

Falkirk as a Location

Statistical information on the Council area

December 2006



Falkirk Council

Introduction

Falkirk is situated right at the centre of Scotland. It has a growing population of over 149,000, with over 58,000 people working in the area. The main towns are Falkirk itself, Grangemouth - Scotland's premier port and home to its only major oil refinery - Bo'ness, Denny, Larbert and Stenhousemuir.

Falkirk is one of the best connected areas in Scotland – within half an hour of two major European cities, just 20 minutes drive from Edinburgh airport, with excellent motorway and train links and a sea terminal. 60% of Scotland's population is within a 60 minute journey.

Grangemouth is Scotland's largest deep sea container port, with excellent road and rail connections. Warehousing and distribution are key growth areas. Grangemouth's major industry is chemicals with BP, Ineos, Syngenta, Avecia and Rhom & Haas located in the area. Other key sectors in the Falkirk area include vehicle manufacturing, timber processing, tourism and leisure.

Falkirk town is the main administrative and shopping centre for the area. It has a vibrant town centre with many of the major retail chains including Marks and Spencer and BHS located there. Development and regeneration plans for each of the other town centres are progressing.

New housing is developing rapidly and house prices are very competitive compared to surrounding areas. Traditional villas and canal side developments are attracting people to come and live in the area.

The Community Schools Project will result in all eight high schools in the Falkirk area being rebuilt by 2008. This project will enhance the role which the schools will play in their community. They will become the focal point of each community in terms of community participation, lifelong learning and active citizenship.

Forth Valley College provides further education services to the community with over 10,000 students currently enrolled in Falkirk. The college provides courses in engineering, business administration and call centre training.

The world famous Falkirk Wheel was built as part of the Millennium project to re-open the historic Forth & Clyde and Union canals. It is currently attracting some 400,000 visitors each year. This adds to the existing attractions of the Antonine Wall - the Roman Empire's most northerly frontier - the unique Dunmore Pineapple, Callender House, Blackness Castle, Bo'ness Steam Railway and the Scottish Railway Museum.

The fantastic new multi-use Falkirk Community Stadium adds to the area's numerous leisure facilities which include an indoor and outdoor athletic stadium in Grangemouth, 7 golf courses, canal network, parks and cycle paths. The HELIX project is the newest green space being created in the area, the vision is an urban park that will provide residents and visitors

with a series of outdoor rooms providing opportunities for a range of recreational activities and habitats for wildlife.

The Falkirk area has much to commend it as a location for business and as a place in which to live, work and visit. The My Future's in Falkirk initiative is a transformational economic development programme for the Falkirk area, delivered by a radically open partnership between Falkirk Council, BP and Scottish Enterprise Forth Valley with funding from European Regional Development Fund and Ineos. The 10 year initiative is already delivering real benefits for the economy, environment and social fabric of the area. The objective is to make the Falkirk area an even better location for business investment, families and visitors. For more information on current action areas visit www.myfuturesinfalkirk.co.uk.



Population

The population of the Falkirk area is increasing. It currently stands at 149,150 (2005) but it is expected to grow to over 155,000 by 2017, making it one of the fastest growing areas in Scotland. The population of the area has increased by more than 4 per cent over the last decade, with most of this growth taking place in the last three or four years.

	Falkirk		Scotland	
Age Group	2005	%	2005	%
< 15	26,518	17.8	865,091	17.0
15-29	26,241	17.6	957,537	18.8
30-44	34,740	23.3	1,124,321	22.1
45-59	30,193	20.2	1,041,834	20.4
60+	31,458	21.1	1,106,017	21.7
Total	149,150		5,094,800	

Source: GROS population estimates, 2005

The populations of the main towns are:

Town	Population
Falkirk	32,670
Grangemouth	17,551
Bo'ness	14,354
Stenhousemuir	10,184
Denny	7,536
Larbert	7,121
Polmont	5,294
Bonnybridge	5,126

Source: Falkirk Council settlement population estimates, 2004

Labour Market

Falkirk has more people employed in manufacturing than Scotland as a whole, particularly related to the chemicals and petro-chemical industries.

