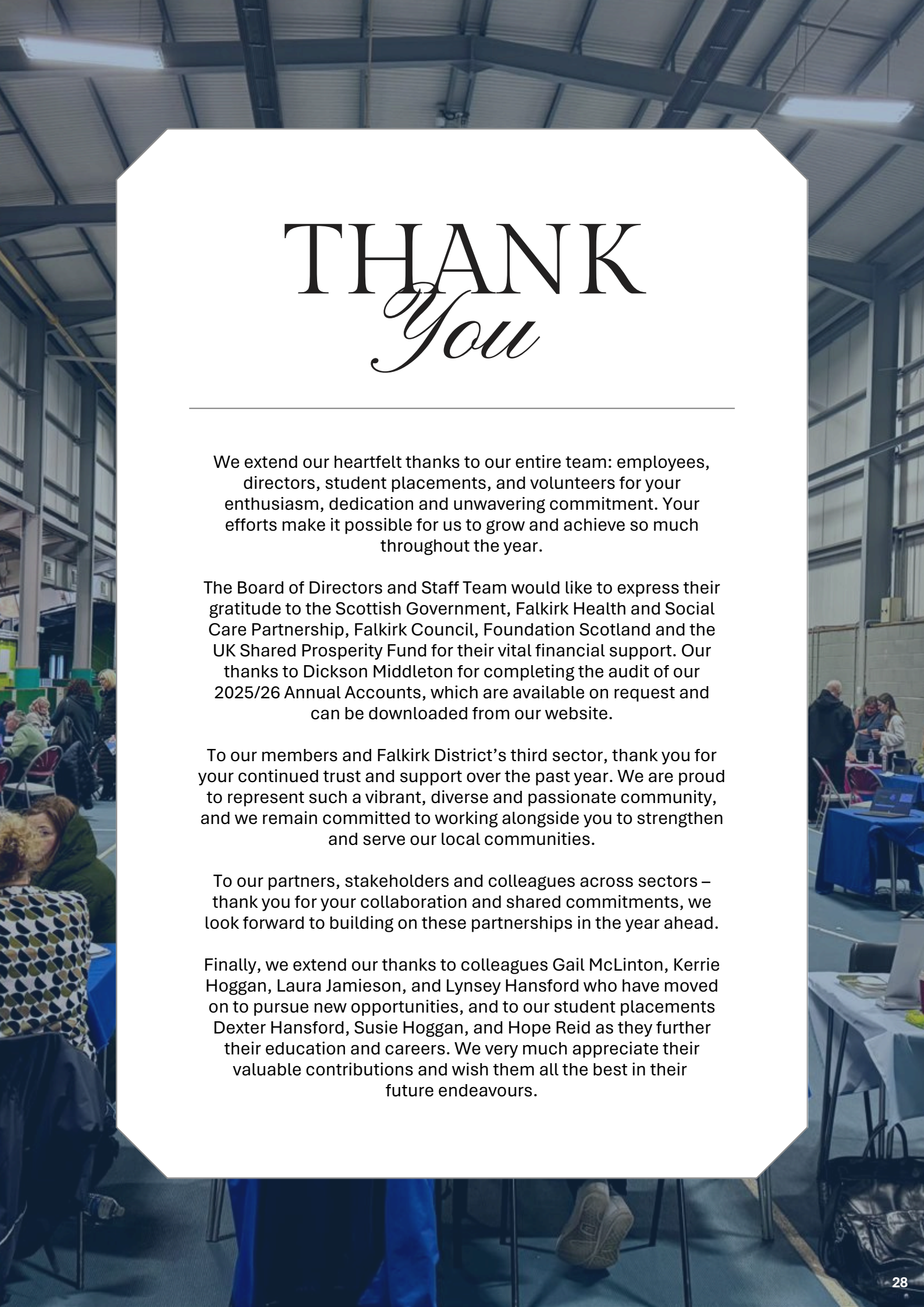
This demonstrates the important role CVS Falkirk & District plays in bringing investment into local communities and ensuring that resources reach organisations best placed to respond to local need.

Expenditure
Total expenditure for the year was £622,934, with £520,134 relating to staffing. Our financial management continues to focus on ensuring expenditure is carefully monitored, liabilities are managed appropriately and project income is used effectively to deliver agreed outcomes. Through prudent management of expenditure and the receipt of management income from projects, the organisation ended the year with an overall surplus of £21,781.

