

CUSTOMER  
APPROVED

Falkirk Council  
Tenant's Magazine  
Spring 2025  
Edition No.28

# Tenant Talk

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**Children, youth and  
adult Competitions**

Win vouchers worth from £25 - £50  
for ASDA, Smyths or Cineworld

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# Editorial

Welcome to the 28th Edition of Tenant Talk. We would like to welcome new members John and Steph. There are now six panel members - all tenants with different skills and networks. In this edition you will read about the difference Scottish Child Payments have made to a student, and the first tenant to be allocated one of the new builds in Hallglen. The panel have visited the Brunch and Blether Club in Slamannan and the Bonnyfield Nature Reserve. We would encourage our readers to complete the Tenant Talk survey, this way we can be sure our readers are enjoying the articles and that we are writing about and researching stories they have suggested. If you would like to join the panel, we typically meet every couple of months on a Tuesday late morning. If you have any suggestions or would like to join, please email [tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk)

The panel would like to thank all who contributed articles and agreed to have their pictures taken.



Katrina



Louise



John



Liz J



Sharon



Steph

## Tenant Talk Survey

The Editorial Panel are keen to hear your views on Tenant Talk, you can either fill out the enclosed survey and post it back to us in the prepaid envelope, or you can scan the QR Code below with your phone to complete the survey online.



We will share the results of the survey with readers in the next edition of Tenant Talk.

### Real Life Story



# New Homes in Hallglen



As Housing Services begin allocating the new properties in Hallglen, the panel wanted to know how the new tenants' were settling in. We asked new tenant Jennifer a few questions.

#### What difference has moving into a bigger property made to your family?

'This has meant a lot less stress for our family. Mammy T has moved into help, due to both my kids having autism and she will also need support in the future. This means I can assist both my kids as well as her as we are all in the same house. It has massively improved my kids' mental health, as the house is very spacious and adapted to their needs. We are closer to my sibling also which makes a difference as they can pop down to see Mammy T'.

#### What is the best thing about your new place?

'Two toilets. No stairs for mum and kids to climb. We do not feel as claustrophobic as we did in the other house. With help from family, we were able to kit it out with carpets prior moving in. Best thing was the house was painted and ready to move in'.

#### How are you settling in?

'Really well. Everyone including the cats have settled well'.



#### Where staff helpful in the lead up to you getting your keys - how did they help you?

'They kept in contact to advise when we would move into the new property. We found out early, but as it's a new build it took a few months to get keys. However, this made it easier for us to prepare the kids (with them having Autism) and pack most of our items away. Due to the bad weather, it took a while longer to get into the property, also with illness, and meltdowns from the kids as expectations were high. Meant we had to pay two rents, but we were advised of some extra help available through the Discretionary Housing Payment.

We are glad Jennifer, and her family have settled into the new property. Please keep an eye on Homespot weekly if you are wanting to bid for any of the new properties still to be allocated. We use a choice based letting system so it's up to you what you bid for and when. As per the updated allocations policy, all new build properties will be allocated to Home Movers.

## New Homes in Bo'ness and Westquarter

Paragon Housing Association and Link Housing Association are in the process of completing properties in Commissioner Street in Bo'ness. There are six houses and twelve flats on the Paragon Housing Association part of the site.

In addition, Paragon Housing have started building in Westquarter (Cedar Crescent), this site will be a Paragon Housing Association site alone, with eight houses and nine flats. Work has already started, and the properties are scheduled to be ready this year.

Breakdown of houses and flats as follows:

#### General

- 2 x 4 person three apartments - Flats
- 3 x 2 person two apartments - Flats
- 3 x 3 person three apartments - Flats
- 2 x 6 person five apartments - Houses
- 6 x 4 person three apartments - Houses

#### Wheelchair Users

- 1 x 3 person three apartments - Flats

If you are interested in these properties, please contact the Paragon Housing Association HOST Team on 01324 664 996. Homes are allocated on a housing need basis, so its worth finding out early about making an application.



## Learn to get the most from your computer devices



Scottish Seniors Computer Clubs is a federation run by volunteers to assist over 50s with their devices. The members are there to find out what they can do with a computer/laptop, iPad/tablet, or smartphone device. The volunteer tutors are there to help in any way they can. We are all in the same club. To find out more and where the clubs operate, please call either Roy Kerr on 07414 681 020 or John McGhee on 07962 014 804.

The club recently received a grant from the Falkirk Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund to help continue delivering digital support in the community.

## Activities At Leishman Tower



The Callendar Park Tenants' and Residents' Association represent their community on all matters related to housing, they have responded to several housing consultations and meet with housing services on a regular basis. It is not all hard work and no play; the group also arrange activities for people living in the high-rise flats.

