Lanarkshire LEADER Rural Strategy 2014 - 2020

A local development strategy for successful and sustainable rural communities

LEADER 2014-20 Local Development Strategy

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

Contents

1. Introduction

This local development strategy [LDS] sets out the Lanarkshire LAG's aspirations for our rural area under the Scottish Rural Development Programme 2014-20. The process has been led by a small working group drawn from the Management Board of the previous South Lanarkshire LAG with the addition of a representative from North Lanarkshire Council. A new development from previous Programmes is the inclusion of part of the North Lanarkshire rural area. This area has a broadly similar community profile to the previous South Lanarkshire LEADER area but its geographical scale would not enable a separate LAG to be established and managed in a meaningful way. The new Lanarkshire LAG area has therefore been established to enable a coherent rural local development strategy to be developed and implemented for the whole area.

The new Lanarkshire LAG will be established as a wholly independent and autonomous group. A balance between the autonomy of the LAG and the role of the accountable body, South Lanarkshire Council, will be achieved by establishing a strong operating agreement that reflects the need for financial propriety, the management of risk and community input.

An integrated approach to rural community and economic development was established under the previous LEADER Programmes and this needs to be adjusted to reflect the additional area which has no previous history of LEADER and the new operating requirements. Securing the strategic benefits of a collaborative approach with both Community Planning Partnerships which enables public sector and community agencies to work together under a common rural agenda is a priority.

Momentum has been established by the South Lanarkshire Rural Partnership under the past two LEADER programmes. Significant achievements have been made and strong public sector and community backing developed. LEADER has acted as the catalyst to lever in significant levels of additional funding to support rural regeneration. This has also mobilised local resources, as individuals, businesses and communities now have a better knowledge of the opportunities available, and have a greater ownership of and commitment to projects.

The Lanarkshire LAG now wants to build on past success and develop the energy and enthusiasm of the individual partners to create a structured and effective approach to rural development that is based on the principles of LEADER and congruent with Scottish Government requirements and policies. We see LEADER as being the driver for the implementation of a range of initiatives and at the centre of a single door approach ensuring co-ordination, collaboration and resource use efficiency.

Our strategy needs to be resourced adequately if it is to be effective. There has to be a balance between administration, animation and direct grant support. This LDS reflects a confidence by the partners that, if successful, significant progress can be made towards the enhanced economic, social and environmental well-being of rural Lanarkshire.

2. Partnership

The LDS development process was led by a small working group that was overseen by the Management Board of the South Lanarkshire LAG at their bi-monthly meetings. Over 50% of the membership of the South Lanarkshire LAG operate across both North and South Lanarkshire

administrative areas. Specific consultations also took place with North Lanarkshire Council who fed comments into the process at all stages. South Lanarkshire Rural Partnership provided strategic input and also indicated their approval of the LDS prior to its submission.

The new Lanarkshire LAG will be constructed from the previous South Lanarkshire LAG supplemented by new representatives to reflect the inclusion of the North Lanarkshire area and the new strategic priorities. LAG membership will be on a by invitation basis based on set criteria, all prospective LAG members will follow the same selection process. The Lanarkshire LAG working group will identify groups/organisations/businesses that meet the required criteria and ask them for expressions of interest and nominations. After due consideration by the working group, LAG members will be identified and invited to participate. All new LAG members will go through an induction process designed to provide background to LEADER, the approach, the LDS and the project assessment and appraisal requirements and process. A list of proposed LAG members indicating their areas of expertise is included in the Business Plan.

The LAG will review and refresh membership on a regular basis particularly on the basis of sectoral and stakeholder group representation and knowledge gaps.

2.1 Delivery

South Lanarkshire Council (SLC) will act as the Accountable body, responsible for the overall management of Lanarkshire LEADER in terms of compliance and finance. The LAG will establish a delivery team supported by the Accountable Body. Consideration will be given to contracting some elements of project animation and delivery to a third party delivery mechanism for LAG establishment and LDS animation similar to the operation of the previous South Lanarkshire LAG.

The new LAG also proposes to build on the success of the previous LAG's close working relationship both with public sector and community partners in the delivery of the LDS. They recognise that it is essential that the public sector partners are committed to the strategy and process as this can bring match funding benefits and link into other strategic funding opportunities such as community benefit funding.

Community groups have become increasingly involved in the delivery of projects and local services. The previous LAG actively identified and established strategic delivery partnerships with those social businesses with the capacity to grow, develop and deliver at a significant scale. These include Clydesdale Community Initiatives, Healthy Valleys, Carluke BID Co., The Rural Development Trust and the town trusts established through the current Programme's Market Towns Initiative. This approach will be continued and extended to encompass the North Lanarkshire area.

The strong delivery linkages established with VASLan, the voluntary sector single interface organisation for South Lanarkshire, Lanarkshire Enterprise Services (the delivery organisation for Business Gateway services) and the other SRDP Delivery Partners (FCS, SNH and RPID) will also be maintained and extended across the full area.

3. Area

The area proposed for the new Lanarkshire LAG includes a small area of rural North Lanarkshire and the almost all of the previous South Lanarkshire LAG area. The new area includes part of two Local Authorities, North Lanarkshire Council and South Lanarkshire Council. The Lanarkshire LAG area is made up of 138 data-zones, a full list of which is provided in **Annex 1**.

The proposed Lanarkshire LAG area comprises of 3,298 square kilometres, with a rural population density of 30 people per square kilometre. The total population in the proposed Lanarkshire 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. Therefore the proposed Lanarkshire LAG area is well within the population ceiling of 150,000.

The area has a dispersed settlement pattern and is characterised by small villages [over 55] with populations below 3,000. Historically, the villages were dependent on agriculture, coal mining (which has been adversely affected by recent changes to the coal industry) and in quarrying and the production of aggregate material. The four larger market towns of Lanark, Biggar, Strathaven and Carluke are included as they are integral to the area and service their surrounding rural communities, associated neighbouring villages and farms. In addition, there are a number of larger villages such as Shotts, Harthill, Lesmahagow, Stonehouse and Forth that provide a range of local services. The new area to be included in the Lanarkshire LDS lies within the North Lanarkshire Council's administration covering an area of upland which straddles the main east-west transport routes between Glasgow and Edinburgh.

The proposed Lanarkshire LAG area has been identified following an analysis of its coherence and critical mass in terms of human, financial and economic resources. It is considered that the area's population and economic structure are of a size to be able to support a viable development strategy. The area shares a common history and tradition, and experiences a common feeling of identity. The area has been endorsed through consultation with individuals and groups who live in Lanarkshire's rural communities at the annual rural community conferences and throughout the development of the new LDS.

There are a number of factors that contribute to its socio-economic, administrative and physical coherence. 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.
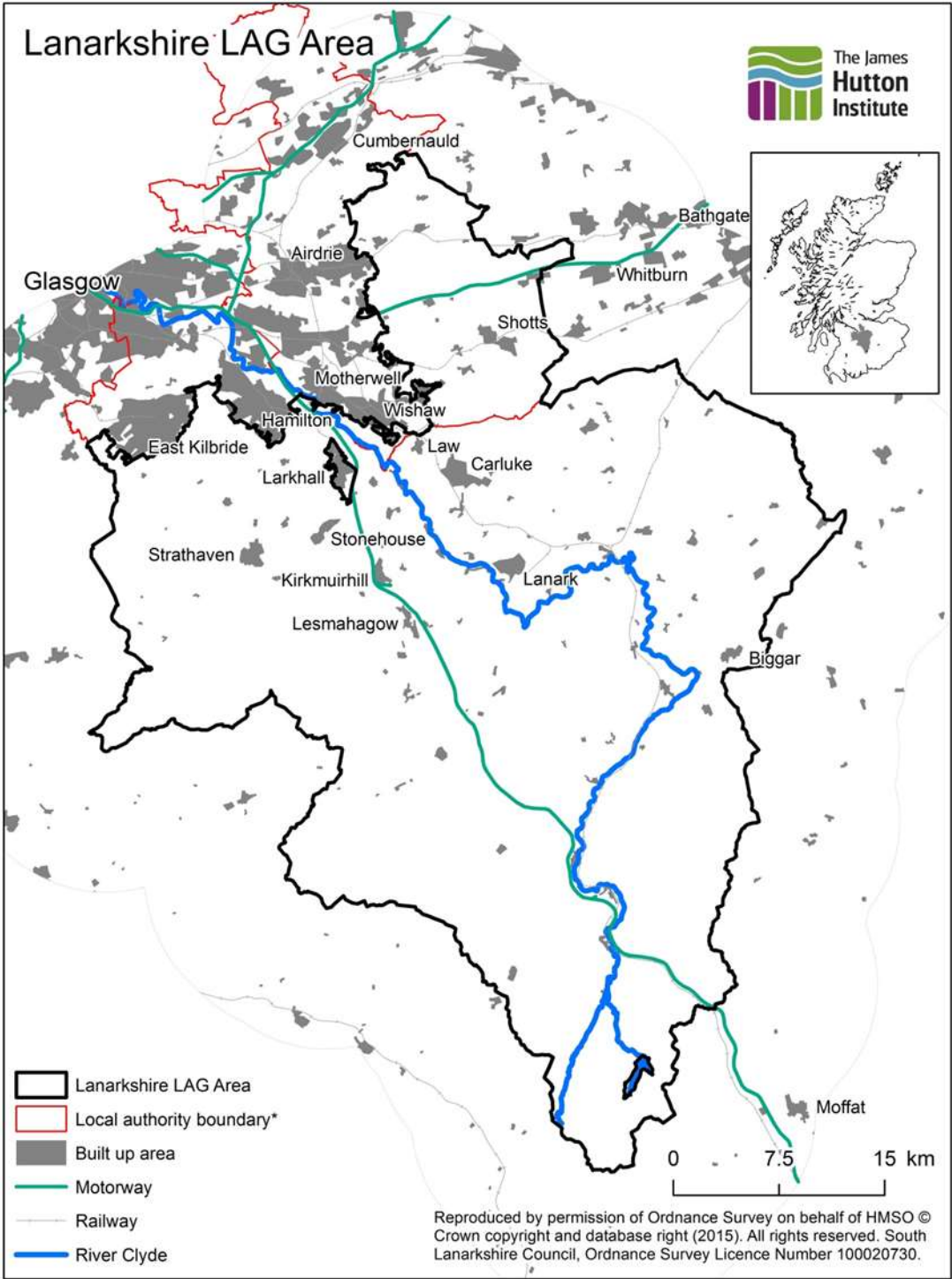
The Lanarkshire LAG area also has a rich natural, cultural and built heritage, prominent within which are the Southern Uplands, the middle and upper reaches of the River Clyde and one of Scotland's four UNESCO World Heritage Sites — New Lanark. The area also makes an enormous contribution to Scotland's renewable energy targets through being home to a number of large wind farms.

Carluke is the only settlement within the proposed area that is above the 10,000 population threshold. It is the most northerly of the rural service centres, closest to the main urban centres of Wishaw, Hamilton and Larkhall. It is the largest market town in the area with a population in 2013 of 13,970 (mid-year population estimate 2012). Historically, Carluke has been the service centre for the lower Clyde Valley and its industries continue to reflect this fact. Key employers in Carluke continue to be the Renshaw Scott jam factory and Ramsey's of Carluke specialist pork and ham products. Orchards and fruit growing have traditionally been important to the area.

Over the last 20 years, Carluke has seen an expansion in population as it has provided housing for an expanding metropolitan population. At the same time, Carluke still performs an important role as a centre servicing its surrounding rural areas. A strategic approach was developed through the 2007-2013 South Lanarkshire LEADER Programme to build community capacity in the four rural market towns. This focused on the establishment and development of sustainable community based delivery organisations in the form of Development Trusts, which in turn led to Carluke becoming a Business Improvement District in 2014.

The rationale for the inclusion of Carluke in the proposed new Lanarkshire LAG area is the extent to which it is integral to the overall cohesion of the area and the substantial role it plays in servicing of its wider rural hinterland, despite a proportion of its population being commuters.

It is recognised that the rural areas of the North and South Lanarkshire Council's administrative areas present different challenges. South Lanarkshire has had a LEADER Programme since 2002 and there has been long-standing experience of engagement with LEADER, although there are still community capacity issues particularly in the most disadvantaged areas. North Lanarkshire has not had the benefit of this experience and therefore the needs are initially different with engagement with communities and stakeholders being critical prior to project animation and development.

Lanarkshire LAG Area

The James Hutton Institute

Legend:
- Lanarkshire LAG Area
- Local authority boundary*
- Built up area
- Motorway
- Railway
- River Clyde

0   7.5   15 km

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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.
Contains data derived from Ordnance Survey Strategi® data and Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 map data. Contains data derived from Data Zone Boundaries 2001. Copyright Scottish Government, contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2015. Local authority boundary based on information from SIMD Datazone Lookup file, data sourced from http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/SIMD/SIMDQuickLookup/. © Crown copyright. Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government License v3.0.

