

Introduction

The past five years in Local Government have presented significant challenges. When the Labour led coalition took power in 2007, no one could have envisaged the downturn in global economic markets and the financial crisis in world banking. This economic tsunami washed ashore, wiping out world economies both strong and weak. Falkirk Council could sit and watch, or take immediate action to protect our local economy. We chose to take action to protect our local economy - and go for economic growth in the Falkirk area!



The Labour led administration developed a flexible 'Economic Downturn Action Plan' in 2008. Falkirk Council was determined to support and protect local people and the local workforce. Since then we have produced a raft of policies, initiatives and strategies which have had an impact on the quality of life in Falkirk Council area. We also ensured that we did not have a 'lost generation' of young people. Our Fairer Falkirk strategy is acclaimed all over Scotland as a success story: we made a substantial reduction in youth unemployment, against the national upward trend.

Our vision has been to have a 'Fairer Falkirk': a place where we work together with communities and our partners to shield our communities from the economic challenges they face. Under this Labour led Council there have been no school closures, no leisure centre closures, no library closures and no compulsory redundancies. It has not been easy to do this given the economic climate. We have taken brave decisions along the way and there is ample evidence in this Manifesto that the approach we have taken has been successful.

If you elect a Labour led Falkirk Council on 3rd May, 2012, we promise to invest further in our communities. We will continue to do this *with* people. In the past five years, we have 'Put People First' in our decision making e.g. devolved more budgets and decision making to local schools; invested in local community facilities; invested public money in the regeneration of Denny Town; created a 'Citizens Panel' with over 1300 participants who influence our decision making.

Scottish Labour holds firm to its values and traditions of a 'Fairer Society'. The Falkirk area is poised on the threshold of a new era with our innovative and ambitious plans for a fairer society. These plans will lead to more improvements in the quality of life locally and a growing economy which will benefit everyone.

This Labour led Council developed the initiative to invest £150m in our local economy. With this and other initiatives in the pipeline, we will create 5,000 new jobs in the Falkirk area over the next few decades. We have also improved the environment as a leading Council in Scotland for recycling and carbon reduction. We have invested £1million in play areas and £500, 000 in multi-use games areas.

This Manifesto reports our successes, despite tight budgets. This Manifesto also spells out what a Labour Council will promise to do next. We ask you to read this Manifesto and put your trust in us by voting for Labour candidates in the local government elections on Thursday, May 3rd.

We want to continue to improve the services we provide to the people of Falkirk. We also promise to work *with you* to ensure that the Falkirk area is the best place in Scotland to live and work!

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Craig Martin'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cllr Craig Martin
Labour Leader of Falkirk Council

Our Manifesto

This Labour Manifesto outlines **the achievements of a Labour led Falkirk Council** on behalf of the communities elected members represent.

The promises in this Manifesto **for a Labour-led administration for 2012 - 2017** were developed in partnership with party members, supporters and other focus groups.

The Labour Party in Falkirk has outlined **what it has achieved by working in partnership with others**: councillors, officers, partners and the wider community.

This Labour Manifesto sets out in detail a **work programme for the next Labour administration**, if Labour is elected to run the Council for the period 2012 - 2017.

On the next page there are **5 Key Pledges** which are a **summary** of what Labour promises to deliver.

The Labour Party in the Falkirk area is **humbly seeking your support on 3rd May, 2012** so that it can deliver these pledges and continue **to serve the people of the Falkirk area**.

Our Key Pledges

The Labour Party in the Falkirk area promises to deliver the following 5 Key Pledges:

1. **To Grow our Economy**
 - Create more jobs and reduce unemployment
 - Introduce the **Living Wage**
 - Create a **Small Business Strategy**
2. **To Care for our People**
 - Deliver more **person - centred care**
 - Alleviate **poverty**
 - Create a **Healthy Living programme** for the over-50s
3. **To Promote Learning and Achievement**
 - **Reduce youth unemployment** through an **innovative 14-19 strategy**
 - Increase **attainment and achievement** in schools
 - **Create nurseries in every school** and double the number of **childcare places**
4. **To Keep our Communities Safe and Healthy**
 - Toughen up on **anti-social behaviour**
 - Introduce **Community Health Champions**
 - Be the best in Scotland for **recycling waste**
5. **To Ensure Thriving Communities**
 - Increase the building of **affordable housing** over the next five years
 - Provide **500 new houses for the rented sector**
 - **Regenerate town centres and villages** and review **transport policy**

Labour's Manifesto for Falkirk Council 2012 - 2017 A Fairer Society: Putting People First

Labour's Achievements in Falkirk 2007 - 2012

- Putting people first in the Falkirk area, the Labour Group believes in cooperation with others and created a coalition in 2007 to deliver improved services.
- To fulfil our promises to the people of the Falkirk area, Labour incorporated the 2007 Labour Manifesto into Falkirk's Community Plan 2007-2011.