### Mondays

**Bingo afternoon**  
2pm - 4pm

**Games night**  
7pm - 9pm

### Tuesdays

**Knit & Natter**  
2pm - 4pm

### Wednesdays

**Scottish Seniors Computing Class**  
10am - 12 (waiting list to join).

**Afternoon Tea**  
2pm - 4pm

**Games Night**  
7pm - 9pm

### Thursdays

**Keep Fit**  
2pm - 4pm

### Fridays

**Art class**  
10.00am - 12.30pm

**Quiz Night**  
7pm - 9.00pm

All activities are £2 and tea/ coffee/ bikkies are included. We would like to let readers know that the group have donated £1,100 to Strathcarron Hospice through their fundraising efforts. If you are interested in helping the group arrange activities or have any suggestions, please visit the club room on these days - just ask for Maggie.



# How the Scottish Child Payment Made a Difference for a Full-Time Student



**"I came across the Scottish Child Payment by pure coincidence. I did not even realise I was eligible until I looked into it a bit more. At the time, I was studying full-time and juggling my studies with looking after my son. The bursary from SAAS, along with my student loan, is not an awful lot to live on, so this extra support really made a huge difference".**

As a single parent, it is difficult to keep up with all the expenses. He is always growing out of clothes—jackets, socks, you name it—and it feels like there is always something new he needs. What is great is that I can choose how to spend the money depending on what we need month to month. Some months, it is used for clothes or shoes, and other months, it helps with day trips and activities. It has allowed me to take my son to visit places more often and do more fun things together, which are so important to us both. I want to give him experiences and memories that make him happy.

The Scottish Child Payment is a meaningful lifeline that really makes a difference for families like mine."

### More information:

The Scottish Child Payment is available to families in Scotland who are responsible for a child under the age of sixteen who get a qualifying benefit such as Universal Credit, Income Support, or Jobseeker's Allowance. You will get £26.70 per week for each eligible child, paid to you every 4 weeks. This payment does not affect any other benefits.

To check your eligibility and apply for the Scottish Child Payment, visit:

[www.mygov.scot/scottish-child-payment](http://www.mygov.scot/scottish-child-payment)

The Scottish Child Payment is one of the five family payments you may be able to get from Social Security Scotland, along with the Best Start Grants and Best Start Foods.

**Visit the website to find out more.**



# Brunch and Blether in Slamannan



**The Slamannan Action Group hosts a delightful "Brunch and Blether" at the Slamannan Bowling Club every Monday. We had the pleasure of visiting this vibrant group to chat with attendees about the positive impact it has on the community.**

Run by dedicated local residents, Claire, Sharon and Kelly who rely on volunteers to help. The group meets at Slamannan Bowling Club every 2nd Monday from 10 - 12. Attendees are treated to a delicious brunch of soup and sandwiches, with one participant enthusiastically remarking,

**"The food is the best bit!  
The soup is great!"**

The group also invites various agencies and support services to engage with residents, providing valuable opportunities to connect with services that might otherwise be difficult to access. Many attendees mentioned that Slamannan often feels like the "forgotten village," so having representatives from Falkirk Council Housing Service, DWP, Community Police, Employment Service, and more is incredibly beneficial. One young lady shared that even if a particular service is not directly relevant to her, she always learns something new from the discussions.

In addition to these informative sessions, the group offers a range of activities such as yoga, curling, and bowls. It provides a safe and friendly environment for residents to relax, chat with neighbours, and enjoy a cup of tea.



The benefits of the Slamannan Action Group are numerous. Many attendees expressed how much they look forward to each session, appreciating the chance to socialise and participate in various activities. The group has become a cherished part of their weekly routine, offering both support and a sense of community.

If you are looking for a welcoming place to meet new people and enjoy some great food and activities, the Slamannan Action Group's "Brunch and Blether" is the perfect spot!

They advertise on the Slamannan and Limerigg Discussion page on Facebook.

If you want to know more or fancy helping out, please email [kelly\\_templeman@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:kelly_templeman@hotmail.co.uk)

Article written by Stephanie McAuley

# Housing Investment Programme and Rent Levels Approved

You may remember that back in October and November 2024 we consulted with you on the rent rise options. From the 607 responses received you told us you preferred 9.5% in year 25-26, 9% in 26-27 and 7% in year 27-28 and at Executive Committee on 30 January 2025 Elected Members agreed with these proposals.

Over the last three years, our rent increase has been well below inflation. Whilst we have managed to keep rents low for these three years, at the same time, costs have gone up. That means a 9.5% increase is now necessary so we can keep up with the investment needed to maintain housing stock to meet the required Scottish Housing Quality Standard, and at the same time meet the affordable housing supply target. The increase in rents means that we will be able to deliver an ambitious Housing Investment Plan 2025 – 2030 with £253million investment approved by Council Executive on 30 January 2025 will ensure

that we maintain and invest in the quality of our homes by spending £182million over 5 years on window and door replacements, to improve energy efficiency and reduce fuel costs. New kitchen, and bathroom replacements, upgrading waste stacks in high-rise blocks, fabric and roofing improvements and maintaining our stock to the Scottish Housing Quality Standards.