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4. LDS development process

In preparing the LDS the working group undertook an extensive process of research, analysis and community and stakeholder consultations. The main elements of this were:

- Initiation of the development of the LDS was started at the annual **South Lanarkshire Rural Community Conference in April 2013.** This included initial consideration of successes to date and future priorities.   It was attended by **over 150 rural community actors and representatives**.
- **Informing** and raising community and business awareness of LEADER, the consultation process and **signposting ways to become involved** through the local press, appropriate partner web sites, community forums and the VASlan community newsletter.
- Submission of a successful Expression of Interest to the Scottish Government in June 2013 (following discussion the area was extended to include part of rural North Lanarkshire).
- Undertaking a strategy review. This considered all the relevant Lanarkshire area-based strategies (social, economic and environmental) that include the rural area, Scottish Government national policy documents and EU policy documents. A list of these is provided at **Annex 2.**
- The desk-based review and analysis of relevant social, economic and environmental data sets out to inform the consultations and SWOT analysis.
- Undertaking a **survey of rural residents and community organisations in spring 2014**. This included on-line, circulation through a rural database to 350 members, a direct e-mail to partner organisation employees (in excess of 17,000) asking those who lived in the rural area to complete the e survey. A total of **239 responses** were received. .
- Undertaking an electronic standpoint survey of rural issues was conducted which was targeted on key venues where a high footfall was anticipated (e.g. Leisure Centres, Supermarkets, and organised Community Events). **148 valid responses** were received.
- Holding a series of individual **consultations with 7 key delivery partners and rural stakeholders** including VASlan the voluntary sector single interface, Health Valleys the rural healthy living initiative, New Lanark Trust, SRUC and Clydesdale Community Initiatives, a key social enterprise in the rural area delivering both special needs training and community landscaping. .
- **Holding topic-based focus groups** on each of the strategic themes.   The VASlan rural thematic network was used to deliver the community development group. Business Gateway Lanarkshire delivered the business/tourism forum. The **business focus group** was attended by **16 representatives** of the agricultural and tourism sectors along with the two largest employers in the rural area.   The **community development group** was attended by **12 community groups and social enterprises**.
- **Re-confirming the priorities** and new LDS at **the South Lanarkshire Rural Community conference on 18th March 2014**. There were **130 attendees** at the Conference, 85 of who participated in the opinion finder keypad voting.
- A Draft LDS was submitted to Scottish Government on 31st March 2014 and a further submission was agreed in July 2014. Following feedback from the selection panel a final

draft was prepared for submission on 28th February 2015. This revised draft has been prepared following further feedback from the selection panel.

The working group has sought to ensure that the Lanarkshire LDS links with actions, policies and strategies from the EU, national (Scottish Government) and local (Lanarkshire) levels, as well as being solidly based on the needs and wishes of the communities and people who live and work in the LAG area. The Lanarkshire LDS development process has enabled it to be placed within this wider strategic context and demonstrate its coherence with the other relevant programmes working with partners at a Lanarkshire level to maximise the impact of LEADER locally.

This is reflected in the diagram below, Figure 1 which illustrates the clear links between the LDS development process and the development of the strategy's intervention logic. This in turn is reflected in the following sections of the description of the area profile, consultation findings and SWOT analysis.
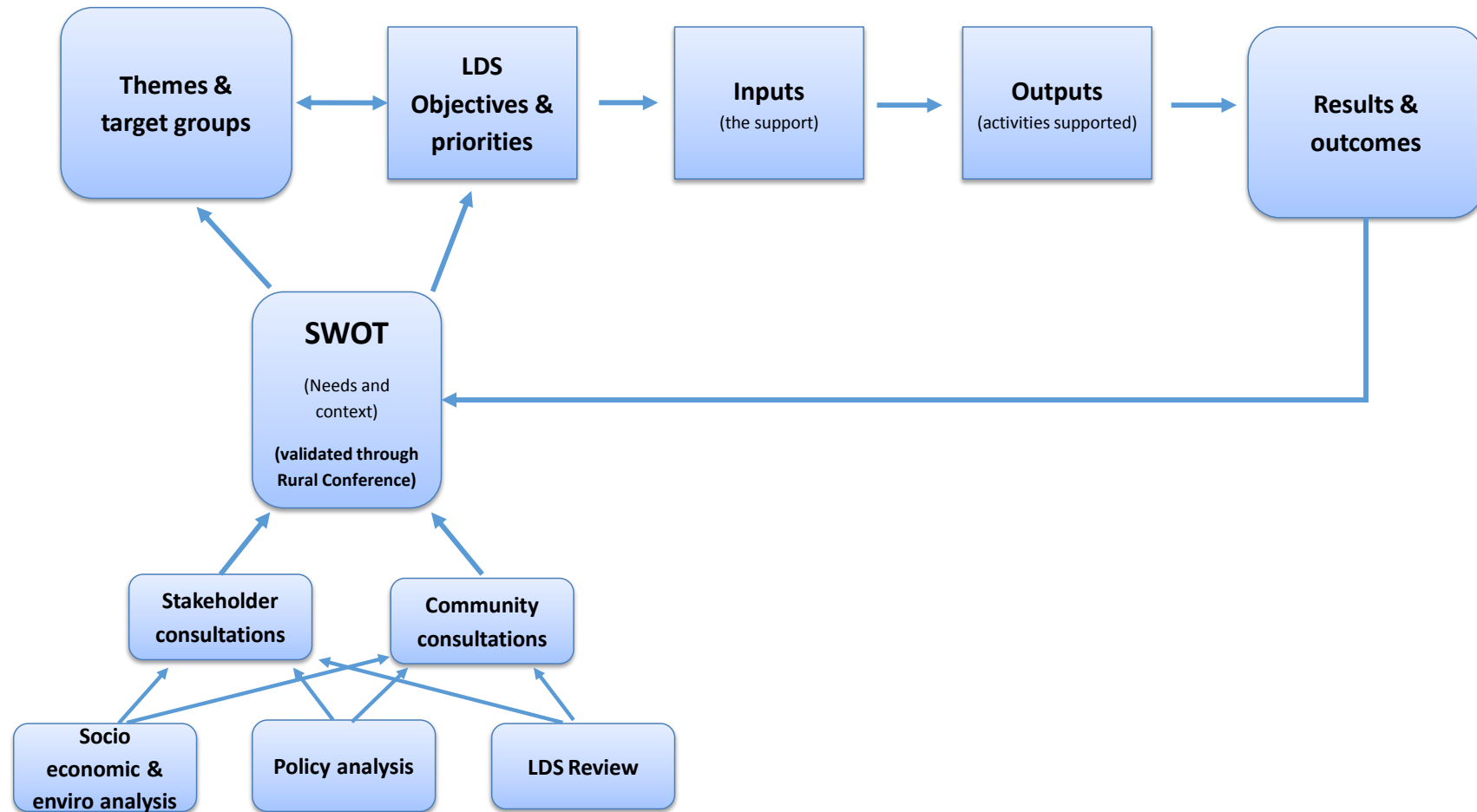
Figure 1

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5. Lanarkshire LAG socio-economic and environmental context

This section provides a summary of the socio economic and environmental analysis, a fuller text on the socio environmental context is provided as an annex, **Annex3**.

The socio-economic character of the LAG has been profiled from the analysis of data-zone-level data. A data-zone represents between 500 and 1000 people and represents the lowest level for which data are published by the Scottish Government. This more detailed analysis and the associated maps are included as an appendix to the strategy. This summary considers:

- Demography – population proportions in younger and older age groups;
- Incomes and employment – occupation levels;
- Unemployment - job-seekers' allowance claimants, employment deprivation and training and skills levels;
- Health;
- Access to services – public transport; and
- Housing.

Overall, the Lanarkshire LAG is in the middle range for Scotland with respect to many variables but is internally very diverse. Its population has increased faster, its SIMD average is close to the Scottish average, as is its heath deprivation score. It is rather worse on employment deprivation, with a score significantly below the average for Scotland. It ranks 2484 whereas the Scottish average is 3253, and is well below the Scottish average on Geographical Access to Services, Drive Times Deprivation Rank (median rank). The LAG areas mean annual lower quartile house prices are about 20% below the Scottish average. The proportion of the population on job seekers allowance is marginally higher than the Scottish average.

The general pattern is one of two major pockets of disadvantage: one in North Lanarkshire and one along a corridor either side of the M 74 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, although Strathaven and the surrounding data-zones generally show higher socio-economic performance on many variables. Biggar is also something of an outlier in the central part of the LAG which on many variables outperforms the other towns. The lightly populated hill areas of rural south west Lanarkshire are also characterised by weak socio-economic performance. Access to services is constrained for many rural residents with large areas of the LAG area which falls into the worst quartile in Scotland for access times.

5.1 Business profile

Where most of a council area in terms of population and business activity is associated with large urban areas, the determination of employment structures such as that of the proposed Lanarkshire LAG is extremely difficult to ascertain. The rural areas and small towns are not likely to have the same employment structure including size and type of firms as the larger settlements. Instead the emphasis in this analysis is on using data-zone level information on the nature of the workforce and

its skills. It is known that rural Lanarkshire is home to a number of high performing companies, particularly in the Scottish Government's growth sectors such as food and drink, but obtaining detailed data on business is problematic given the area covered by the Lanarkshire LAG.

Whilst rural Lanarkshire is home to many high performing companies, particularly in the Scottish Governments growth sectors such as food and drink, obtaining detailed data on business has proved problematic given the area covered by the Lanarkshire LAG. The proposed overall performance of the proposed LAG area (2969) sits well below the Scottish average (3253) on the education, skills and training deprivation rank with two data-zones in Lesmahagow, and one each in Carluke, Stonehouse and Lanark being in the lowest 15% in Scotland in 2012 . The whole area of North Lanarkshire included in the proposed LAG area is in the bottom two quartiles of deprivation in relation to education, skills and training particularly focused around the Accessible Small Towns and Accessible Rural categories. This indicates that a significant part of the workforce may lack the skills base to engage in more skilled new types of employment.

The employment deprivation was even lower for the LAG area (2835) than the education and skills rank in comparison to Scotland (3253) in 2012. This again indicates performance well below the Scottish average.

There is a higher than Scottish average employment in the agriculture and forestry industries in the proposed LAG area. The proportion of those employed in high level occupations is very close to the Scottish average. Both young people (16-24) and total working age population (16-64) claiming job seekers allowance is higher than the Scottish average.

It is likely that the skills of the resident population are higher than those living and working within the LAG area. Commuting tends to be associated with higher level occupations and greater affluence. Whilst this may create an injection of income into the area and generate a demand for service related work, it may create an employment profile that is more favourable than the situation of the LAGs overall resident businesses employment structure.

Given the importance given to increasing the involvement of businesses in the proposed LEADER strategy theme of Growing Business, it is seen as a priority for the LAG to research the area's business data much more fully.

5.2 Environmental analysis

Landscape

The Landscape Character Assessment undertaken for South Lanarkshire Council (2010) identifies seven landscape types, ranging from the Southern Uplands and Southern Uplands foothills in the south of the council area to the western and northern plateaus, to the Clyde basin farmlands, to the Inner Clyde valley, to the edge of the Pentlands in the north-east of the council area. The North Lanarkshire area of the LAG has components of Clyde valley farmlands and upland plateaux landscape types. In general, over the LAG as a whole, from south to north the landscape passes from rolling southern upland hills to extensive upland plateaux with raised bogs and mosses, through pastoral farming to the inner Clyde with its hanging woodlands and orchards.

The area includes a strong legacy of the industrial revolution with past mine workings and extensive 19th century buildings associated with the industrial revolution. Many of these are locally significant but the New Lanark complex is one of the UK's most significant industrial heritage sites and arguably the world, where Robert Owen pioneered a socially responsible brand of industrial community.

Wind farms are prominent in the landscape and further developments are in the planning pipeline. Community surveys reveal a sense of there being too many wind farms in the area.

The landscape quality of significant areas of the northern part of the area is challenged by the legacy of the industrial revolution, but it also includes a significant heritage asset.

There are some distinctive small sites such as Little Sparta on the southern edge of the Pentland Hills which attract international attention from specialist groups.

Biodiversity

The LAG area contains a relatively small number of Special Areas for Conservation (SACs) and a much larger number of Sites of Special Scientific interest (SSSIs). There are three main types of SAC: raised bogs or blanket bogs; woodlands; and heathlands. Of particular note are the Clyde Valley Woodlands National Nature Reserve which comprise extensive hanging woodlands of ash, lime and other species and which have an interesting ground flora including Herb Paris. There are some extensive Special Protection Areas (SPAs) mostly for moorland birds on the Southern Uplands. (See Environmental Map at Annex 4)

There is a much larger area and number of SSSIs including a broadly similar range of sites (woodland, raised and blanket bogs and heaths), but also including gills, waterfalls and gorges (often wooded) and some extensive upland grasslands and moorland. There are also a number of geological and geomorphological SSSIs including River Clyde meanders, rock formations etc. Many of the larger upland SSSIs straddle the boundary in the hills of the south-west of South Lanarkshire. The raised and intermediate bogs are a threatened habitat type and this is well recognised in LBAPs. Those in North Lanarkshire alone account for 10% of the Scottish total.

