Strategic Plan

July 2026



Coulter Community Trust
Registered as a charity with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator, no. SC053346

Executive summary

Coulter Community Trust (CCT) was established because we believe the long-term sustainability of our rural community depends upon strong social infrastructure – the combination of places, organisations and relationships that enable a community to function well. In Coulter, the gradual loss of community facilities, changing demographics and increasing social fragmentation have weakened that infrastructure. These challenges highlighted the need for a long-term, strategic approach to community-led development.

This Strategic Plan sets out the Trust's long-term direction and provides the framework within which all its activities and projects are developed. It establishes the principles that guide decision-making, ensuring that individual projects contribute to a coherent long-term strategy rather than being pursued in isolation.

Our approach is founded on the belief that successful community development begins with a clear understanding of local need. We identify opportunities through research, consultation and partnership working before developing practical, financially sustainable projects capable of delivering lasting public benefit. Community assets are viewed not as ends in themselves, but as places that enable people to meet, learn, volunteer, celebrate and support one another.

The Trust aspires to build a complementary portfolio of community initiatives and assets that collectively strengthen the social infrastructure of Coulter. Every project is assessed against demonstrated community need, its contribution to the Trust's strategic objectives, its relationship with existing and proposed facilities, and its long-term financial sustainability. This integrated approach ensures that resources are directed where they will achieve the greatest lasting benefit and that individual projects reinforce one another as part of a wider strategy for the community.

Our Strategy is founded on our strategic objectives:

- Strengthen community cohesion
- Promote wellbeing
- Safeguard our community assets
- Preserve our heritage
- Protect the environment
- Enable regeneration
- Build resilience

Together, these objectives provide a clear framework for prioritising investment, developing projects and measuring the Trust's long-term success.

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1. Introduction

Purpose

This Strategic Plan sets out the long-term vision, direction and priorities of Coulter Community Trust (CCT). It explains why we exist, the outcomes we want to achieve, and the principles that guide our decisions and activities.

The Plan provides the strategic framework for all the Trust's activities, ensuring that individual projects contribute to a coherent long-term vision for the community rather than being developed in isolation.

This document is intended to provide our Trustees, members, volunteers, partners and funders with a clear understanding of CCT's purpose, strategic objectives and approach to community-led development.

Relationship to Other Documents

This Strategic Plan sits at the top of the Trust's planning framework and is supported by project-specific business plans, including those for Coulter Hall and Coulter Library, which explain how individual projects contribute to the delivery of the Trust's strategic objectives. These business plans set out the evidence of need, project proposals, delivery arrangements and financial viability for individual projects.

The Strategic Plan should be read alongside the Trust's governing and operational documents, including its Constitution, policies and procedures. Together, these documents ensure that the Trust operates within a clear strategic direction, robust governance framework and effective system of management.

Document	Purpose
Strategic Plan	Defines our long-term vision, strategic objectives and organisational approach
Project Business Plans	Explain how individual projects contribute to the Strategic Plan and demonstrate their operational and financial viability
Constitution	Defines our charitable purposes, legal powers, membership arrangements and governance structure.
Policies	Describe how the Trust operates and ensures compliance with legal, regulatory and good governance requirements.

Review

This Strategic Plan is intended to remain relatively stable over the medium to long term and will normally be reviewed every three to five years.

Project Business Plans will be reviewed and updated more frequently to reflect changes in individual projects, operational experience and funding opportunities.

2. About our charity

Who are we

CCT exists to strengthen the long-term sustainability of Coulter by creating the conditions in which its people, organisations and community assets can thrive together. It was founded in April 2024 by village residents who shared concerns about declining community infrastructure, increasing social fragmentation and the loss of important village assets.



Many community charities are established to deliver a single project or respond to a specific opportunity. That is not the case for CCT. Projects do not define our charity – community needs do. CCT was established to be a permanent part of the community of Coulter. Its role is to understand the changing needs of our village and parish, and develop projects that respond to those needs over time. We take a long-term, strategic view of potential projects, ensuring that each one contributes to a coherent overall strategy rather than being pursued in isolation.

Our vision is for Coulter to become an inclusive, vibrant and thriving village and parish, with a resourceful, resilient and well-connected community, offering residents improved quality of life and making Coulter a better place to live, work and visit.

We will achieve this by understanding the changing needs of our community, developing projects that respond to those needs, and working collaboratively to deliver lasting social, environmental and economic benefit.

Our approach

We believe that successful community development is best achieved through local leadership, evidence-based decision making and the responsible stewardship of community assets. Rather than developing projects in isolation or simply responding to funding opportunities, we will seek to understand needs and aspirations of our community before identifying practical, sustainable projects. We recognise that community assets are not an end in themselves. Buildings and land are valuable because they create opportunities for people to meet, learn, volunteer, celebrate and support one another.

We will therefore acquire and manage assets only where community ownership will deliver lasting public benefit and where there is a clear strategic purpose and sustainable business model.

We are committed to the prudent management of charitable resources and to creating projects that are financially sustainable over the long term. This requires careful planning, sound governance and a willingness to make informed decisions based on evidence, recognising that successful projects are built on strong partnerships and active community participation.

