



Voluntary Action
South Lanarkshire
Putting the Voluntary Sector FIRST

South Lanarkshire's Third Sector Interface



ENGAGE



PROMOTE



INVOLVE

ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18

WELCOME



Rev. Ian Barcroft
Chairman of the Board
 VASLan

I am delighted to offer the Annual Report of VASLan for 2017-18. As usual it has been an all consuming year with much activity and I offer my personal thanks for the dedication of our CEO, Gordon Bennie, all the Staff and especially the Board of Trustees, who are all volunteers but have both passion and enthusiasm for the local voluntary sector and the community of South Lanarkshire. I hope you enjoy reading our Annual Report.

Seven years have passed since VASLan emerged in 2011 as the Third Sector Interface (TSI) supported both by the Scottish Government and South Lanarkshire Council. We take particular pride being recognised by the Scottish Government as one of the best TSIs in the country. As Chair, I want to highlight in my report how the Trustees are focusing on what is essential for a charity not only to survive but to develop its mission.

Most voluntary sector organisations, regardless of size, are faced with competing needs, in a period of diminishing resources and severe political uncertainties. It has been important for the Trustees of VASLan to take

a long-term strategic view, to ensure our mission is being clearly articulated. There are no quick fixes to the many challenges in the voluntary sector; but by addressing the effectiveness of our organisational strategy we have developed various contingencies to place VASLan in good stead for the opportunities and challenges the sector is facing. By establishing good practice in our own organisation we are becoming a mature TSI and can offer this experience to others. VASLan is no different than any other voluntary organisation having unique aspects that give its identity. We are an Interface - and if positioned well can make a real contribution to improving the effectiveness of the whole sector meeting the needs of the community.

There are so many talented people with varied skills in the voluntary sector, and we would particularly welcome those with HR, accountancy, communications and marketing skills on the VASLan Board. If you have the experience of governance and strategic planning, within the challenges of a sector that despite all the pressures continues to serve its community effectively, then you are welcome to join us and make an impact.

Become Engaged, Promote your skills and Involve yourself in developing the voluntary sector in South Lanarkshire!



THE TSI - A CLEAR VOICE ...AND PROUD TO BE THAT VOICE



Gordon Bennie
Chief Executive Officer
VASLan

In such a time of change the need for clear and constructive engagement with our Public Sector partners has never been greater. Our Trustees continued to hold faith in what we were doing and maintained a business as usual approach through a significant additional financial investment to the Sector to ensure the TSI remained at the forefront of this engagement, enabling vital conversations to happen.

Bringing people together to enable clear views from service providers within the community to shape how services can really support people effectively to benefit those most in need is really what we are about. Central forums, important dialogue, grappling with the issues, all make vital contributions in shaping and determining the wishes and aspirations of many communities across South Lanarkshire.

It is well recognised that 'too many cooks spoil the broth' and to achieve effective singularity of purpose is particularly challenging but not overwhelming. Our lead in Scotland in the development of the intelligence resource 'Engage, Promote, Involve' is both innovative and ground breaking and is now providing continuous high level information well beyond the scope and imagination of many. The Sector is well equipped with 21st century data and language.

VASLan has played its part in bringing the Sector to the fore across a wide range and diverse set of strategic conversations. Delivering an increasingly important partnership role in helping to attract and secure resources and funding for our local Sector. By adopting a clear and credible locality focus our strategy provides a coordinated accountable approach to assessing and resourcing emerging need, increase Sector stability and provide a richer communications platform for statutory partners to engage with the Third Sector.

That's what we said we will do and that's what we are doing!

STRATEGY UPDATE

In November 2017 we launched our Strategic Plan for 2017-2020 and since then we have been working on the implementation of the strategic priorities contained in the plan. Over the last year we have carried out the following:

- Introduced our 'programme of change' designed to bring about more responsive systems in support of partnership priorities and to augment our role as a strategic partner within the Community Planning Partnership whilst supporting and advocating for South Lanarkshire's Third Sector.



South Lanarkshire's Third Sector Interface

- Identified a new operating structure to allow us to lead in strategic engagement with statutory partners and further establish VASLan as a key interface between Third Sector organisations, local communities and Community Planning Partners.
- Revamped our CRM system database referred to as "EPI" (Engage, Promote, Involve), redesigned the functionality of the Locator tool and refreshed our website.
- As we embed the new operating structure and processes we will continue to provide a coordinated accountable approach to assessing and resourcing emerging need and provide a richer communications platform.