We will also be carrying out an extensive programme on energy efficiency works, including upgrading heating systems to around 1,000 Council homes, installing cost effective, efficient gas heating systems and Air Source Heat Pumps where gas cannot be connected and/or tenants prefer a green energy solution (the latter being subject to grant funding)

£7.1million will be invested over the next 5 years to build new council homes and to purchase ex local authority homes through the Councils Buy Back Scheme to increase the affordable housing supply and reduce homelessness.

You can find out more on COINS committee report by scanning the QR Code below:



## Worried about Debt?

If you are worried about debt our Debt Advice Team can talk to you about options to help you. This service is free, confidential and impartial and can help anyone who lives or works in the Falkirk Council area. We can help you with

- Personal budgeting
- Deal with your debts
- Review the money you have coming in and going out
- Understand what the people you owe money to, can and can't do to recover it

Call us on 01324 503 997 or email [debtadvice@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:debtadvice@falkirk.gov.uk)

### Young Persons Blog



The panel have recruited a young person who has offered to share their housing journey with readers, this is their first article. More to follow, we hope you are inspired and learn from Kacie's experience.

Well, I am still here and living in a council property in Denny and let me tell you I have learnt a lot in the past few months.

I am now the proud owner of Wi-Fi and a 25% discount on my council tax! It was good to find that out because I live alone, I can get that discount.

I have had to become a colour coding expert to know which bin goes out which day and what can go in them, even if I miss them sometimes. I also quickly realised that letters no matter what colour should be opened and read. Leaving stuff does not help the situations but asking for help does.

Living alone has its challenges like shopping and cooking for myself. I have realised even the milk is more expensive when you only need a little bit and

cheese is about to send me into bankruptcy. So, I have now bought some plastic storage tubs and can freeze what I do not eat and that is saving me some money.

I also had some issues with my boiler 'dropping pressure' (I have also become a plumber lol). I had to use the council repairs system, which was a challenge, and, in the end, I managed to get help with complicated group face time call with a friend's friend who talked me through what to do. I felt so grown up when I sorted it, it was my problem, and I found a way to solve it.

I think to sum it up being a council tenant so far: It can be fun, it can be stressful, it can be lonely, but it is great to have my own space where I can my own mistakes, choices, and decisions.

Kacie

## Help with your next career step

We offer personalised support for people over the age of 25 who need help finding employment or help progressing their career.



FALKIRK COUNCIL

Get in touch today:  
[etu@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:etu@falkirk.gov.uk)

# Good Neighbour Award

The Good Neighbour Award is open to all i.e. tenant helping an owner, owner helping a tenant. If you have a neighbour who has gone above and beyond, we want to hear your story. Please email us at [tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk) or call 07803 898 099. A panel will look at all the nominations and chose one, we will then contact the person who has nominated and the person who has been nominated. We will present them with a gesture of good will - typically shopping vouchers. We will then print their story in the next edition of Tenant Talk along with some pictures.

The things people have been nominated for in the past include:

- Taking my bin out for me when I have been ill.
- Taking in parcels for me when I am out.
- Cutting my grass when I am not able.
- Cooking me meals when I was poorly.
- Taking me to my hospital appointments



We know there are good neighbours out there so get nominating!

### Keeping An Eye On

# 84%

Falkirk Council  
Scottish Average 84%

Percentage of tenants satisfied with the contribution to the management of the neighbourhood they live in.



For more information of how your Housing Service performs please scan the QR code below with your phone.

## What You Told Us About the New Tenant and Customer Participation Strategy

Tenants and Tenant Groups have influenced the new Tenant and Customer Participation Strategy by sharing their views on how we can enable people to be more involved in consultation. When we asked what would prevent tenants from getting involved, we learned that -

- 37% felt there was not point, and that dates and times did not suit.
- 31% said they were too busy and that transport to and from events was a problem.
- 19% said they did not feel confident enough to be involved.

Housing Services will adapt to this feedback by:

- Offering a variety of dates/times and venues when conducting consultation events.
- Building trust and confidence by providing open and honest feedback on consultation outcomes.
- Offering transport or travel expenses to and from events.
- Offer training and support to build confidence and knowledge
- Advertise events more widely

If you haven't already given us feedback on the Tenant and Customer Participation Strategy there is still time, we will be sharing a draft of the strategy in the coming weeks and inviting feedback on the content.

