

Falkirk Community Justice Partnership Annual Report of Activity

**2024 -
2025**



1. Introduction

The Falkirk Community Justice Partnership want to prevent and reduce further offending by addressing its underlying causes. We want to safely and effectively manage and support those who have committed offences to help them to (re)integrate into the community and realise their potential for the benefit of all citizens. We want to ensure outcomes/interventions for those who have committed an offence are proportionate and maximise opportunities for rehabilitation and desistance from crime.

The Partnership's pledge to secure better outcomes for people with convictions, victims and witnesses, families and communities in Falkirk is set out within a Community Justice Outcome's Improvement Plan. This has been revised in 2024 and is available for view on the Falkirk Council Website.

The following report represents a summary of progress made towards achieving community justice outcomes in Falkirk, within the reporting year 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025.

An activity template is also submitted annually to the national body, Community Justice Scotland, in accordance with statutory requirements outlined within the Community Justice Act (2016). For an overview of community justice activity across Scotland, a national Annual Report is prepared and published by Community Justice Scotland on their website.

2. Local governance arrangements

The Falkirk Community Justice Partnership consists of statutory partners – typically represented at senior officer level to ensure that they can provide strategic leadership, make decisions and commit resources necessary to the work of the Partnership. All statutory partners are represented at local level with the exception of Crown Office & Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS), who facilitate Sheriffdom meetings for Coordinators to attend. In the case of the local authority, a range of relevant services are represented

such as Justice Services, Housing, Adult Social Work Services, Children's Services and the Community Planning Partnership.

Understanding of purpose and duties is maintained by the Community Justice Partnership Terms of Reference. Partnership meetings are held on a quarterly basis.

Partnership progress and issues are reported into the Public Protection Chief Officers Group, who in turn have a direct reporting line into the Community Planning Leadership Board.

The third sector are represented at partnership meetings by CVS, Falkirk and District's Third Sector Interface. Meetings are also attended by the Senior Manager of Cyrenians. A Safe and Empowered Communities Forum have now been established with representation from a range of third sector organisations within the Falkirk area. The group is hosted by the local third sector interface, CVS Falkirk, and there is a focus on the intrinsic link between feeling safe and a sense of community belonging, inclusion and empowerment. The Community Justice Co-Ordinator attends these meetings to provide updates and enable two-way communication on partnership initiatives. As before, this engagement model has been implemented in addition to third sector representation at core partnership meetings from CVS Falkirk and Cyrenians to secure a strong third sector voice in decision making.

3. Activity highlights

Publication of a new Community Justice Outcomes Improvement Plan

A new Falkirk Community Justice Outcomes Improvement Plan was published on 1st April 2024, setting out local improvement goals for 2024-2030. Development was supported by a strategic needs and strengths assessment and consultation with stakeholders, to ensure our priorities continue to align with other workstreams within the Falkirk Plan, as well as the new national performance framework.

Developing pathways into mental health support

Justice and Mental Health Leads have continued to work collaboratively to support pathways for mental health support. A Community Psychiatric Nurse (CPN) post was embedded within Justice Services in 2020 using Action 15 funding and shared management between Justice and the Falkirk Health and Social Care Partnership. Bringing mental health support in house within Justice Services has allowed for earlier assessment and access to secondary care, reducing barriers for a client group who are often considered “hard to reach”.

The number of clients referred and engaging with support offered by the CPN remains steady and has done so over the past 4 years of service. 285 referrals were made in 2024-25 and the service had an 83% attendance rate.

The main presenting issues currently are emotional instability, anxiety, trauma, substance use, voicing thoughts of suicide. The main support offered is anxiety management, decision skills, safety and stabilisation and group work programme. The Justice-based CPN has completed a wide range of training throughout the reporting year to enhance the support offer. This includes training regarding violence and aggression; self-neglect and hoarding; trauma enhanced training delivery; peer support; sexual harm and transgender identity; and autism and trauma.

The Justice based CPN continues to work closely with other in-house support services including Change Grow Live Recovery Workers, Keep Well Nurse, Cyrenians and all Social Work teams. They also liaise with GP's, Perinatal Mental Health Nurses, Woodlands Mental Health Services, Psychology Services, Forensics and third sectors services such as FDAMH (Falkirk District Mental Health Association). They attend Falkirk Mental and Suicide meetings and joint Community Mental Health Team meetings, where they can take cases that require the advice of a fuller multi-disciplinary team. They also work closely with other closely CPNs based in Alloa and Stirling, liaising around day to day running of the service and regular reviews.