We faced many Challenges over the past 5 years:

- The worst **adverse weather conditions** over the past 3 years hit the central belt.
- Lehman brothers collapsed and the **world banks were in financial crisis** leading to a public sector squeeze which had an impact on council priorities such as town centre regeneration, private investment and housing developments.
- **Council revenue funding was slashed** by almost 10% in 3 years by the SNP government, creating a £26m funding gap. In addition, the capital funding is being slashed by 30% this year and 34% next year.
- All of the above had a serious **impact on local private firms** who rely on capital funding work and local employment opportunities.

Falkirk Council's Labour-led Coalition responded to the challenges by:

- Ensuring there were no school closures, no leisure centre closures, no library closures and no compulsory redundancies.
- Producing a **Financial Downturn Action Plan** in 2008 and
 - supporting businesses e.g.: *Campbells; Alexander Dennis; HeroTSC.*
- Creating a new **Economic Initiative Strategy** in 2010 which supported local businesses and attracted inward investment e.g. *Calachem; Earls gate developments; Pre runner for TIF.*
- Producing a new **Financial Package for Denny Town Centre** with a Council funding package of £6.5m.
- Creating the **10 year Poverty Strategy** in 2011 and the 'Fairer Falkirk' initiative and reducing youth unemployment by 5.9% since March 2011.
- Developing a **Tax Increment Finance initiative** in 2011, a 20 year economic investment that will bring 5000 jobs and a further 5000 construction jobs to the local community. This was fully developed by the Labour coalition with no input by any other political party.
- Developing **Job creation initiatives including a Council house building programme** - using council modern apprentices.
- **Restructuring Falkirk Council in 2009/10** and reducing directors/heads of service by 30% and restructuring services to enhance frontline services.

Vision for Labour's Manifesto in the Falkirk area

For the next 5 years, Labour in Falkirk will ensure that we deliver the following Vision for Falkirk's people:

- **A Fairer Falkirk area:** we will continue to create opportunities to get young people and the unemployed into work and seek ways to support people of all ages through the challenges of the current economic climate.
- **Local decision making in Falkirk:** we will actively engage local communities in making key decisions about their lives, their environment and council services, empowering communities to make them even stronger.
- **Opportunities for all:** we will continue to invest in people: jobs, learning, homes and leisure. We will ensure all services take responsibility for delivering the Poverty Strategy.
- **Falkirk area at the centre of Scottish life:** we will strive to become the focus of a network of tourism, employment and travel opportunities.
- **Falkirk's heritage:** a rich historical, industrial and natural heritage. We will strive to maximise the benefits of this distinct heritage for local people of all ages, visitors and tourists.
- **Innovation in Falkirk:** we will support innovation and forward thinking to take our area's rightful place at the heart of Scotland.



Our Fairer Falkirk strategy, developed with partners, will ensure that we create opportunities to get young people and the unemployed into work.

Underpinning Principles

We will deliver our Vision for the Falkirk area and its communities with a set of Principles which will underpin the work of all who deliver services:

Putting people first: we will listen to, and value, the views of our communities (of all ages) in shaping council services. All services should be accessible and convenient to the service user and the increasing use of information technology should ease access to services in our communities.

Inclusion and Equality: we will continue to be an inclusive council which ensures fairness and equality and celebrates and promotes diversity. We will ensure that throughout people's life stages, from birth to the elderly, services will accommodate individual and community needs. We will aim to close the opportunity gap and reduce poverty in the Falkirk area by having the highest aspirations for our communities.

Partnership: all services will encourage and sustain cooperative partnerships with the community and with other service providers to improve outcomes for individuals and communities.

Quality services: all services will strive for the highest standards and meet all statutory requirements to raise standards in all services. Staff will be valued and supported in the delivery of quality services.



The Falkirk Council area has one of the highest recycling rates in Scotland. We will work with communities to improve recycling household waste and have a recycling rate of 70% by 2017. We are aiming to be the best in Scotland for recycling and carbon reduction.