Reserves and Financial Sustainability
The Directors reviewed the organisation's Reserves Policy during the year and reaffirmed that maintaining reserves equivalent to six months' operating costs is prudent. The six-month target at 31 March 2026 was £196,722, with general funds therefore exceeding the minimum level considered necessary to provide financial resilience. This provides an important stable platform from which to maintain staffing levels, meet our commitments and continue delivering our activities, objectives and funding requirements.

Looking Ahead
While our financial position remains stable, financial sustainability continues to be a key area of focus for the Directors. Static core funding, increasing operating costs and the continued uncertainty within the wider funding environment mean that maintaining our current level of activity will require careful planning and active income generation.

Our reserves provide resilience, but they are not a substitute for sustainable core funding. During 2026/27, we will therefore continue to focus on prudent financial management, securing appropriate project and core income, and ensuring that our resources are directed towards the areas where they can achieve the greatest impact for Falkirk & District's third sector and communities.



THANK *You*

We extend our heartfelt thanks to our entire team: employees, directors, student placements, and volunteers for your enthusiasm, dedication and unwavering commitment. Your efforts make it possible for us to grow and achieve so much throughout the year.

The Board of Directors and Staff Team would like to express their gratitude to the Scottish Government, Falkirk Health and Social Care Partnership, Falkirk Council, Foundation Scotland and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund for their vital financial support. Our thanks to Dickson Middleton for completing the audit of our 2025/26 Annual Accounts, which are available on request and can be downloaded from our website.

To our members and Falkirk District's third sector, thank you for your continued trust and support over the past year. We are proud to represent such a vibrant, diverse and passionate community, and we remain committed to working alongside you to strengthen and serve our local communities.

To our partners, stakeholders and colleagues across sectors – thank you for your collaboration and shared commitments, we look forward to building on these partnerships in the year ahead.

Finally, we extend our thanks to colleagues Gail McLinton, Kerrie Hoggan, Laura Jamieson, and Lynsey Hansford who have moved on to pursue new opportunities, and to our student placements Dexter Hansford, Susie Hoggan, and Hope Reid as they further their education and careers. We very much appreciate their valuable contributions and wish them all the best in their future endeavours.



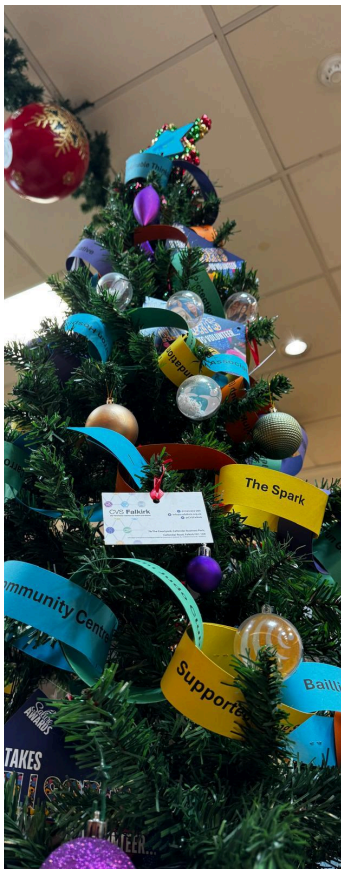
AGM 2025



GRANGEMOUTH ELF TRAIL



VOLUNTEERING AWARDS



FALKIRK FESTIVAL OF TREES



RAN OUR CALLENDAR
BUSINESS PARK FOOD DRIVE

STAFF
VOLUNTEERING





PROMOTED SALIRE AWARDS



SHOWCASED VOLUNTEERING
OPPORTUNITIES



EUAN STEINBANK PLACED MOTION IN PARLIAMENT

2025 -



PROMOTED VOLUNTEERING AT COMMUNITY EVENTS



RECOGNISED NATIONAL CAMPAIGNS



SUBSIDISED TRAINING





DEVELOPMENT DAYS



HOSTED NEW YEAR, NEW YOU IN FALKIRK TOWN CENTRE





ATTENDED MEMBER EVENTS







CELEBRATED COMMUNITY VOICES



- 2026

CVS Falkirk
The Third Sector Interface for Falkirk and District
CVS Falkirk & District Registered Scottish Charity No. SC000312

www.cvsfalkirk.org.uk

Supporting, developing, and representing community groups, voluntary organisations, social enterprises and volunteering

CVS Falkirk & District is a Company Limited by Guarantee in Scotland No. SC085838. Scottish Charity No. SC000312
Registered office: Unit 7b The Courtyard, Callendar Business Park, Callendar Road, Falkirk, FK1 1XR.