



Plains Heritage Plan

April 2024

North Lanarkshire Rural
Heritage Program



With thanks to The National Lottery Heritage Fund and National Lottery players.
Thank you to everyone who contributed their time, information, ideas and suggestions to help produce this local Heritage Plan

This Heritage Plan is part of the North Lanarkshire Rural Communities Heritage Program and is part of a set of 5 heritage plans for communities in Caldercruix, Greengairs and Wattston, Harthill, Eastfield and Greengairs, Plains and Upperton.

Acknowledgements

It would not have been possible to collate the information for these plans and to put them together without the help and support of each of the local communities involved. We would like to say thank you to everyone who gave their time, provided feedback and helped to ensure that these Heritage Plans accurately reflected the communities involved.

The picture on the front cover is of the boardwalk in the park at Plains

Plains Heritage Plan

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INTRODUCTION TO THE RURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM

Introduction

The communities involved

Why produce a heritage plan?

Context

Key principles

Vision



INTRODUCTION

The North Lanarkshire Rural Communities Heritage Program

The North Lanarkshire Rural Communities Heritage Program involves five rural communities where there is the potential of using heritage as a tool for regeneration. The work is funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

The legacy of mining across this area has left a significant and lasting change to the identities of all these communities but there are also connections to print and paper works, Scotland's canals, medieval farming and even, in one community, Roman finds.

These areas are also part of important swathes of bog and heath encompassing the Slamannan Plateau and some of the least disturbed active raised bogs in the central belt.

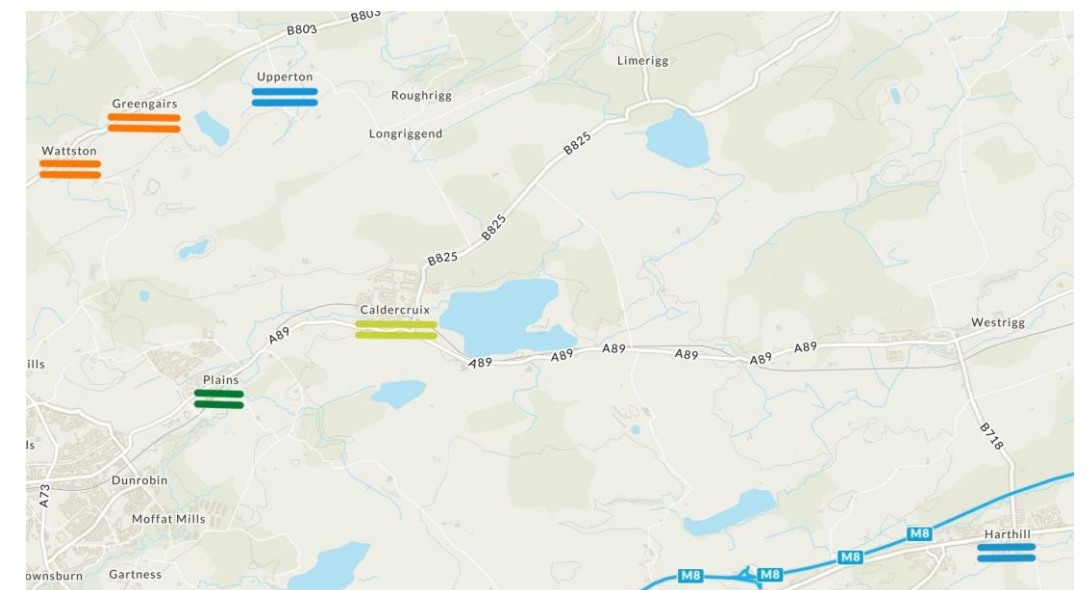
COMMUNITIES INVOLVED

Which Communities are included?

The five rural communities included in the North Lanarkshire Rural Heritage Programme are:

- Caldercruix
- Greengairs and Wattston
- Harthill, Eastfield and Greenrigg
- Plains and
- Upperton

These communities were selected because they were previously involved in the production of a five year community action plan.



Location of the local communities

HERITAGE PLAN

Why produce a heritage plan?

Heritage Plans provide a clear strategy for the identification and protection of heritage assets.

These heritage assets could be built heritage, natural heritage, archaeological sites or items or intangible heritage, such as folklore and oral histories.

To prepare the plans for each of the five rural communities the Rural Development Trust consulted with the local community in order to identify what was important to them.

What will the Heritage Plan do?

The Plains Heritage Plan is one of five Heritage Plans for rural communities in North Lanarkshire.

The Heritage Plan will help the Rural Development Trust and the local community to plan and prioritise activities that preserve local heritage, engage people in local heritage, make heritage more assessable and identify what is special about the heritage of each community.