Our approach is founded on a number of key principles that shape every aspect of the Trust's work:

- We are evidence-led rather than assumption-led, ensuring that projects are developed in response to demonstrated need.
- We take a long-term view, investing in assets and projects that will continue to benefit future generations rather than chasing short-term gains.
- We recognise that strong communities are built through participation and collaboration, and we place local people at the heart of our decision making.

Above all, we seek to strengthen the social infrastructure of Coulter by creating the conditions in which our community, its organisations and its assets become increasingly resilient, financially sustainable, and able to prosper.

What we have achieved

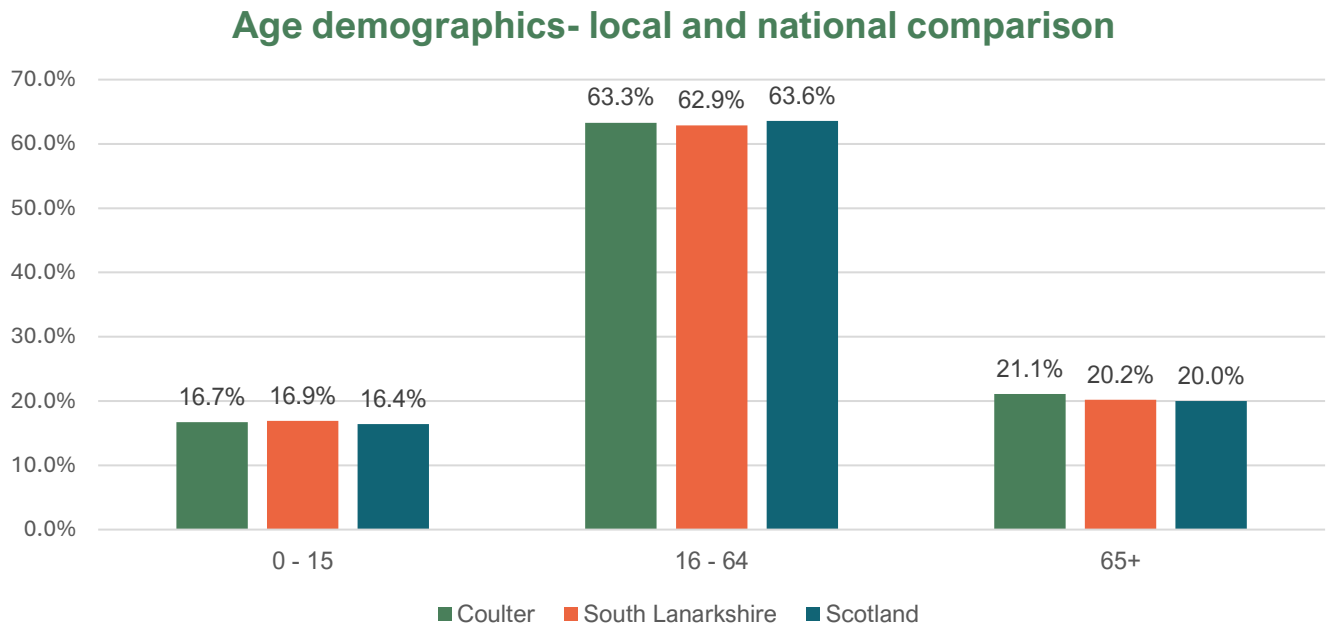
Working entirely through the commitment of our volunteers, CCT has established the governance, financial management and organisational capacity needed to pursue ambitious, long-term community projects. The Trust has built a growing membership, secured the confidence of funders and partners, and developed a strong evidence base to support its work.

In its first two years, the Trust has raised over £120,000 in donations and grant funding, generated more than £15,000 in hall hire income, secured the Community Asset Transfer of Coulter Hall, taken ownership of Coulter Library, and commissioned the professional studies needed to support the refurbishment of both buildings. These achievements have been delivered in collaboration with residents, businesses, funders, elected representatives, professional advisers and statutory bodies.

3. Our community

Demographics

According to the 2022 Census, there are 251 people living in Coulter Parish. The age breakdown of the local population is roughly in line with both regional and national trends.



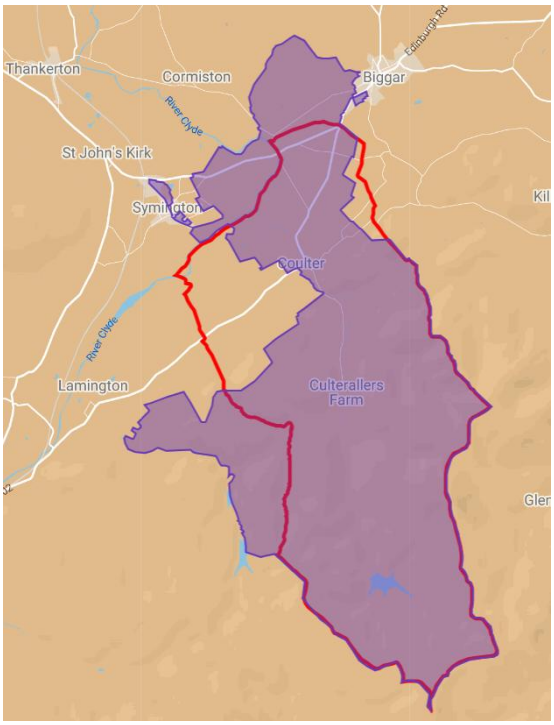
The population of Coulter has decreased in the past decade or so. At the 2011 census, there were 278 people living in the area, but this reduced to 251 at the 2022 census. This represents a 9.7% decrease in the local population. However, it should be noted that in small areas, a small change in the number of residents can result in a large percentage change.