Economic Strategy

Achievements over the past 5 years

- Secured agreement to proceed with a **pilot £52m Tax Increment Financing (TIF) initiative** with the potential to attract **£365m of investment** and create over **5,000 jobs**.
- Maintained a commitment to **tackling youth unemployment**, providing employment and training support for over **500 young people** in the Falkirk area annually. Through the Backing Falkirk's Future initiative, **the area now has the highest percentage of young people in training in Scotland**.
- Gained the **2010 Scottish Regional Award** for Enterprising Britain
- Secured **£2m of Town Centre Regeneration Funds** for the Falkirk area, completing projects in each local centre including the upgrade of the Churchyard at Falkirk Old Church and St Modan's Church.
- Provided business health checks and provided Mary Portas training **support for retailers** to help attract business during the recession
- **The Falkirk Business Improvement District (BID)** was the first to be successfully re-elected in Scotland
- Completed the **£5m Bo'ness Townscape Heritage Initiative**, including refurbishment of the **Hippodrome Cinema** (Scotland's first public cinema)
- Completed the **£16m regeneration of Stenhousemuir Town Centre**, providing a new food store, retail units, library, health centre and community facilities
- Adopted responsibility for management of the **Business Gateway contract** for the Forth Valley which has supported **2400 business-start-ups** and established Falkirk for Business, the new business support organisation for the Falkirk area
- Maintained a **business property portfolio** accommodating over **500 businesses and 4,000 employees**.
- **Provided assistance to TSC** to maintain its contact centre operations in Central Park, Larbert, **and retaining employment for 550 jobs**.
- Helped relocate **Campbell's Prime Meats** to successfully relocate their business to a site at Lathallan, bringing **300 jobs** to the area.
- Some 400 retail jobs increased in the area with Tesco and Asda investment.

Economic Strategy

What Labour will do next

- Our **Fairer Falkirk strategy**, developed with partners, will ensure that we create opportunities to get young people and the unemployed into work and seek ways to support people of all ages through the challenges of the current economic climate.
- **Backing Falkirk's Future initiative** we will **prioritise economic growth** by building on current skills; promoting the diversification of skills and developing flexible and responsive training programmes with training providers.
- Produce an **economic strategy which connects the Falkirk area firmly to Scottish, UK, European and Global markets**
- Develop a model of **Social Impact Bonds ("SIB")** (i.e. a contract with the public sector to pay for improved social outcomes (e.g. substance misuse; anti-social behaviour; family support). SIBs will fund **preventative and early intervention programmes** to tackle the underlying causes of specific social problems which have an impact on economic growth and development. Incentives are aligned across public sector commissioners, external investors and service providers)
- Produce the **timeline for infrastructure investment** through the **Tax Increment Finance**, with a commitment to start ground work in 2012.
- Regenerate **Falkirk Town Centre, east end; complete Denny, Grangemouth and Bo'ness town centre regeneration**; continue to regenerate towns and villages.



Sketch plans of how the revitalised Denny Town Centre could look.

- Develop a **Public Transport policy** to improve transport, especially to and from the Villages and Towns. Conduct a **Bus Service Review** to support local infrastructure and employment opportunities.
- Develop a plan for a **new, community accessible, Civic heart in Falkirk Town Centre**, regenerating the town during the day and evening e.g. integrated shopping; council services; community services; social and leisure activities
- Develop various **cooperatives / social enterprise contracts** (e.g. community transport / school buses/purchasing power of the Council) to create local jobs and opportunities in partnership with community enterprises.
- Work in **partnership with the Business sector to enhance the Business Panel to maximise** economic development opportunities. Review and develop further a **Strategy for Small Businesses**.
- **Work with retailers** to encourage investment in district town centres.
- Deliver **the Living wage** (linked to procurement policy requirements) over the next 5 years.
- Develop an **Entrepreneurial Policy** to encourage alternative retail in town centres.
- Link our **Tourism Strategy to economic growth** in Falkirk and particularly in the Bo'ness / Blackness area (e.g. Antonine Wall; Kinneil Estate; SRPS; the Harbour /Docks area; Foreshore walks), with particular emphasis on co-operative approaches to these developments.
- Continue the **Falkirk Employability Award** for successful young people who achieve a positive destination after school.

Leisure and Tourism Strategy

Achievements over the past 5 years

- £1m investment in play parks and football pitches throughout Falkirk council area to support healthy living and access to activities for families and the wider community.
- £550 000 investment to double the amount of multi-use games arenas in the Falkirk Council area to almost 30
- Created the Leisure Trust to protect frontline services to local communities and attract new investment.
- Developed a new Core Paths Plan and Public Open Spaces strategy.
- Implemented the first phase of the Helix
- Re-located the Park Gallery, seeing a massive increase in attendance.
- Successfully delivered the Hippodrome, Bo'ness - usage is continuing to increase.
- Some 5km of new footway and cycleway schemes completed.
- Community use of PFI schools has culminated in a 35% increase in admissions to the out of hours use of these schools.
- Opened 2 new libraries in Polmont and Larbert.



The refurbished Hippodrome Cinema in Bo'ness is attracting growing audiences.