What is included in the project?

- **Heritage plans:**
There is a Heritage Plan for each of the five communities. Each community helped to produce the Heritage Plan. The heritage plan complements the work previously undertaken during the production of their 'Community Action Plan'.

The Plains Heritage Plan contains a Heritage Action Plan, a list of aims and an outline of potential projects.

The Appendix for each plan includes information on local places and spaces, wildlife and nature and information on places of special interest.

- **Community heritage events & activities:**
The Rural Development Trust has undertaken a range of events and activities including local Health and Heritage Walks and hosted family events with traditional games. At the request of the local community we have produced a Children's Heritage Plan to engage with younger audiences and have produced a number of heritage themed guides.
- **Community Grants Pilot:**
Budgets for small heritage projects are available through the Micro Heritage Grants Program.
- **Identifying future projects**
This includes medium term and long term projects.

CONTEXT

The legacy of mining across this area has left a significant and lasting change to the identities of all these communities but there are also connections to print and paper works, Scotland's canals, medieval farming and even, in one community, Roman finds.

These areas are also part of important swathes of Bog and Heath encompassing the Slamannan Plateau and some of the least disturbed active raised bogs in the central belt.

The funding represents an opportunity to highlight the wide range of natural habitats and local history that the rural villages in North Lanarkshire has to offer.

KEY PRINCIPLES

Our key principles for this project are:

- To engage with a wider audience using local heritage and history
- To promote inclusion, diversity, access and participation through local heritage.
- To help people learn about local heritage.
- To help people learn new skills.
- To help people conserve and value local heritage now and for future generations.
- To use heritage to support nature and the local environment
- To use heritage to improve local communities
- To use heritage to improve well being

VISION STATEMENT

***“Our vision is for local communities to have access,
now and in the future,
to information on local places that hold meaning,
to local stories that connect people and
to spaces that connect to nature.”***

WHAT DID WE DO?

Community involvement

Methodology

Aims of the rural heritage program

Next steps



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The Consultation for the rural heritage programme was undertaken between January and March 2023.

The objectives of the consultation were:

- To raise awareness and support for the project
- To check accuracy of information relating to local heritage assets
- To find out the important places (physical buildings and spaces in nature)
- To find out the important local stories
- To identify potential improvements
- To raise awareness of the community grants scheme
- To generate new ideas for heritage engagement
- To understand the barriers that exist for people to engage in the heritage

The heritage survey, the drop in events and the various meetings that took place helped to identify the aims of each community, including Plains.

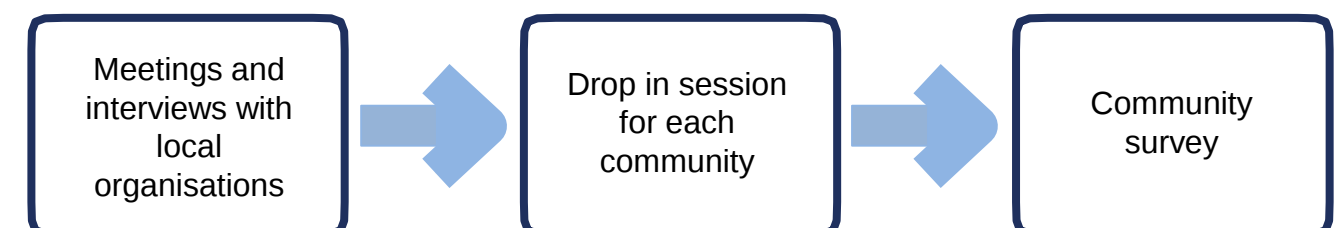
Each local community helped identify projects and initiatives to enable a wider audience to engage with the rich local history of each village.

The community helped to identify small projects that could be undertaken as part of the Micro Heritage Grant Program, larger scale heritage projects that can be undertaken by the local community (community led groups) and a series of ideas and inspiration for future projects.

METHODOLOGY

To ensure that we reached people living in all five of the rural communities included in the pilot study, we agreed to use a variety of communication methods. This included setting up a number of one to one meetings, a number of group meetings, hosting drop in sessions for each community and supporting this with online information and a press release.

A community survey was available online and as a hard copy for those who did not have or did not like using online survey tools.



The detailed results of the Community Consultation and the Drop in sessions is contained in Appendix 3 of the Plains Heritage Plan. Please refer to this document if you would like more detailed information.

COMMUNITY AIMS

The community consultation helped to identify what was important to each local community. From this we developed a list of aims for the rural heritage program.