ENGAGE

VASLan's mission to engage with Third Sector organisations is **'To shape, strengthen and serve a strong, vibrant, empowered and inclusive volunteering community and voluntary sector in South Lanarkshire'**.

Our commitment to our Third Sector partners is to engage with them across a range of subject matters providing real value in terms of the support provided to new and existing organisations.

ENGAGING VOLUNTEERS

VASLan is committed to promoting the many benefits of volunteering and ensures that anyone who wishes to volunteer is given the opportunity to do so. A range of advice and support is available to potential volunteers to help them find a suitable placement, including a **database of volunteering opportunities**.



SUPPORTING & DEVELOPING THIRD SECTOR ORGANISATIONS

A primary function of VASLan as the Third Sector Interface for South Lanarkshire is to provide capacity building support to enable Third Sector organisations to be well managed and deliver quality services.

A range of capacity building support was offered to South Lanarkshire's Third Sector during 2017/18 including: start-up advice; understanding common Third Sector legal structures; business planning; finance; governance; policies & procedures; applying for charitable status; identifying potential funding opportunities; drafting funding applications and more.



ORGANISATIONS SUPPORTED

- 384 ORGANISATIONS SUPPORTED
- 59 SOCIAL ENTERPRISES SUPPORTED
- £3,648,936 WORTH OF FUNDING APPLICATIONS SUPPORTED
- OVER 1,000 INTERACTIONS WITH VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

“ This was my first TSF as I am new to the Third Sector. I found this very informative and found the content relevant. ”

Third Sector Forum attendee

EVENTS, REPRESENTATION & CONSULTATION

50+

information sessions delivered to schools, universities, colleges & Third Sector organisations

100+

consultation events participated in

200+

partnership meetings attended on behalf of the Third Sector as well as 37 networking events attended



VASLan facilitates regular **Third Sector Forums** (TSFs). This platform enables effective engagement between the third sector and our strategic partners.

This year 16 forum meetings with a total of 221 attendees have taken place across all 4 localities and have included information and consultation opportunities on a range of upcoming themes and trends such as: autism support information, social prescribing and community justice.

As part of the Third Sector Forum Structure the Third Sector Chief Officer Group met on 11 occasions, addressing issues such as social prescribing, children's services planning and health and social care.



TRAINING

Throughout the year VASLan worked in partnership with a range of external organisations and Third Sector partners to deliver **training opportunities**, including a 'Business Innovation Workshop' and an 'Introduction to Selling Skills' session. We also delivered sessions on governance, evaluation, Gift Aid, funding and volunteer management. Additionally, eight **First Friday Funding** surgeries were held along with **Bits & Pieces** sessions including "Keeping the Lights On".



During 2017/18 VASLan focused on developing a picture of the Third Sector in South Lanarkshire. This picture has evolved to now show the services being delivered by Third Sector organisations and VASLan is actively promoting them.

PROMOTE

Our vision is to ensure *'The quality of community and voluntary action in South Lanarkshire is among the best in Scotland'*.

VASLan's role as a strategic partner within the Community Planning Partnership provides a platform across a range of partnership boards to promote, support and advocate for South Lanarkshire's Third Sector. Our revised **EPI database** provides a direct link to **Locator**, ensuring partners from a range of services, communities and individuals have an easily accessible platform to source Third Sector services across South Lanarkshire.

PROMOTING BEST PRACTICE

VASLan significantly improved the online **Resource Kit** which now provides a vast amount of informative resources to support the Third Sector in achieving best practice goals. The **Volunteer Friendly Award** is a simple, user-friendly mark of quality signifying excellence in the way organisations manage, support and involve their volunteers. This year we continued to promote and support organisations to achieve the award.



Volunteer Friendly Award®

8

organisations
achieved the
Volunteer Friendly
Award

PROMOTING VOLUNTEERING



VASLan continued to promote and administer the **Saltire Awards** in South Lanarkshire, the Scottish Government endorsed scheme recognising the volunteering achievements of young people aged 12-25 years old. In 2017/18 Saltire registrations increased 16% on the previous year with **402** Approach and **292** Ascent level certificates being issued.

694
certificates
issued

657
young people
registered

16,000 hours of Saltire
volunteering
recognised

VOLUNTEERING AWARDS

Our **Volunteer of the Year Awards** were held at Hamilton Racecourse during Volunteers' Week 2017 where shortlisted nominees of 5 categories enjoyed an afternoon tea. In total we had **118** nominations across categories which included Young Volunteer of the Year, Long Serving Volunteer, Committee Member of the Year and Volunteer of the Year.