Leisure and Tourism Strategy

What Labour will do next

- Review the use of **Community Centres and schools as integrated learning and leisure hubs** for people of all ages in the community. Seek the views of the wider community in the Review and provide training for Users Groups.
- Further promote an **Active Falkirk Strategy** with **people-centred activity** and health promotion activities for children, youth, families, the elderly and other community members throughout the Falkirk area.
- Continue to develop and improve local **playing parks** in the lifetime of the Council.
- **Develop a strategy for parks as leisure areas and areas for learning** (e.g. nature / environmental walks; healthy living walkways) in the lifetime of the Council.
- Encourage more community participation and ownership - through the creation of more **"Friends" groups for parks** and the setting up of **user groups** to help plan future facilities
- Bring more **arts to outlying communities** e.g. take out **taster events** from Falkirk Town Hall and Hippodrome to local areas around the district.
- **Review under-used spaces** in neighbourhood sports centres and schools and maximise the use of space for community activity.
- Aim to **improve use of community sports provision**; improve the use of community schools - creating **new community hubs**.
- Aim to **boost tourism** through closer partnership working with the tourist trade.
- Re-brand the area as **Antonine Wall Country**, and use area's Roman links to attract new tourists from home and abroad.
- Work with town centre management to roll out **"Local Information" points** in shops and other town centre premises to make it easier for visitors to find out local and tourist information.
- Explore **loyalty schemes** for arts/leisure facilities.
- Work with Falkirk Community Trust to **refresh our museums provision**. Long-term plan for key museum bases: Kinneil House/Estate, Bo'ness; Callendar House, Falkirk and to create, over time, an **Industrial Museum** which supports an understanding of the rich industrial heritage of the area and which puts stored resources on public display.

- Reaffirm commitment to have **new museum space in new Grangemouth Library building**.
- Build on **Comedy Festival** success - through the creation of new local Festivals (and link-ups with existing festivals e.g. Edinburgh Film Festival) to boost arts provision.
- The creation of a **bike hire scheme** in Falkirk Town Centre to encourage cyclists into the town but also encourage people to enjoy the surrounding areas using cycle paths whilst keeping fit and healthy. Promote **more bike recycling**.
- **Improve internet access**, particularly in rural areas, through additional access points in community buildings.



Visitors walking the Antonine Wall near Bonnybridge. Labour wants to use the area's Roman links to attract more tourists to the area.

Social Work Strategy

Achievements over the past 5 years

- Reduced the £5m Social Work overspend and restructured **Personal Care**. The charging policy is now fair, flexible, affordable and provides more choice for service users.
- Maintained the **high standard of front line personal care to the elderly and vulnerable** through very difficult economic times.
- Introduced the **1st Falkirk Corporate Parenting action plan for looked after children**.
- Introduced a new **intensive family support service** for families in crises, commented by SCSWIS as '**excellent practice**'.
- Re designed a new delivery of **co-ordinated children services**, identifying and responding to the needs of vulnerable children and young people.
- Established and developed an **integrated Central Resource Centre in Camelon** for all children and adults with **complex needs**.
- Enhanced the **Aids and Adaptation programme** to include minor as well as major adaption of housing stock.

Social Work Strategy

What Labour will do next

Overarching approaches

- Improve **person-centred care** through improved **collaboration and cooperative working** with services users and across **Social Services, Forth Valley Health Services, Education and other service providers**.
- Further **redesign Day Care Centres, facilities and services** to meet modern day requirements which ensure support for those seeking to undertake **employment**.
- We will ensure that people will have the opportunity to give **feedback on the quality of service** received.
- In the face of the UK Government's **Welfare Reform proposals**, we will pledge to help **alleviate poverty** by implementing the Poverty Strategy; investing in Welfare Benefits Advisors and protecting the budget of the Citizens Advice Bureau
- Advise and support tenants and owners with care and support needs who wish to **remain in their homes**.

Elderly Services

- Ensure a **locality model of service** delivery in our communities within the proposed integrated Health and Social Work Service.
- Budgets will be aimed at **early intervention and preventative care for the elderly** to allow them to remain within their own homes/community for as long as possible.
- We will integrate Home Care, Mecs etc more closely with health delivery in the home to ensure an **improved and more co-ordinated service**.
- **Social work** will promote a **positive health and healthy living programme** working in partnership with health and arts organisations to address the needs of vulnerable people of all ages.
- Prepare an **Elderly Carer Strategy** which will support people who have learning difficulties when their elderly parents / carers are no longer able to care.

Children and Family Services

- All Council Services and partner agencies will continue to work together to develop and deliver **local Children's Services Plans**, in consultation with communities, to improve outcomes for all children, young people and their families.
- Ensure a **positive destination for young adults with learning difficulties / additional support needs**, working closely with all relevant service providers.
- When possible we will provide **learning facilities for children with additional support needs** as close to their local communities as can be delivered.
- We will offer **more flexible respite** to meet the needs of Carers and their families.
- To support children who are looked after, **Social Work staff** will receive training in raising educational achievement and **Education staff** will receive support and training on the care needs of children who are looked after.



All Council Services and partner agencies will continue to work together to develop and deliver local Children's Services Plans.