AIM 1 VALUING HERITAGE

- Sharing stories and memories
- Local knowledge as risk of being lost when members of the community move or pass away
- Connecting communities and building a sense of identity through important spaces, historic sites (e.g. Stanrigg) and buildings
- Access to information – for example, historic photographs and maps
- The importance of understanding the industrial heritage of each community including the role of agriculture, coal mining, mills, quarrying and brick manufacturing
- Connecting the energy Landscapes of the past, present and future through knowledge of water power, coal mining, biogas and windfarms

AIM 2 PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

- Importance of parks and outdoor play
- Landscapes, access to nature, connecting with nature, waterways and the reservoir
- Protecting the environment, improving biodiversity (enhance habitats, increase pollinators and support diversity of species)
- Providing opportunities for learning about the natural environment – for example information boards, leaflets and digital guides

AIM 3 INCLUSION, ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION

- The need to involve young people
- The need to involve older people
- Include new members of the community
- Encourage visitors
- Provide information in a variety of formats

AIM 4 SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE

- Understanding the impact of industrial decline
- The history of local activism – improving safety for workers (e.g. mine workers)
- include information on sustainability
- learning new skills – calculating carbon footprints, researching family history, how to use archives

NEXT STEPS

The results of the community consultation have been used to produce a Heritage Plan for each area.

The Heritage Plan consists of:

- **The Heritage Plan** – Main document containing the Heritage Action Plan, example projects suitable for the Micro Heritage Grant program, a list of community projects identified during the community consultation and a list of ideas and inspiration for future projects
- **Appendix 1 & 2** – Appendix 1 contains information on the Places, Spaces, Landscapes and Natural Environments that are special to each community. Appendix 2 contains information on sites of special interest and/or mapping information
- **Appendix 3** – This contains the details results of the Community Consultation and the Drop In Sessions. It can be used as a reference document or evidence of need for any groups completing their own grant forms.



The Next Step will be to launch the Micro Heritage Grants and to undertake the tasks outlined in the Heritage Action Plan.

A guide has been produced to help community groups apply for a grant.

THE HERITAGE ACTION PLAN

*The Heritage Action Plan
Micro Heritage Grants (Springboard Projects)
Example Projects for Micro Heritage Grants
Community Projects suggested for Plains
Inspiration and ideas for future projects*



The Heritage Action Plan

- The Heritage Action Plan outlines the steps involved in achieving the project aims. It also sets out the activities being undertaken as part of the Rural Heritage Program.

Micro Heritage Grants (Springboard Projects)

- The Micro Heritage Grant is a pilot grant programme intended to act as a springboard for small scale projects or activities relating to local, cultural or natural heritage.

Micro Heritage Grants - Example Projects List

- During the Heritage Plan Consultation all five communities contributed to a list of potential projects suitable for the Micro Heritage Grant program.

Community Projects Suggested for Caldercruix

- List of potential heritage projects identified by the local community in and around Plains

Inspiration and Ideas for Future Projects

- Inspiration and ideas for potential projects that could be undertaken in the future.



North side of Hillend Loch

HERITAGE ACTION PLAN

The Heritage Action Plan sets out activities that will be undertaken as part of the project.

What is the Action Plan?

Type of Activity	Activity Description	Timescale
Activities delivered by Community Action Lanarkshire	Deliver a program of heritage micro grants to act as taster projects for new groups or catalyst projects for more experienced groups	Present until end July 2024
as above	Compile traditional recipes from the local communities and share them by the end of the project.	Present until end July 2024. Recipes will remain online after project completion.
as above	Promotion of traditional crafts and/or crafts activities that enhance or support the telling of local stories (e.g. children's activities such as making Roman coins or paper making – see Children's Heritage Plan)	Present until end July 2024
as above	Offer support to nature and gardening projects by supporting biodiversity. See Guide to Plants for Bees and other pollinators	Guide available to download and will remain online after project completion.
as above	Health and Heritage Walks. Community Action Lanarkshire have undertaken a number of Health and Heritage walks. Digital information on walking routes will be available by end of the project. Mapping information is being added to GoJauntly.	Walks took place during 2022 and 2023. Digital information will remain online after project completion.
as above	A Children's Heritage Plan has been produced for the rural villages. This includes word searches for each of the villages, information sheets on local wildlife, drawing sheets and colouring sheets.	Children's plan available to download and will remain online after project completion.
as above	Reminiscence activities including attendance at local community groups and organisations. This includes heritage handling box and traditional games and activities. A Guide to Reminiscence activities with older people will be available to download. Community Action Lanarkshire can provide printed copies on request.	Guide to activities will be available to download and will remain online after project completion.

