



# Lanarkshire LEADER Local Development Strategy 2014 - 2020 Summary

A community led local development strategy  
for successful and sustainable rural  
communities in Lanarkshire



A vision for:

"A more sustainable rural Lanarkshire which will improve the quality of life for local communities, address problems of rural disadvantage through regeneration, as well as safeguarding and enhancing the area's rich cultural, historic and natural heritage"





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# 1. Introduction



This LEADER Local Development Strategy (LDS) sets out our aspirations for the Lanarkshire rural area under the Scottish Rural Development Programme 2014-20.

The name LEADER is a French acronym “Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l’Économie Rurale” and as this suggests, it aims to link actions between the economic, social and environmental dimensions of rural community and economic development. It seeks to establish a collaborative approach that will enable the public and private sectors work alongside community agencies under a common rural agenda.

A new development is the inclusion of part of the North Lanarkshire rural area in LEADER. This presents an opportunity to share knowledge, and experience that will see economic and community growth across all of rural Lanarkshire.

In the past LEADER has acted as leverage to significant levels of additional funding to support rural regeneration. Strong partnership working has been achieved between the public and community sectors. LEADER has helped to build capacity in local communities, encouraging individuals, businesses and community organisations to benefit from greater ownership and commitment to community-driven projects.

Lanarkshire LEADER aims to build on past success, to develop the energy and enthusiasm of the individual partners and to be the driver for the implementation of a range of initiatives that can make significant progress towards the enhanced economic, social and environmental well-being of rural Lanarkshire.

The strategy will create a strong lobbying opportunity that will ensure rural issues are considered and resources identified to enable priorities to be addressed. It aims to achieve consensus, with communities then having responsibility alongside the public sector, for delivering projects that address these priorities.

## 2. Management and delivery of Lanarkshire LEADER



The Lanarkshire LEADER Programme will be managed by a Local Action Group (LAG) which will be a wholly independent and autonomous group, the members of which consist of representatives from the community, private and public sectors.

South Lanarkshire Council (SLC) will act as the accountable body responsible for managing Lanarkshire LEADER in terms of compliance and finance. A balance between the autonomy of the LAG and the role of the accountable body will be achieved by establishing a strong operating agreement that reflects the need for financial propriety, the management of risk and community input.

The LEADER staff, employed by South Lanarkshire Council, will be based in the rural area at New Lanark.

The Lanarkshire LAG will foster close linkages between public sector and community partners in the delivery of the LDS. This will see a broad commitment to the strategy and process, resulting in the leverage of match funding opportunities including local community benefit funding, as well as the sharing of knowledge and expertise.



# 3. Area

The Lanarkshire LEADER area includes part of two local authorities, North Lanarkshire Council and South Lanarkshire Council. The area has a strong post-industrial legacy and agricultural characteristics based primarily on livestock rearing, with some more specialised and mixed farming systems in the Clyde Valley. Large parts of the rural area appear attractive, but there is a great deal of hidden disadvantage and a significant legacy of former mining activity. A number of small settlements within this area suffer the double disadvantage of being isolated and, as former mining villages, much of their economic rationale has been lost. Issues of isolation from services, job opportunities and activities are in many cases exacerbated by the lack of public transport. The area's population and economic structure has also changed in recent years with many people now living in the area without being part of the rural economy. For example the population in the Lanarkshire LAG area has grown by 11% between 2003 and 2013 in comparison with 5.3% across Scotland over the same period when primary sector employment has declined.