Housing Strategy

Achievements over the past 5 years

- Received a very positive Housing Regulators report.
- For the first time in 50 years we significantly improved Council house building with a total of 132 new houses built by May 2012. 80% of the cost was paid for by the Council.
- Introduced a private sector leasing scheme allocating 100 private rented properties to homeless applicants.
- Introduced a new transparent allocation system with a needs based approach.
- Introduced a home insulation service to over 6,000 house owners
- Introduced a small repairs and handyman service for the elderly and vulnerable clients which carried out 1424 jobs last year.
- Completed a full stock survey of 16,000 council properties for future investment programmes.
- Continued to invest in council house upgrades and refurbishment.
- Introduced energy efficiency heating systems to reduce fuel bills.
- Worked with other housing providers to ensure low cost housing.
- Invested £50m per annum on improving tenants' homes.



The high flats in Falkirk - being upgraded under Labour.

Housing Strategy

What Labour will do next

- To increase the housing supply Labour will:
 - Commit to further council house new build programme and provide more than 500 new houses for the rented sector over the next five years (minimum 100 per year)
 - Develop further partnerships to utilise private rented accommodation for those on the council waiting list.
 - Work with the private sector to provide additional homes for rent.
 - Develop in partnership with other providers, Council homes (new build) and re- purchase ex council houses.
 - Introduce an incentive scheme to encourage downsizing for those in an over occupied situation.
 - Work closely with local developers to enhance the availability of affordable housing.
 - Further develop activities within the private housing sector.
 - Work closely with Housing Associations.
 - Explore the potential for work on house extensions to Council properties.
- Introduce a management estate strategy in cooperation with the community and give residents a bigger say in the management of their estates.
- Advise and support tenants and owners with care and support needs who wish to remain in their homes.
- Continue to invest in the current housing stock, with a commitment to the replacement of electric storage heating systems.
- Strengthen the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy as part of a local Estate Management Plan.
- Continue and further develop strategies to tackle fuel poverty e.g. new boilers; insulation and modern technology.

Communities: Health, Safety & Environment Strategy

Achievements over the past 5 years

- **Achieved 54% of municipal waste being recycled. We are a leading Council in Scotland for recycling and carbon reduction**
- **Improved infrastructure at both recycling centres, currently achieving 70% recycling of materials delivered.**
- **Kerbside recycling boxes rolled out to 63,000 households.**
- **Completion of a £5.3m Bo'ness flood protection scheme.**
- **Drug misuse continues to fall, currently 25% below the Scottish average for reported heroin abuse.**
- **Introduction of the innovative safer streets initiative and the taxi marshalling service in Falkirk town centre.**
- **The introduction of the safe base unit in Falkirk town centre.**
- **The introduction of community based litter management initiatives, with more frontline staff monitoring our streets for litter and issuing penalty notices.**
- **Zero tolerance approach to dog fouling.**
- **Introduction of the 'take the right routes' initiative in the Stenhousemuir area.**
- **Created one of the most comprehensive new footway and cycleway schemes (5 km).**
- **35% increase in admissions to the council's community schools out of hours use.**
- **Renewable energy in Council Buildings.**
- **Taken huge steps to address a major lack of play areas.**
- **Invested over £1m in our play areas and £500 000 in multi-use games areas to promote healthy outdoor play and leisure activities.**

Communities: Health, Safety & Environment Strategy

What Labour will do next

- We will work with communities to improve recycling household waste and have a recycling rate of 70% by 2017. We are **aiming to be the best in Scotland** for recycling and carbon reduction.
- Aim to **cut our energy use by 30%** over the next 5 years by installing innovative green technology, new efficient boilers and insulation.
- We will save council tax payers money by ensuring efficient use of funds, **reducing use of gas and electricity in our buildings** and thereby **cutting carbon emissions**.
- Develop a **District Rural Transport Scheme** in partnership with communities, to provide alternative transport to outlying areas
- **Build capacity: Community Health Champions** linked to community volunteers supporting groups in the community in shaping policy e.g. smoking cessation; healthy living; health checks; positive mental health.
- Develop a **Healthy Living Strategy** to include the promotion of the cycle tracks; pathways for walking; the use of bicycles for hire; exercise programmes and opening up more schools for activities designed for community and family use.
- Develop an integrated **Strategy for the over 50s** which promotes healthy and active living opportunities.
- **Increase investment in community recreational facilities** for families
- The creation of a **bike hire scheme** in Falkirk Town Centre to encourage cyclists into the town but also encourage people to enjoy the surrounding areas using cycle paths whilst keeping fit and healthy.
- Increase Community Safety Team to develop an education and action programme to address the issues of **Litter and Dog Fouling**.
- **Increase the number of allotments** by assisting groups find land to extend the number of units they have already.
- **Further develop public toilets** by signposting public facilities in partnership with shops and other venues.