Type of Activity	Activity Description	Timescale
Activities delivered by Community Action Lanarkshire	Heritage Visits to local museums. Arrange trips to local heritage sites or museums e.g. Summerlee or arrange an ideas and inspiration trip to existing projects such as Wilsontown Ironworks or towns with community murals.	Present until end July 2024
as above	Skill sharing and how to find information. Signposting to support e.g. North Lanarkshire Heritage Centre and Local Studies team, biodiversity officer, Paths for All, Ramblers Scotland etc	Present until end July 2024
as above	Photography showcase. Call to action. Ask local residents to share their photos of their favourite outdoor location, historic site or building.	Social media campaign running until the end of July
as above	Continue to compile additional information which can be added to the Heritage Plans before the completion of the project. This can include local stories and more detailed information on local history and heritage.	Present until end July 2024
Micro Heritage Grants (Springboard projects)	Springboard projects are small scale projects that can be undertaken quickly but lead to larger scale projects in the future. They can be taster projects which help to raise awareness of local history or can help to engage new audiences. These can be funded through the Micro Heritage Grant Program which offers grants of up to £500. See Guide to Micro Heritage Grants for example projects.	Present until end July 2024
Community led projects	Larger scale projects suggested by the local community that could be taken forward	Digital information will remain online after project completion.
Inspiration and ideas	These are a series of initial ideas that were highlighted through the community engagement and consultation. For example community mural, bioblitz on overgrown ground, heritage trail, integrated local museum space	Digital information will remain online after project completion.

MICRO HERITAGE GRANTS

What is the Micro Heritage Grant?

The Micro Heritage Grant is a pilot grant programme intended to act as a springboard for small scale projects or activities relating to local, cultural or natural heritage.

Example projects could include the hire of a venue for an exhibition or activity, the cost of materials and equipment to support a heritage activity (anything from a tea dance to a picnic in the park), growing projects that promote biodiversity, signs to promote natural heritage sites and cultural heritage projects.

The Micro Heritage Grant Program can also support newly formed organisations who would like to undertake taster style projects to build their experience before embarking on a larger projects.

We anticipate that the micro grants will be a maximum of £500 and expect that most grants will be somewhere between £100 and £500. See our Guide to Micro Heritage Grants for more information.

Which Communities are eligible for funding?

The five rural communities participating in the North Lanarkshire Rural Heritage Program are;

- Caldercruix
- Greengairs and Wattston
- Harthill, Eastfield and Greenrigg
- Plains and
- Upperton

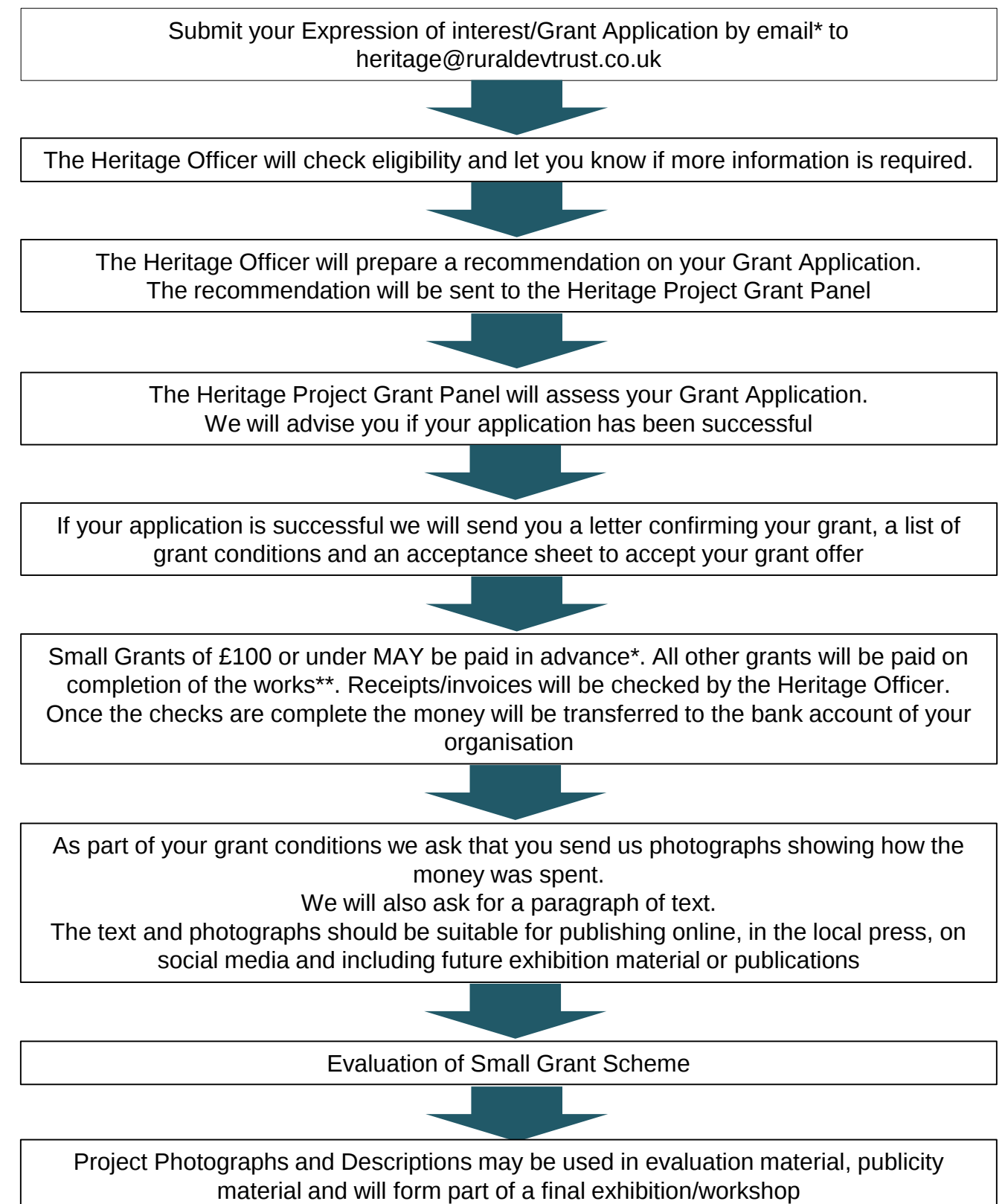
These communities were chosen because of their previous involvement in the production of a five year community action plan.