'The Tenant & Customer Participation Strategy has enabled me to work as a tenant volunteer with Housing Services. This means that I can scrutinise, influence and make recommendations on how the Council can improve its services to tenants. The Strategy also means that others can get involved in a way that suits them, and at a level that suits them. The more tenants' views that are heard and acted on, means that Housing Services will get better for all of us.' (Claire Malcolm: Tenant)

We would like to hear more from young people and have plans to start a Young Persons Housing Forum, led and organised by young people. If you would like to be part of this forum, or have any questions about the strategy please email [tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk)



Real Life Story

Mr Ivison with Home Energy Strategy Officer Carol Glass (left) and his daughter

## Connections to Gas Network Well Underway

Mr Ivison's new gas heating system is helping to keep all rooms warm.

More than 600 council homes across five rural villages will be connected to a new gas supply by the end of the summer, with heating installed in properties by end of 2025.

Tenants living in Letham, Whitecross, California, Avonbridge, and Slamannan now have the option of connecting to a gas supply for the first time, following Falkirk Council's investment in vital infrastructure.

Letham became the first rural village to connect to the gas network at the end of last year (2024), with tenants embracing the opportunity for a new energy source. Among them was Mr. Ivison, the first tenant to connect, who described the transformation in his home heating experience.

He said:

**"I used to have to switch on a convector heater before I could even have a shower. Now, with my new gas heating system, the house warms up so much faster, and the difference is incredible."**

**The installation process was very smooth - the company moved everything, left no mess, and you would not even know they had been here, apart from the fact that my home is now a lot warmer. The service was impeccable."**

Falkirk Council commissioned SGN, the gas network operator for Scotland, to design and install an extension to the gas network, which will serve the five rural villages. The new infrastructure includes polyethylene (PE) piping with a lifespan of over 80 years. The system has also been designed to be 'hydrogen ready' for potential future energy solutions.

Connections are progressing well in Whitecross and California with Avonbridge and Slamannan to follow in coming months.

All council-owned properties in the five villages will have the choice to connect to the SGN gas network. Residents who privately own their homes can also apply and pay for a direct connection through SGN. To support the transition, SGN has held drop-in sessions in each village, providing residents with information and answering queries about the project.

To ensure tenants had access to the heating solution best suited to their needs, a survey was conducted in 2022 among 720 tenants in off-gas villages, giving them the choice between gas and Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP). The ASHP option included solar PV panels with battery storage. 129 tenants in off-gas villages have had an ASHP system fitted, future installations of ASHP will be subject to Scottish Government funding being available.

## Opportunity For Young People To Be Heard



## Bryony's Story

**Being young I always looked forward to a spending the weekend with my dad; takeaway and movie night, no concept of trouble with repairs, rising council tax rates or your bin shed overflowing. Yet here I am now 10 years later as the main tenant of that exact same house.**

Chasing repairs, trying to figure out how to read a gas meter, working full time, it was all becoming a bit much and I had some opinions on how it could all be improved.

Then I received a Falkirk Council letter, but was pleasantly surprised to see it was an invitation to participate. A place to partake in council decisions, provide feedback, and tenant led scrutiny groups. Finally having a place to go to voice my concerns and struggles. This piqued my interest and after a quick search I was able to find a group that would be a good fit for me after my 9-5 working hours.

