



## Sustainable Development unveiled for Redding Park Falkirk

The Redding Park Development, situated on the banks of the canal in Falkirk, will see an exciting new development breath life into a desolate brownfield site, historically dogged with industrial contamination.

The development plans include around 370 homes, ecologically friendly parkland with a wildlife corridor, retail units, a bar/restaurant, heritage centre, a pontoon for boats using the Union Canal and some 17 acres of recreational space.

Following extensive investigative and feasibility studies supported by Scottish Enterprise Forth Valley and Falkirk Council, planning consent has finally been granted to develop this strategically important residential development to support the growth of Scotland's major cities.

Gordon Macpherson, managing director of Redding Park Development Company,

commented: *'This development will offer an aspirational lifestyle to those looking for countryside living within very short commuting distance to Scotland's commercial centres.*

*'Both Edinburgh and Glasgow are less than a 25 minute train journey from the development. Its centrality, plus its close proximity to the Falkirk Wheel and newly opened and regenerated canal will be key to the development's success.'*

Charlene O'Connor, chief executive, Scottish Enterprise Forth Valley, said: *'Falkirk has a major role to play in supporting the growth of Scotland's cities. This new development will not only provide much needed housing to accommodate the growth in the local population but will inject wealth into the area by attracting further investment and new businesses to the area.*

*'After significant investment by SE Forth Valley to treat over 60 acres of contaminated land, we are delighted to see this project finally come to fruition. Canal Corridor development is one of the key elements of the My Future's in Falkirk initiative and I have no doubt that the economic benefit in terms of further investment and new jobs that this development will bring over the next few years will be considerable.'*

Work has started clearing the site and a preferred developer will be appointed imminently. It is expected that the remediation phase will take one year to complete, with onward development spanning the next three to four years. ■



### **STOP PRESS!**

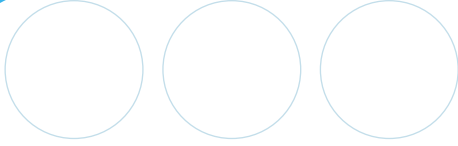
## **MY FUTURE'S IN FALKIRK HIGHLY COMMENDED AT DYNAMIC PLACE AWARDS**

The innovative regeneration initiative, My Future's in Falkirk, has been Highly Commended at the prestigious Dynamic Place Awards for its approach to community communication and promotion of the area to a wider audience.

The 'Connections' category award was presented by Scottish Enterprise at a glittering event on the 24th of November in Edinburgh in front of an audience from all over Scotland.

The My Future's in Falkirk initiative beat off competition from across the country to pick up the commendation which recognises its excellent approach to communication with local businesses and communities and the promotion of the Falkirk area as a vibrant area of regeneration.





# 3663's flagship £3.5m facility has the ingredients for success

Food service company, **3663 First For Foodservice**, the UK's leading foodservice wholesale distributor, recently officially opened its flagship £3.5million distribution centre at Larbert, Falkirk.

With a network of 15 frozen, fresh and chilled food depots in the UK, the company had outgrown its existing facilities in Denny. The company's relocation to Larbert, and the new state-of-the-art facility, will help 3663 to take full advantage of the market growth opportunities.

3663 is the only company that can deliver an extensive range of frozen, fresh and chilled products in one delivery. This is complemented by industry expertise and an efficient delivery service. Distributing some 8,000 food products to more than 2500 food and catering outlets across Scotland, 3663, has seen sales in its Central Scotland depot grow in line with the growth in the food and drink market. The food and drink sector is a major contributor to the Scottish economy with sales of £7.3billion over recent years, the Scottish delivered frozen food sector has grown by 36% to be worth an estimated £86million.

With support from Scottish Enterprise Forth Valley, 3663 was able to invest in developing the site to become one of the largest frozen hub sites in the UK,



Above: Depot Manager, Andrew Watson outside 3663's new facility in Larbert

safeguarding 70 jobs and creating a further 23 full time positions in the area.

The new facility incorporates 34,660 sq ft of purpose designed cold and chilled accommodation, along with training facilities and an advanced demonstration kitchen, which will be used in the education and exhibition of product display, preparation and storage in a 'real catering' environment.

Depot manager, Andrew Watson, commented: *'We are delighted with our new facility which will firmly cement 3663's position as market leaders in the Scottish frozen, fresh and chilled market. This new facility not only offers first class storage space and office accommodation, but will offer a unique training facilities that are second to none.'*

The new facility which will firmly cement 3663's position as market leaders in the Scottish frozen, fresh and chilled market.