A South Lanarkshire Biodiversity Partnership is in place to deliver the Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP). The LBAP for North Lanarkshire is currently under revision and will operate over a similar time period to the next SRDP. Detailed plans are available for all key habitats.

The challenge to the LAG is how to engage with landscape and biodiversity planning, given other organisations' prior and central involvement, such as the Clyde and Avon Valley Landscape Partnership (CAVLP), LBAPs and Scottish Wildlife Trust which manages a number of reserves in the LAG area; and in particular how to use the environment as a source of capacity building, health and enrichment of lives for local communities and as a source of recreational and tourist opportunity. The co-location of the CAVLP and the LAG office creates opportunities for synergies.

6. Consultation findings and SWOT analysis

This section summarises the findings from the various forms of consultation with a full text provided at **Annex5**. The consultation process is detailed at Section 4 above.

There has been a long-standing experience of South Lanarkshire engagement with LEADER. The 2007-2013 LAG only operated in South Lanarkshire which reflects the high response rate to community engagement. The low survey response rate in North Lanarkshire appears largely attributable to a lack of prior engagement, even though the survey attracted good publicity in local papers. This indicates a need for further and deeper engagement of the LAG in North Lanarkshire, particularly to enhance awareness of the LAG's "offer" and how it can support rural social, economic and environmental development in the new area.

There is also a need to consider the future operation of the LAG in relation to the new RDR Priorities, these are:

1. Fostering knowledge transfer and innovation in agriculture, forestry and rural areas.
2. Enhancing competitiveness of all types of agriculture enhancing farm viability.
3. Promoting food chain organisation and risk management in agriculture.
4. Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems depending on agriculture and forestry.
5. Promoting resource efficiency and supporting the shift towards a low carbon and climate resilient economy in agriculture, food, and forestry sectors.
6. Promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas

There is a clear expectation that LEADER will emphasise, not necessarily exclusively, the social inclusion/poverty reduction/economic development Priority. This represents perhaps less of a community orientation than in previous rounds. Further detail on strategic coherence is provided at sections 7 and 11 and in each LDS objectives in the consistency test which is included.

The survey results give a clear steer for the direction of future LAG activity. Community-based projects are likely to be crucial to delivering the social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development outcomes sought. Young people are identified as a highly important target group, though poor and retired people are also flagged. As well as wider community, the business community is identified as an important partner and support for business start-ups is flagged as an issue with rural small businesses flagged as a group needing support. In a LAG with quite a large post-industrial socio-economic landscape it is likely that new business may be built around social enterprise which has particular capacity to reach out to disadvantaged groups.

The main points which emerged from the consultation showed some nuanced differentiation between the experienced South Lanarkshire area and the less experienced North both in terms of prioritisation and the inclusion of some specific activities. The full prioritised and differentiated survey analysis is presented at **Annex 4**, with the following **section** providing an indicative summary of the key common activities proposed.

Equalising opportunities between communities: Priorities here included improving rural service provision e.g. local public transport and community health. Direct help and support to communities is a priority e.g. in the deprived areas and the development and delivery of projects.

Supporting communities to achieve their full potential: Supporting the preparation of village/town action plans, helping with funding applications and transferring these skills to the community e.g. providing training in joint working, project development, financial management and group governance.

Most important target groups: The priority groups were young people under 25, small business, retired people and those on low incomes.

Attracting more visitors to rural areas: Priorities included encouraging both tourism businesses to work collaboratively and community groups to deliver more tourist activities.

Attracting more customers: Improving marketing and sales of local produce, more events and simple environmental enhancements.

Creating economic opportunity: Various measures to support business start-up and social enterprise development as well as improving employability and skills.

Conserving and enhancing local outdoors and open spaces: Promoting and extending responsible public access to the countryside, helping protect important landscape areas etc.

Promote the area's heritage and culture: Upgrading and finding new uses for old and historic buildings and features, supporting local heritage initiatives and improving interpretation.

Mitigate climate change impact at a local level: A wide range of approaches, community renewable energy, reducing energy consumption, community recycling, composting and growing initiatives.

At the Rural Conference delegates were asked how important they felt each key theme identified should be in terms of "the partnership" prioritising their allocation of resources. This contributed to the development of the three LDS specific themes.

Table 2: Rural Conference priorities

Theme/Issue	Numbers ranking very important
Local community development: capacity building and funding	49
Promoting tourism including World Heritage Site	28
Housing improvements	40
Economic growth	50
Access to high speed broadband	40

SWOT analysis

This SWOT analysis has been informed by the research and surveys undertaken as part of the LDS development. It is founded in the evidence base identified through the LDS preparation and has been adjusted to identify those issues that are appropriate for LEADER rather than being broad based.

Strengths

- **Community capacity:** There are a number of strong third sector partners that have established the capability and capacity to deliver projects of significant scale.
- **Tourism:** With over 6.8m tourism trips per annum Lanarkshire tourism generates £362 million for the local economy and supports over 10,000 jobs (source: Destination Regional Economic Activity Monitor, 2013). The rural areas of Lanarkshire are a key component of this tourism offer and as such the sector represents an important element of the rural economy.
- **Heritage:** The area has one of Scotland's five World Heritage sites, New Lanark which attracts around 350,000 visitors per annum, 95,000 of whom are paying visitors.
- **Business:** Rural Lanarkshire is a well-represented in terms of the Scottish Government growth sectors [such as food and drink] and is home to many high performing companies within these sectors with the potential to grow even further and act as role models for others. There is a pro development attitude and a range of competitive development sites that can accommodate different types of business operations.
- **Employment:** The most recent claimant count figure for April 2013 indicates that there are just under 9,000 people unemployed and claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA). This represents a decrease on the 2012 figures.
- **Environment:** The area has a wealth of built, natural and cultural heritage assets many of which are currently under-utilised in terms of providing social and economic benefit to local communities.
- **LAG operations:** There is a strong history of utilising the LEADER method to resource the development of rural initiatives and implementing a partnership approach to rural service delivery. A strong strategic linkage with Community Planning has been established and the LAG at a strategic and operational level is strong and functions well. LAG members understand the process and concept, apply it well and attendance at meetings and participation in decision making is good.
- **Local rural network:** The wider engagement of the rural community through the annual rural conference and co-ordinator involvement in rural network and working groups has established community buy-in and commitment to LEADER and the LEADER approach.
- **LAG governance:** The structure employed by the LAG, Accountable Body and the contracting of delivery to a rurally focused third party has worked well providing clear, well-structured governance. The LAG is professional in its approach and demonstrates a high degree of common understanding, leading to strong added value.

Weaknesses

- **Community capacity:** The ability to access and absorb resources appears to be weakest where the needs are greatest and targeted ongoing support will be required in these areas. In some areas self- confidence to initiate and respond to opportunities is missing.

- **Disadvantage:** There are some major pockets of disadvantage, one in North Lanarkshire and one along a corridor either side of the M 74 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 the North Lanarkshire area. The lightly populated hill areas of rural south west Lanarkshire are also characterised by weak socio-economic performance.

- **Agriculture:** Since 2001 there has been a significant decline in the core agricultural livestock enterprises along with a fall in the agricultural workforce. The age profile of the sector is concerning with a lack of opportunity for new entrants. At this stage, analysis of the impact of the new SFP system is incomplete but scenario analysis suggests that within the Lanarkshire LAG there will be gainers and losers (the biggest gains being from the more lightly stocked land and the biggest losses from the more heavily stocked land). On balance and compared to the very significant losses projected for some other regions, the net outcome of the reformed CAP seems likely to be relatively neutral in the Lanarkshire LAG area, based on analysis undertaken at the James Hutton Institute.

- **Youth employment:** There has been a significant fall in employment amongst the younger age groups since the recession – down by 21.7% amongst those aged 20 to 24 and by 21.5% for those aged 16 to 19. The number of young claimants has more than doubled since 2008.

- **Long term unemployment:** This is at its highest level since 1997 and the number is now ten times that of 2008.

- **Housing:** There are a number of communities in the rural area with low demand for housing and this is generally a symptom of wider community issues such as access to employment opportunities, transport links and public services. Continued housing stock decline impacts adversely on the cost of maintenance and destabilises communities. The needed solutions are necessarily broad-based, much wider than just addressing housing issues and thus require a partnership approach.

- **Transport:** The area is strategically located with good access to both Glasgow and Edinburgh but the local public transport infrastructure is poor away from the main strategic links [M8/M74 and Glasgow/Edinburgh rail route].

- **Tourism:** The tourism sector in Lanarkshire is immature and is based around some key attractions such as New Lanark. Collaboration between providers is underdeveloped and there is a need to establish a broader product base that appeals to a wider market, such as the promotion of walking and cycling.

- **Ageing population:** Over 20% of the area's population is aged over 65 and this is increasing. In the period 2003 -2103 the elderly proportion of the population of the LAG area increased marginally faster than in Scotland as a whole.

- **New LEADER areas:** There are areas in the LAG operating area that have no history of either the LEADER approach or funding. Significant early effort will be required to raise awareness, build local capacity and animate projects in this area, particularly as it also exhibits significant socio-economic disadvantage.
- **Reconfiguring industrial landscapes:** North and South Lanarkshire have extensive landscapes shaped by industrial activity, especially coal mining. This creates a challenge in improving compromised landscapes to make them more attractive, where possible using afforestation for screening and carbon sequestration and ecologically sensitive greening measures to help build a greener infrastructure.

Opportunities

- **New LEADER areas:** The inclusion of new communities within a different administrative area will create opportunities for fresh ideas and economies of scale at a delivery level.
- **Co-operation:** There is scope for greater local cooperation both with adjacent areas and between groups. North Lanarkshire Council is also participating in the Kelvin and Forth Valley LAG and this may present opportunities for local collaboration. Steps can be taken to develop formal networking links and mechanisms at a local level to share and cascade knowledge and experiences through which joint activity or resourcing could result in value being added.
- **Capacity Building:** There is a need to address community capacity building more fully, to encourage increased ownership of local projects, building involvement and buy in. The extent of community capacity and resources is a key contributor to the sustainability of community-based regeneration activity and there is a clear need to focus on this.
- **Local Rural Network:** There is potential to build on strong local networking which has been achieved through the links to the South Lanarkshire Rural Partnership and broaden this to include the North Lanarkshire part of the LAG.
- **SOA:** There is scope to link the delivery of this strategy to the Single Outcome Agreements and to better reflect the Governments national outcomes and outputs.
- **Strategic focus:** The new LAG can continue to build on the successful approach of using the LEADER Programme as a means of resourcing and operationalising rural project delivery.
- **Community delivery partners:** The new LAG can continue to work with key community-based delivery partners that have the capability and capacity to deliver projects at a scale that will make a significant difference to rural service delivery, adopting a similar strategy for the North Lanarkshire area.
- **Natural assets:** The area has some significant natural assets such as the, Clyde Valley Woodlands National Nature Reserve and the sweeping moorlands of the southern uplands with SAC status, but these are mainly of sub-regional significance. Their contribution to local economic activity could be enhanced.
- **Town centres:** The nature of the rural town centres is changing. They are moving away from being principally retail centres to accommodating a mix of different uses all of which contribute to make them interesting and social places. This change process can be supported through initiatives such as Business Improvement Districts alongside LEADER.

- **Public Sector Investment:** Local authority capital investment, such as the schools modernisation programme, creates opportunity for community-led integrated project development.
- **Asset transfer:** Opportunities exist to support communities to take ownership of public assets that create an independent community income stream.
- **Community benefit funding:** This creates a significant investment pot that can be aligned and a strategic fit established across a range of policies and strategies as well as supporting community aspirations.
- **Cross regional agencies:** The new LAG will work closely with trans-local bodies such as the Southern Uplands Partnership and Clydesdale Community Initiatives and Central Scotland Green Network Trust to deliver positive outcomes on shared interest projects, ensuring a unified approach to environmental enhancement and green infrastructure improvements.
- **Social Enterprise:** There is a significant history of social enterprise in the area which has capacity to provide a bridge to full employment and can address employment and employability challenges beyond the reach of most in the private sector.

Threats

- **Young people:** Lack of opportunity leading to outward migration from the rural area and an imbalance in population profiles.
- **Significant variations in the well-being of individual communities in the rural area:** Between a third and a quarter of the total population of some rural communities (25-30%) were classed as Income Deprived (SIMD 2012), almost twice the national average.
- **Access to services:** In particular public transport, broadband and further education. Further decline in public transport makes outlying areas less attractive places to live.
- **Disadvantage:** There are two major pockets of disadvantage: one on North Lanarkshire and one along a corridor either side of the M 74 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.
- **Agriculture:** There is the possibility of economic and landscape change unless the decline in agricultural activity is addressed.

7. The policy context

The Lanarkshire Local Development Strategy is framed by a conscious drawing together of EU and Scottish Government priorities, the analysis and economic priorities for Lanarkshire as set out in the economic strategies for both administrative areas, and is grounded in the aspirations and focal interests of the Lanarkshire LAG. See Annex 6.