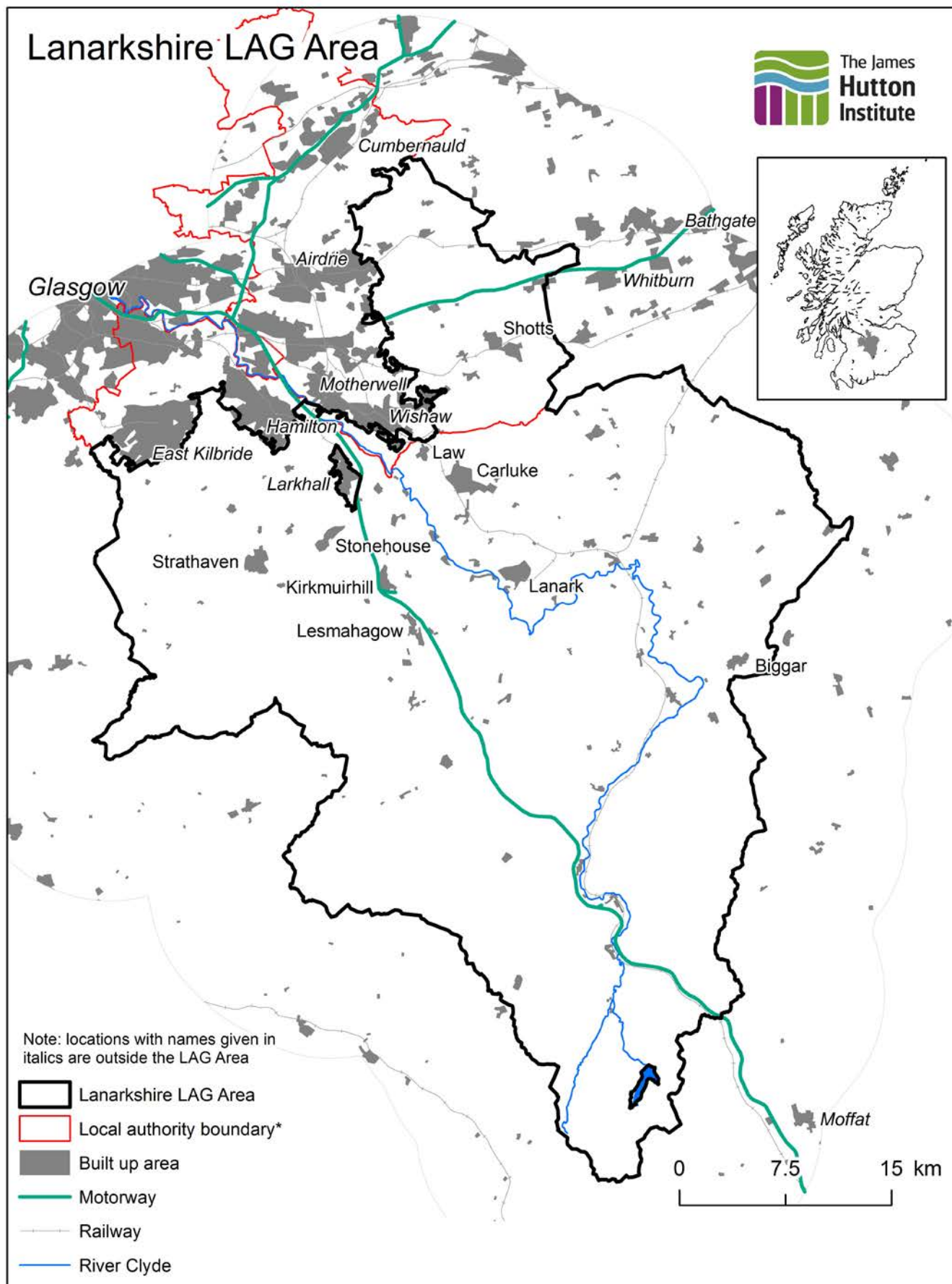
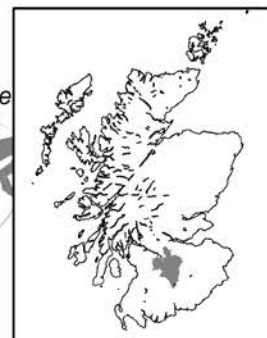
The Lanarkshire LAG area also has a rich natural, cultural and built heritage, prominent within which are the Southern Uplands, the middle and upper reaches of the River Clyde and one of **Scotland's five UNESCO World Heritage Sites - New Lanark. The area also makes an enormous contribution to Scotland's renewable energy targets through being home to a number of large wind farms.**