Access to services

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) measures the level of deprivation across 6,976 datazones in Scotland.

While SIMD is relevant to rural areas, care needs to be taken in analysing the data because:

- Data zones in rural areas are bigger than those in urban areas.
- Pockets of deprivation are smaller in rural areas, and these are more likely to include a mix of households experiencing different levels of deprivation.
- Problems of transport and distance to employment and services are very important features of rural deprivation, and these factors have less impact on overall SIMD rank.



The majority of the Coulter Parish Boundary (shown in red on the map opposite) is located in the Biggar, Symington, Thankerton and Dolphinton – 02 data zone (shaded in purple). Whilst this datazone is ranked in the 20% least deprived in Scotland, Coulter experiences significant deprivation locally in regard to

geographic access to services, falling within the 10% of the most deprived data zones for this domain.

Challenges

Like many rural communities across Scotland, Coulter has experienced gradual changes that have reduced opportunities for community interaction and increased the risk of social isolation. Population change, digital technology, the centralisation of services, reduced public transport, changing patterns of employment and the loss of local facilities have all affected the way people live, work and participate in community life. The closure of our village pub and church, together with uncertainty surrounding the future of other community assets, has further reduced opportunities for Coulter residents to meet, organise activities and maintain social connections.

Our community also faces longer-term challenges in sustaining its population. A recent survey commissioned by CCT has identified a shortage of smaller, high-quality housing suitable for local people wishing to remain in, or return to, the village. Without appropriate housing and attractive community facilities, there is a risk that younger households, older residents wishing to downsize, and key members of the community will be lost over time.

Many community assets also face increasing pressures arising from ageing infrastructure, rising operating costs and significant maintenance liabilities. Without investment and adaptation, these assets risk becoming financially unsustainable, reducing the services and opportunities available to the community.

These challenges are interconnected. Declining facilities, limited housing opportunities and reduced participation are reinforcing one another, affecting the long-term sustainability and resilience of our community. Addressing these issues requires a co-ordinated, long-term approach informed by evidence, partnership working and community leadership.

Opportunities

Despite the challenges it faces, Coulter possesses significant strengths on which to build. The village has a strong sense of identity, an attractive rural setting, an active and supportive community, and a growing culture of volunteering and community participation. These qualities provide a solid foundation for long-term community-led regeneration.

The formation of CCT has demonstrated a clear appetite within the community to take greater responsibility for shaping the future of our village. Strong public support, a growing membership, successful fundraising and the willingness of local people to contribute their time, skills and experience provide confidence that community-led development can deliver lasting benefits.

Community ownership creates opportunities to secure important local assets for future generations, attract investment and ensure that decisions about their future are made in the interests of the community they serve. It also enables income generated from community assets to be reinvested in their ongoing operation, improvement and wider charitable purposes.

National and local policy increasingly recognises the value of community ownership, community wealth building and sustainable rural development. These priorities create opportunities for partnership working and investment, enabling the Trust to deliver projects that contribute to wider social, environmental and economic objectives while responding directly to local needs.

Together, these opportunities provide a strong foundation for the long-term regeneration of Coulter. By building on local strengths and responding to identified needs, the Trust aims to help create a thriving, resilient and sustainable community for current and future generations.

4. Our operating principles

CCT develops projects from evidence rather than assumption. We identify community needs through research, consultation and partnership working before developing practical, financially sustainable projects. Every project is expected to complement existing services, respond to an identified need and contribute to the Trust's long-term strategic objectives.

Consultation and community engagement

Community engagement is fundamental to the way CCT develops projects and makes decisions. We are committed to ensuring that our activities are informed by local people and by robust evidence of need, rather than by assumption or individual opinion.



Since its formation, the Trust has engaged extensively with residents, community groups, stakeholders and partner organisations using a range of formal and informal consultation methods. Where appropriate, this engagement is undertaken alongside professional advisers to ensure that community views are reflected throughout project development.

We recognise that consultation is an ongoing process rather than a single event. Community needs and aspirations evolve over time, and projects must evolve with them. Feedback from consultation is therefore considered alongside demographic information, policy, technical studies and financial appraisal when developing proposals, reviewing projects and setting priorities.



By maintaining an open and constructive dialogue with our community, we aim to ensure that our projects remain relevant, proportionate and responsive to local needs, while continuing to build trust, encourage participation and strengthen community ownership of the Trust's work.

Financial philosophy

The long-term success of the Trust depends upon sound financial management and prudent use of charitable resources. We intend to develop projects and community assets that are financially sustainable, enabling them to continue delivering public benefit without becoming dependent upon continual grant funding.