The Lanarkshire LDS therefore takes account of and responds to the following hierarchy of strategies and programmes. Further, the LDS objectives have been developed following consideration of these wider strategic imperatives.

- Under the EU Common Strategic Framework for the application of the European Structural and Investment Funds a higher degree of integration between the Funds is indicated and is set out in Member State level Partnership Agreements. Within this a common approach to Community Led local Development (CLLD) is specified with potential for integrating actions under the EAFRD, EMFF, ESF and ERDF contributing to integrated territorial development. In Lanarkshire this will be coordinated through the Economic Boards of the CPPs. The LEADER LDS and activities supported should therefore complement this overall approach.
- The CLLD approach and LDS content are specified in the Common Provisions Regulation and further LEADER-specific elements are contained in the Rural Development Regulation. Of particular importance in rural Lanarkshire are the provisions for greater focus on animation and capacity building and strengthening the participation of private sector in the partnership.
- For the 2014-2020 period, the EU Rural Development Regulation has six stated Priorities for Rural Development Programmes[1]. LEADER can contribute to all these but is programmed under Priority 6: Promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development. The focus on innovation is strengthened.
- The key purpose of the SRDP 2014 - 2020 is to help achieve sustainable economic growth in Scotland's rural areas. Within this the Scottish Government have indicated the following priorities for Local Development Strategies.
    - Driving community action on climate change;
    - Enhancing rural services and facilities, including transport initiatives;
    - Enhancing natural/cultural heritage, tourism and leisure;
    - Supporting food and drink initiatives (e.g. short supply chains, community food);
    - Building co-operation with other LAGs in Scotland, UK and Europe;
    - Equal opportunities for all in our rural communities.

These are entirely congruent with EU priorities and many are evidenced in prior LEADER actions in the area. These EU and Scottish Government objectives frame the LAG objectives and are also compatible with the Lanarkshire CPP priorities.

At a Lanarkshire level, the two local economic strategies highlight a number of issues which frame their priorities, including:

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[11] See Section 6.

- that there is an environment that is as supportive as possible to the active businesses that are located in the area.
- that support is provided for the development of existing small businesses as well as encouraging the creation of new businesses.
- the need to create a supportive enterprise environment which encourages greater social entrepreneurial activity and targets those social enterprises that want to grow and develop their own capacity.
- the need to have a labour supply with skills and capacities which meet the needs of modern businesses and can help contribute to economic growth and focus on reducing unemployment and providing opportunities for rural residents to play their part in a thriving sustainable local economy.

The LAG Local Development Strategy considers the rural area dimensions of these priorities. LEADER can provide a unifying force to connect the EU, Scottish and local strategic priorities. LEADER's emphasis on community development connects to social inclusion and social cohesion objectives. The EU and Scottish Government concern with supporting economic growth finds expression in LEADER through the support to rural business, especially by focussing on collaborative action by rural businesses, by supporting fragile businesses and in particular in Lanarkshire through strengthening the entrepreneurial dimension of social enterprises. Finally, LEADER can cut across a range of heritage and environmental concerns to support enhanced environmental management, support for climate change objectives and support for historic and natural heritage conservation.

The overarching policy objectives for the Lanarkshire Local Development Strategy for are therefore:

- To ensure consistency with EU and Scottish Government priorities;
- To ensure consistency with locally determined priorities in Lanarkshire;
- To ensure that the distinctive qualities of the CLLD approach are nurtured and that CLLD interventions are seen as distinctive;
- To ensure multiple beneficial outcomes from LEADER projects with respect to the range of Rural Development priorities, in ways which are supportive of the Scottish Government's overall purpose and the National Performance Framework;
- To recognise the need and allocate support accordingly to animate local communities and build capacity to develop projects which contribute to European and Scottish priorities and contribute to long term sustainable development;
- To ensure that value is added through the CLLD approach and that it complements and is congruent with other funding streams; and
- To seek out and take advantage of opportunities to cooperate with other LAGs or appropriate partnerships where this contributes to improving the achievement of the Lanarkshire LDS outcomes.

8. Strategy aims and priority themes

The SWOT analysis, statistical review, policy review and various forms of community consultations lead to the identification of the strategic themes around which the Lanarkshire LEADER Programme will be based along with priority actions. These have been drawn together to articulate the regeneration needs and opportunities of rural Lanarkshire appropriate to the scope, scale and approach of LEADER within the context of the strategic overview of EU and Scottish rural policy. The relevant LEADER objectives and priorities that flow from these will guide funding decisions made under the 2014-2020 Programme.

In addition, the strategy aims to build on the experience and knowledge gained through delivering 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. Delivering 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.

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

Three linked strategic themes have been identified:

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

The approach to LEADER in the 2007-13 programming period was to give LEADER a pivotal role in the institutional architecture of South Lanarkshire, whilst at the same time engaging also with council and regional bodies such as the Clyde and Avon Valley Landscape Partnership and Central Scotland Green Network Trust and national initiatives such as Business Improvement Districts. This established LEADER as a connecting hub to the actions and activities in rural South Lanarkshire. In the new funding period, the addition of areas in North Lanarkshire creates a requirement to deepen the cross-regional connectivity and to connect to relevant North Lanarkshire strategies. The hub function and the focus on delivering positive outcomes through strong community engagement in the LAG area provide the hallmark of the LEADER approach in the new programme period.

We recognise that LEADER cannot address all the rural issues identified in the SWOT analysis and this strategy needs to focus on the relevant and appropriate gaps and opportunities that Lanarkshire LEADER LAG will seek to address. There needs to be a clear differentiation between LEADER support and that provided through the other ESI funds, particularly ERDF and it needs to be additional to that being delivered through existing contracts such as Business Gateway. This strategy has been designed to be flexible and to accommodate the evolution of wider Scottish and EU implementation proposals. The complementarity and fit with the other ESI funds will become clearer once the detailed delivery arrangements have been established. This will have a major bearing on the detail of the 'Growing Business' priority theme. We are clear that there will be a need to refine this part of

our strategies implementation based on assessment of need, existing service provision and projects being developed and delivered through other funding mechanisms.

Principles

In developing the strategy we have tried to ensure that our priorities are clear, based on sound research and are achievable, logical and realistic. The strategy has been developed in an inclusive manner based on input from individuals, communities and businesses located or delivering in our area. We have reviewed existing strategy documents, such as the Tourism Action Plan, and have taken account of these in establishing the LDS. We have also considered the strategic fit with EU policy and Scottish Government national outcomes. We have considered the areas strengths and opportunities and have identified weaknesses and threats that need to be addressed through the LDS.

In overall terms our vision is to establish:

''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"

9. LDS objectives and intervention logic

The specific objectives of the LDS focus on those priority needs and opportunities for rural Lanarkshire which are thought appropriate to the CLLD approach within the above framework. They draw together the findings from the various strands of research, the consultations and the process of refinement undertaken by the LAG Working Group. Each is supported by a rationale linking to the underpinning research. A short intervention logic is provided for each objective. Indicators and targets for the outcomes sought are provided. The objectives are clustered under the three priority themes of the strategy to help strengthen the strategic focus and enhance the internal cohesiveness of the approach.

Weighting and prioritisation

Not all our objectives have equal priority or importance. As part of both the LDS development research and community survey we asked the community to identify key priorities and at the Rural Conference delegates were asked from the key themes to identify how important each theme should be in terms of "the LAG" prioritising the allocation of resources. This showed that the most important issue, 'local community development' was ranked highest by a very significant degree. Economic development was ranked a clear second, very significantly ahead of any other issue. On this basis, there is a clear remit to weight in favour of projects and investments that meet the strategic objectives of the community development and growing business themes. In addition, we have looked at the potential for economic impact based on existing statistical and trend information.

We have therefore allocated a weighting to each objective based on these processes and the analysis. Each is supported by a rationale linking to the underpinning research. Weightings have been accorded to the objectives based on these processes.   Measurable outputs have been established linked to the objectives and target groups. Indicators and targets sought are provided;

these are based in a pragmatic assessment based in the wider experience of the working group and their consultants in working with LEADER. This will be used as part of project appraisal and scoring by the LAG and will influence the level of grant offered, the intervention rate applied and thus the allocation of budget by LDS strategic priority. This will also aid the LAG in identifying the need for any strategic lead on their part e.g. in the promotion or development of LAG led initiatives.

Theme: 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 proactively 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 the capacities and capabilities of our rural area. 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 a community level.

Rationale

There are significant variations in the well-being of individual communities in the rural area. Between a third and a quarter of the total population of some rural communities (25-30%) were classed as Income Deprived (SIMD 2012), almost twice the area average. There are some major pockets of disadvantage: one in North Lanarkshire and one along a corridor either side of the M 74 to the south of Lesmahagow. These areas contain some deeply disadvantaged areas, which include many of the formerly 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 pockets 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.

Co-ordination of support and providing a clear route map and inclusive support framework will be priorities for our 2014-20 Programme. Community groups are increasingly involved in the delivery of projects and local services. The LEADER approach encourages an area-based, bottom–up approach that assists communities identify local priorities. However, some communities have struggled to develop the capability and capacity to participate effectively. This is partly down to the entry points for support being varied and inconsistent. We therefore see a need for better co-ordination, awareness and liaison between delivery organisations and improving access to support services both physically and electronically. The approach will seek to both reduce the barriers and transaction costs facing communities whilst also taking positive actions to build their capabilities.

We also recognise that parts of the area, particularly those in the North Lanarkshire administrative area, will be new to the LEADER approach and that there will be a need to raise awareness of the offer and to identify community stakeholders and work with them to develop and deliver projects that meet the LDS priorities.

Some of the targeted areas are within the reach of wind farm community payments. Strengthening local capacity to use these funds will offer considerable added value. The up-skilling of local groups will enable them to plan and draw down community benefit funds in a more effective way. 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 between communities including support the community delivery and integration of support services for younger and older persons. The priority weighting applied to this objective will have the impact of increasing intervention rates for appropriate activities on a project by project basis.

Intervention logic: A strong community sector with community organisations at the heart of social and cultural action in rural communities is fundamental to rural wellbeing. Where local community organisation is weak it can be strengthened by capacity building and support for small projects that can break dependency cultures and create a platform for local initiative and building momentum for action.

Target groups

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

Quantitative target outputs

3 collaborative projects that aim to create an inclusive support framework

20 community awareness raising events

5 community conferences

15 projects within the most disadvantaged areas

3 projects within the new to LEADER areas

Weighting and prioritisation

1. Collaborative projects **HIGH**
2. Projects in most deprived communities **HIGH**
3. Projects in new LEADER area **HIGH**

Strategic consistency test

Consistency Test	Yes/No	Comment
CLLD priorities	Yes	Yes this proposal is focused on developing rural capacity
EU priorities	Yes	Focus on building rural capacity, economic development and promoting social inclusion. It addresses rural priorities.
Scottish Government priorities	Yes	If it addresses community empowerment and social economy development imperatives
Other strategic priorities	Yes	Links to Tackling Poverty improvement Plan and CPPs

Objective 2

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

Rationale

The transfer of assets into community ownership or control presents challenges for both the public sector and community organisations. It is important that proper project planning takes place alongside an understanding of on-going practical operational and financial responsibilities of managing those assets. 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, and
- 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, it is clear that clear guidance through a route map for communities wishing to take on assets is required.

There is also evidence throughout Scotland of communities taking a share in renewable energy projects. Where new developments are proposed community ownership of part of the development (using the Fintry or Neilston models)[2] can generate long term funds to support local community development.

Intervention logic: The Scottish Government is actively supporting community asset acquisition as a means of community empowerment. It is considering extending these rights in new legislation. To acquire and manage assets effectively requires new skills. LEADER can offer a critical service to

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[2] **Slee, B**., (2015) Is there a case for community-based equity participation in Scottish on-shore wind energy production? Gaps in evidence and research needs, Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews, 41 540-549

support community empowerment by enhancing the skill base to manage local collectively owned assets. These could be buildings or renewable energy installations. Some of these assets can create revenue streams which will feed into community development; others will use buildings as places to support specific community needs. In either case, the output is an enhanced community asset base. It can be achieved by building on successful experiences (many of which are catalogued) and by networking community actors to nearby successful examples of community asset acquisition. Building trust with community groups and brokering relationships with other organisations promoting community asset acquisition (e.g. Local Energy Scotland) will be a key role for the LAG.

Target groups

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

Quantitative target outputs

5 asset transfer projects supported

2 community co-ownership developments with renewable energy

Weighting and prioritisation

MEDIUM

Strategic consistency test

Consistency Test	Yes/No	Comment
CLLD priorities	Yes	Yes this proposal is focused on developing rural capacity, and economic development
EU priorities	Yes	Focus on building rural capacity, economic development and adding value. It addresses rural priorities.
Scottish Government priorities	Yes	If it addresses community empowerment, creating a sustainable third sector and economy development
Other strategic priorities	Yes	Links to local economic strategies and CPPs

Objective 3

Improve mobility for rural residents

Rationale

The rural community has again indicated that the biggest barrier to accessing employment, training and services is the poor accessibility of rural public transport. It is recognised that this is difficult to address through a single range of interventions given the issues associated with deregulation, service procurement and sector capacity. We 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. We will focus on community transport schemes but also give consideration to other forms of mobility enhancement such as safer cycling routes, social enterprise car hire schemes (as exists at Moffat) and explore possibilities for extending formal and informal voluntary schemes.