To be eligible for funding projects must meet at least one of the priorities listed below:

- To engage with a wider audience using local heritage and history
- To promote inclusion, diversity, access and participation through local heritage.
- To help people learn about local heritage.
- To help people learn new skills.
- To help people conserve and value local heritage now and for future generations.
- To use heritage to support nature and the local environment
- To use heritage to improve local communities



FLOW CHART SHOWING GRANT APPLICATION STAGES



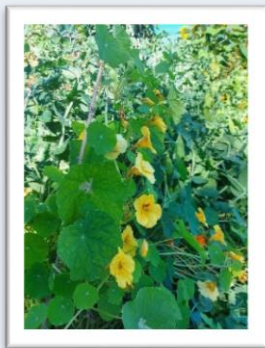
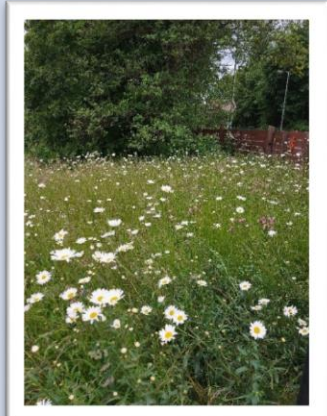
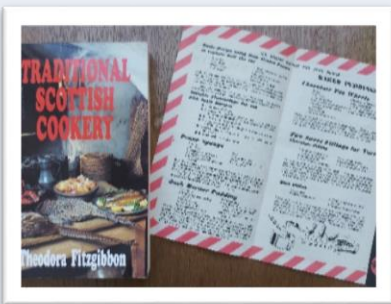
MICRO HERITAGE GRANTS

During the Heritage Plan Consultation all five communities contributed to a list of potential projects suitable for the Micro Heritage Grant program. The table below lists the projects suggested across all five communities.

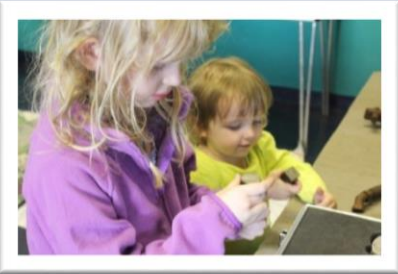
Project Title	Project Description
Activities and Events  	If you would like to host a heritage themed activity you can apply for funding for the cost of venue hire or the cost of materials and/or equipment to support the activity • Hosting a local history sessions where people can meet informally to share stories, photographs and information on local stories. This can be open to everyone or it can be themed for a specific group such as children or older people. • Hosting a reminiscence event such as a tea dance with music, tea and cake or a visit to a museum such as Summerlee. This can be open to everyone or it can be themed for a specific group such as children or older people. • Hosting an event such as a picnic in the park to celebrate a local event or talk about connections to their local area. • Hosting an exhibition of local photographs, stories or drawings, including framing costs or venue hire • Hosting family fun days/activities which celebrate local traditions or activities e.g. craft activities or that recreate opportunities for traditional play/traditional children's games. • Materials or equipment to help hold a heritage themed activity or event e.g. materials for traditional craft activists, heritage themed play equipment for children.
Nature and growing projects 	If you would like to host a natural heritage themed activity you can apply for funding for the cost of cost of materials and/or equipment to support the activity. Materials can include the cost of things such as seeds or even leaflets to publicise your event or activity. Projects should encourage biodiversity and avoid the use of peat. • Small scale nature/food related projects such as planting apple trees/fruit trees/ fruit canes can be considered, particularly if this includes some form of shared learning for other members of the community (e.g. sharing planting skills, sharing any crops)