Education Strategy

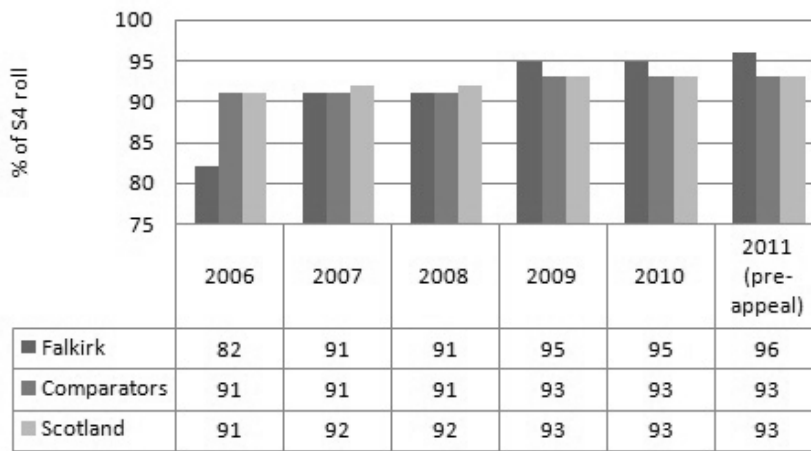
Achievements over the past 5 years

Overarching strategy

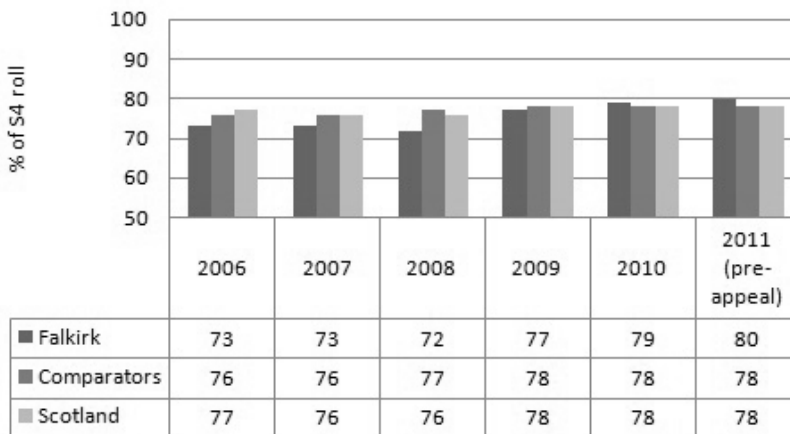
- Falkirk Labour believes all children in the area deserve the **best possible start in life**.
- We worked tirelessly to **narrow the gap** between those with advantage and those without, maintaining the **highest aspirations** for all children and young people.
- We ensured children, young people and their families could **access the help and support** they rightly needed in order to fulfil their potential. This included access to a range of services including the arts and music.
- Invested significant resources on our **literacy programme**, this is now starting to deliver real results for local children in terms of raising literacy standards.
- Completed one of the **largest school modernisation programmes** in Scotland which has seen all of Falkirk's high schools and many primary schools rebuilt or modernised.
- Falkirk Labour did not shy away from making it a priority to **tackle the causes of educational underachievement**. We worked hard with young people, staff and parents and committed resources to **raising the educational standards** in the area's schools, aiming to achieve excellence.
- We recognised the importance of **vocational education and training** and worked with further education colleges and employers to ensure young people have the skills required to enter colleges and the world of work with confidence.
- Completed the building of **4 new Secondary Schools and 2 primary schools**
- Building a new RC School at **Antonshill**
- **Doubled the amount of pre-nursery places by building new nurseries** in Grangemouth and Camelon
- Opening of **Braes and Larbert** high schools to **community use**.
- The creation of the **Tryst community hub** in Larbert High School.
- **SFA Elite Academy** at **Graeme High School** and other secondary schools (a focus on sports and arts).

- Increased attainment levels throughout the secondary schools:

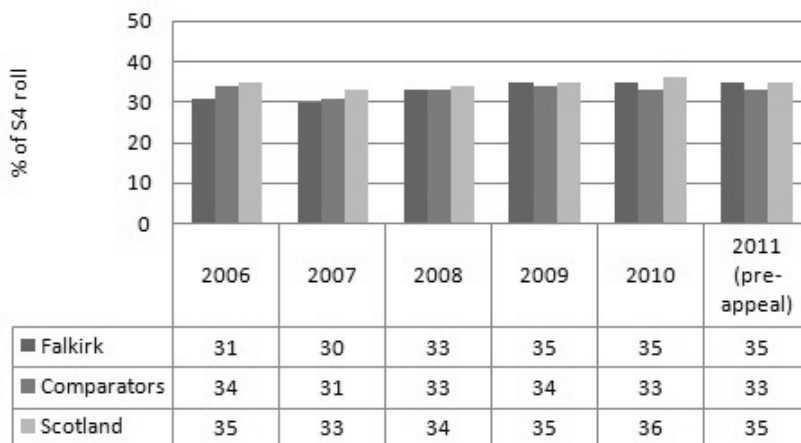
English & Maths at SCQF level 3 or better - by S4