Using the overall drive time deprivation indicator, the majority of the LAG area is in the worst quartile in Scotland. On the average public transport drive time deprivation rank, almost the whole of the LAG area excluding only five rural data-zones is in the most deprived rank by Scottish standards. Bearing in mind that these areas do include smaller settlements and former mining communities the performance is very poor.

Intervention logic: 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 which is widespread across the UK, especially in remote rural areas. Drawing on best practice in prior Lanarkshire experience and elsewhere will help address the mobility deficit of disadvantaged and immobile rural people. The LAG can act as support agency, broker and co-financer, informing potential initiatives of good practice elsewhere and ensuring accessibility enhancement projects have a maximum chance of success.

Target Groups

Community transport providers

Older and younger residents of remoter rural communities

Quantitative target outputs

3 community transport projects supported

Weighting and prioritisation

HIGH

Strategic consistency test

Consistency Test	Yes/No	Comment
CLLD priorities	Yes	Yes this proposal is focused on developing rural public transport, equalising opportunities in rural communities and improving access to services
EU priorities	Yes	Focus on building rural capacity and improving access to services and promoting social inclusion. It addresses rural priorities.
Scottish Government priorities	Yes	If it addresses community empowerment, improving access to training and education and economic development
Other strategic priorities	Yes	Links to Tackling Poverty improvement Plan and CPPs

Theme: Growing business

The Lanarkshire LAG is confronted by a need to strengthen existing businesses and create new enterprises, given the decline of traditional industry sectors and the thinning out of the rural workforce. 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.

Rationale

One of the most concerning issues for our rural area is the significant fall in employment amongst the younger age groups since the recession – down by 21.7% amongst those aged 20 to 24 and by 21.5% for those aged 16 to 19. The ability to retain youngsters in the rural area is seen as critical to its future health and well-being. An employability pipeline is already in place coordinated though the local employability partnership and accessing mainstream support and ESF funding. There is a five-stage strategic skills pipeline covering engagement, overcoming barriers, focussed training, work activity and job sustainability. The initial challenge is to engage effectively and to retain youngsters in the pipeline. This is more difficult in rural communities where issues of scale, access to transport and training are complicating factors. It is recognised that it is important that this is addressed at a community level and that this should be part of an integrated approach that could be established to address issues across all the strategic themes.

We recognise that social enterprise/entrepreneurship may be a bridge to full engagement in work and would seek to support social enterprises in rural areas which have the capacity to build the employability credentials of those marginalised from the mainstream workforce. The experience of Moffat CAN in neighbouring Dumfries and Galloway has been very positive with up to 27 people employed in recent years.

It is recognised that ESF will be the principal support mechanism for employability support. The Lanarkshire LAG 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. An employability strategic skills pipeline is already in place covering engagement, overcoming barriers, focussed training, work activity and job sustainability coordinated though the local employability partnership and accessing mainstream support and ESF funding. The LEADER niche is seen as supporting the first stage in this; the challenges of engaging effectively and retaining youngsters in the pipeline. It is recognised that it is important that this is addressed at a community level and

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should be part of a coordinated approach. No one service provider is currently tasked with this and opportunities exist to build on part provision to create a comprehensive youth employability framework overlaying the pipeline. We will also consider projects that aim to bring young people into agriculture to such as that delivered by Ringlink in Aberdeenshire who run an agricultural apprenticeship scheme. West Clyde Machinery Ring could be approached to explore the scope for such an initiative in Lanarkshire.

Intervention logic: The LAG 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 use of social enterprise (see Objectives 1 and 2) as bridges to full engagement in labour markets has a strong track record. The LAG can support latent social enterprises, co-finance market research and business plans, provide an outreach function to communities that are often beyond the reach of other agencies or intervene proactively to promote or broker strategic initiatives.

Target Groups

16-25 year olds living in the rural area, especially those NEET

Rural social enterprises

Quantitative target outputs

5 youth employability projects supported with a target of 30 employees/trainees

Weighting and prioritisation

HIGH

Strategic consistency test

Consistency Test	Yes/No	Comment
CLLD priorities	Yes	Yes this proposal is focused on improving participation assisting the younger rural age group into employment, equalising opportunities in rural communities and improving access to jobs and training.
EU priorities	Yes	Focus on improving access to services and promoting social inclusion. It addresses rural priorities.
Scottish Government priorities	Yes	It addresses support for young people, improving access to training and education and economic development
Other strategic priorities	Yes	Links to Tackling Poverty improvement Plan, ESF and CPPs

Objective 5

To improve the vitality and viability of rural town centres

Rationale

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. Our surveys have shown that communities are still very committed to their towns and the town centre remains firmly at the heart of the communities. 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 back 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.

Intervention logic: Decline in small town centres can lead to a negative spiral of decline. This can be broken by collective action by empowered local actors and it is this aspect which LEADER will support in Lanarkshire. It will thus play a vital part in rebuilding sustainable places and creating a more vibrant small town culture. LEADER can nurture capacity building in local groups which strengthens their capacity to act in ways that promote revitalisation. It can also bring together disparate groups of businesses in trader groups in ways that develop a more cohesive sense of place.

Target Groups

Development Trusts established through the LEADER Market Towns Initiative

Business and trader groups including Business Improvement Districts

Quantitative target outputs

2 BIDS supported

4 Development Trust projects supported

Weighting and prioritisation

MEDIUM

Strategic consistency test

Consistency Test	Yes/No	Comment
CLLD priorities	Yes	Yes this proposal is focused on economic development and assisting community trusts develop their delivery capacity

EU priorities	Yes	Focus on improving access to services and promoting social inclusion. It addresses rural priorities by promoting social inclusion, and economic development in rural areas
Scottish Government priorities	Yes	It aims to support sustainable town centres and economic development
Other strategic priorities	Yes	Links to local economic development strategies and ERDF.

Objective 6

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

Rationale

Since 2001 there has been a significant decline in the core agricultural livestock enterprises along with a fall in the agricultural workforce. In addition, the agricultural support mechanisms provided under the CAP are crucial to the viability of the region's agricultural sector with subsidies accounting for around 25 – 30% of output. This high level of subsidy dependency could have a significant impact on not only the agricultural businesses, but also those businesses associated with the supply of goods and services to the sector and the LAG need to be cognisant of the associated risks. However, the biggest barrier to the continued health of agriculture in Lanarkshire is seen as the need to encourage business to manage the succession from existing holdings to new entrants into the industry.

Maximising uptake of Pillar 2 support in landscape-scale collaborative schemes to address say diffuse pollution or biodiversity enhancement would help draw down of EU funds and strengthen the environmental quality of the area. Further, there may be scope for private or social enterprise relating to wood energy from logs or chips. This would use a low grade product, add value and contribute to climate change objectives.

At one time, orchards made a significant contribution to the local economy, providing jobs for many local people in cultivation of a range of soft and tree fruits and tomatoes. However traditional orchards have been in decline and many are now out of active management regimes. Over the past few years, new owners have begun to revive old orchards and develop an economic model that has potential to shorten supply chains and provide access to quality local produce. We will continue to support this process through assistance to businesses to collaborate, shorten the local supply chains and develop local markets and, where possible, try to add value e.g. through fruit juice etc. 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. There is also potential to link the agricultural sector into the strategic Clyde and Avon Valley Landscape Partnership to maximise collaboration on access enhancement, local environmental management particularly boundary improvements and woodland and traditional orchard management.

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. We will work with groups such as Nourish Scotland to explore possibilities.

Intervention logic: Areas with small farms face problems in realising economies of size and scale. Bodies such as machinery rings based on collaboration can help. There is a need to extend such collaboration to environmental management to address diffuse pollution and biodiversity enhancement across habitat corridors. These could also extend to the local food sector, such as providing a possible transformational role from food banks to local food hubs. LEADER's core ethos is to support collaborative action and build links between actors and activities making it the obvious gateway for such activity.

Target groups

       Local food and drink businesses

       Producer Groups and farmers markets

       Agricultural sector support groups

Quantitative target outputs

       5 businesses supported

       2 social enterprises supported

       2 producer groups supported

       2 Agri support groups supported

Weighting and prioritisation

MEDIUM

Strategic consistency test

Consistency Test	Yes/No	Comment
CLLD priorities	Yes	Yes this proposal is focused on improving the viability of the agricultural sector through support for growing business
EU priorities	Yes	This will focus on enhancing competitiveness of all types of agriculture and promoting food chain organisation and risk management in agriculture. It directly addresses rural priorities 2and 3.
Scottish Government priorities	Yes	It addresses support for young people, improving access to training and education and economic development

Other strategic priorities	Yes	Links to Tackling Poverty improvement Plan, ESF and CPPs

Objective 7

To improve rural access and customer entry to business support

Rationale

The challenges to operating a rural business are not generally uniquely rural and are dominated by economic factors. Start-up levels have remained consistent but most new businesses are now low-level, self-employment enterprises (but nonetheless integral parts of local economies). Rural businesses currently access 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. There are many lines of support available to businesses, but rural business awareness of these is not high and identifying the "Right Door to Knock" can be intimidating. Consequently, some businesses fail to access support as they struggle to understand the complexities of various funds, programmes and roles of different organisations. At present this is further compounded by ongoing uncertainty around the implementation of new support structures.

It is recognised that some development is required, both strategically and operationally, to align with Business Gateway programmes, taking account of existing service delivery, provision gaps, available budget and alternative sources of support. 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. It will aim to provide a roadmap to find the right doors and help open them, enhance existing support and mitigate higher costs of rural provision through consideration of:

- Developing a virtual incubator supporting businesses in their rural situation, tailored to mitigating their constraints and capitalising on their opportunities
- Providing one-to-one services to assist rural businesses in identifying their support needs
- 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 could 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.

Intervention logic: The Smallbone Report (2002) highlights the problems faced by small businesses in rural areas and the increased costs of delivering effective business support services. The intervention logic of this measure is 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.

Target groups

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

Social enterprises

Quantitative target outputs

10 businesses supported

5 social enterprises supported

Weighting and prioritisation

MEDIUM

Strategic consistency test

Consistency Test	Yes/No	Comment
CLLD priorities	Yes	Yes this proposal is focused on support for growing business
EU priorities	Yes	This will focus on supporting economic development in rural areas. It directly addresses rural priority 6.
Scottish Government priorities	Yes	It addresses support to start up business and social enterprise development and support for food and drink initiatives
Other strategic priorities	Yes	Links to local economic development strategies and ERDF programmes

Theme: Heritage, culture and the environment

An areas heritage can provide and deepen a sense of place, build identity and enhance cohesion. 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 sites, including the Clyde and Avon valleys, which 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.

Rationale

Overall Lanarkshire tourism generates £362 million for the local economy and 6.8m tourism trips per annum and the rural areas of Lanarkshire are a key component of this tourism offer. The majority of rural visits are day trips, including primarily day trips from the visitor's home location. Rural tourists overall satisfaction rates are high, 96% express satisfaction with their overall experience of the destination including 68% that indicate they are "very satisfied". This is very positive. However, there are also indications that some key attractions are seeing a fall in visitor numbers. 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 this 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 adopts a bottom-up approach to community engagement that is complementary to the LEADER approach. 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.

Intervention logic:

There are some significant natural and historical heritage assets in the Lanarkshire LAG area run by charitable trusts and partnerships. They can become more important locally through embedding them more in the business community (e.g. by larger attractions highlighting rural accommodation providers or other attractions) or through off peak and other deals with local residents, schools and other local bodies to encourage stronger engagement and participation. By stronger embedding of actions and activities of such bodies in local communities their role in enhancing 'livability' and livelihoods can be improved and they help build local identity and sense of place. LEADER can provide a bridging role to local community engagement and support enhanced local economic benefits through collaborative initiatives.

Target groups:

Community and business groups wishing to connect to major tourism and natural environment attractions

Quantitative target outputs

3 community projects connecting to major attractions

5 projects linked to strategic landscape initiatives such as CAVLP and CSGN

3 local business group projects linking major attractions to tourism and other service providers

Weighting and prioritisation

MEDIUM

Strategic consistency test

Consistency Test	Yes/No	Comment
CLLD priorities	Yes	This proposal is focused on support for heritage and tourism projects
EU priorities	Yes	This will focus on supporting economic development in rural areas. It directly addresses rural priority 6.
Scottish Government priorities	Yes	This will focus on enhancing natural/cultural heritage, tourism and leisure;
Other strategic priorities	Yes	Links to local economic development strategies, Lanarkshire Tourism strategy and ERDF programmes

10. Coherence of the strategy with Community Planning and the other relevant programmes under the funds in the Common Strategic Framework and EU 2020.