What if my idea doesn't appear on this list?
As long as your heritage project is eligible and meets our priorities we would encourage groups to share their ideas for activities and apply for a Micro Heritage Grant.

What might my project look like?

Project Title	Project Description
Nature and growing projects continued 	• Projects that include companion planting and other natural growing methods, especially if they increase knowledge on biodiversity and benefits of companion planting. • Do you have people that can't access outdoors because of limited mobility? Could small changes help more people access the outdoors? For instance a bench near community growing or other outdoor spaces. • Do you have a group that would like to learn more about subjects such as wildlife or plant identification? Funding can be used to set up events with experts such as bat walks or guided walks on subjects such as plant or wildlife identification, the importance of the mosses and the surrounding landscape etc. For more information on companion planting and plants that support biodiversity please refer to our Plants for bees and other pollinators guide
Improving Biodiversity and attracting pollinators 	• Install bird boxes and bat boxes to support local biodiversity. • Install a pre made or build your own bug hotels. • Would you like to learn how to build your own? Host a workshop to learn how to build a bug hotel, bat box or bird box. • Improve the natural environment by increasing plant species that encourage pollinators. Peat free gardening should be encouraged. • Host a nature themed activity for specific groups such as older people, young adults or children. This could include sowing seeds and tending to growing plants.
Growing, gardening and traditional recipes 	• Gather traditional recipes and share them with the local community. Maybe your group would like to host a community meal based on your traditional recipes? • Host community gardening days so that volunteers can meet and support each other. Encourage new volunteers to participate in the community growing projects. The cost of materials or leaflets to advertise the event can be included.

Project Title	Project Description
Growing, gardening and traditional recipes continued 	Encourage best use of resources by hosting seed swaps and seed share events. Potential to host a gardening workshop to show how to split and share plants. Funding can be used to for materials or equipment needed to kick start your event.
Access to Information 	The Micro Heritage Grants can be used to support communities interesting in sharing information on local history and heritage. If you have a project which will improve community access to information the costs of equipment, materials or activities can be included in your application. Projects can include natural heritage, cultural heritage or local history. - Could a micro grant help your community access information? Would equipment such as a scanner help you to take copies of photos of what your village used to look like? Have residents asked for printed heritage information? - Would extra signage help your community find local heritage sites? Could a micro grant improve the access to local points of interest or walking routes?
Access to the outdoors 	- Is your group interested in local wildlife? Would you like to arrange a walk or visit to learn more about the diverse wildlife surrounding your village? - Does your project increase knowledge of the local wildlife, natural landscape and local history? Could you use a range of communication methods to reach your audience? E.g. digital information, leaflets or lightweight information boards.
Our Stories – Celebrating our local history 	The Micro Heritage Grants can be used to help you and your community gather stories and information about your local history. This could be in the form of training for members of your organisation (e.g. how to use local studies and how to search your family history) or it could be for equipment to help you record local stories. For example a voice recorder and microphone could help capture oral histories. If you work with older people and would like to host a reminiscence group or activity you can include the cost of materials and venue hire etc. in your application. If you are an existing group (such as a lunch club) you can also apply if you think that reminiscence materials would encourage members to share stories and socialise with others.

Project Title	Project Description
Our Stories – Celebrating our local history continued 	- Arrange a trip for your group to meet the local studies team. Or you may wish to invite members of the local studies team to attend your own local events. - Genealogy project – including training on how to research your family history. - Is your organisation interested in gathering information about your local area? e.g. Stanrigg or the ‘Lost Villages’. Project costs can include copies of maps, historic photographs and any equipment needed. - Equipment for hosting an oral history project. Reading material or maps. - Projects can explore the industrial heritage of the rural communities e.g. Mining, farming and paper mills
Involving children and young people in your project  	Groups and organisations working with children can apply for our Micro Heritage Grant. Below are a few suggestions for projects that might be suitable for children. However, please feel free to be as creative as you like with your approach to engagement with younger people. We welcome a range of heritage projects and activities that will reach new and more diverse audiences. - Outdoor learning project to increase knowledge about nature and the local environment - Mining and industrial heritage themed projects. These can use materials and information packs or they can include visits from the local studies team. - Heritage themed play equipment, particularly equipment that connects children to traditional games or traditional skills (including crafts, traditional games or traditional construction skills). - Children’s heritage themed activities which tell the story of energy production from coal to renewables - Children's heritage themed activities local wildlife and connection to nature. Biodiversity and importance of using plants that support wildlife. - Children's heritage themed activities including crafts such as papermaking