*This new facility is the first bold step in our expansion plans. We aim to take full advantage of the boom in the food service market and have ambitious plans to double our turnover in 5 years.'* ■

## 2005 highlight

There have been many highlights but one of the most significant was the naming of The Falkirk Wheel as the Best Scottish Civil Engineering Project of the last 25 years, at the 25th Saltire Society Civil Engineering Awards.

**RICHARD MILLAR**, SERVICE AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER AT BRITISH WATERWAYS SCOTLAND



## Ton up for Academy

- Over 100 employees of SMEs in Falkirk have gained valuable qualifications over the past year thanks to a successful trial of the **Scottish e-Skills Academy**.

Funded as part of My Future's in Falkirk, the Academy delivers education in ICT and commerce based on certificated courses recognised by industry, and matching skills gaps identified by the business community.

The courses include those certificated by the likes of Microsoft, Cisco, Sun, Macromedia, CIW, and the Institute of Leadership and Management.

As a result of the success of Falkirk's 2005 trial, this innovative technology project has gained more funding to continue in the area over next year.

Further afield, new e-Skills Academies will be rolled out across Greater Glasgow, Lanarkshire and Fife.

You can get more information at [www.e-skillsacademy.com](http://www.e-skillsacademy.com).

## Outstanding hospitality at Stadium

- There's been a mammoth 300% leap in conference and hospitality bookings in the last month for the increasingly popular **Falkirk Stadium**. And, for everyone connected with this iconic symbol of progress in Falkirk, the good news is that the rest of this year looks likely to follow suit.

The Stadium's open 364 days a year, and is recognised as a unique venue for conferences, staff away days, product launches, parties and weddings. Its facilities, which are on the third floor overlooking the magnificent football pitch, include eight function/meeting rooms.

A new bistro/bar called *Amarillo* is now open. It provides a relaxed atmosphere for meals, a glass of wine, cocktails or coffee. The menu available at Falkirk Stadium became even more extensive when *Eleven*, a fine dining restaurant was recently opened. At the helm of

this welcome addition to the area's impressive array of places to eat is Drew Norloch's award winning executive chef, Peter Banks.

In another move, around 60 staff from Falkirk Council's Community Services became the newest tenants at the Stadium when they moved in during October. The modern, open plan offices that they now occupy should allow the teams to provide an even better service than before.

Visit [www.falkirkstadium.co.uk](http://www.falkirkstadium.co.uk) for more details.

## David's Loan up for development

- Another development of modern industrial premises is in the pipeline for Falkirk following the decision of Novelis Inc. to sell its David's Loan (Falkirk) industrial site to Scottish Enterprise Forth Valley.

The 35-acre site was bought for just over £4m, and the new development will attract fresh investment in the area, encourage indigenous expansion, and help diversify the local economy.

## Another boost for Bo'ness

- Plans to restore **Bo'ness Harbour** have been boosted with £950,000 from Scottish Enterprise Forth Valley (SEFV).

SEFV made a substantial contribution with a commitment of £227,000 last year for site investigation work for the £8,480,000 harbour project.

Earlier this year the project, which is part of the plans by Falkirk Council and SEFV for a multi-million redevelopment at the Bo'ness foreshore and harbour, attracted a £1 million from Europe through the East of Scotland European Partnership. Falkirk Council itself is committing £819,000 and BP recently said it would give £150,000 to the project.

International developers ING Real Estate have submitted a planning

application for a £150 million development that includes a marina, waterside restaurants, cafes and bars, shops, a 100-bedroom hotel and 700 new harbour front apartments and townhouses. The application is currently going through the planning process.

## Property improvement is just the business

- Several business properties in Falkirk are to be upgraded after a decision by Falkirk Council to spend £600,000 next year on improving its portfolio. The aim is to increase opportunities for businesses to expand their operations.

A **Business Property Review** was completed recently as part of My Future's In Falkirk. It identified work that will now be carried out following the Council's move. That work includes:

- £250,000 at The Forum, Callendar Business Park where a large space will be transformed into eight smaller units to let growing businesses have more flexibility and space. The work will also see improvements to the entrance, a new lift, upgraded toilet facilities and a new security entry system.
- £230,000 at Castle Road in Bankside Industrial Estate. This will include re-insulation, rendering, the replacement of asbestos cladding, re-roofing and new doors and windows fitted.
- £80,000 at West Mains Industrial Estate, including new doors and windows, better security, access and ventilation.

For more information on all projects visit [www.myfuturesinfalkirk.co.uk](http://www.myfuturesinfalkirk.co.uk)





# Company and Sector NEWS

Technology invented by a start-up in Larbert may soon be used in NASA's exploration of the moon and Mars after successfully completing the American space agency's tests.