The community planning processes[CPP] and structures in Lanarkshire have been in place for a number of years and a recent review has proposed a new framework based on the demands now being placed on CPPs in terms of delivering real improvements in outcomes at a local level that contribute to commitments made to meet national priorities. It has been recognised that the creation of the new Single Outcome Agreement and its supporting Partnership Improvement Plans requires an updated approach that is currently being developed.

In consideration of the need for partnership arrangements to reflect policy changes and the need for better service integration and delivery amongst partner agencies, a simplified structure is proposed that consists of three strategic boards covering economic growth, sustainability and tackling poverty. LEADER sits under the economic growth board.

LEADER is seen as an important part of the delivery of a range of services in North and South Lanarkshire to the rural economy. The LAG links strategically to the CPP through the local authorities. There will be rural representation on both authorities CPPs to ensure the rural aspect of the wider economic development agenda is represented. .

Responsibility for management of the EU Structural Funds Programme will also be co-ordinated through this forum creating the opportunity to manage strategically interventions across EFARD and the ERDF and ESF structural funds.

Table 3: Strategic alignment and complementarity

Strategy	Alignment	Complementarity LEADER adds value	Links
ESF		√	Youth employability skills
ERDF		√	Growing business support
EAFRD	√		Supporting rural communities
Lottery Funding		√	Building community capacity and community owned assets
Climate Challenge Fund		√	Building community capacity
N&S Lanarkshire SOA	√		
SG National Indicators	√		
Central Scotland Green Network		√	Heritage culture and the environment
Community benefit monies	√		Capital costs of community capacity, rural transport, tourism development.
Clyde & Avon Valley Landscape P'ship	√		Heritage culture and the environment
Lanarkshire Tourism Partnership	√		Heritage culture and the environment

11. Cooperation

The Lanarkshire LAG will aim to build cooperation both between project sponsors and with other LAGs in Scotland, UK and Europe. A minimum of 10% of LEADER funding will be dedicated to inter-territorial and transnational co-operation projects. Through the establishment of working relationships initiated at networking events and the adoption of a pragmatic and flexible approach, the LAG has seen the huge benefits that can accrue from this type of activity. In particular, the opportunities it presents to shorten the learning curve, involve and enthuse communities and transfer practical experience to strategic locally appropriate projects. The new LAG therefore sees the opportunity to use collaborative approaches to stimulate LEADER activity in the new North Lanarkshire area given the clear need to enthuse and transfer knowledge from existing successful projects and approaches.

There are three main forms of cooperation projects:

- **Local cooperation** – Cooperation between project sponsors within the Lanarkshire LAG area
- **Inter-territorial cooperation** - Cooperation between different rural areas at a Scottish and UK level, and
- **Transnational cooperation** - Cooperation between different rural areas from at least two EU Member States.

Co-operation activities with other LAGs in Scotland, the UK and Europe have been relatively low key. However, there are valuable learning experiences and much is to be gained from more pro-active engagement in co-operation activity. The South Lanarkshire LAG stimulated interest in local

collaborative activity by linking local and transnational cooperation. This has proved effective and is something the new LAG will wish to continue through to the new Programme.

The Lanarkshire LAG will use cooperation as a delivery mechanism rather than as developing separate cooperation projects in their own right. The starting point with therefore be for the LAG to consider cooperation as a delivery mechanism through the project animation process and proactively introduce the concept to project sponsors, particularly in the key focus areas identified below.

We see a significant opportunity to develop projects within Lanarkshire that build on the experience and knowledge gained from over 10 years of using the LEADER method in South Lanarkshire and applying this to the new LEADER areas. In addition there are opportunities to extend operational links with our neighbouring LAGs in the South of Scotland. A number of joint projects were developed under the previous Programme and common issues, particularly across the Southern Uplands area, and along with some common delivery partners, suggest an opportunity to proactively explore further rural regeneration opportunities.

Such co-operative activities need to be well thought out and purposeful, and if possible, the focus should be on delivery activities, rather than on networking/learning journeys. It is anticipated that both the National Rural Network in Scotland and the European Network for Rural Development (ENRD), will act as a hub supporting the preparation of co-operation initiatives identifying opportunities and aiding the development of initiatives by LAGs.

In considering the LDS strategic themes and objectives and the LAG's working relationships across Europe, within the UK/, in Scotland and the South of Scotland the following key areas emerge as initial cooperation priorities to focus on in the new Programme.

- Youth employability;
- Adding value to local food products and shorten local food supply chains; and
- Asset based community development including community owned renewable energy projects

Innovation

The Lanarkshire LAG believes innovation is at the heart of their overall approach to rural regeneration. The previous LAG's proactive approach to integrating LEADER and Community Planning was of itself innovative and the inclusion of part of North Lanarkshire into the LAG area will require this approach to be further developed to accommodate two CPPs and two local authority administrations. The development of a web based application, appraisal and claim system is evidence of the nature of innovative actions that have previously been implemented. This system improved the quality of LEADER applications, client relationships became less complicated and LAG participation in project appraisal was improved. It is anticipated that this thinking will be transferred to the new LAG given the number of common members. The LAG also see scope for innovation in, market and local supply chain development, social engagement and local delivery collaboration. The LAG is committed to the process of ongoing review and proactively working to identify new approaches that are both appropriate and transferable to Lanarkshire. In specific terms to the LAG builds innovation into its processes in a number of ways. At a LAG level, continual emphasis will be

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placed on assisting new and experimental approaches to local rural development and on testing new ideas that could be mainstreamed on a wider scale in the future. The LAG's role is seen as being much more than project assessment and financial monitoring. We will adopt a proactive approach to the development of new ideas and take a lead role in developing and financing schemes and projects. Project development will be an ongoing item at all LAG meetings and partners will take responsibility for assisting feasibility assessments building on expertise and experience developed through project implementation and monitoring.

Showcasing of successful projects is done on a regular basis, particularly at our annual community conference which will be extended to include delegates from the new LAG area. We use this and our local community networks to demonstrate programme accessibility, build wider rural community ownership, establish a sense of place and pride in the projects supported, and to stimulate project ideas from other communities. The LAG will also actively seek out innovation in project content, approaches and methodology as part of the animation process. We will also proactively seek out transferable experiences and solutions to address key issues identified in the rural strategy. Use will be made of existing contacts within the EU, partners' sectoral relationships and by developing links with other rural practitioners.

We will use the LEADER team as a central knowledge resource for rural data and best practice. This will support project applicants develop projects and build a transferable knowledge base that will be invaluable in assisting applicants shorten their learning curve thus reducing demands on their finite capacity. Every effort will be made to join projects together where this can be done effectively and meaningfully. For example, providing one cross boundary resource for similar projects in a number of communities in our area would be of benefit. This will ensure maximum benefit for our communities and will have spin-off benefits by linking and working across communities.

Annex 1 – Data – Zones

. Lanarkshire LDS Data Zones 2014-2020					
4531	4823	5687	5710	5733	5763
4551	4827	5688	5711	5734	5765
4599	4830	5689	5712	5735	5766
4611	4837	5690	5713	5736	5767
4628	4846	5691	5714	5737	5770
4631	5669	5692	5715	5738	5773
4636	5670	5693	5716	5739	5774
4647	5671	5694	5717	5740	5777
4654	5672	5695	5718	5741	5778
4657	5673	5696	5719	5742	5779
4664	5674	5697	5720	5743	5783
4669	5675	5698	5721	5745	5785
4673	5676	5699	5722	5746	5791
4674	5677	5700	5723	5747	5796
4715	5678	5701	5724	5749	5800
4718	5679	5702	5725	5750	5802
4720	5680	5703	5726	5751	5804
4741	5681	5704	5727	5753	5806
4753	5682	5705	5728	5754	5831
4755	5683	5706	5729	5756	5838
4762	5684	5707	5730	5758	5843
4821	5685	5708	5731	5760	5850
4829	5686	5709	5732	5761	5865

Annex 2: List of strategies reviewed:

These included:

- Lanarkshire Tourism Action Plan to 2015
- Visitlanarkshire Visitor Surveys 2012 and 2013
- Tacking Poverty Improvement Plan
- Importance of Agriculture in South Lanarkshire
- Better Homes: Thriving communities-A local housing strategy 2012-17
- Landscape Conservation Action Plan : Clyde and Avon Valley Landscape Partnership
- Promoting Growth and Prosperity: Economic Strategy for South Lanarkshire 2013 – 2023
- South Lanarkshire Biodiversity Duty Implementation Plan
- Stronger Together: South Lanarkshire Community Plan
- South Lanarkshire Sustainable Development Strategy 2012 - 2017
- Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill [consultation]
- Scotland Rural Development Programme 2014 – 2020 Stage 2: Final Proposals
- EU Common Strategic Framework (Common Provisions Regulation)
- EU Rural Development Regulation

Annex 3: Socio-economic context

The socio-economic character of the LAG can be profiled from the analysis of data-zone-level data. A data-zone represents between 500 and 1000 people and represents the lowest level for which data are published by the Scottish Government. For ease of interpretation, the data-zones for the towns are enlarged in boxes at the edge of the maps. The dates on the maps represent the latest available data in that category. Apart from the maps of SIMD ranks (which are based on the Scottish quartiles), the quartiles are based on the quartiles for the Lanarkshire LAG. They thus describe the internal variation within Lanarkshire. Additionally, maps showing change in variables over time show positive and negative changes grouped into categories. Where appropriate, the comparison with Scotland can be made by reference to the LAG average and the Scottish average.

Demography

Overall there is a distinct pattern of population change with a gain of over 11% between 2003-2013 compared to a gain of just over 5.3% in Scotland over the same time period. All other demographic ratios (% young people; % old people; dependency ratios) were very close to the Scottish average. With respect to the change in population level, there were gains in most of the peri-urban rural areas, and losses in the southern part of South Lanarkshire. There is also evidence of a degree of thinning out of population in towns and some of the former mining villages with Carluke, in particular, showing a number of datazones with significant losses. In the Strathaven area, there is a surprisingly large number of datazones with losses, which rather bucks the trend of growth for the central-northern part of the LAG area. Apart from Shotts-Harthill, the North Lanarkshire component of the LAG has been gaining in population.

Proportion of people aged 65 or more

In Scotland as a whole 17.77% of the population was over 65 whereas the figure for the Lanarkshire LAG was 17.43%. Generally, the population of the more rural parts of the Lanarkshire LAG in 2013 has rather less people over 65 than the Scottish average. There are pockets of a high proportion of older people in the population in central South Lanarkshire including Carluke, Lanark, Lesmahagow and Douglas, another cluster around Biggar and its hinterland and two smaller clusters around Strathaven and Shotts.

There are quite marked differences in the change in the proportion of older people between 2003 and 2013, with a number of data zones in more peri-urban areas showing a decrease in the proportion of more elderly people (possibly associated with increases in commuting), but with some areas where there has been a significant increase, especially the area south of Lesmahagow, parts of the Strathaven hinterland and parts of the north east corner of South Lanarkshire.

Proportion of population that are 16-64
For Scotland as a whole 65.12% of the population was between 16-65 years old in 2013; for the Lanarkshire LAG the figure was 64.33%. Across a large swath of central South Lanarkshire the proportion of the population of working age is significantly below the LAG average with many datazones in the bottom quartile for the LAG area. These data-zones include towns and more rural areas. The far west of Strathaven, the north east of South Lanarkshire and most of North Lanarkshire outwith Shotts-Harthill have a more positive demographic structure.

In terms of change, the overall picture from 2003-2013 is one of a declining proportion of the population of working age, with areas of modest growth in the far west of Strathaven, in much of North Lanarkshire and in some data-zones east of Lanark.

Proportion of the population aged below 16

The proportion of children varies significantly over the LAG area in 2013, with high proportions (compared to the Scottish average of just over 17%) recorded in the central area of North Lanarkshire adjacent to the larger urban settlements and in a number of more rural data-zones in the centre of the LAG area. The lowest proportions are in the south of the LAG area, the M74 corridor south of Lesmahagow, the north east corner of South Lanarkshire and parts of North Lanarkshire around Shotts.

The change in the proportion of children is most marked by decline over much of the LAG area, though this is smaller on average than the decline over Scotland between 2003-2013. Only in the central peri-urban area in South Lanarkshire adjacent to the major urban settlements, one data-zone to the west of Biggar and parts of North Lanarkshire is there an increase in the proportion of children. Generally those areas with a high proportion of children in 2013 have also seen growth in the previous decade.

Incomes and employment

On average, household incomes in Lanarkshire are marginally above the Scottish average (£415/week instead of £389 for Scotland as a whole). The lowest quartile median household incomes tend to be in the market towns and mining communities with an island of poorly performing data-zones to the south of Lesmahagow and another poor performing area in the remote southern part of South Lanarkshire. Compared to some of the other socio-economic variables, North Lanarkshire performs relatively well, with a significant number of data-zones in the top 50% in the LAG area, although the Shotts-Harthill area performs badly.

Proportion in high-level occupations

The general pattern within the LAG is for there to be an over-representation of high-level occupations across the central part of the LAG area with below average levels in the North Lanarkshire part of the LAG and the south west part of South Lanarkshire. Lanark and Carluke also have a number of data-zones with a low proportion in high-level occupations, but Strathaven has only one low-scoring data-zone. This suggests a concentration of high level occupations in the more rural data-zones close to urban centres and a degree of social spatial stratification.