Our approach is to establish sustainable income streams wherever appropriate, including trading, property, fundraising, donations, investment income and other compatible activities. Any commercial activity undertaken by the Trust will support, rather than define, our charitable purposes, with financial surpluses reinvested in the operation, improvement and long-term sustainability of our community assets and wider charitable objectives.

Grant funding has a central role in enabling investment and supporting project development. However, our objective is to use grant funding strategically to create lasting community benefit, rather than relying upon it to support ongoing operational costs.

Through prudent financial planning, appropriate financial controls and the careful management of reserves, we aim to build a financially resilient organisation that is capable of responding to changing circumstances while continuing to deliver long-term benefit for the community.

Project integration

Each project undertaken by the Trust will have a distinct purpose while contributing to our wider strategic objectives. Projects are developed collectively rather than in isolation, ensuring that they complement one another, avoid unnecessary duplication and make the best use of community resources.

For example, Coulter Hall provides the principal venue for community activity, events and resilience, whilst Coulter Library provides a complementary focus for heritage, learning, quieter community use and affordable housing. Together they strengthen the social infrastructure of Coulter while avoiding duplication of purpose.

Continuous learning and improvement

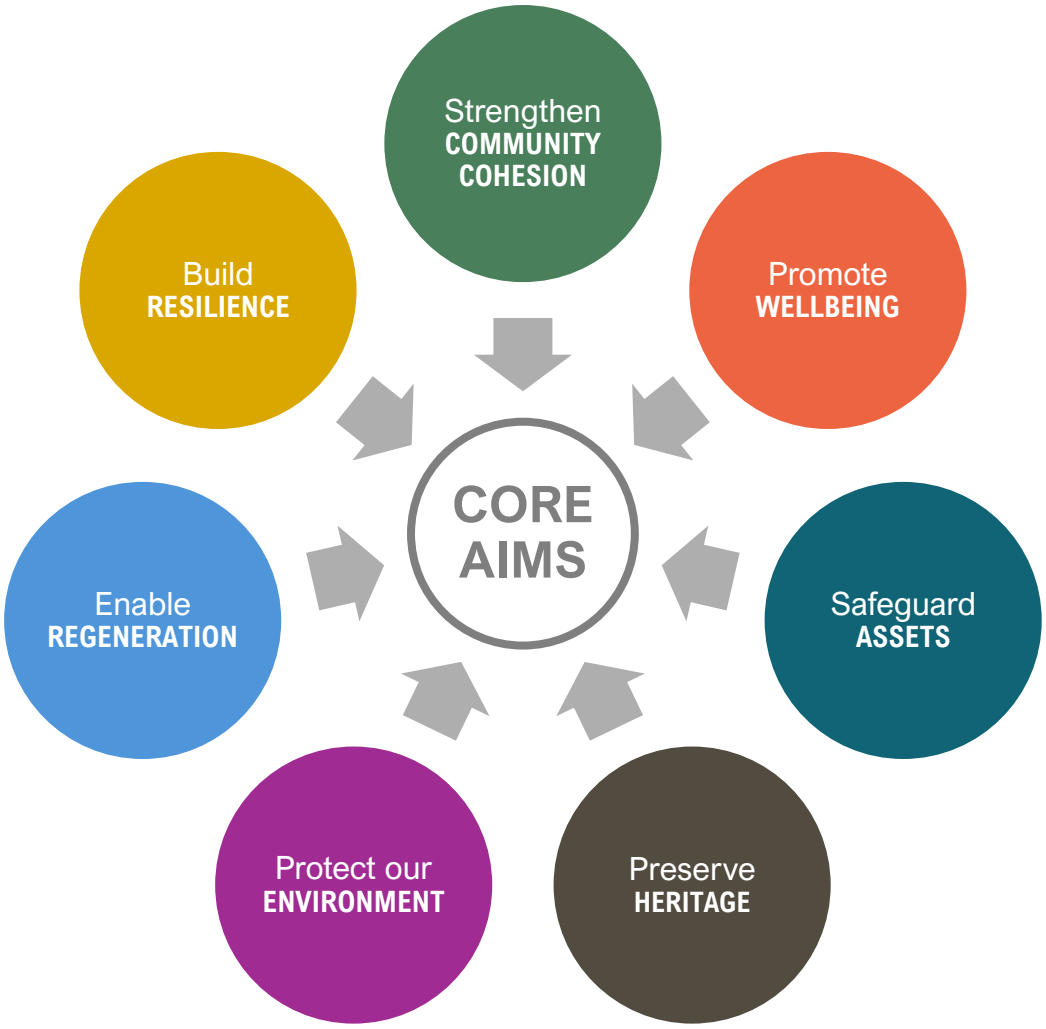
We recognise that the needs and aspirations of our community will continue to evolve over time. To remain effective, we must be willing to learn from experience, adapt to changing circumstances and continually review the way we develop projects, manage assets and deliver public benefit.

We are committed to listening to feedback, evaluating our performance and using the lessons learned to improve the way we work. We will monitor the performance of our projects against clearly defined objectives, ensuring that lessons learned are applied to future initiatives and that resources continue to be directed where they will have the greatest impact.

