

VASLan Clydesdale Locality Strategy 2026–2029

Empowering Communities in Clydesdale through Local Networks

Purpose

To empower and enable the third sector in Clydesdale to thrive, by supporting local organisations, strengthening partnerships, and amplifying community voices within the unique rural and semi-rural context of South Lanarkshire.

Vision

A vibrant, connected, and resilient Clydesdale third sector that shapes local change, strengthens wellbeing, and ensures that every community is heard and supported.

Local Context

Clydesdale covers a large, diverse area with distinct rural communities, strong volunteer networks, and deep-rooted local identity. This strategy was developed via workshops with 75 participants/organisations with participants highlighting:

- **Geographical challenges:** isolation, transport gaps, and digital exclusion.
- **Volunteer sustainability:** difficulties recruiting and retaining volunteers.
- **Funding inequality:** rural groups often missing out on larger funding opportunities.
- **Communication gaps:** local stories and successes not consistently shared.
- **Community strengths:** resilience, collaboration, and a strong ethos of mutual support.

This strategy focuses on building connection, visibility, and sustainability across the Clydesdale third sector.

Pillar 1: Locality Network Strength

Aim: Build and sustain a strong, trusted local platform that connects Clydesdale organisations and amplifies their priorities.

Outputs	Outcomes	KPIs
Relaunch and strengthen the Clydesdale Locality Network with quarterly themed meetings	Increased collaboration and representation across rural areas	Network participation grows by 25% by 2029
Establish a rural	Harder-to-reach	3 outreach sessions per

engagement plan with outreach sessions in smaller communities (e.g. Biggar, Douglas, Carnwath)	communities feel connected and supported	year delivered
Create locality-specific links with CPP and TSCOG structures	Local issues represented at decision-making tables	Clydesdale represented in all relevant partnership discussions

Pillar 2: Sector Engagement & Voice

Aim: Strengthen Clydesdale's collective voice and ensure the third sector's experience informs public sector priorities.

Outputs	Outcomes	KPIs
Facilitate regular thematic discussions (e.g. rural transport, cost of living, youth engagement)	Stronger cross-sector understanding of rural challenges	4 thematic sessions held annually
Develop a "Clydesdale Third Sector Charter" setting shared principles and priorities	Clear and unified local third sector identity	Charter adopted by 30+ local organisations
Annual locality report summarising key community priorities	Stronger evidence base for advocacy and planning	Report presented annually to CPP and partners

Pillar 3: Collaboration & Impact

Aim: Promote joint working and innovation to deliver tangible benefits across communities.

Outputs	Outcomes	KPIs
Facilitate collaboration on shared funding bids (e.g. rural connectivity, youth, wellbeing)	Improved access to joint resources	At least 2 collaborative funding bids per year
Pilot local projects addressing key rural issues (digital inclusion, volunteer transport)	Innovation driven by local need	Minimum of 1 pilot project per year
Develop a Local Partnership Showcase to highlight success stories	Increased learning and visibility of Clydesdale's impact	1 showcase event annually

Pillar 4: Communications & Visibility

Aim: Raise the visibility of Clydesdale's third sector and celebrate local successes.

Outputs	Outcomes	KPIs
Launch a "Clydesdale Voices" campaign to share community stories	Improved awareness of local third sector contribution	20% annual increase in communications reach
Quarterly newsletter and social media updates from the Clydesdale Network	Stronger community connections and visibility	4 newsletters per year
Training and support for local groups on storytelling and media	Increased confidence in public communication	20 local groups trained by 2029

Pillar 5: Organisational Capability

Aim: Build local capacity and strengthen VASLan's support to meet Clydesdale's needs.

Outputs	Outcomes	KPIs
Allocate dedicated staff resource with rural engagement expertise	Enhanced local responsiveness and trust	Locality officers embedded and accessible daily/weekly
Provide tailored training (governance, volunteer management, digital skills)	Increased sustainability of local organisations	3 training sessions per year delivered in Clydesdale
Strengthen internal communication between locality staff and central VASLan	Better alignment of support and intelligence	Monthly internal locality updates maintained

Local Outcomes Framework

Theme	Desired Outcome	Indicators of Success
Connectivity	Stronger rural collaboration and reduced isolation	More active cross-community initiatives
Capacity	Increased organisational sustainability	More groups with secure multi-year funding
Visibility	Enhanced recognition of	Media mentions,

	Clydesdale's third sector	attendance at partnership forums
Participation	Broader engagement across diverse communities	Representation from all Clydesdale areas in network
Impact	Demonstrable contribution to wellbeing, inclusion, and community resilience	Annual impact report evidencing local outcomes

Additional Focus: Windfarm and Community Benefit Resources

Clydesdale's landscape includes several operational and planned windfarms that provide community benefit funds. Workshop participants identified a need for more equitable access, better coordination, and transparent distribution of these resources. There is recognition that while some communities benefit directly, others across the locality experience indirect impacts but receive limited support.

VASLan, through the Clydesdale Locality Network, will work to facilitate collaboration around windfarm community benefit funds. This will include establishing a 'Clydesdale Windfarm and Community Benefit Forum' to map existing funds, share information, and promote partnership-based applications that deliver on shared locality priorities.

Outputs	Outcomes	KPIs
Establish the Clydesdale Windfarm and Community Benefit Forum under the Locality Network.	Greater equity and transparency in the use of windfarm and community benefit resources.	Forum established and meeting biannually.
Facilitate regular engagement with fund administrators and local groups.	Stronger collaboration between local organisations on rural development and sustainability initiatives.	Annual report produced summarising local windfarm fund impact and distribution.
Share intelligence on available funding and best practice in community benefit management.	Enhanced investment in shared community priorities across Clydesdale.	Minimum of three collaborative funding proposals submitted through the forum by 2029.

Delivery and Review

Local Delivery Plan: Developed annually by the Clydesdale Network, setting clear actions under each pillar.

Monitoring: Quarterly reporting to VASLan's central team using KPIs and case studies.

Learning Loop: Insights shared across all localities to shape South Lanarkshire-wide practice.

Review Points:

- Year 1 (2027): Review initial engagement and outreach outcomes.
- Year 2 (2028): Evaluate partnership and funding impacts.
- Year 3 (2029): Refresh priorities based on local feedback and new data.

Summary

The Clydesdale Locality Strategy 2026–2029 sets out a shared vision for a connected, visible, and confident rural third sector. By strengthening local networks, amplifying rural voices, and fostering collaboration, VASLan and its partners will ensure that Clydesdale's communities not only thrive but lead innovation and resilience across South Lanarkshire.