Unemployment

Persons 16-64 claiming job seekers allowance

The percentage of the population 16-65 on job seekers allowance is marginally higher for the Lanarkshire LAG than for Scotland as a whole (4.47% compared to 4.21 in 4th quartile of 2012). There is a clear spatial pattern with the centre of the LAG area, outwith the market towns performing rather well by overall Lanarkshire LAG standards with almost all the area in the lowest quartile of those claiming job-seekers allowance, but with pockets of high numbers of claimants in

the towns. The poor performing areas are concentrated in North Lanarkshire and in the far south west of South Lanarkshire.

Persons 16-24 claiming job-seekers' allowance, (2012 4th quarter)
The proportion of 16-24 year olds on job seekers' allowance is slightly higher in the LAG area than for Scotland as a whole. The proportion of the population claiming job seekers' allowance ranges from 2.5 to over 22 %. Generally the worst performing areas are the market towns, with Lanark having a large concentration of poorly performing data-zones. Peri-urban data-zones in northern parts of South Lanarkshire perform relatively well with a significant proportion of data-zones in the best quartile, and these high-performing data-zones extend into the southern parts of North Lanarkshire.

Employment deprivation
In terms of employment deprivation (defined as the percentage of the working age population (men aged 16-64 and women aged 16-60) who are on the claimant count, receive Incapacity Benefit, Employment and Support Allowance, or Severe Disablement Allowance) the scores show a marked concentration in the towns, North Lanarkshire generally and in the far south west of South Lanarkshire. Across a large swath of rural central South Lanarkshire the rural data-zones perform rather well.

Education training and skills deprivation
Lanarkshire LAG's average rank for this variable is 2969, significantly lower than the Scottish average of 3253. With regard to Education Training and Skills Deprivation, North Lanarkshire performs badly with the whole of the North Lanarkshire LAG area below the Lanarkshire LAG mid-point and many data-zones in the bottom quartile. The whole of South Lanarkshire south of Lesmahagow also performs badly apart from a data-zone south of Biggar which is in the least deprived quartile. There is also an island of poorly performing data-zones around Stonehouse.

Health

The median health deprivation rank for the LAG area is better than the Scottish average. In terms of health deprivation rank in 2012, the North Lanarkshire part of the LAG performs very poorly indeed with almost all data-zones in the lower two Scottish quartiles. South Lanarkshire has below average health deprivation data-zones in the towns and in the rural area to the west of Lesmahagow and with only one lowest quartile data-zone in Rigside.

The proportion of the LAG area with higher than average long term health and disability is quite low with two distinct rural concentrations in the M74 corridor immediately south of Lesmahagow and in the Shotts area of North Lanarkshire and a number of datazones in Lanark, Carluke and adjacent areas and an outlier in Biggar when all the rest of north east Lanarkshire performs well on this variable.

Access to services

Access to services can be considered with respect to drive times or public transport times. For those who do not have regular access to a car, it is public transport accessibility that should be considered; and in general more disadvantaged people are more dependent on public transport. In all cases

(6/6) access to services was associated with a longer drive or public transport time in the Lanarkshire LAG compared to the Scottish average and in 5/6 cases this worsened between 2006 and 2012.

Drive times

Using the overall drive time deprivation indicator, the majority of the LAG area is in the worst Scottish quartile. This is not entirely surprising because there are many data-zones of 50 square km or more where the density of population is very low, and the housing very scattered. Predictably, the situation in the small towns is reversed with most urban data-zones in the highest performing Scottish quartile.

Public services times

On the average public transport drive time deprivation rank, almost the whole of the LAG area excluding only five rural data-zones is in the most deprived quartile by Scottish standards. Bearing in mind that these areas do include smaller settlements and former mining communities the performance is very poor. In terms of average public transport times to get to a GP the worst performing data-zone has a travel time of nearly 90 minutes. The character of the rural areas with highly scattered pattern of farmsteads and isolated dwellings inevitably makes the delivery of effective public transport very challenging, although the situation is better where there are distinct villages. On a range of access to particular services large areas of rural Lanarkshire perform very poorly with high average public transport drive times.

Housing

In a 2007 survey for the Scottish Government, house price affordability was assessed. Across three categories of dwellings North Lanarkshire had the most affordable homes of any local authority in two out of three classes in Scotland and South Lanarkshire ranked between 6th and 15th[3].

The lower quartile house prices 2012 show a pattern of broadly low prices in the North Lanarkshire part of the LAG and in the south west part of South Lanarkshire and two areas in the mid part of the LAG area: around Stonehouse and to the north of Biggar. There is an unexpected cluster of higher house prices in the northern part of North Lanarkshire to the south of Cumbernauld. The towns predictably have some areas with house prices in the lowest quartile, which will most likely comprise the poorer housing estates.

Aggregate deprivation

The average figure for the data-zones comprising the Lanarkshire LAG is marginally above the Scottish average. However, SIMD is known to under-record rural deprivation because it tends to pick up blocks of deprivation in data-zones whereas rural deprivation tends to be more dispersed. Nonetheless, rural Lanarkshire shows quite large areas in the deep rural south west and the scattered settlements around Dunsyre in the east of South Lanarkshire with high SIMD levels and with the largest concentrated area of high SIMD (most deprived communities) in the post-industrial, former mining areas of rural North Lanarkshire. Over and above the predictable concentrations in certain parts of market towns (excepting Strathaven and Biggar), the most noticeable feature of the

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[3] Paper presented to the Barker Commission http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/180088/0051205.pdf

poorest performing communities is that they are typically villages, many of which are associated with active or former mining/opencast activity. They include three settlements to the south of Lesmahagow including Coalburn and Douglas, Carstairs and Forth in the north-east of South Lanarkshire and a significant number of communities in North Lanarkshire, including Harthill, Blackridge and Caldercruix. These are the focal points of concentrated disadvantage as assessed by SIMD. Generally, the north west of South Lanarkshire and the east are above the Scottish average with the worst performing parts of the LAG area, the more rural south (albeit with former mining communities) and the North Lanarkshire area.

Overall conclusions

On many socio-economic variables the Lanarkshire LAG is in the middle range for Scotland. Its population has increased faster, its SIMD average is close to the Scottish average, as is its heath deprivation score and its education and skills score. It is rather worse on employment deprivation, with a score significantly below the average for Scotland. It scores 2484 whereas the Scottish average is 3253, well below the Scottish average on Geographical Access to Services, Drive Times Deprivation Rank (median rank). The LAG's mean annual lower quartile house prices are about 20% below the Scottish average. The proportion of the population on job seekers' allowance is marginally higher than the Scottish average. However, there is very considerable variation within the LAG area.
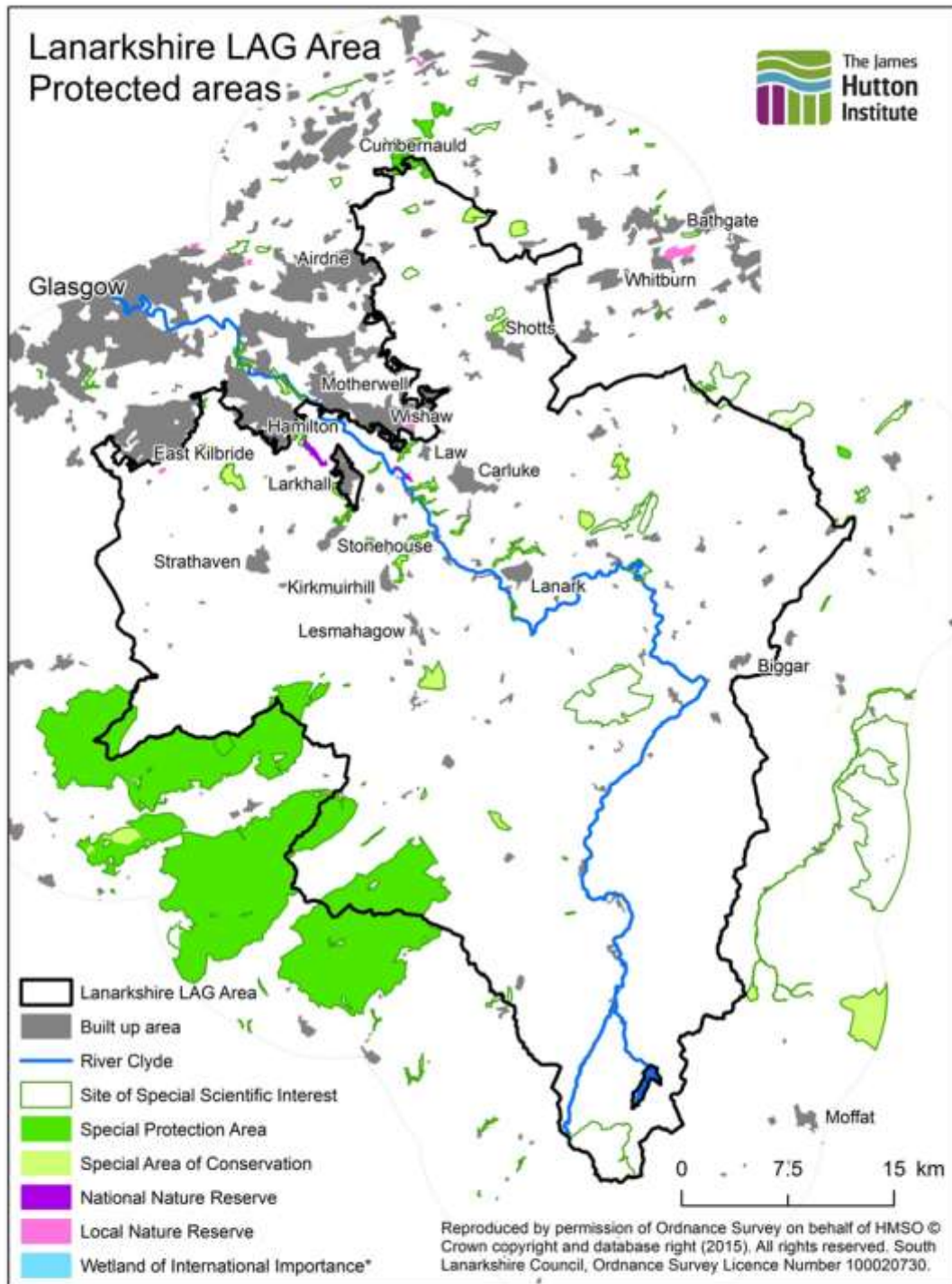
The general spatial pattern is one of two major pockets of disadvantage: one on North Lanarkshire and one along a corridor either side of the M 74 to the south of Lesmahagow. These areas contain some deeply disadvantaged areas, which include many of the mining dependent communities in central South Lanarkshire 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, although Strathaven and the surrounding data-zones generally show higher socioeconomic performance on many variables. Biggar is also something of an outlier in the central part of the LAG which on many variables outperforms the other towns. The lightly populated hill areas of rural south west Lanarkshire are also characterised by weak socio-economic performance.

With respect to housing, house prices are very low in North Lanarkshire and house price earnings ratios are relatively favourable whereas rural South Lanarkshire has house price earnings ratios closer to the middle of the range for Scotland. The availability of housing is probably not a major issue. Quality might well be.

Access to services is constrained for many rural residents with large areas of the LAG area experiencing long and worsening travel times, especially by public transport. Travel times in and around the market towns are not a concern, but those of poorer remote residents ought to be, especially where private car ownership is lacking.

The variation within the LAG area suggests that support for service provision, enhanced mobility skills training and enterprise support might be focussed on the areas of greater disadvantage which are clearly displayed on the data-zone-level maps.

Annex 4: Environmental map

Lanarkshire LAG Area
Protected areas

The James Hutton Institute

Legend:
- Lanarkshire LAG Area
- Built up area
- River Clyde
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
- Special Protection Area
- Special Area of Conservation
- National Nature Reserve
- Local Nature Reserve
- Wetland of International Importance*

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Area mapped: Lanarkshire LAG Area and features within 10 km of its boundary. Note that some protected areas overlap each other, and as such are not visible. *Ramsar site.
Contains data derived from Ordnance Survey Strategi® data and Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 map data. Contains data derived from protected areas data: Copyright Scottish Natural Heritage, Ordnance Survey Derived Data Licence (PGA Schedule 6).
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Annex 5: Consultation process and findings

Eliciting the views of Lanarkshire informants on the future direction of LAG activity

Community engagement and consultation have been integral to the development of the Rural Strategies that the South Lanarkshire LAG have designed and implemented over the last two LEADER Programmes and has been at the heart of helping the LAG identify the key issues and priorities that they addressed in the 2007 – 2014 period. Actively seeking out and engaging with the key voluntary and community stakeholders within the rural area is a LAG priority. The new LAG continue to look at new ways in which to engage with and sustain the involvement of this sector and have piloted a number of initiatives throughout the year to help inform the key priorities contained within this document.