Continuous improvement is fundamental to the long-term evolution of the Trust. By embracing innovation, sharing knowledge and building on experience, we aim to strengthen our organisation, improve the services and facilities we provide, and ensure that CCT remains responsive, effective and relevant to the communities it serves.

5. Strategic approach

CCT's long-term success will be measured not by the number of projects it undertakes or the assets it owns, but by the positive difference it makes to the community it serves. The Trust's **core aims** provide the framework against which opportunities are assessed, resources are prioritised and success is measured. They ensure that we remain focused on delivering lasting public benefit while responding to the changing needs and aspirations of our community. These core aims are delivered through seven complementary strategic **objectives**, each addressing a different aspect of the Trust's long-term vision for our community.



Our core aims

All projects undertaken by the Trust are expected to contribute to one or more of our core aims, ensuring that individual activities support a coherent long-term strategy for the sustainable development of Coulter and its surrounding parish.

- To provide opportunities for village residents of all ages, background and ability to participate in events and activities on their doorstep, building an increased sense of ownership and inclusion in their community.
- To address the social needs of children, young people and their parents by providing opportunities for village families to come together, increasing their engagement and participation in community life.
- To address a lack of inclusion for those who are elderly, living alone or without their own transport, who struggle to maintain social connections because of poor bus service provision in the village.

- To promote physical wellbeing through the provision of leisure, sporting and recreational activities in the village.
- To improve mental wellbeing by encouraging residents to engage with community events and activities, extend their social and support networks within the village and develop greater personal resilience.
- To support aspiration and ambition, and encourage people to take an active role in organising activities in support of their community by providing opportunities for volunteering, personal development and lifelong learning.
- To build capacity within our community, strengthening the skills, abilities, experience, processes and resources that we need to become sustainable, adaptable and thriving.
- To lay solid foundations for rural regeneration and greater economic prosperity in the parish by making it a better place for people at all socioeconomic levels to live, work and visit.

Our objectives

Strengthen community cohesion



Strong communities are built on the relationships between people. They thrive when residents have opportunities to meet, participate, volunteer, share experiences and work together towards common goals. In rural communities like Coulter, these opportunities cannot be taken for granted and require active support if they are to be sustained over the long term.

Community cohesion is fundamental to the wellbeing, resilience and long-term sustainability of the parish. By creating opportunities for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to participate in community life, we aim to strengthen social connections, reduce isolation and foster a greater sense of belonging and shared responsibility.

We are committed to ensuring that our activities are inclusive and accessible, enabling everyone to contribute according to their interests, abilities and circumstances. Whether through volunteering, attending events, participating in local decision making or simply making use of community facilities, every opportunity for involvement helps to strengthen the social fabric of our village.

Community cohesion also depends upon people feeling that they have a genuine stake in the future of the place in which they live. By encouraging local participation, supporting community-led initiatives and placing local people at the centre of decision making, we aim to build confidence, develop local capacity and empower residents to shape the future of their community.

Promote wellbeing

For our community to flourish, we need to support the wellbeing of the people who live in it. Opportunities to participate in community life, build relationships, learn new skills, volunteer and enjoy welcoming public spaces all contribute to healthier, happier and more fulfilling lives.

We recognise that wellbeing encompasses physical, mental and social health, and that these aspects are closely connected. By creating opportunities for people to come together and

encouraging active participation in community life, we seek to support wellbeing across all ages and backgrounds.



Our projects will be designed to create environments in which people feel welcome, valued and able to participate. Whether through recreation, learning, volunteering, cultural activities or informal social interaction, we aim to remove barriers to participation and ensure that everyone has the opportunity to benefit from community life.

We are particularly committed to promoting inclusion and reducing inequalities in participation. We recognise that factors such as age, disability, transport, income and social isolation can limit opportunities for some members of the community. By considering accessibility and inclusivity in everything we do, we aim to ensure that our projects provide benefit for the widest possible range of people.

Safeguard assets

Community assets play an important role in supporting community life. They provide places where people can meet, learn, celebrate, volunteer and access services, helping to strengthen social connections and improve quality of life. Their value lies not simply in the buildings or land themselves, but in the opportunities they create for people and communities.

Community ownership can provide the stability and long-term perspective needed to protect important local assets and ensure that they continue to serve future generations. Bringing community assets together under a single organisation enables them to be planned, developed and managed within an overarching strategic framework, ensuring that investment decisions are guided by community need and long-term public benefit.

The Trust does not intend to acquire assets for their own sake. Every potential acquisition will be carefully assessed to understand the needs it would address, how it would complement existing community facilities and services, how it would contribute to delivery of the Trust's strategic objectives, and whether it can be operated and maintained on a financially sustainable basis. We therefore look to acquire and manage assets only where there is a clear strategic purpose, a realistic business model and the organisational capacity to fulfil our responsibilities as long-term custodians. This approach ensures that our assets work together efficiently, share resources where appropriate, avoid unnecessary duplication, and collectively deliver greater benefit than they could in isolation.