## Key facts and figures

- Area 3,298 square kilometres, with a rural population density of 30 people per square kilometre.
- The total population in the LAG area is 116,741 based on 2013 mid-year estimates. This is made up of **26,270 in North Lanarkshire, representing 22% of the total population and 90,471 in South Lanarkshire, representing 78% of the total population.**
- **The population in the LAG area has grown by 11% between 2003 and 2013 in comparison with 5.3% across Scotland over the same period when primary sector employment has declined.**
- The area is characterised by small villages (over 60) with populations below 3,000.
- The area has a strong post-industrial, mining legacy and agricultural characteristics.
- The Lanarkshire LAG area has a rich natural, cultural and built heritage.
- **The area's many wind farms contribute significantly to Scotland's renewable energy targets.**

The area contains two major pockets of disadvantage: one in North Lanarkshire and one along a corridor either side of the M74 to the south of Lesmahagow. These areas contain some deeply disadvantaged areas, which include many of the mining dependent communities in central South Lanarkshire and in almost the whole of North Lanarkshire within the LAG. Some of the smaller former mining areas lack vibrancy. There are also concentrations of disadvantage in most of the towns. The lightly populated hill areas of rural south west Lanarkshire are also characterised by weak socio-economic performance.

# Lanarkshire LAG Area



Area mapped: Lanarkshire LAG Area and features within 10 km of its boundary, and boundaries of North and South Lanarkshire.

\*Local authority boundaries shown only where different from LAG Area boundary.

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# 4. Preparing the Local Development Strategy

In preparing this strategy, Lanarkshire LEADER undertook detailed analysis, statistical review, policy review and various forms of community consultations. This led to the identification of the strategic themes, priority actions and objectives around which the Lanarkshire LEADER Programme will be based. These will guide funding decisions made under the 2014-2020 Programme.

The strategy aims to build on the experience and knowledge gained through two previous LEADER programmes and provides a mechanism to co-ordinate the development and delivery of rural services by all the partners to ensure maximum benefit is secured for the rural area. Successful delivery of the strategy will be dependent upon the energy and enthusiasm of both partners and the wider rural community. Projects need to be identified and developed at a grass-roots level and supported appropriately to ensure that real additionality is achieved without duplicating resources.

## 5. Lanarkshire LEADER Priorities

The strategic themes and priorities of Lanarkshire LEADER reflect the regeneration needs and opportunities of rural Lanarkshire appropriate to the scope, scale and approach of LEADER funding. Projects that address the priorities will be developed at a grass-roots level and supported appropriately.

Three linked strategic themes have been identified:

- Developing Communities
- Growing Business (including social enterprise and entrepreneurship)
- **Heritage, Culture and the Environment**

Local community development and economic development rank highly as areas of concern in the LDS area. Therefore, there is a clear remit to focus on projects and investments that meet the strategic objectives of the community development and growing business themes and can achieve outputs aligned with the objectives and target groups.



# Theme 1: Developing Communities

This is the priority theme for the Lanarkshire LAG and encompasses three objectives addressing community capacity and capability, access and mobility and the management of assets. The objectives under this theme are designed to give the LAG the tools to enable and empower rural communities to act in tackling disadvantage and contributing to their own development, along with pro-actively addressing the geographical disparities and levelling up community capabilities across the territory. Taken together, these address a number of the key constraints affecting rural communities and target groups across the area through the application of a distinctive LEADER approach.



## Objective 1

Developing capacity and capability of rural communities. Establishing a support framework that seeks to create a strong community sector capable of delivering a range of priority services, learning from each other and ensuring communities consider their own priorities at community level.

A strong community sector with community organisations at the heart of social and cultural action in rural communities is fundamental to rural well-being and sustainability.