Three main forms of engagement were undertaken in the preparation of the LDS. First, the South Lanarkshire Rural Community Conference 2013 was informed and consulted regarding the new approach. Secondly an on-line survey was undertaken by the LAG in 2014 to ascertain the views of individuals and groups in both South and North Lanarkshire looking forward to the new SRDP. Finally, a Rural Conference was held which using keypad technology enabled those present to vote on a number of issues pertinent to the new LDS.

The survey

There has been a long-standing experience of South Lanarkshire engagement with Leader. It should be noted that the low response rate in North Lanarkshire is largely attributable to a lack of prior engagement, even though the survey attractive good publicity in local papers. The 2007-2013 LAG only operated in South Lanarkshire. This indicates a need for further and deeper engagement of the LAG in North Lanarkshire, particularly to enhance awareness of the LAG's 'offer' and how it can support rural social, economic and environmental development.

There is also a need to consider the future operation of the LAG in relation to the new RDR priorities are:

- Fostering knowledge transfer and innovation in agriculture, forestry and rural areas.
- Enhancing competitiveness of all types of agriculture enhancing farm viability.
- Promoting food chain organisation and risk management in agriculture.
- Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems depending on agriculture and forestry.
- Promoting resource efficiency and supporting the shift towards a low carbon and climate resilient economy in agriculture, food, and forestry sectors.
- Promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas

There is a clear expectation that Leader would emphasise, not necessarily exclusively, the social inclusion/poverty reduction/economic development priority. This represents perhaps less of a community orientation than in previous rounds.

The survey results (see Table 1) give a clear steer for the direction of future LAG activity. Community based projects are likely to be crucial to delivering the social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development outcomes sought. Young people are identified as the really important target

group, though poor and retired people are also flagged. As well as community, the business community is identified as an important partner and support for business start-ups is flagged as an issue and small businesses flagged a s a group needing support in South Lanarkshire. In a LAG with quite a large post -industrial socio-economic landscape it is likely that new business may be built around social enterprise which has particular capacity to reach out to disadvantaged groups.

Table 1 Top Three highly important responses in South and North Lanarkshire Survey 2014

	South Lanarkshire	North Lanarkshire
	Top three listed highly important	Top three listed highly important
The measures you consider would have the greatest impact on equalising opportunities between communities	Improving local public transport provision Providing more local services aimed at improving community health Providing higher levels of grant support to communities showing evidence of social and economic deprivation	Slight change of wording between N and S Lanarkshire (see question below)
The measures you consider would have the greatest impact on helping tackle disadvantage within rural areas of greatest need	Slight change of wording between N and S Lanarkshire (see question above)	1. Providing direct help to community groups to assist with the development and delivery of projects 2. Providing higher levels of grant support to communities showing evidence of social and economic need 3. Providing more local services aimed at improving community health
The measures you consider would have the greatest impact on supporting communities to achieve their full potential	1. Support communities prepare village/town action plans that identify key improvements and projects 2. Provide help with funding applications alongside transferring these skills to the community…doing with rather than for organisations 3. Bring stakeholders together to work collectively towards the development of their areas and learn from each other	1. Provide help with funding applications alongside transferring these skills to the community (doing with rather than for organisations) 2. Support communities prepare village/town action plans that identify key improvements and projects 3. Provide training in project development, financial management and group governance
Which of the following priority groups do you think it is important that LEADER funding is used to target within your area?	1. Young people under 25 2. Small business 3. Retired people 3 = 3.People on low incomes 3 =	1. Young people under 25 2. People on low incomes 3. Retired people
The measures you consider would have the greatest	1. Encouraging tourism business to work together to promote	1. Community groups delivering more tourist activities such as

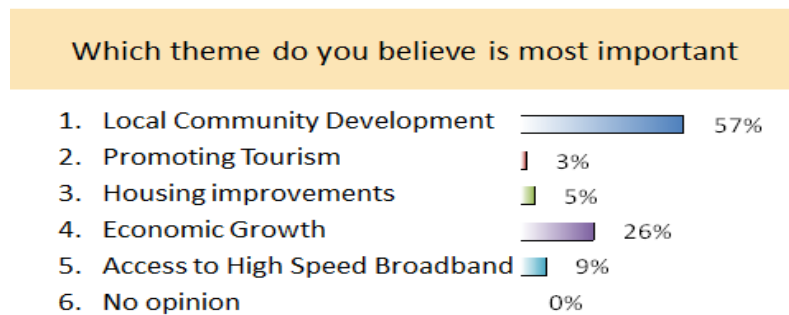|		
impact on attracting more visitors to rural areas within North and South Lanarkshire.	their products 2. Community groups delivering more tourist activities such as guided walks and themed events 3. More investment in accommodation	guided walks and themed events 2. More investment in accommodation 3. Encouraging tourism business to work together to promote their products
The measures having the greatest impact on attracting more customers	1. More events and family/ community activities 2. Being able to buy local produce through events such as Farmers markets 3. A cleaner, brighter environment with floral displays and hanging baskets	1. Loyalty/ shop local schemes and offers 2, More events and family/ community activities 3. A cleaner, brighter environment with floral displays and hanging baskets
The measures you consider would have the greatest impact on helping create economic opportunity within your area	1. Access to high speed broadband 2. Employability and skills training 3. Support for new business start-up and social enterprise development	1.Support for new business start-up and social enterprise development 2. Employability and skills training 3.Business development grants
The measures you consider would have the greatest impact on helping to conserve and enhance local outdoor and open space assets:	1. Initiatives that promote responsible public access to the countryside such as footpath signage and walking/cycling guides 2. Improvements and extensions to the network of footpaths 3. Measures that protect important landscape areas such as the Lowther Hills, Culter Fells and Clyde Valley.	1. Initiatives that promote responsible public access to the countryside such as footpath signage and walking/cycling guides 2. Measures that protect important landscape areas (others all equal)
The measures you consider would make the greatest contribution to promoting the area's heritage and culture	1. Support to upgrade old and historic buildings and features 2. Finding new uses for old buildings 3. Support for local heritage initiatives	1. Finding new uses for old buildings 2. Support for projects that interpret heritage sites for visitors 3. Support for local heritage initiatives
The measures you consider would make the greatest contribution to helping to mitigate impact on climate change at a local level.	1. Support for community recycling and composting initiatives 2. Collaborative initiatives to reduce fuel costs and encourage the use of renewable fuels such as wood. 3. Support for community growing projects such as allotments and community orchards	1. Advice and guidance on measures that can be taken to reduce energy consumption 2. Support for community growing projects such as allotments and community orchards 3. Support for community renewable energy projects such as micro hydro schemes

NB respondents S Lanarkshire 235; North Lanarkshire 7.

At the Rural Conference delegates were asked from the key themes identified how important you feel each theme should be in terms of "the partnership" prioritising allocation of resources.

Table 2 Rural Conference priorities

Theme/Issue	Numbers ranking very important
Local community development: capacity building and funding	49
Promoting tourism including World Heritage Site	28
Housing improvements	40
Economic growth	50
Access to high speed broadband	40

When asked at the same meeting for the most important issue, the importance of local community developed was ranked highest by a very significant amount. Economic development was ranked a clear second very significantly ahead of any other issue.

Table 3

Which theme do you believe is most important

1. Local Community Development 57%
2. Promoting Tourism 3%
3. Housing improvements 5%
4. Economic Growth 26%
5. Access to High Speed Broadband 9%
6. No opinion 0%

Annex 6: The policy context

The roots of the Lanarkshire Local Development Strategy lie in a conscious drawing together of EU and Scottish Government priorities which, additionally, is grounded in the aspirations and focal interests of the Lanarkshire LAG and recognises the analysis and economic priorities for Lanarkshire as set out in the economic strategies for both administrative areas.

Under the new arrangements for the application of the European Structural and Investment Funds, the principles of Community Led local Development (CLLD) should cut across and be integrated with actions under the SRDP, ESF and ERDF. The CLLD approach should contribute to integrated territorial development at the same time as contributing to long term sustainable development; in Lanarkshire this will be coordinated through the Economic Boards of the CPPs. The LDS and activities supported should therefore complement this overall approach.

LEADER is one of the principal means for applying the EU principles of CLLD. The Lanarkshire Local Development Strategy [LDS] will employ LEADER within this wider context.

Five principles are asserted by the Commission in its guidance as community-wide foci for the 2014-20 funding period:

- Provisions on minimum elements to be included in local development strategies in order to ensure their sufficient quality;
- Provisions obliging the Member State (MS) to guarantee the presence of all LEADER specificities in Rural Development Programmes (e.g. minimum tasks of local action groups);
- Greater focus on animation and capacity building (e.g. through an explicit provision for preparatory support; an explicit allocation of funds for animation; and an increase in the budget for running costs and animation to 25% of the total public expenditure incurred within the LDS);
- Strengthening the participation of private sector in the partnership (through a specific rule requiring a minimum share of participation of the non-public sector partners in project selection decisions); and
- Streamlining transnational cooperation (e.g. through common rules concerning publishing selection procedures and deadlines for project selection).

For the 2014-2020 period, the EU's stated Priorities for Rural Development Programmes are:

1. Fostering knowledge transfer, co-operation and innovation;
2. Enhancing competitiveness, promoting innovative technologies and sustainable management of forests;
3. Promoting food chain organisation & risk management;
4. Restoring, preserving & enhancing ecosystems;
5. Promoting resource efficiency & transition to low carbon economy; and
6. Promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development.

At a Scottish level, the key purpose of the SRDP 2014 - 2020 is to help achieve sustainable economic growth in Scotland's rural areas and the priorities remains broadly the same as the previous programme: The main priorities are:

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- Enhancing the rural economy
- Supporting agricultural businesses
- Protecting and improving the natural environment
- Addressing the impact of climate change
- Supporting rural communities

According to the European Commission, LEADER priorities should focus on innovation and promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development. However, it is anticipated that the LEADER elements of the strategy and the resultant projects will contribute to other RDP Priorities too. There has been a strong economic content in previous LEADER programmes in Lanarkshire and this focus will continue.

In the Consultation on the SRDP, the Scottish Government have indicated their priorities for Local Development Strategies. They are:

- Driving community action on climate change;
- Enhancing rural services and facilities, including transport initiatives;
- Enhancing natural/cultural heritage, tourism and leisure;
- Supporting food and drink initiatives (e.g. short supply chains, community food);
- Building co-operation with other LAGs in Scotland, UK and Europe;
- Equal opportunities for all in our rural communities; and

These are entirely congruent with EU priorities and many are evidenced in prior Leader actions in the area

At a Lanarkshire level the two local economic strategies highlight a number of issues which frame their priorities, including

- that there is an environment that is as supportive as possible to the active businesses that are located in the area.
- that support is provided for the development of existing small businesses as well as encouraging the creation of new ones.
- the need to create a supportive enterprise environment which encourages greater social entrepreneurial activity and targets those social enterprises that want to grow and develop their own capacity.
- the need to have a labour supply with skills and capacities which meet the needs of modern businesses and can help contribute to economic growth and focus on reducing unemployment and providing opportunities for rural residents to play their part in a thriving sustainable local economy.

The LAG Local Development Strategy considers the rural area dimensions of these priorities. The LDS objectives have been have been developed following consideration of the wider strategic imperatives and informed by a process of consultation through survey, stakeholder meetings, community conferences and focus groups and an analysis of relevant socio-economic and environmental information relating to rural Lanarkshire.

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The overarching policy objectives for the Local Development Strategy for Lanarkshire are:

- To ensure consistency with EU and Scottish Government priorities;
- To ensure consistency with locally determined priorities in Lanarkshire;
- To ensure that the distinctive qualities of the CLLD approach are nurtured and that CLLD interventions are seen as distinctive;
- To ensure multiple beneficial outcomes from LEADER projects with respect to the range of Rural Development priorities with respect to that programme in ways which are supportive of the Scottish Government's overall purpose and the National Performance Framework;
- To recognise the need and allocate support accordingly to animate local communities and build capacity to develop projects which contribute to European and Scottish priorities and contribute to long term sustainable development;
- To ensure that value is added through the CLLD approach and that it complements and is congruent with other funding streams; and
- To seek out and take advantage of opportunities to cooperate with other LAGs or appropriate partnerships where this contributes to improving the achievement of the Lanarkshire LDS outcomes.

From an EU and Scottish Government perspective LEADER is intended to focus on innovation, social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development. These objectives frame the LAG objectives and are also compatible with the Lanarkshire CPP priorities.

There are four local guiding principles (also strongly congruent with Scottish Government priorities) which underpin the overall aims of the LDS and run through the strategy. These are seen as fundamental to the strategy's successful implementation. These guiding principles will shape and inform the key aims and actions flowing from the strategy. These are:

- Sustainable development – ensuring that our actions meet present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.
- Equalising opportunity and social cohesion - balancing need and opportunity and ensuring all sectors of our rural communities are supported.
- Economic growth – supporting the development of a diverse economic base.

Protecting the environment and mitigating climate change – conserving and enhancing the areas environmental assets.

For more information on the Lanarkshire Leader Strategy email leader@southlanarkshire.gov.uk