We believe that good stewardship is not about preserving buildings unchanged. It is about understanding their significance, respecting their character and adapting them sensitively and appropriately so that they remain relevant, useful and financially sustainable for future generations. By doing so, we can balance the protection of our built heritage with the evolving needs and aspirations of the community.

The Trust is committed to making the best possible use of the assets in its care, protecting their long-term value through responsible management, investment and maintenance. Where community assets generate a financial surplus, this will be reinvested in their ongoing operation, improvement and the wider charitable objectives of the Trust. We see ourselves not as owners in

the conventional sense, but as custodians acting on behalf of the community, with a responsibility to protect, enhance and pass on these assets in a better condition than we inherited them.

Preserve heritage



Coulter's heritage helps to define who we are. It reflects the history, character and identity of our village, providing a tangible connection between past, present and future generations. Historic buildings, landscapes, traditions and shared memories all contribute to a sense of place and belonging that cannot easily be recreated once lost.

Protecting our heritage is about more than preserving historic fabric. It is about ensuring that the stories, character and significance of our community continue to enrich people's lives and remain relevant to future generations. Heritage should be celebrated, understood and enjoyed as a living part of the community, rather than simply preserved as a record of the past.

We recognise that our historic buildings can most effectively be protected by ensuring that they remain useful and valued by the people they serve. We therefore support the sensitive adaptation and sustainable reuse of heritage assets, ensuring that they continue to meet contemporary needs while respecting their historic significance and architectural character.

Heritage also provides opportunities for education, volunteering, lifelong learning and community engagement. By encouraging people to explore and understand the history of their local area, we hope to strengthen community identity, foster civic pride and inspire greater participation in caring for the places that matter most.

Through this approach, we aim not only to conserve our heritage, but to ensure that it continues to make a meaningful contribution to the social, cultural and economic life of the community.

Protect our environment

Protecting our environment means reducing the environmental impact of our activities while safeguarding the natural and built environment that makes Coulter sustainable and an attractive place to live.

We recognise that environmental sustainability and financial sustainability are closely linked. Improving the energy efficiency of our community assets reduces operating costs, strengthens their long-term viability and, at the same time, reduces their environmental impact. We therefore seek practical, evidence-led approaches that balance environmental performance with financial sustainability, heritage conservation and community benefit.

Older and historic buildings present particular challenges. Rather than seeking to maximise energy performance at the expense of their character and significance, we support sensitive improvements that respect their heritage value while delivering meaningful reductions in energy demand, carbon emissions and operating costs.

Our commitment extends beyond the buildings in our care. We will seek opportunities to protect and enhance the wider environment through responsible land management, biodiversity improvements, sustainable landscape design and the protection of natural features where appropriate. Environmental considerations will be integrated into project planning and decision

making from the earliest stages, ensuring that our activities contribute positively to both the built and natural environment.

By reducing environmental impact, improving resource efficiency and protecting the place where we live, we aim to strengthen both the long-term resilience of our community and the assets entrusted to our care.

Enable regeneration

Successful regeneration is about creating places where people want to live, work, volunteer and participate in community life. It is not achieved through individual projects alone, but through sustained investment in the social, environmental, cultural and economic wellbeing of the community.

Our approach to regeneration is founded on evidence of local need and shaped by the aspirations of the community. We will identify opportunities that deliver lasting public benefit, recognising that meaningful regeneration is incremental and requires long-term commitment rather than short-term intervention.

Regeneration extends beyond buildings. It includes supporting volunteering, encouraging participation, improving the local environment, creating opportunities for learning and enterprise, and helping to make Coulter an attractive and sustainable place in which to live and work.



Through partnership working and community leadership, we aim to deliver projects that complement and reinforce one another, creating wider benefits than could be achieved through isolated initiatives. By building on the strengths of our community and investing where it will have the greatest long-term impact, we will drive lasting improvements that will benefit current and future generations of Coulter residents.

Our ambition is not simply to preserve what exists today, but to help shape a thriving rural community that is well equipped to meet the opportunities and challenges of the future.

Build resilience

Resilient communities are better able to respond to change, overcome challenges and seize new opportunities. Resilience is built over time through strong relationships, effective organisations and sustainable community assets that enable communities to adapt and prosper.

We recognise that rural communities face a wide range of challenges, including changing demographics, economic pressures, climate change and significant weather events, rising costs and the loss of local services. Building resilience means creating the capacity to respond quickly and positively to all these challenges while maintaining a strong sense of identity and purpose.

Our approach is to strengthen resilience by investing in people, organisations and community assets together. We will build local skills, encourage volunteering, support community leadership and create facilities that are adaptable, financially sustainable and capable of meeting changing community needs over the long term.

Partnership working is fundamental to this approach. By working collaboratively with Coulter residents, community organisations, public bodies, businesses and funders, we aim to strengthen local capacity, share knowledge and make the best use of available resources.

Resilience is not an end in itself, but the result of sustained investment in strong communities. Building local capacity, supporting community ownership and encouraging participation, will help us to ensure that Coulter remains a thriving, adaptable and confident community for generations to come.

6. Our delivery model

CCT's delivery model provides a structured framework for transforming identified community needs into successful, sustainable projects. It ensures that decisions are evidence-based, risks are understood, resources are used responsibly and projects remain aligned with our strategic objectives throughout their development and delivery.