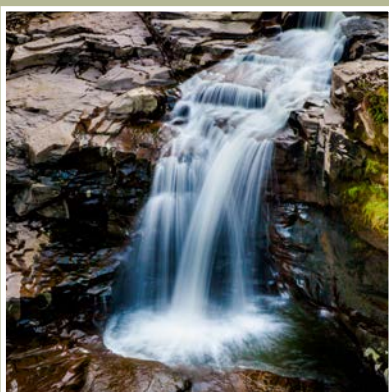
The LEADER approach encourages local rural communities to identify local priorities and progress projects and local services. In reducing barriers relating to improving community capacity and capability, co-ordination, awareness raising and liaison between delivery organisations and improving access to support services are essential. This applies particularly to those communities who are new to the LEADER approach. Co-ordination of support and providing a clear route map and inclusive support framework will be priorities for Lanarkshire LEADER.

The LDS will focus on developing projects that focus on areas of need and aim to bring forward measures that would impact on equalising opportunities within communities, including supporting community delivery and integration of support services for younger and older people.

## Target Beneficiaries

- Community organisations based in the most disadvantaged parts of the Lanarkshire LAG area
- Existing third sector service and support providers
- **Community groups and organisations in the area of North Lanarkshire** that has previously not had LEADER support





## Objective 2

To provide a support framework that assists communities take on local community owned and/or managed assets.

The Scottish Government is actively supporting community asset acquisition as a means of community empowerment. These could be buildings or renewable energy installations with the potential to generate revenue streams.

Lanarkshire LEADER will support the rural community through the process of transfer and management of assets into the community. There are a number of key elements that need to be met if successful outcomes are to be achieved. These include:

- Recognition in the community of an evidence-based need for the project
- Suitably skilled and committed people willing to volunteer time to make the project happen
- The ability for the project to be independently sustainable without requiring regular injections of public revenue support

Although support exists through both the local authority and independent support agencies, there is a demand for clear guidance through a route map for communities wishing to take on assets.

### Target Beneficiaries

- Community groups and Trusts seeking to take on community assets including social enterprises
- Community owned renewable energy projects (to enable local communities investigate co-ownership)

## Objective 3

Improve mobility for rural residents.

Rural Lanarkshire is facing increased travel time to key services and employment, especially by public transport. New and innovative approaches to mobility enhancement are needed to address this problem. Lanarkshire LEADER will identify and support innovative and sustainable methods of improving the accessibility of public transport services and look to develop community-centred approaches that get better value for money and resource efficiency by linking work streams together. It will focus on community transport schemes and consider supporting other forms of mobility enhancement, such as safer cycling routes, car hire schemes and formal and informal voluntary schemes.

### Target Beneficiaries

- Community transport providers
- **Older and younger residents of remoter rural communities**



## Theme 2: Growing Business

The Lanarkshire LAG will aim to strengthen existing businesses and create new enterprises. There are two distinctive niches where LEADER can add value to other agencies' interventions: rural business support, where LEADER has strong engagement with the rural constituency and social enterprise support, where again LEADER's rural reach is strong, building upon **established relationships. Rural business diversification can make local economies more** resilient and reduce their 'leaky bucket' character. Social enterprises have a proven track record in creating jobs and providing a bridgehead to employment for disadvantaged groups. **Where market based enterprises may be unwilling to invest, social enterprise can provide** employment opportunities.



### Objective 4

To support younger age group engagement and employment initiatives.

The Lanarkshire LEADER area has rising numbers of young adults in long-term unemployment. Entry to labour markets is essential for social and economic integration and breaking out of long-term unemployment has a key role in social inclusion. The ability to retain youngsters in the rural area is seen as critical to its future health and well-being.