“ Various partners across South Lanarkshire - including the Health and Social Care Partnership, NHS Lanarkshire Health Improvement, South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture and South Lanarkshire Health and Social Care Forum - have been actively promoting the VASLan Locator tool to assist in the identification of locally based Third Sector organisations at locality level through the Locality Planning Groups and a range of local activity. ”

Craig Cunningham, Head of Commissioning & Performance,
South Lanarkshire Health & Social Care Partnership

PROMOTING THE SECTOR

VASLan has become more proactive through the increased usage of social media tools and the enhancement of our **website** to both promote the Third Sector and ensure it is informed.

24

e-newsletters published with an additional eight special e-newsletters covering topics such as early years, health and social care & social enterprise

110

New volunteering opportunities advertised through social media, our website and the Volunteer Scotland website

A number of events were also facilitated to enable organisations to promote their work and network, including social enterprise targeted events such as the **Christmas Pop-Up Shop. Meet the Funder** events were also held on two occasions, enabling organisations to discuss proposals face-to-face with funders.



LOCATOR

The Locator website www.locator.org.uk originally launched in 2013 was significantly enhanced this year. Locator now allows members of the public, professionals and the Third Sector to search for services using a variety of search criteria e.g. location, service type or desired outcomes such as 'improved mental health' etc.



Approximately 2,400
services advertised
Around 76,000 page
views per year

With **76,000** page views per year, Locator is a vital resource in allowing partners and South Lanarkshire communities to easily identify local Third Sector organisations and services. This year we have continued to promote the tool at partner meetings and events, helping to raise awareness and extend its benefit to those in need. For example, through receiving a presentation on the tool at a multi-agency group that included social work, education, health improvement and leisure and culture, professionals were able to disseminate the information to kinship carers ensuring that they could access information about activities taking place in their localities that were suitable for their children.

As well as engaging and promoting the Third Sector, VASLan actively encourages organisations to be involved in the decision making process.

INVOLVE

VASLan as a representative body works hard to ensure the Third Sector is informed of and involved in the strategic decision making process. We do this through our:

- on-line services
- e-newsletter
- social media
- website
- locality Third Sector Forum events
- Third Sector Chief Officers Group
- strategic links with the Community Planning Partnership

All of which encourages local organisations and the wider partnership to 'get involved' in supporting and generating new ideas for positive change.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

VASLan has kept organisations supporting children's services in South Lanarkshire abreast of the changes that have been taking place on the local and national landscape.

getting
it right
for every child

Links formed with the **National GIRFEC Third Sector Group** and the **Health and Social Care Alliance** provided information on the progress of GIRFEC's "Named Person" Scheme, as well as giving organisations in South Lanarkshire access to tools developed in other areas to help them understand and embed the principles and values of the GIRFEC approach in their work with children and young people.

A mapping of children's services organisations along with partner agencies as part of the Realignment of Children's Services journey revealed an income of over **£10.5million** from Third Sector organisations operating in South Lanarkshire.

As part of the South Lanarkshire Autism Strategy, VASLan also provided partners with links to a variety of support that could be utilised by families.

CONSULTATIONS & BRIEFINGS

Throughout the year VASLan facilitated, participated in and promoted a range of **consultations** to ensure the views of South Lanarkshire's Third Sector were represented. These included:

- Police Scotland priorities
- Adult Recognition Award scheme
- Scottish Fire and Rescue Service: New Ways of Working
- Living Wage
- Community involvement in health and social care



With a number of new national policies either being introduced or impending, **policy briefings** were prepared and disseminated to the sector in order to raise awareness, ensure involvement and prevent any organisation being left behind. This year briefings covered two significant policies in the Lobbying (Scotland) Act and the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), detailing the implications for the Third Sector and how best to prepare.

“ The membership for the gym has been a lifesaver for me, I am able to relax, clear my head and have time away from my caring role. When exercising I feel that I can forget about my caring role for a small period of time and this helps my mental health. ”

A carer who cares for her father and who applied for ‘Creative Breaks Time to Live’ funding to purchase a gym membership for South Lanarkshire Leisure to access regular short breaks whilst her father is at day care

HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE



VASLan continues to be a key partner in the South Lanarkshire Health and Social Care Partnership. Although health and social care covers a plethora of activity throughout the whole Third Sector including social prescribing opportunities and mechanisms, a major focus for VASLan has been the administration and monitoring of the **Integrated Care Fund** investment in the sector. This has resulted in a broad range of funded activities and benefits including:



348 volunteers, 477 members of staff and 1,893 members of the public were trained in health & social care issues



6,521 people were supported to maintain their independence through support for safer homes & through supported volunteering