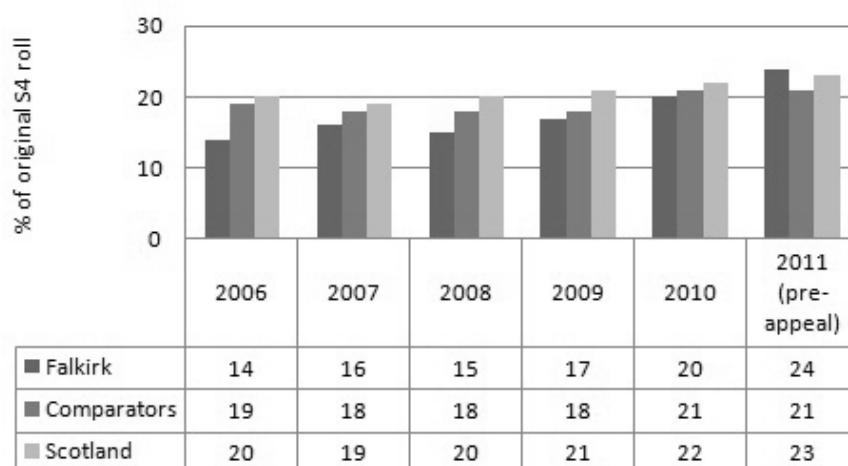
5 or more awards at SCQF level 4 or better - by S4



5 or more awards at SCQF level 5 or better - by S4



5 or more awards at SCQF level 6 or better - by S6



Education Strategy

What Labour will do next

Overarching strategy

- To provide high quality educational experiences which will raise achievement and attainment levels in all our schools.
- To provide broad, balanced and rich curriculum experiences in line with Curriculum for Excellence (i.e. successful learners; confident individuals; responsible citizens; effective contributors)
- To work in partnership with other services and providers to ensure that we maximise the life chances of all our children (e.g. children who are vulnerable; have additional support needs; are looked after; sports, arts and cultural activities for all)
- Specifically, to raise attainment and the achievements of looked after children and young people.
- To ensure that children, young people and adults fully access **their right to an education** and that we promote and support **lifelong learning**.
- When possible we will provide **learning facilities for children with additional support needs** as close to their local communities as can be delivered.
- To support **children who are looked after**, **Social Work** staff will receive training in raising educational achievement and **Education** staff will receive support and training on the care needs of children who are looked after.
- Schools will work towards '**Community School**' status which will involve the use of school facilities for education and leisure activities.

For Children in Pre -School

- Ensure the highest quality learning and care experience for young children.
- **Double our childcare provision** by building additional all age nurseries .
- Work towards opening nurseries (for 3-5 year olds) in every primary school and ensuring access to at least 15 hours a week for all children as an entitlement.

For Children in Primary School

- Continue to provide learning opportunities which will raise the achievements of our children of primary school age.
- **Continue to raise aspirations** for all children of primary school age by providing high quality education for all.
- Continue to develop and implement strategies to improve literacy, numeracy and personal development in primary
- **School buildings and resources:**
 - Finish St Bernadette's RC primary school (Antonshill)
 - Expand and Upgrade Westquarter Primary
 - Expand Antonine Primary
 - Expand St Joseph's Primary
 - Upgrade Camelon Education Centre.
- Undertake Traffic improvements at various schools including Wallacestone Primary
- Invest over £1 million in broadband upgrades at all schools

For Young People in Secondary School

- Continue to provide learning opportunities which will raise the achievements and attainment of our children and young people of secondary school age.
- **Continue to raise aspirations** for all children by providing high quality education for all.
- **Develop a 14 - 19 Strategy** in partnership with other learning providers to ensure that all young people achieve a positive destination i.e. into further or higher education; training or employment.
- **Review capacity issues** at Braes and Larbert High Schools - work with children and parents in these areas to collectively find a solution.

For Parents and Carers

- Further support **School Councils** to enable them to work in partnership with schools and support and challenge school policies and practices.
- Engage parents in discussion about the purpose and consequences of **curriculum of excellence**
- **Work with Parents and Carers** recognising that they are the prime educators of their child and to work in partnership with them to help them **understand how their children are performing and provide any support and advice required.**
- Continue to work with parents and carers to **improve attainment** for children of primary and secondary school age especially in increasing the council average on 5+ highers.
- **Improve childcare provision with a revised Childcare Strategy**
- Continue to **improve community access to schools** and produce an integrated school / leisure pricing package to increase usage of schools in the evenings.
- **Review capacity issues** at Braes and Larbert High Schools and in primary schools
- Through the **Children's Services Plan**, improve partnership working across all service providers to secure **improved outcomes in terms of education, training and employment opportunities for all secondary aged young people.**
- Continue to provide training for **education staff in Inclusion and Equality** and **support for parents and carers** with particular emphasis on: children with additional support needs; autistic spectrum and communication disorders and children with disability.