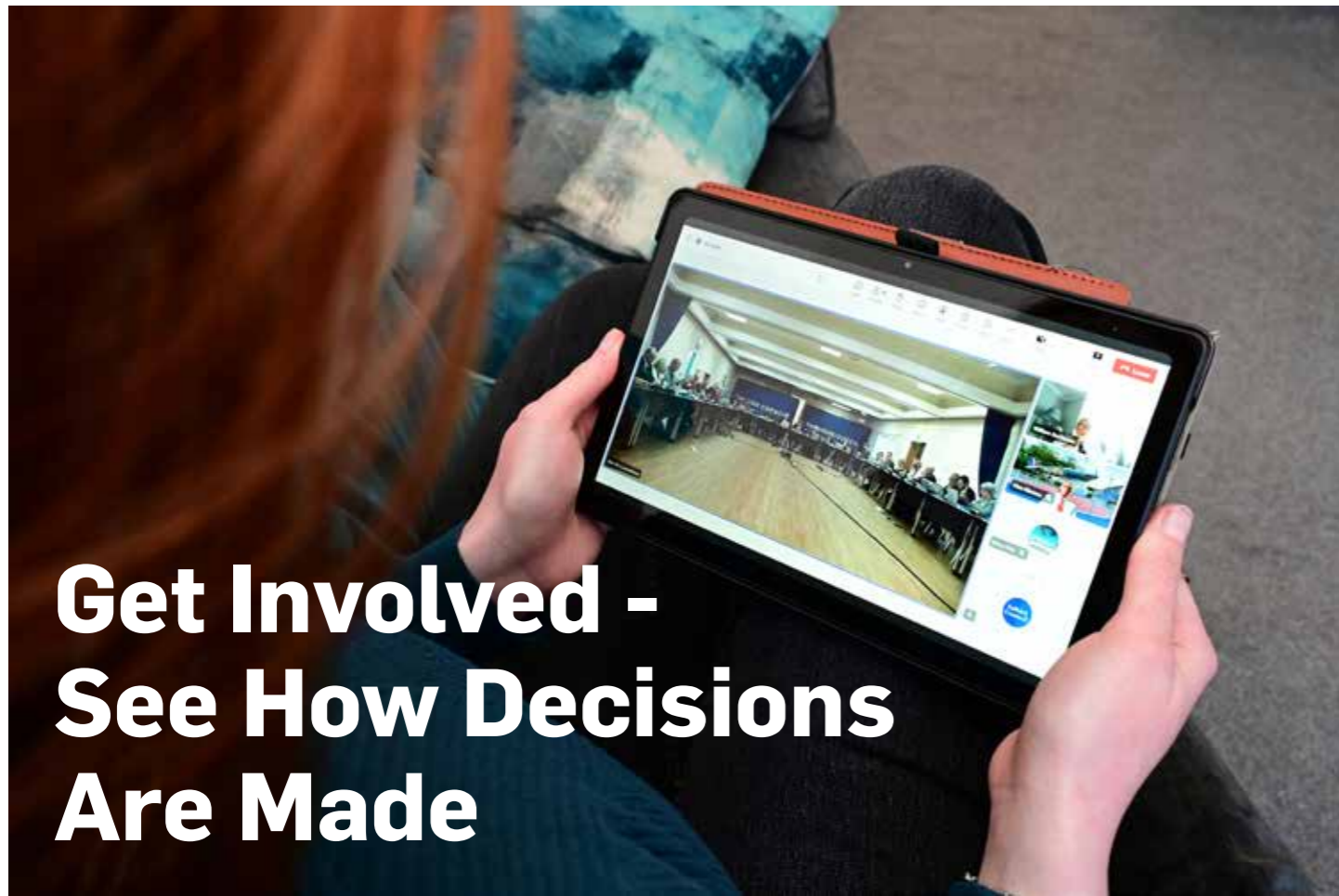
I reached out to someone within the council about this and was keen to do what I could to bring more youth and representation to these groups. After a few weeks of planning together, we set up an event at the local college which I lead, asking people to come

along and learn more about ways tenants' can get involved. Like myself many were not aware this was even an option, and were thrilled to finally see a route into having their concerns and wishes be heard about their futures.

The turnout was small but I felt true passion and interest from those who attended. In the hour we spent together some points were raised that had never been mentioned in the months I had been attending the meetings prior. On the back of this word-of-mouth spreads, and a small ray of sunshine appears where young people believe they do have a chance and a way forward. We have a few more people who will be attending these groups going forward and I could not be happier with the outcome. I wanted to show people that our opinions matter, that our futures matter.



No matter your age, ethnicity or situation I ask that you get involved, and be in the room where it happens.



# Get Involved - See How Decisions Are Made

Over the years, many bairns of Falkirk have taken an interest in the workings of the council. Decisions affect us as tenants, residents, and members of the wider community. Some decisions are popular, while others spark debate. But have you ever attended one of these meetings?

Some might think that it is all done behind closed doors, hidden from the public, with discussions kept secret. In fact, the opposite is true! Everyone is invited to watch our elected members make those important decisions that shape our lives. Whether it is the annual budget meeting in March, making positive changes for the council area, approving building planning applications, or discussing the future development of our towns, these meetings play a critical role in determining Falkirk's growth and progress.

The tradition of open council meetings dates back to the 1960s, when it became common practice to hold meetings in public to promote transparency and open local government. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, anyone interested in council proceedings had to attend in person at the old Municipal Buildings on West Bridge Street in Falkirk. There, members of the public could take a seat in the gallery and witness the discussions and decisions being made.

However, the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns brought significant changes to how council meetings were conducted.

In-person attendance was no longer an option, and meetings had to adapt to a virtual format. One positive outcome of this shift was the introduction of live broadcasts, allowing people to watch council meetings from the comfort of their own homes. Since July 2020, Falkirk Council meetings have been streamed live on YouTube, a practice that continues to this day.

For those interested, the council's meeting diary can be found by scanning the QR code provided, here you can access the calendar of council and committee meetings. About a week before each meeting, the agenda and associated reports are uploaded, giving the public ample time to review the topics to be discussed.

If you are curious about what is happening in Falkirk and the decisions that impact your community, consider tuning in. You might find the discussions insightful and engaging.

To watch live or catch up on past meetings, visit the Falkirk Council Committees YouTube channel.

## Falkirk Council Committee Meetings

By John Haston  
(Editorial Panel Member)

By participating, even as an observer, you can better understand how Falkirk is governed and how your local representatives work to shape the future of the area. Open council meetings are a cornerstone of transparent democracy, and Falkirk Council's commitment to accessibility ensures that everyone can stay informed and involved.