1,247 people were supported or represented to resolve issues around housing or benefits



612 people got help for their mental health



6,226 carers received support to maintain their health and continue to provide a caring role or to improve their relationship with the people being cared for

THE MENTORING PROJECT

Evolved from the longstanding Chance 2 Change project, **The Mentoring Project** was launched in April 2017 and is funded by the Big Lottery Fund and Robertson Trust. The project focuses on improving the mental health and wellbeing of young people aged 16 to 29 living in South Lanarkshire. It pairs young people with volunteer mentors who meet with them regularly, build trust, offer support and guidance and do their best to help with any issues that may be preventing the young person from fulfilling their ambitions. This year:

81

young people were matched to a trained volunteer mentor or staff member

71%

of those attending achieved a positive outcome or destination



BOARD, STAFF & VOLUNTEERS



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Bill Tynan
 Ian Barcroft
 Jean McKeown
(appointed Feb 18)
 John Brain
 John Cassidy
 Margaret Duffy
(deceased June 18)
 Nancy Barr
 Niall McShannon

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Gordon Bennie

TEAM LEADERS

Audrey Canning
 Charlie Duffin
 Heather Petrie
 Jenny Gemmell

PA TO CEO

Letitia Gallacher

IT SUPPORT

Angus Lindsay

ADMINISTRATION

Chloe Frame
 David Bett
 Sharon Stewart

DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS

Ann Sangster
 Jen Fleming
 Peter McGhee
 Sandra Renicks
 Stuart Reilly
 Teeda Boyd
 Tina Cameron

MENTORING TEAM

Caitlin Barnes
 Debbie Williams
 Ian McLaughlan
 Winnie Brown

COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

Amy McDonald

STUDENT PLACEMENT

Nicola Duggan

VOLUNTEERS

Alan Dalton
 Alison MacDonald
 Anne-Marie Black
 Billy Gallacher
 Campbell McEwan
 Caroline Kneller
 Chelsey Watson
 Dannielle Wyatt
 David Symon

Deborah O'Donnell
 Denise Stewart
 Emily West
 Emma Thompson
 Fiona Docherty
 George Mackle
 Gordon Lyon
 Helen Faulkner
 Ian Cunnington
 Jasmine Sim
 Joan McGarry
 John Boyd
 John Wallace
 Karen Fullerton
 Khosrow Zanjani
 Kirsty Conway
 Laura Burns
 Louise Jones
 Megan Monagle
 Nicola Duggan
 Pamela Moyes
 Pamela Youngson
 Rachael Ward
 Rebecca Graham
 Shelly Cunnington
 Shelly Palette
 Stephanie Anderson
 Steven Brock
 Yvonne Wiseman

With special thanks to our fantastic volunteers for their invaluable contribution over the year.

FUTURE PLANNING

As South Lanarkshire's TSI VASLan are committed to building on a financially sustainable, resilient and well governed organisation capable of resourcing our strategic and partnership delivery priorities.

By reflecting and learning from the work we have already undertaken within a challenging environment we will be building on positive change through investing time and effort in our Board, Management and Staff.

We will be reviewing how we analyse and present the impact and effectiveness of the TSI and the wider Third Sector, lifting the profile of VASLan through a responsive approach to engaging, promoting and involving South Lanarkshire's Third Sector.

We are clear that we need to manage our capacity and the demands on the organisation, ensuring we have operational resilience across the organisation, embedding capabilities, processes, systems and behaviours which ensure VASLan can carry out its work.

As South Lanarkshire's TSI, VASLan will continue to build constructive and purposeful relationships, actively engaging with other organisations in order to collaborate and work towards shared objectives of the wider partnership.

ANNUAL SURVEY RESULTS 2017—2018

ORGANISATION SUPPORT

72% of organisations stated that the third sector support they received from VASLan was good or excellent



“VASLan has been there for us all of the way. Their guidance is greatly appreciated”



SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

75% of organisations felt confident to develop their enterprise as a result of using VASLan's services

“The service and support has been excellent. Without it I think we would have been lost”

“VASLan are a great one stop shop for advice and training regarding working with volunteers..”

79% of organisations stated that the service they received in supporting them to recruit and support volunteers was good or excellent



VOLUNTEERING

“VASLan staff have been really supportive and instrumental in helping us establish links with others”

78% of organisations stated that as a result of taking part in networks and forums they feel more connected



CONNECTING THE SECTOR



Voluntary Action South Lanarkshire

Putting the Voluntary Sector FIRST



@vasouthlanarkshire



@VA_SLAN



www.vaslan.org.uk



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