Industry	Falkirk No.	Falkirk %	Scotland %
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, energy and water	606	1.0%	3.1%
Manufacturing	9,224	15.7%	10.1%
Construction	4,967	8.5%	5.4%
Distribution, hotels and restaurants	13,954	23.8%	23.3%
Transport and communications	3,133	5.4%	5.5%
Banking, finance and insurance	5,766	9.8%	18.0%
Public administration, education & health	18,347	31.3%	29.2%
Other services	2,604	4.4%	5.4%
Total	58,601		

Source: Annual Business Inquiry, 2004

Income and Earnings

Average household income in the Falkirk area is £28,731¹, compared to a UK average of £29,000. Gross weekly pay is below the Scotland and UK average.

	Falkirk	Scotland	UK
Full time workers	£460.4	£479.6	£518.7
Male full time workers	£484.1	£522.9	£571.1
Female full time workers	£430.3	£423.8	£437.0

Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, 2005

Unemployment

Unemployment in Falkirk is marginally below the Scottish average and has decreased slowly over the past year. The unemployment figures for October 2006 are shown in the table below.

	Falkirk		Scotland	United Kingdom
	No.	%	%	%
Total	2,329	2.5	2.6	2.5
Males	1,734	3.6	3.8	3.5
Females	595	1.3	1.4	1.4

Source: ONS, Claimant count October 2006

Unemployment has declined steadily over the past decade. The table below shows yearly averages.

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Falkirk	5.9	4.9	4.6	4.4	3.9	3.6	3.6	3.4	3.1	2.8
Scotland	6.1	5.0	4.5	4.2	3.8	3.4	3.3	3.2	3.0	2.8
UK	6.0	4.5	3.8	3.5	3.1	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.3	2.4

Source: ONS, Claimant Count 1996 - 2005

¹ Source: CACI Paycheck 2005

Commuting

The table below highlights significant commuting in and out of the Falkirk area.

	Edinburgh	Stirling	West Lothian	Glasgow	North Lanarkshire	Fife	Clackmannanshire	Rest of Scotland	Totals
Out commuting	5,308	4,553	3,671	2,605	2,235	1,292	908	1,720	22,292
In commuting	1,044	2,946	1,895	815	2,108	1,673	1,602	2,103	14,186

Source: 2001 Census (Crown Copyright)

Education and Qualifications

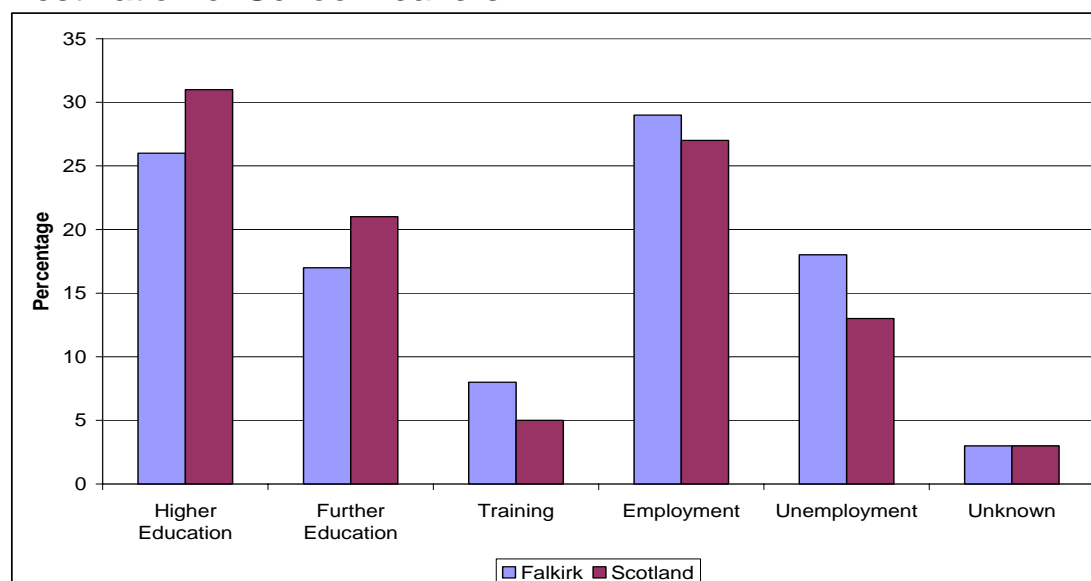
School Qualifications

The level of school qualifications achieved in Falkirk is slightly below the Scottish average. This is shown in the table below.