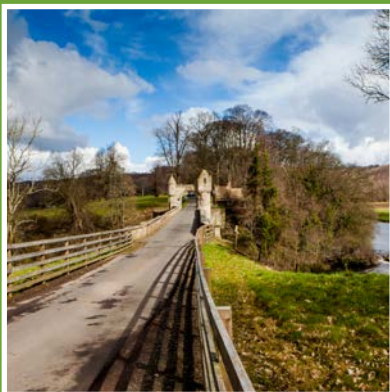
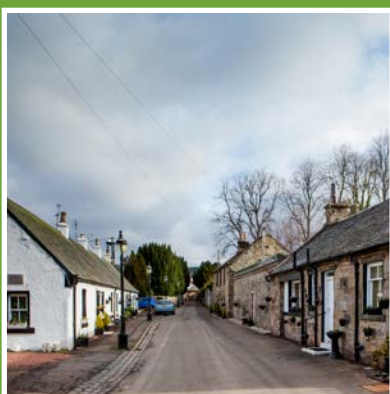
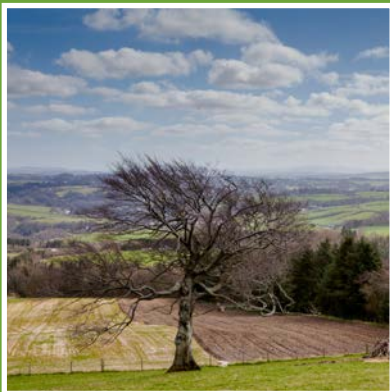
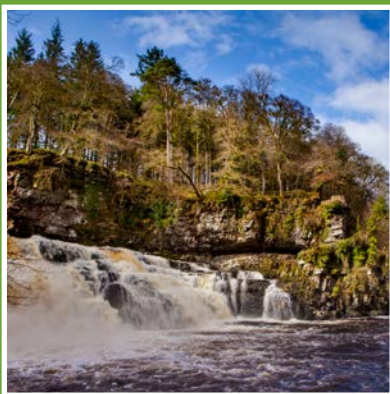
It is recognised that ESF will be the principal support mechanism for employability support. Lanarkshire LEADER will work with the ESF delivery organisations operating in the area to identify gaps in the employability support pipeline which LEADER can add to or enhance, not duplicate. The LEADER niche is seen as supporting the first stage in this. It is important that this is addressed at a community level and should be part of a coordinated approach. We will also consider projects that aim to bring young people into agriculture.

Social enterprise/entrepreneurship can be a bridge to full engagement in employment; as such Lanarkshire LEADER aims to support social enterprises in rural areas which have the capacity to build the employability credentials of those marginalised from the mainstream workforce. Support will be aimed at encouraging social enterprises to undertake research and develop business plans that lead to new provision or service brokerage.

### Target Beneficiaries

- **16-25 year olds living in the rural area, especially those NEET (not in education/employment/training)**
- Rural social enterprises





## Objective 5

To improve the vitality and viability of rural town centres.

Decline in small town centres can lead to a negative spiral of decline. This can be broken by collective action which Lanarkshire LEADER will support. It will thus play a vital part in rebuilding sustainable places and creating a more vibrant small town culture.

Town centres are changing both in nature and function. Our rural towns face pressure to adapt to a new set of economic and social circumstances. In particular, changes to the way people shop and access many of their day to day services has been transformed by increasing use of the car and most recently by the internet. It is clear that in traditional town centres, the quality of the place is becoming more important. The viability of local businesses remains the key to the success of the centres over the coming decades and it is clear from diminishing shopper numbers that greater activity is needed to ensure that the town centres improve their competitiveness and become sustainable in the longer term. No single intervention in isolation will suddenly bring vitality back to our centres nor is LEADER the tool to address all such issues. However, initiatives such as Business Improvement Districts should be investigated as appropriate funding mechanisms to deliver an agreed project action plan.

### Target Beneficiaries

- Development and community Trusts
- Business and trader groups including Business Improvement Districts

## Objective 6

To support collaborative initiatives that aim to improve the viability of the area's agricultural sector.

Areas with small farms face problems in realising economies of size and scale. There is a need to promote collaboration in environmental management and the local food sector.

Since 2001 there has been a significant decline in the core agricultural livestock enterprises along with a fall in the agricultural workforce. Lanarkshire LEADER will encourage business to manage the succession from existing holdings to new entrants into the industry. LEADER will also support businesses to collaborate, shorten the local supply chains and develop local markets and, where possible, try to add value. These new local value added supply chains could be connected to major consumption nodes such as New Lanark, as well as local food retail outlets.

Central Scotland has many food banks. Given proximity to these we will consider the scope for transforming food banks to food hubs to enable local healthy food to be made available at competitive cost to needy households.