For Adult learners

- **To review Adult Learning Strategy** by building on successes and to take account of our commitment to the development of integrated learning and leisure hubs for people of all ages, involving schools, community centres and libraries.

Addressing youth unemployment

Achievements over the past 5 years

Since 2007 Labour-led Falkirk Council has supported 5,970 people into employment and training:

- 1,445 Adults through Working for Families
- 1,705 through Get Ready for Work Vocational Skills/Work Experience
- 1,350 with life skills and core skills
- 820 Modern Apprentices
- 650 young people of school age via Positive Transitions

In the past year:

- **School Leavers' Destinations:** There has been a 3.8% improvement in positive school leaving destinations with 88% of school leavers now in a positive destination; there was a 3.3% increase in the number of school leavers entering Falkirk Council funded training programmes supported by the Fairer Falkirk Funding which was the main reason for the improvements' in results.
- **Youth Unemployment:** There has been a 5.9% reduction in the number of 16-24 yr olds on Job Seekers Allowance in Falkirk since April 2011 - in the same time period the UK increased by 12.7% and the Scottish Average increased by 3.1%. The Council's approach through Backing Falkirk's Future and the Falkirk Job's Programme is now having a noticeable impact.
- **Modern Apprentices:** The Council have supported 325 Modern Apprentices up to November 2011 which exceeds our annual target of 300.
- **Get Ready For Work:** Falkirk Council's Get Ready For Work Contract is performing at 44% above the Scottish Average.
- **Clients Supported:** The Employment and Training Unit has supported 685 clients since April 2011 to date.
- **Falkirk Employability Award:** This award focuses on Workplace Core Skills and was launched in August; over 250 young people in Falkirk are now undertaking this nationally recognised qualification.
- **Care Leavers:** Fairer Falkirk Funding has enabled the first focused employability programme for young people leaving care with 30 young people positively engaged since July - case studies available.
- **Helix:** Fairer Falkirk Funding enabled the creation of 12 Modern Apprenticeship opportunities for young people who left school without any qualifications.

Addressing youth unemployment

What Labour will do next

- Labour will **improve on the successes outlined above** to further improve the number of young people who achieve positive destinations (education, training or employment) when they leave school.
- We will support initiatives which will **improve the education, training and employment chances** of young people to 26 years of age.
- **'Activity agreements'** will be further developed to ensure that young people have a plan to achieve a positive destination.
- A **14 - 19 Strategy** will be developed in partnership with all learning providers in the area to:
 - ensure that **all schools, colleges and learning providers work together** to improve positive destinations (education, training, employment) for this age group.
 - ensure a **positive transition for young people** from secondary to work experiences / college placements /employment /higher education.
 - ensure that **pathways through education (academic and vocational) are clear** for young people and their parents / carers.
 - ensure **learning providers share their understanding** of the curriculum, learning and teaching, assessment and the world of work.
 - ensure that **learning providers share training and resources** to maximise the input to young people in the Falkirk area.
 - ensure that there are **opportunities for young people** to participate in work experience; shadowing; mentoring; part time work experience - whilst at school / college.
 - use the **Get Ready for Work** scheme as a **Pre Apprenticeship route** where they undertake up to 39 weeks training before moving to the apprenticeship for which they receive an allowance.
 - explore further with employers and others, opportunities for **sponsored apprenticeships**.
 - **improve work placement processes** to ensure all young adults get a placement and a positive experience.

- develop a **work related curriculum** and access to **vocational opportunities** for all young people in this age group, **whatever their learning centre (i.e. school or college).**
- **Give consideration to pre apprenticeship approaches**, so that they can progress automatically to a full apprenticeship on leaving school. This might mean that either the funding follows the young person to pay for this or the schools will increase the variety of qualifications they can assess and deliver in partnership with other learning providers.
- Develop a **Continuous Support Scheme**, starting from S2 till two years post leaving, focusing on readying young adults with **additional support needs for school learning and for life and work after school.**
- **STEP - Skills Training and Employment Programme:** explore a social enterprise model that delivers a range of Council services at arms length through the training and employment of 18 - 24 yr olds, taking 'Community Benefits in Procurement' a step further.
- **A Training and Enterprise Centre** - explore the potential with partners to use business parks and other venues where whereby young people are employed to run, manage and maintain a facility in a social enterprise setting. They could provide a variety of services: conference support; business and administrative; catering; facilities management; estate maintenance.



www.falkirklabour.org.uk

www.grangemouthlabour.org.uk

www.bonesslabour.org.uk

Email: info@falkirklabour.org.uk