Falkirk Council Committees YouTube channel

The council's meeting diary



# What is a Registered Tenants' Organisation (RTO)?

## Anybody can start an RTO.

RTOs are Registered Tenants' Organisations; these groups are primarily made up of tenants but can also include owners. They are registered with Falkirk Council and with Scottish Government. RTOs represent the views of their community on housing related matters, however many also provide activities and day trips etc. Representing the views of the community on housing matters, with a view to improving service they receive, should be their primary objective.

## Elections

An RTO Committee is elected at a public meeting, which must be advertised 28 days in advance. Officer bearing roles i.e. Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary are decided at the first meeting after election.

## Constitution

All registered groups have a constitution which outlines the geographical area they represent and the objectives of the group, which are typically to represent the views of the community on issues that affect them.

## Funding

Housing Services offer a yearly grant of £300 to all Registered Tenants' Organisations these funds can be used for administration i.e. Wi-Fi, printing, and stationery. Groups can apply for funding from any source for anything i.e. The Parkfoot Court Tenants' and Residents' Association recently secured funding for day trips and to decorate their clubroom from the National Lottery. Their accounts are audited yearly (independently) prior to the AGM, and must be made available for inspection - this gives the people they are representing assurances that funds are being spent appropriately.

## Consultation

Housing Services have a statutory obligation to consult all RTOs on changes to the service, i.e. the rent increase and the recent allocations review. RTOs can also be used as a sounding board to gather feedback. Housing Services usually give 6 weeks for RTOs to respond to consultation. RTOs do have the right to make suggestions and complain about a service, however, we can ask for evidence that such actions represent the views of the community not an individual, minutes of meetings would provide evidence of such discussions.

## Partnership Agreement

Partnership Agreements are signed at the first committee meeting and lay out what Housing Services expect from the group and vice versa - partnership agreements are not a legal requirement, but it is good practice. The agreement can be bespoke to the group's needs, i.e. requires committee skills training and help sourcing funding or responding to consultation etc.

## Meetings

RTOs are expected to meet at least every 3 months and have an AGM every year. The Treasurer is expected to report on income and expenditure, the Secretary is expected to report on correspondence. RTOs can invite their Housing Officer to these meetings to discuss any housing issues raised by the community they represent. Often groups will invite other services such as Waste Management and the Conflict Resolution Service.

If you would like to know more about starting or being part of a Registered Tenants' and Residents Association, please email [tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk) or call 07803898099

Tenants' and Residents' get-together



Tenants' Voices

### Next Meeting

Date:  
Friday 6th June 2025

Time:  
1-3pm

Venue:  
Leishman Tower,  
Seaton Place,  
Falkirk FK1 1TF

Our next meeting is all about...

## Housing Services contribution to estate management



Scottish Housing Regulator  
National Panel

# Your experience of homelessness services

The Scottish Housing Regulator looks after the interests of homeless people and others who use housing services.

## What we're doing

The Regulator has asked Engage Scotland's researchers to speak to people who have used homelessness services. Your feedback is **completely confidential**. It will help the Regulator focus on what's important for people.

## How to take part

Interviews only take 15-20 minutes. You can talk to us over the phone or by video call. Call or email to book a time that suits you...

0800 433 7212

or

[natpan@engagescotland.co.uk](mailto:natpan@engagescotland.co.uk)

Everyone taking part gets a £15 voucher

# 2025/26 Bulky Uplift and Garden Waste Permit

## Bulky Uplifts

**Commencing 1st April, tenants are advised of changes to the bulky uplift service.**

Each bulky uplift request will cost £50, with no free uplifts available. However, residents in receipt of Council Tax reduction (excluding single occupancy discount), are entitled to one uplift per annum (eg. between 1st April 2025 and 31st March 2026) at a discounted rate of £25. A maximum of five items is accepted per uplift request. To establish what items are accepted, detail on how and where to present items for collection, or to book an uplift, please scan the QR code or visit [www.falkirk.gov.uk/bulkyuplift](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/bulkyuplift)

Should you choose not to use the bulky uplift service, items can be taken free of charge to the Recycling Centres at Roughmote and Kinneil Kerse or, if the items are in good repair, please consider donating for reuse/resale. There are multiple organisations available in the Falkirk area or via social media platforms. Choose to dispose of any unwanted bulky items responsibly - placing items in a bin store area is not only inconsiderate to your neighbours, but is fly tipping, and could result in the issue of a £500 Fixed Penalty Notice.



## Brown Bin Permits

2025/2026 brown bin permits (pink in colour) are now available to purchase. The price per permit remains at £45 as per last year. If at the point of application you are in receipt of Council Tax reduction (excluding single occupancy discount) a 50% discount is applied, with the price per permit reducing to £22.50. All bins to be serviced require to be displaying a valid permit. Current 2024/2025 permits (yellow in colour) expire at the end of April.