Identifying need

The success of any community project depends upon a clear understanding of the needs it is intended to address. We will therefore begin every project by gathering and evaluating evidence to ensure that our activities respond to genuine local priorities and deliver lasting public benefit.

Our assessment of need will draw upon a wide range of information, including community consultation, demographic data, local and national policy, technical studies, stakeholder engagement and the experience of residents, volunteers and partner organisations. Where appropriate, we will commission independent professional studies to provide robust evidence and inform decision making.



We recognise that community needs and the wider operating environment will continue to evolve over time. Evidence gathering is therefore an ongoing process rather than a one-off exercise undertaken at the start of a project. As new information becomes available, we will review our priorities and, where necessary, adapt projects to ensure that they continue to address genuine community needs and remain aligned with our strategic objectives.

We are committed to making objective, evidence-based decisions throughout the life of every project. We will regularly review projects to ensure that they remain viable, deliver public benefit and represent an effective use of charitable resources. Where circumstances change and a project no longer meets these tests, we will be prepared to modify, defer or discontinue it, regardless of the time, effort or funding already invested. We believe that responsible stewardship requires us to look forward rather than be constrained by past decisions.

This evidence-led approach provides the foundation for well-informed project development and responsible application of charitable resources.

Project development

Once a need has been identified, we will follow a structured project development process to ensure that potential solutions are practical, sustainable and capable of delivering long-term public benefit. Our objective is to reduce uncertainty, manage risk and establish a robust evidence base before significant capital resources are committed to implementation.

Project development typically includes the technical, financial and legal work needed to evaluate options, refine proposals, understand risks and establish a robust business case. Where appropriate, we will commission independent professional advisers to provide specialist expertise and ensure that decisions are based on sound technical, financial and legal advice.

We recognise that successful projects are rarely developed in a straight line. As new information becomes available, proposals may be refined, alternative approaches explored, or project scope

adjusted to improve outcomes and respond to changing circumstances. This iterative approach helps to ensure that projects remain proportionate, achievable and aligned with the Trust's strategic objectives.

Progression from one stage of development to the next is determined by evidence rather than assumption. At each stage, we review whether the project continues to address an identified need, remains financially viable, represents an effective use of charitable resources and is capable of delivering meaningful public benefit. Projects will proceed only where there is sufficient evidence that these criteria can be met.

We recognise that all projects involve risk. Our objective is not to eliminate risk altogether, but to understand it, reduce it where practicable, and ensure that informed decisions are made before progressing to the next stage of development.

Project management

Successful projects require clear governance, effective planning and disciplined management throughout their delivery. Once a project has been approved for implementation, we will establish arrangements that are proportionate to its scale, complexity and risk, ensuring that it is delivered safely, efficiently and in accordance with the Trust's strategic objectives.

We recognise that the most cost-effective time to identify and resolve uncertainty is during project development rather than implementation. We can then enter the implementation phase with a clear understanding of project scope, design, programme, costs and risks. This may involve up-front investment in surveys, investigations, professional advice, detailed design and risk management before significant capital expenditure is committed.

Projects will be managed using appropriate project management processes, with clearly defined roles, responsibilities and reporting arrangements. We will establish proportionate, realistic programmes, budgets and risk registers, and monitor progress against agreed milestones to ensure that projects remain under effective control and aligned with their intended outcomes.

Where specialist expertise is required, we will appoint appropriately qualified professional advisers and contractors through fair and transparent procurement processes. The Trust will retain overall responsibility for project governance, ensuring that professional advice is considered alongside community priorities, financial prudence and long-term operational sustainability.

Effective project management also requires discipline in controlling change. Once implementation has started, we will endeavour to minimise changes to agreed project scope and design. While unforeseen circumstances may occasionally require modifications, unnecessary changes during implementation can increase costs, extend programmes and introduce additional risk. We will therefore encourage thorough planning and informed decision making before implementation begins, reducing the likelihood of avoidable changes during delivery.

Throughout project delivery, we will maintain regular communication with funders, partners, stakeholders and the community, ensuring that significant decisions are taken transparently and with proper accountability. We will continue to review project risks, costs and expected benefits, adapting our approach where necessary to ensure that projects continue to represent the best use of charitable resources and deliver lasting public benefit.

Working in partnership

Successful community development is rarely achieved by a single organisation acting alone. The most effective and sustainable projects are delivered through collaboration, bringing together the knowledge, skills and resources of a wide range of partners who share a common commitment to improving the community.



We will work constructively with residents, volunteers, community organisations, local authorities, public bodies, funders, local businesses and professional advisers throughout the development and delivery of our projects. Each partner brings valuable experience and expertise, enabling us to make better-informed decisions and achieve outcomes that would not be possible independently.

Partnerships will be built on openness, mutual respect and a shared understanding of roles and responsibilities. We will establish clear expectations from the outset, communicate openly throughout the life of a project and ensure that decisions are taken transparently and in the best interests of the community.