	Falkirk	Scotland
5+ Standard at 1-4	73%	76%
3+ Highers at A-C	18%	21%
5+ Highers at A-C	14%	19%

Source: Scottish Executive, 2006

Destination of School Leavers



Source: Scottish Executive School Leavers Destination Survey, 2004/05

The percentage (26%) of school leavers entering Higher Education is below the Scottish average (31%), while 17% of Falkirk school leavers go on to Further Education compared to 21% for Scotland. The higher (18%) than Scottish average (13%) moving into unemployment reflects the persistence of high youth unemployment in the Falkirk area.

House Prices

The average house price in Falkirk in the first half of 2006 was £116,000. The equivalent Scottish and UK prices were £122,511 and £179,425 respectively. House prices in the area are increasing rapidly with an 11% increase in the year to June 2006. The average house price for new houses in Falkirk was £174,800. However 25% of houses sold for less than £70,000. The overall median house price was £96,250. It is anticipated that over the next few years there will continue to be a large number of new houses built in the Falkirk area – current estimations are that almost 1,000 houses will be completed annually.

Year	Average Price	Number
1997	£53,417	2,328
1998	£53,534	2,503
1999	£57,271	2,602
2000	£60,836	2,803
2001	£64,532	3,003
2002	£72,028	3,337
2003	£79,109	3,631
2004	£100,737	3,624
2005	£109,934	3,871
2006 (Jan – June only)	£115,570	1,779

Source: Sasines

Household Types

Falkirk has the following household types according to the Scottish Acorn groupings.

Scottish Acorn Group		Falkirk		Scotland
		No.	%	%
A	Affluent families	7,322	10.9	7.6
B	Older prosperity	7,024	10.5	11.6
C	Settled families	4,743	7.1	6.4
D	Rural Areas	1,441	2.2	5.7
E	City Lifestyle	1,355	2.0	8.9
F	Young workers	4,104	6.1	6.9
G	Traditionally comfortable	14,983	22.4	19.3
H	Developing families	14,883	22.2	13.2
I	Poor old age	8,807	13.2	9.9
J	Struggling singles	2,270	3.4	10.2
	Total	66,932		

Source: CACI

This shows that the predominant household types in the area are 'traditionally comfortable' and 'developing families' (over 22% each). The area also has more than the Scottish average for 'affluent families' (almost 11%) and 'settled families' (over 7%).

Business Property and Sites

The Falkirk Council Structure Plan is a strategic land use plan which provides the broad framework for detailed planning policies in Local Plans and determining planning applications. The purpose is to indicate the general scale and location of future development in line with national policies set out by the Scottish Executive. The Structure Plan contains policies covering the following key areas: overall approach to the development of the area, the number and location of new houses over the next 15/20yrs, the amount and location of new land that should be set aside for employment development, the location of new shopping and leisure development, the main transport proposals and the areas that should be protected from development. For a copy of the plan call Development Services on 01324 504 950.

The Business Property Register is an ideal point of reference for companies or individuals looking for land or property in which to start a new business venture, relocate or expand an existing business. To access this site visit www.myfuturesinfalkirk/business_panel or call Jennifer Anton, Falkirk Council on 01324 59 0975 for more information on availability.

Quality of Life

Living conditions

97% of households in Falkirk have central heating and 63% of households own their own homes.

92% of people in Falkirk think that their neighbourhood is a good place to live in and 95% never experience any serious disputes with their neighbours.

46% of people in the Falkirk area now have access to the internet, up from 34% in 2001/02.

Crime

Falkirk has a lower crime rate than other parts of Scotland with only 642 crimes recorded per 10,000 population in 2005/06, compared to a Scottish figure of 820. And the clear up rate is well above the Scottish average - 66% of all crimes were cleared up, while only 46% of all crimes in Scotland were solved.²

² Source: Scottish Executive, Statistical Bulletin, Recorded Crime 2005/06