**Vibtech** makes systems for measuring what lies beneath the surface of a planetary body, and its latest development has just been trialled by NASA at a test crater in Arizona.

Doug Gibson, chief executive of Vibtech, said, *'The fact that NASA invited us to participate in this trial for extra-terrestrial exploration, where weight and volume are at a premium endorses our belief that we have the most adaptable seismic system on or off the planet.'*

■ THE SUNDAY HERALD, 24 JULY 2005



Stagecoach has ordered 45 low-floor buses for its Merseyside operation from **Alexander Dennis**, the vehicle maker that has plants in Falkirk and Guildford, Surrey. The Perth-based transport group said the deal was worth £3.9m. The buses will be introduced on services formerly operated by Glenvale Transport, which Stagecoach bought earlier this year.

■ THE SCOTSMAN, 11 AUGUST 2005



Above: Alison Hill and Alison McInnes of Haliem

Two fashionable young entrepreneurs behind Falkirk's first exclusive shoe boutique walked away with a top business award and cash boost of £600.

Alison Hill (26) and Alison McInnes (26), founders of **Haliem** shoe boutique have beaten off the business talents of Central's best young start-ups to win the 2005 regional final of the Prince's Scottish Youth Business Trust/The Royal Bank of Scotland Business Awards.

The pair, who set-up the thriving store in February 2004, did extensive research into the local market before launching the business. Armed with their findings, which proved Falkirk was ripe for a new unisex shoe outlet stocking affordable yet exclusive shoes, the pair approached PSYBT for a start-up loan and support. Haliem has proved a hit with locals and with the store only ever stocking 10 pairs of the same shoe design, their customers and friends are rarely seen wearing the same shoes!

■ FALKIRK HERALD, 29 SEPTEMBER 2005

The **My Future's In Falkirk** initiative is in the running to lift a top national honour in this year's Dynamic Place Awards 2005.

The search to find the winners of this year's Dynamic Place Awards, the only awards in Scotland that recognise the country's leading design, innovation and regeneration projects, has taken a leap

forward with the announcement of this year's shortlist of entries.

Judges have reduced a list of nearly one hundred entries down to twenty six projects. My Future's in Falkirk is a finalist in the Connections category.

■ MY FUTURE'S IN FALKIRK PRESS RELEASE, 13 OCTOBER 2005

**Big in Falkirk** bagged a top award at the 2005 Scottish Thistle awards - recognised as one of the top accolades a tourism business or event can receive. Big in Falkirk was named the winner in the Events and Festivals category. Finalists in the same category were Edinburgh's Hogmanay and International Pairs, Fife.

■ FALKIRK COUNCIL PRESS RELEASE, 1 NOVEMBER 2005

Larbert-based, **BenRiach Distillery Company** has scooped a top accolade for international business at Scotland's most prestigious business awards ceremony.

The single malt Scottish whisky distillery has lifted the award for Best International Business after developing a range of products to take advantage of the opportunities offered by different markets. The company currently exports to 18 markets world-wide and has a long term vision to develop the BenRiach Single malt range.

## 2005 highlight

“The progress made with the regeneration of our district centres.”

COUNCILLOR DAVID ALEXANDER, LEADER OF FALKIRK COUNCIL

continued...

After reopening a 'mothballed' distillery in late 2003 the company achieved a turnover in excess of £2 million in their first trading year, with almost 90% of sales overseas.

■ SCOTTISH ENTERPRISE FORTH VALLEY PRESS RELEASE, 27 JUNE 2005



Falkirk's top tourist attractions helped draw in almost 700,000 visitors in 2004. The bumper visitor figures, an increase of 6% on the year before, are a huge boon for the area and have delighted area tourist chiefs. The figures were announced by the Scottish Tourism Economic Activity Monitor (STEAM), which also found that visitor spending in the area rose by 6% to nearly £72 million, supporting an estimated 1,857 jobs in the Falkirk economy.

■ FALKIRK HERALD, 14 JULY 2005

Falkirk has been identified as the place in Scotland where first-time buyers looking for the best return should purchase a home, according to new research. The town is also the fourth hotspot in the UK for people wanting to get a foothold on the property ladder.

Falkirk is regarded as a good investment due to a number of exciting developments in the pipeline.

The Royal Bank of Scotland, which carried out the study, said Falkirk's home owners would reap the benefits of a £500m regeneration project planned for the town, which is expected to create 5000 jobs. The town's proximity to Edinburgh and Glasgow, with good train and bus links, was also seen as an advantage.