Plains

This is the list of potential heritage projects identified by the local community in and around Plains



Project Title	Project Description
Accessing local history and heritage 	Potential projects to improve access to local history and heritage. This can include looking at new or alternative methods of communicating. Easier access to information on local history, more opportunity to engage in person or online, better and more consistent signage through the villages.
Walking routes, Heritage Trails and Signage 	Project which looks at potential for heritage trails, walks and signage project – developed in partnership with members of the local community. This could include digital and/or hard copy walking routes and maps. In partnership with the local groups, Ramblers Scotland, and organisations such as CAL/RDT develop a mapping project which also looks at improving signage, improving existing walking routes and considers improvements to new walking routes. This could include highlighting/creating a new walking trail which starts in Plains and connects to Greengairs.
Recording local history, consider engagement methods	Potential project to support local historians to look at how best to capture information – consider a range of options such as digital recording, voice recordings and potentially printed books
Children’s play activities	Potential to engage children in hands on learning about traditional building techniques through activities, play equipment and natural materials. Brick, timber, stone and slate were all traditional materials used to construct buildings within Greengairs and Wattston (and surrounding villages).
Biodiversity Project	Biodiversity project to increase the opportunities to increase biodiversity through planting and increase the range of pollinators within Upperton. This could include introducing plants that are beneficial to wildlife to new spaces or swapping some traditional plants for pollinator friendly plants.

Project Title	Project Description
Explore Local History and shared histories of local communities 	Project to explore the former industries that supported the village of Plains. This includes industries such as quarrying, the brickworks, coal mining and farming. The Stanrigg disaster still plays a key role in local identity. Many residents still recall family speaking about the impact of the events of July 1918. Potential to link the project to other villages also impacted by the Stanrigg disaster. Project outcomes can be physical such as information boards or could include oral history, heritage walks or heritage discussion groups and activities.
Children’s Heritage Themed Activities	Develop a series of children’s themed heritage activities including nature, growing projects and wildlife. Another theme for children’s heritage activities is industry and the energy from the landscape around us (the story of coal to renewables). Focus on coal mining, biogas, wind turbines and water power to power the mills. Include activities or information on papermaking.
Shared Histories, remembering Gala Day	Potential project to record the history of our shared memories, particularly for special days such as Gala day. Focus on oral or written histories, photographs and displays and playing traditional games.
Oral History and Reminiscence Project	Potential oral history and/or reminiscence project with local lunch club attendees. Benefits include the potential to improve the health and well being of participants, capture information on local history that would otherwise be lost and opportunity to record stories for the benefit of family, friends and future generations. If staff capacity allows there is also the potential for RDT/CAL staff to support short walks through the Health and Heritage Walk program.
Traditional Recipe Book 	Project to bring people together through a shared love of food and memories of what they ate growing up. Potential to gather local recipes and create a book.

IDEAS & INSPIRATION

Project Outline

Interpreting the legacy of the remains of the industrial landscape through a Heritage Trail or signage

The example photos below are from Wilstontown near Forth. There is a walking trail with a series of signs and small interventions in the landscape to help visitors understand what the site would have looked like in the past.

If there was interest in taking forward a larger project to interpret the site of the former Stanrigg Colliery and/or the 'lost villages' this might be a good example of the type of interpretation that would have a minimal impact on the landscape but would be robust enough to last.



Potential to include a local history museum space in future community developments/projects

If a local community has gathered artefacts that they wish to display there are a number of options that can be considered. It may be possible to find space where a temporary display can be set up such as a local library, community hall or empty shop front. Larger collections may benefit from community spaces or asset transfers where they may be able to add a benefit to the community space by sharing it with other organisations. If there is nowhere to display a collection you can also approach your local studies team for some informal advice on storing materials or potentially gifting some pieces to a local museum.



What if we have an idea for a project that would benefit our community in the future?

If you have an idea for a future project, we can still highlight the idea in this plan. That way you can use the plan to demonstrate support for the project in future grant applications

What about future projects?