Keepwell within Justice Services

Justice Services also works in partnership with NHS colleagues to ensure ongoing provision of a co-located Keep Well nurse, working 3 days each week to conduct Keep

Well assessments and provide healthcare advice and support, especially to those who have difficulty in accessing GP services.

The Keep Well nurse has a remit to help support men and women service users who attend the Justice Service at Brockville supporting them with their physical and mental health needs.

106 referrals were made during the reporting period, and 71 clients accepted the support. There has been an increased uptake for service users who prefer the face-to-face appointments option. Acceptance of appointments ranged from 1-15 contacts within a three-month period, which is dependent on the health needs of each individual service user. The service users were willing to share the information regarding their health issues and always gave the Keep Well nurse permission to share the information with their Justice workers, which has proven to be very beneficial for continuity of care, seamless delivery of service and information for inclusion within the Social Work reports for court.

GP registration and arranging telephone triage appointments continued to be a priority, as many service users struggle to navigate the GP systems and many have no money and no credit to use their mobile phone. The Keepwell nurse would provide the GP with the reasoning as to why the appointments were required and as well as supporting and gently advising, with written prompts, for each individual service user as to how to engage with health services and how to describe their physical symptoms and their mental health issues affecting their mood, thinking and behaviour at their appointment. On occasions suicide intervention was required during the assessments, requiring supports from GP's, A/E and paramedics.

Following the assessment referrals were often required to various agencies in primary, secondary and third sector organisations, including: Woodlands; Justice CPN; bereavement services; FDAMH (Falkirk District Mental Health Association); Addictions Support and Counselling; Change Grow Live; carers; Occupational Therapy; Physiotherapist; Podiatrist; district nurse; and dental services.

Advice and support are provided for various aspects of improving their general health and wellbeing. Decider skills were designed to help individuals manage their emotions and improve their mental health issues, in particular anxiety and isolation. With regular

appointments these skills have helped regulate service user's emotions, tolerate distress and improve communication. Often poor nutrition and diet can be related to lifestyle choices, dependency on alcohol or drugs and lack of finances. Providing support, knowledge and encouragement with their nutrition, can help improve energy levels, improved sleep, enhance mood and a healthier weight. In addition, advice provided for budgeting, recipes and suggestions of how to incorporate simple ideas to improve their activities and help improve their fitness levels.

The Keep Well nurse is also available and utilised regularly to support Social Work staff with regards to information and advice to support service user's physical health and mental wellbeing within the Justice Service.

Commencing groupwork for men and women in the justice system

A Men's group and Women's group have been developed and adapted to meet the needs of the Justice clients.

The men's group commenced around July 2024, led by Justice Keep well nurse, Justice Social Work and Justice CPN. This provides a safe space for men to attend every week for support around mental health and wellbeing and physical health. Initially this was 5 sessions based around 4 Decider skills areas – distress tolerance, emotional regulation, mindfulness and interpersonal relationship skills and fifth session was input on men's health. Hot drinks and hot food are also provided.

The groupwork has been adapted as men kept attending after 5 sessions. It now runs weekly and a new theme is chosen for each session. Group attendees have taken part in a planning session and have some ideas for future planning including a canal boat trip in October with the Seagull Trust.

Feedback from clients has been positive. One said, "The group provides a supportive environment where I can be myself and don't feel judged and pressured like I do in other areas of my life". Another client said "I have learned a lot from attending this group along with other groups I have been attending within the recovery community and Andy's man's club"

The Women's group commenced Nov 2024, there was initially high amounts of referrals however attendance at the group was low. The group was resumed in 2025 and attendance has now improved. It continues to run as a five-week Decider skills programme with one session being on Women's health.

Forth Valley NHS Psychological Therapies Team and Justice based CPN are also currently planning the development of a joint phase 1 trauma intervention Survive and Thrive men's group.

Improved access to drug and alcohol support

A Recovery Service collocated within Falkirk Justice services also remains in operation. The service is delivered by 2 Change Grow Live Recovery Coordinators, who provide support for people referred by Justice Social Workers to address their substance use, alongside their offending.

People engaging with the Justice Recovery Coordinators were supported to access partner services via Change Grow Live Recovery Hubs, such as: Peer Supporters from Recovery Scotland, Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs, Citizens Advice, an Advanced Nurse Practitioner from NHS Substance Use Service and Hepatology nurses. This is in addition to the Recovery Coordinator working closely with the Justice Mental Health Nurse.

Throughout this year, the service continued to strengthen relationships with Justice Social Workers, creating an environment where communication and collaboration have ensured that regular joint reviews of service users are taking place, which allows for an enhanced care plan to be agreed. This supports and encourages engagement leading to:

- Increased attendance
- Enhanced and robust assessments, identifying risks and management plans
- Person centred and holistic care planning
- Positive outcomes and increase in number of planned discharges.