**To request and pay for your 2025/2026 permit, visit [www.falkirk.gov.uk/services](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services).**



# Former Bo'ness Landfill Site Blossoms With Award For Natural Transformation

**"Working on the Kinneil Kerse landfill restoration has been an incredibly rewarding experience, and winning the Best Biodiversity Enhancement on Brownfield Project award is a true testament to our team's dedication."**



Former landfill site Kinneil Kerse received the 2024 Brownfield Award for Best Biodiversity Enhancement for efforts on natural restoration work. The project focused on improving the environment and helping nature thrive, changing the area from environmental risk to ecological success. Kinneil Kerse, a 375-acre site was an active landfill from the 1920's to 2000, posing risks to the environment including pollution and the chance of harming nearby water sources. Thanks to the efforts of John Kirkhope (Falkirk Council's Waste Services Coordinator) the area has now become a green space which helps fight climate changes by offsetting more than 4.4 tonnes of carbon each year - the long-term monitoring of gas, groundwater and surface water continues.

Falkirk Council has an obligation to remove risks to environment and take measures to eliminate or reduce hazards. Any uncapped landfill would have a significant danger of gas and waste pollution, along with the potential of contamination in nearby waterways.

The panel would like to congratulate all involved in receiving this award.

# Bulky Items? Why not Donate them to Strathcarron Hospice

Strathcarron Hospice takes pride in their charity Shops, which offer a wide range of new and quality used goods. Vital in fundraising for the Hospice, by donating and shopping at Strathcarron Charity shops, over the last year the local community has helped raise approximately £500,000 (including Gift Aid) for their local Hospice.



There is incredible work being done in charity retail and this funding goes directly into the Hospice to make sure everyone can benefit from the very best end of life care. Strathcarron Hospice charity shops are also important for the local communities they serve - providing volunteering opportunities, training in retail skills, tackling loneliness and isolation and fostering a sense of community.

## Free Collection of Bulky Goods

Strathcarron's logistics partner, Boxmove offers FREE pick-up of good quality larger items of furniture e.g. sofa's, beds, and cupboards, picking up from your home and delivering them to the charity shop. All items are then recycled and sold across Strathcarron's shops to make money for Hospice.

For all other items for donation, please contact your local Strathcarron Charity Shop directly.

Check out Strathcarron Hospice website to schedule a collection: [www.strathcarronhospice.net/furniture-collection](http://www.strathcarronhospice.net/furniture-collection)



# Waste Services help at the Recycling Centres



One of our Housing Volunteers (Sharon) was keen to see those with blue badges get assistance at our recycling centres. When Sharon asked Waste Services if this was possible, she got a very quick 'yes, of course.' The panel are sure that all blue badge holders will be grateful for this assistance - THANK YOU SHARON!

Disability blue badge holders visiting our recycling centres are entitled to additional assistance to ensure they can access services safely and conveniently. Staff at the recycling centres are trained to provide support, including guidance on where to deposit waste and help with unloading items when necessary.

To receive assistance, blue badge holders should display their badge clearly upon arrival and notify staff of their needs. Recycling centres are committed to creating an inclusive environment and ensuring that all users, regardless of ability, can effectively utilise the facilities while maintaining their independence.

# Wordsearch

S	E	D	R	Y	O	U	P	K	G	H	A	I	W	R	H	C	N
N	P	Q	I	A	T	F	J	E	L	E	Y	B	S	X	U	M	A
E	F	I	L	D	L	I	W	O	S	D	U	P	G	C	O	E	T
D	O	U	R	H	Z	C	A	R	T	G	I	R	K	A	F	S	I
R	I	F	G	B	P	U	S	L	N	E	T	C	D	I	O	J	U
A	W	O	X	M	E	P	I	Y	U	H	O	N	U	H	R	K	B
G	S	Y	D	O	M	A	R	M	C	O	B	C	A	E	E	F	A
L	D	B	A	B	O	U	S	H	J	G	O	I	P	Q	S	R	C
U	K	E	S	I	K	W	P	T	R	S	D	A	V	Y	T	X	E
C	V	E	R	C	G	H	R	W	I	L	T	D	G	I	O	R	P
G	R	B	N	S	E	B	I	F	K	E	B	N	D	P	U	S	I
I	J	E	U	M	V	B	N	X	R	A	S	H	U	T	F	O	Y
D	O	L	S	Y	A	L	G	D	C	R	U	T	A	U	C	J	V
Q	T	B	A	D	H	O	C	S	H	A	Q	N	P	G	E	G	U
E	C	M	X	I	K	S	G	V	F	B	U	K	R	B	D	I	R
G	S	U	M	M	E	R	O	L	N	B	M	C	A	S	W	Z	O
Y	F	B	T	H	J	E	P	G	N	I	L	H	C	T	A	H	K
L	P	A	D	C	S	I	Y	U	T	T	E	R	O	F	N	G	B

Find the following TWELVE WILDLIFE words:

- BEASTIES
- BUMBLEBEE
- CUCKOO
- FOREST
- GARDEN
- HATCHLING
- HEDGEHOG
- NATURE
- RABBIT
- SPRING
- SUMMER
- WILDLIFE

Once you've found them simply draw a ring round them, fill in the form below and post us your entry. Wordsearch Competition winners will receive £50 Asda Vouchers and £25 for runners up. **Closing date is 23rd June.**

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

.....