### Target Beneficiaries

- Local food and drink businesses
- Producer Groups and farmers markets
- Agricultural sector support groups





## Objective 7

To improve rural access and customer entry to business support.

The LAG will aim to support novel ways of engaging with rural SMEs and microenterprises to ensure, insofar as is possible, parity of access to support services with urban counterparts. Often rural business lack awareness and confidence in accessing business support through existing national and local frameworks including those delivered by Scottish Enterprise, Business Gateway, the local authorities, the Chamber of Commerce and employability contractors.

The LAG will initially research needs and existing provision and examine how improved rural customer entry could be established, identify the most suitable delivery organisation(s) and identify potential linkages with other strategic initiatives. This will include:

- Support businesses identifying and accessing support services through a brokerage approach
- Specific support linked to the other LDS objectives including access to finance if gaps in funding for growth projects are identified.

Delivery would be through existing voluntary sector organisations and link into community capacity initiatives and business incubation requirements identified through community regeneration planning.

It is important that any provision is additional to existing services and adds value through improved uptake and utilisation of these existing services.

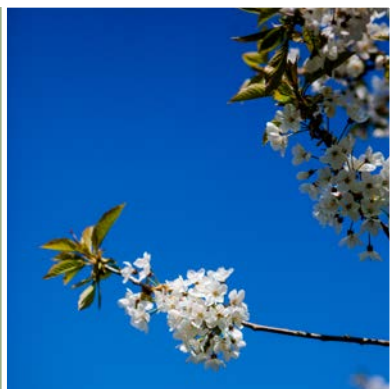
### Target Beneficiaries

- **Non-Agricultural or para-agricultural rural businesses with identified growth potential**
- Social enterprises



## Theme 3: Heritage, culture and the environment

**Lanarkshire is home to a globally significant site in New Lanark, but it also has a number of** underutilised assets that present an opportunity to improve the attractiveness of the area for residents and visitors. LEADER can add value by connecting the different actors and agencies **in a more unified approach to enhancing the areas natural and historic heritage sites.** There are a number of key nature and heritage sites that could be more actively promoted. LEADER can provide links between heritage assets and the accommodation sector, seeking synergies between rural tourism and attractions.



### Objective 8

To support collaborative visitor initiatives and connect to strategic interventions which protect and enhance natural and cultural heritage assets in Lanarkshire.

There are some significant natural and historical heritage assets in the Lanarkshire LAG area that can become more important locally through embedding them more in the business community. LEADER can assist this by providing a bridging role to local community engagement and support enhanced local economic benefits through collaborative initiatives. Overall Lanarkshire tourism generates £362 million for the local economy and 6.8 million tourism trips per annum and the rural areas of Lanarkshire are a key component of this tourism offer.

The strategic challenges moving on include; enhancement of the visitor experience; new customer acquisition; extending stays and increasing revenue and added value. An important priority will be to encourage visitors to use the range of attractions offered by Lanarkshire and encourage crossover between different areas with an emphasis on encouraging 'cross selling' of Lanarkshire's range of attractions, better linking the rural and urban product. New Lanark is one of Scotland's five World Heritage sites and is the keystone of the rural visitor offer. We will identify interventions to embed the site more fully in local business and community.

The Clyde and Avon Valley Landscape Partnership is a major strategic initiative that aims to enhance the landscape of the Clyde and Avon Valleys through engaging and informing local communities about the influence of the landscape on their communities, and the influence man and the communities have had in influencing the shape of the landscape. It aims to ensure that local people and visitors to the area have the opportunity to access, enjoy and understand the landscape and that important features, such as orchards are regenerated and their historic, cultural and landscape importance is recognised.

### Target Beneficiaries

- Community and business groups wishing to connect to major tourism and natural environment attractions
- Strategic partnerships
- Key attractions





## Contact

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If you need this information in another language or format, please contact us to discuss how we can best meet your needs. Phone: 0303 123 1015 or email: [equalities@southlanarkshire.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@southlanarkshire.gov.uk)

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