■ THE HERALD, 5 SEPTEMBER 2005



## Talkback

### WILSON PATON

Chairman and Managing Director, Outreach Ltd, Falkirk.

**Outreach Ltd** distribute hydraulic cranes, loading and access equipment for the worlds leading manufacturer Palfinger. Outreach also design and manufacture specialised handling and access equipment for the offshore oil and gas industries.

#### *Favourite City?*

New York.

#### *Favourite Restaurant?*

Las Americas in Houston Texas.

#### *Hobbies?*

Classic Cars, listening to music, travelling and photography.

#### *Dream car?*

Jaguar E-Type (I own two) but a dream car that I don't own - an Aston Martin with a V-12 Engine.

#### *Which famous person do I most admire?*

This is very difficult to answer because there are a lot that I admire for different reasons.

When I think of 'leaders' I think that Sir Ernest Shackleton takes some beating. He possessed a formidable array of leadership qualities and talents including extraordinary courage and compassion. Nelson Mandela from the political stage and from the world of music Leonard Bernstein both as a composer and as a conductor.

#### *Biggest fear?*

That I will run out of time to do all that I want to do and achieve.

#### *What makes you happy and contented?*

Spending time with my wife, the aroma of fresh baking and fresh coffee and good malt whisky.

#### *Careful plans or big risks?*

I am not a gambler. I accept that a certain level of risk is inevitable and some times the level can be high so I do what I can to minimise the risk and get on with it. I frequently give in to 'gut instinct' and more often than not it has worked out fine - perhaps I am just lucky.

#### *The most difficult hurdle?*

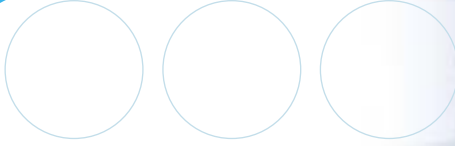
Finding creative, positive and reliable people.

At Outreach I have from the outset tried to ensure that our people are valued for their skills and dedication. I try to make their work interesting, their working environment safe and pleasant and I encourage all our staff to develop their skills and knowledge to their full potential.

#### *Best piece of business advice...*

Sleep on it - no matter how bad it looks it will look less bad next morning!





# The Falkirk Business Panel

## What is the purpose of the Falkirk Business Panel?

To network, connect and inform the **Falkirk business community** to make the most of their businesses and help build the reputation and image of the Falkirk area. In addition, it enables the private and public sector to work together to create a strong business focused environment for the future of the area.

### Why have a Falkirk Business Panel?

Effective communication and networking are key for many businesses. Also, the profile of Falkirk as a business- focused area is an essential part of the My Future's in Falkirk regeneration initiative and the Panel gives businesses the opportunity to contribute to the area's future economic direction.

### What does it do?

The FBP runs networking and information events and workshops; encourages the sharing of good business practice; promotes learning and information exchange between businesses; and provides a forum for communication between the business community and key players in business support agencies.

### Who is involved?

Any Falkirk business can be a member of the Business Panel and currently, 650 businesses from a range of sizes/sectors and locations participate. The FBP is supported by Falkirk Council, Scottish Enterprise Forth Valley and BP.

### Why is it worth getting involved?

If you have an interest in the local economy, the FBP is the place to make your voice heard, tap into resources within the business community and gain knowledge, information and confidence.

By playing an active part with so many other local business players, we aim to lift further the profile and reputation of the Falkirk area as a place to do business. That can only be good for us all.

### What kinds of things are going on now and how can I join in?

To learn more and also to sign up as a FBP member (there is no charge) you can visit [www.myfuturesinfalkirk.co.uk](http://www.myfuturesinfalkirk.co.uk) and click on Falkirk Business Panel.

A full programme of events and workshops for 2006 are currently in the planning stages so check out the website for up to date news.

If you've got a business 'good news story' you'd like to bring to the attention of the FBP please email details to [yournews@myfuturesinfalkirk.co.uk](mailto:yournews@myfuturesinfalkirk.co.uk) ■

## Invitation

### Falkirk Business Panel NEEDS YOU

The FBP is seeking to involve local business leaders with key people from the public agencies to develop and drive the future direction of the Panel. We are establishing a new leadership group and we need your support.

#### What is the leadership group?

A focused group of business and public sector players, who will lead, inform and direct the future progress of the Panel.

#### Who are we looking for?

People with drive, energy and genuine interest in the Falkirk area. All sizes of businesses are welcome.

#### RSVP

If you are interested send your name and why you want to become involved by Friday 27th January 2006.