.....

Daytime Tel No: .....

**Post to:** Tenant Talk Wordsearch, Community Engagement Team (Housing Services), The Foundry, 4 Central Boulevard, Larbert FK5 4RU.

Or take a picture of your entry and send to [tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk)

Employees of Falkirk Council are not eligible to enter. The Editor's decision is final.

## Adult Wordsearch Winners

**Elizabeth** from Falkirk    **Anne** from Boness    **John** from Dennyloanhead

# Competition Winners

**Laura** from Slamannan

**Ivanna** from Falkirk

**Alexander** from Bo'ness



# Children's Competition



Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

.....

Age Group:  3-5     6-8     9-11    Daytime Tel No: .....

7-11-year-olds are invited to send us their own autumn themed drawing. £50 Smyths Toys Voucher for the winners of each age category.

If you prefer, you can take a picture of your entry and send to [tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk)

Please send your entries to:  
Community Engagement Team (Housing Services),  
The Foundry, 4 Central Boulevard, Larbert FK5 4RU.

Competition closing date is the 23rd June.  
Winning entries from the Children's Competition will be shown in the next edition of Tenant Talk.

## Bonnyfield Nature Reserve



Just outside Bonnybridge there is a well-preserved nature reserve, panel members visited the reserve and were given a grand tour by Ranger Fiona. On the day of our visit the Rangers and some volunteers had just finished planting trees - altogether they planted over 300 trees in three days!

They planted Hazel, Elder, Willow, Crab Apple, and Sweet Chesnut trees just to mention a few. The local Scout Group used money from their fundraising to plant two Oak trees. One thing we noticed almost immediately was there was little litter and dog fouling. The volunteers and staff have worked hard in educating locals on the benefits of having the reserve nearby and that respecting the reserve has in turn created an abundance of bird species and sustainable habitats. The locals are proud of the reserve and how it has grown over the years with a helping hand from mother nature and the expertise of the volunteers and Rangers. The walk around the reserve is flat, visitors are asked to stay on paths. There are multiple ponds that are fenced off to allow the eco system to thrive. Thirty species of plant (wildflower) have just arrived in the last year around the new pond. There are thousands of species of plants in the reserve.

With different habitats including wetland, open grass, meadows, and

woodland. If you would like to visit the reserve, please be mindful of the hard work volunteers and Rangers have carried out. The reserve is a safe place for nature to thrive.

Facilities include:

- Cycle path
- Natural Heritage Service - Ranger Service
- Seating
- Views
- Walks
- Water - Pond / Loch / Burn / River
- Wheelchair access
- Wildflower meadows
- Wildlife viewing
- Woodland



The panel would like to invite young people aged between 16 and 21 to send us pictures of what they like best about their community. If your pictures have people in them, please be sure to get their permission - if your picture is chosen as a winning entry, then we would be printing the picture.



## PHOTO COMPETITION

Send your entries to [tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk) or posted to Community Engagement Team, Housing Services, The Foundry, 4 Central Bo ulevard, Larbert FK5 4RU

The closing date for this competition is 2nd June 2025. A panel will select 3 winning entries, 3 winners will receive £25 Cineworld Vouchers each.

## Louises' Wildlife Tips

Louise is keen to share her knowledge of wildlife with readers and has a few tips for those of you interested in keeping our wildlife and biodiversity areas safe.

- Make sure you leave out clean water as wildlife depends on it such as birds: this helps them maintain healthy feathers.
- Put fresh food out on a bird feeder and remove the old.
- If you have a pond, make sure you put a wooden ramp to help birds get out.
- It is a good time to think about planting some wildflowers for the garden and your pond.
- Make sure you leave a hole in your fence for hedgehogs to get through as they will be coming out hibernation between March to May and males emerge before females.

It is a good idea to check out your local wildlife and animal shelter charities as many are looking for help. One of Louises favourites is the Eden Animals Sanctuary and Wildlife Centre at Lyon Cross Dennyloanhead. You can call them on 07712541069 or email [edenanimalsanctuary@gmail.com](mailto:edenanimalsanctuary@gmail.com)

## Contact Us

One Number: **01324 506070**

Email Housing Services: [housingservices@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:housingservices@falkirk.gov.uk)

Please email [tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk) if this publication is required in another language or format.