Project Outline

Community Mural

Murals can be a good way of bringing a local community together and getting people involved. Key things to remember if you want to undertake this type of project is to:

- Keep everyone informed
- Always ask permission from the building or land owner
- Always contact the planning to check whether or not planning permission will be required
- Always take advice from a professional to ensure that the surface has been adequately prepared before painting and to ensure that the paint used is suitable for the weather conditions. The mural may require to be sealed to protect it from the elements.



Bioblitz on overgrown areas

A quick and collaborative project can be a 'bioblitz'. An example might be the site of the Country Park/nature park at Caldercruix. Working with the landowner, a volunteer group and the local biodiversity officer it may be possible to set a date to gather volunteers to clean up and cut back paths so that people can, once again, enjoy these outdoor spaces.



CONCLUSION



CONCLUSION

The North Lanarkshire Rural Heritage Program has revealed a number of themes common to all communities as well as highlighting a number of area specific issues.

This includes:

- The significance of the Stanrigg Disaster to the local community
- Interest in commemorating mining and other industrial heritage
- Desire to capture local history from older members of the community
- Support for intergenerational work that brings together stories from older people with opportunities for children to learn about local history
- Support for learning materials for children based on local history and heritage
- The need for activities for older people
- The need for activities and information for younger people
- Support for improved connection with nature
- The need for more information on history and heritage to be available for new residents
- Materials that support walking routes and provide information on wildlife and nature
- Importance of capturing local stories and information on how villages have changed within the lifetime of residents
- Interest in improving biodiversity and various growing projects

The Stanrigg Disaster

There is a strong sense of connection to the Stanrigg disaster. Despite the disaster taking place over a hundred years earlier, the consultation work undertaken demonstrated that the disaster is still very much in the thoughts of the local communities.

Several people taking part in the Drop In Sessions referred to hearing family members or friends of family members talking about the experience of their relatives in relation to the Stanrigg disaster. Stories appear to have been handed down to each generation. The sense of loss does not appear diminished by time and there is a strong desire to find new ways of telling the story to new generations.

There is a desire to tell the story of Stanrigg through some form of information boards or way markers that help walkers to interpret the post industrial landscape.

Community Activism

Another common theme within the five communities is community activism. All five communities have a core group of community volunteers who strive to make their communities better for everyone. From landfill to windfarms these communities are well informed and expressive of positive and negative impacts on their village. Encouraging new volunteers is seen as crucial for the future.

CONCLUSION

Capturing stories before they are lost

Throughout the project there has been a sense of urgency about the loss of local information from older generations. There is a strong desire to record the stories and knowledge that exists within these communities so that it can be shared with future generations and new audiences. In particular, there is a desire to record the individuality and uniqueness of each village through memory, oral history and photographs.

Working together

All communities highlighted the benefits of intergenerational projects and/or information sharing between older people who will have stories about the history and heritage of the local communities and the younger members of the community who may not be familiar with the history and development of each community.

Activities for younger people

Each community noted the difficulties faced by children growing up in rural area. Many have no facilities such as a hall or community centre that would allow them to meet with friends. Heritage and nature projects which engage with young people would be beneficial

Connecting with nature

The importance of the landscape and getting outdoors is evident in each community. The benefits of walking and being outside enjoying the views across the local landscapes was expressed time and time again. This includes support for walking groups, information on walking routes, signage and interpretation and village trails which link walking with the history and heritage of each area.

Engaging with new audiences

There was an acknowledgement that new development and housing building means new residents who may not know the history and heritage of the community. Making people feel welcome and part of the community was seen as important and one way to do this is through local heritage. This can include making information available online or leaflet drops and posters. Activities which bring people together to share experiences and stories was seen as important and beneficial to the well being of the community. There is also an interest in bringing new visitors to the area and having activities for visitors, friends and family to do. This could include self led trails and information boards and way markers on walking routes.

The Rural Heritage Programme – Micro Grants

As part of the National Lottery Heritage Fund project, each local heritage plan has a list of potential projects.

Funding is in place for heritage micro grants which can fund small projects of around £50-£500 that use heritage to support the themes highlighted in this plan and help improve knowledge of natural or cultural heritage and support well being.

IN CONCLUSION

The purpose of this Heritage Plan was to identify the potential to use heritage as way of improving well being, support audience development and to preserve the unique heritage of the rural communities included in the pilot study.

The results of the community consultation demonstrates clearly that across all five communities there is a desire to:

- *Maintain and improve access to nature and outdoor spaces,*
- *Collate information on local history and heritage and make it accessible to new audiences*
- *Capture local stories that give each village a sense of individuality and identity*
- *Remember the hard work and sacrifice of generations of workers before them – particularly in relation to the disaster at Stanrigg Colliery.*
- *Utilise the Heritage Micro Grants for a range of Springboard Projects..*