Email to [david.moffat@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:david.moffat@falkirk.gov.uk) or call Ken Richardson **07770 266379** to discuss.

**Falkirk Business Panel - Working together for the future of the Falkirk area; creating a strong local economy.**

# Economic Outlook

A recent Scottish national newspaper headline read 'Scottish economic growth on track to outpace UK'.

It explained that positive signals in the second quarter of 2005 meant that the full year could see Scottish economic growth exceeding that for the UK as a whole. While this sense of optimism is welcome, such pronouncements are frequently based on relatively short timescales.

**STUART OGG**, Executive Director, Corporate Development and Tourism, Scottish Enterprise Forth Valley explains.

Sometimes it is helpful to zoom out a bit to look at longer term changes that are taking place. This first briefing on the Falkirk economy highlights just some of the most significant changes.

Official figures show a 9.1% growth in the number of full and part time jobs in Falkirk between 1999 and 2003, although these numbers rose and fell erratically during this period as they followed the fortunes of some of the area's major companies. The recent experience of Alexander Dennis Ltd, with its product innovation led strategy is now on a 'growth curve' contrasting with a low point less than two years ago.

Historically Falkirk proportionally has had less small businesses than its neighbouring local economies. As a source of new employment and innovation small businesses are important to an economy and fortunately Falkirk's position has been improving. The number of new VAT registered businesses has grown from around 230 per year during the early 1990s to 315 in 2004. This trend has helped increase the overall number of businesses in Falkirk by 250 over this period.

Another significant trend has been increasing travel to work areas with people now travelling much further between where

they live and work. Between the two census years of 1991 and 2001 the number of people commuting out of Falkirk to work rose from 16,640 to nearly 22,500, an increase of 35%, while the number of in-commuters increased from 10,340 to 12,510 an increase of 21%. At the same time Falkirk's links with Edinburgh and West Lothian grew, both economies having seen job growth especially in financial services and electronics respectively.

Finally, in line with the rest of Scotland and the UK, Falkirk has seen its unemployment levels fall. In the early 1990s unemployment rate was around 7.2, in 2005 it was down to 2.7 and consistently on par with the Scottish average.

Undoubtedly Falkirk's economy has changed and will continue to change as it faces up to new economic challenges - increasing global competition especially from China and India, technological developments, an ageing workforce, economic migration and growing demands for more innovation, higher skilled workers and more ambitious management.

*Future briefings will look in more detail at some of these trends and their implications for Falkirk. ■*

## Economy Facts

- 60% of Scotland's population is within a 60 minute journey of Falkirk.
- Falkirk house prices have risen 20% since 2004.
- By 2018 the Falkirk area's population is expected to reach 150,000 making it one of the fastest growing areas in Scotland.
- There are over 25 castles, 64 public parks and 146 children's play areas in the Falkirk area.
- 155,000 visitors have taken The Falkirk Wheel boat trip this year.
- Around 1,000 new houses are expected to be built in the area each year, with 11,000 homes planned before 2020.
- More than 10% of households are in the affluent bracket, the Scottish average is 7.6%.
- 93% of people in Falkirk think their area is a good place to live.

ALL FACTS CORRECT AT TIME OF GOING TO PRESS.

## 2005 highlight

Seeing Camelon-based bus manufacturer, Alexander Dennis Ltd, turn its business around. The company has transformed into an international exemplar for Scottish manufacturing innovation and excellence.

**CHARLENE O'CONNOR**, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, SCOTTISH ENTERPRISE FORTH VALLEY

## Current Action Areas



## Useful Telephone Numbers

- **Business Gateway**  
0845 609 6611 or visit [www.bgateway.com](http://www.bgateway.com)
- **Falkirk Council**  
Property Search - Jennifer Anton 01324 59 0975  
Business Support - Stewart Cameron 01324 59 0964  
Employment & Training - 0800 028 0363
- **Development Services** (planning, trading standards, licensing, environmental health)  
01324 50 4950
- **Falkirk Business Panel** - David Moffat, Falkirk Council  
01324 59 0963
- **Scottish Enterprise Forth Valley**  
01786 451919
- **Falkirk & District Town Centre Management Ltd**  
01324 61 1293
- **Falkirk Enterprise and Action Trust**  
01324 66 5500
- **VisitScotland**  
01786 44 5222
- **Forth Valley College**  
01324 40 3000
- **The Prince's Scottish Youth Business Trust**  
01324 48 3300
- **Careers Scotland**  
01324 62 0311
- **My Future's in Falkirk** - Shona Thom  
01324 59 0967