Improving community integration, wellbeing and employability through a tailored Outreach service

The colocation model within Brockville Justice Services houses an outreach service provided by Cyrenians. The service provides a variety of tailored support such as community integration, support for wellbeing and employability. Examples included:

- Community Exploration, where staff and client engage in a walk around the community, speaking about services, groups and organisations.
- Barrier Breakdowns, where a specific barrier is hampering integration, specific sessions aimed at resolving this.
- Addressing Isolation. Similar to exploration, but solely targeted at groups, hobbies and interests of the clients and then tailoring this with what's available in the community.
- Lifestyle Changes. The support here can range from healthy eating to active lifestyles, drug and alcohol signposting, etc.
- Volunteer Search. These sessions were aimed at anything from showing the range of opportunities present in the client's community to helping them apply for these opportunities.
- Employment Search.

Supporting Communities through Community Payback Orders

Falkirk Justice Services have a dedicated email inbox for unpaid work requests from internal and external agencies and communities. Requests for unpaid work support for local projects are assessed for eligibility and work that concerns community safety, reducing the fear of crime or environmental improvements to public spaces are particularly welcomed.

Unpaid work teams assisted in a range of projects to support local communities. We also continued to work towards an improved awareness and understanding of what community justice looks like in action.

Press releases were issued to local newspapers to improve awareness and understanding of Community Justice among the public. This has focused on showcasing examples of Unpaid Work activity carried out as part of a Community Payback Order to show the tangible benefits of this work for local communities and people subject to an order. One of the examples used was the ongoing development and maintenance of the Floral Clock in dollar park, which involved Justice Service Users working alongside local

community groups and residents. The story was picked up by a local newspaper, [The Falkirk Herald](#).

4. High level assessment against national indicators

Section 26 of the Community Justice (Scotland) Act sets a requirement for Community Justice Scotland to undertake such assessments from time to time. Community Justice Partnerships were provided with a local report for the 2024- 2025. It should be noted that all high-level performance indicators have significant limitations and should be viewed in combination with wider local evidence of progress to help understand local progress against the priority actions and outcomes.

The following conclusions can be drawn from Falkirk data, in relation to each of these indicators:

- The number of diversion assessments undertaken shows an increase compared to the baseline year, however there is a decrease compared to the previous year. The desired direction is to increase.
- The number of diversion commencements shows an increase compared to the baseline year, however there is a decrease compared to the previous year. The desired direction is to increase.
- The number of diversion completions shows an increase compared to both the baseline year and the previous year. The increase is in line with the desired direction.
- The percentage of CPO completions shows an increase compared to the baseline year, however there is a decrease compared to the previous year. The desired direction is to increase.
- The percentage of DTTO completions shows a decrease compared to the baseline year, however there is an increase compared to the previous year. The increase is in line with the desired direction.
- The number of homelessness applications where prison was the property the main applicant became homeless from, shows an increase compared to both the baseline year and the previous year. The desired direction is to decrease.

- The number of voluntary throughcare cases commenced shows an increase compared to the baseline year, however there is a decrease compared to the previous year. The desired direction is to increase.

Data report for 2024-2025

National indicators	Current year	Previous year	Pre-Covid	Baseline	Local Progress	National progress
Number of diversion assessments undertaken	125	136	74	62	Some concern	On track
Number of diversion cases commenced	88	93	71	53	Some concern	On track
Number of diversion cases successfully completed	101	81	61	41	On track	On track
Percentage of community payback orders successfully completed	77%	78%	82%	73%	Some concern	Some concern
Percentage of drug treatment and testing orders successfully completed	33%	29%	0%	56%	On track	On track
Number of homelessness application where prison where prison was the property the main applicant became homeless from	65	40	15	5	Off track	On track
Number of voluntary throughcare cases commenced	81	108	15	59	Off track	On track

5. Challenges and next steps

Funding remains one of the key challenges for the sustainability of services and projects. The funding model for community justice relies on the expectation that resources are pooled by local partners for common aims. Budget restrictions across the workforce often means that partners are unable to commit financial resources to new partnership initiatives or dedicate long term funding. There also remains significant concern over the pressures on housing and homelessness services and broader impact of this.

Falkirk Community Justice Partnership remain committed to improving outcomes for those involved in, and affected by, the justice system. In response to the publication of new National Strategy for Community Justice in Scotland and National Performance Framework, and to locally identified needs, Falkirk Community Justice Partnership have published a revised Community Justice Outcomes Improvement Plan. The revised Plan outlines our commitment to securing better outcomes for people with convictions, victims and witnesses, families and communities in Falkirk.