Whilst we value the contribution of our partners, responsibility for strategic direction and management of the Trust's assets rests with our Trustees. Professional advice and stakeholder views will inform our decisions, but they will always be considered alongside community priorities, our charitable purposes and our responsibility to ensure the prudent use of charitable resources.

We will also seek opportunities to share knowledge, experience and good practice with other community organisations, recognising that collaboration extends beyond individual projects and contributes to stronger, more resilient communities across the wider area.

Volunteering and community participation

Our volunteers are fundamental to the success of the Trust. They contribute their time, knowledge, skills and enthusiasm to the development and delivery of our projects, enabling us to achieve far more than would be possible through financial resources alone.



Community participation takes many forms. While some people contribute through regular volunteering, others support the Trust by becoming members, attending events, participating in consultations, serving as Trustees, sharing professional expertise or simply using and promoting the facilities and services we provide. Every contribution helps to strengthen the Trust and the wider community.

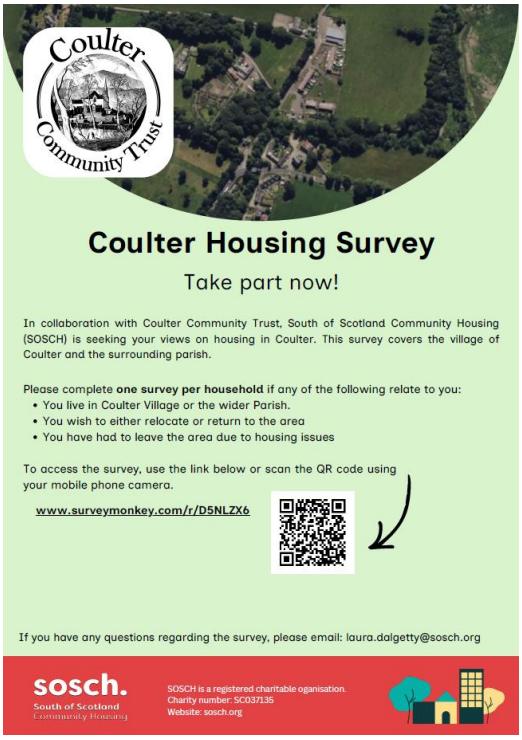
We are committed to creating an inclusive environment in which people feel welcome, valued and able to contribute according to their interests, abilities and availability. We will endeavour to remove unnecessary barriers to participation, provide appropriate support and training where required, and recognise the important contribution that volunteers and participants make to the success of the Trust.

Volunteering also creates wider benefits for the community. It strengthens social connections, develops skills and confidence, encourages community leadership and helps people to develop a

greater sense of ownership and pride in the place where they live. By creating meaningful opportunities for participation, we aim not only to deliver successful projects, but also to build the capacity, resilience and long-term sustainability of the community itself.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation are essential to ensuring that the Trust continues to deliver meaningful public benefit, using its resources effectively. We will regularly review the performance of our projects, assets and activities to assess whether they continue to address identified needs, contribute to our strategic objectives and represent good value for the community.



The approach taken to monitoring and evaluation will be proportionate to the scale and complexity of each project. Appropriate measures will be selected according to the nature, scale and objectives of each project.

Monitoring and evaluation are not undertaken simply to demonstrate accountability to funders, but to improve the way we work. We will use the evidence gathered to identify opportunities for improvement, inform future decision making and ensure that lessons learned from one project are applied to the next.

We recognise that success is not measured solely by the completion of projects, but by the lasting benefits they create for the community. By embedding monitoring, evaluation and learning throughout our work, we will continue to strengthen the Trust, improve the effectiveness of our projects and ensure that our activities remain aligned with the changing needs and aspirations of the community.

Performance is typically measured against a small number of strategic indicators, such as:

- membership
- volunteer participation
- utilisation of community assets
- financial sustainability
- project outcomes
- community engagement

7. Governance and management

Good governance underpins everything that CCT does. Effective leadership, sound financial management, robust decision making and clear accountability are essential to maintaining public confidence and ensuring that the Trust can deliver its charitable purposes over the long term.

Charitable purposes

CCT was founded by residents of the village for the public benefit of the community of Coulter Parish, South Lanarkshire with the following purposes to be exercised following the principles of sustainable development:

- the provision of recreational facilities, or the organisation of recreational activities
- the advancement of the arts, heritage, culture or science.
- the advancement of citizenship or community development.

In this context, *sustainable development* means development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Legal structure



CCT is a two-tier Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation, registered with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) no. SC053346. This structure provides a separate legal personality and limited liability for our members and Trustees. Our charitable status entitles us to rates relief, access to charitable funding and other support.

Ordinary membership is open to any individual over 16 who is resident in the Coulter Parish. Others living elsewhere who have a connection to Coulter and support the aims and purposes of the charity may join as associate members, but do not have voting rights. The ordinary members therefore control the charity.

The Constitution allows corporate bodies that support the aims and activities of CCT to become corporate associate members.

The powers in our constitution are wide enough to cover registering an interest in land and to exercise the right to buy land under Part 2 or Part 3A of the Land Reform Act 2003 or to exercise the right to buy land under Part 5 of the Land Reform Act 2016. CCT was issued with a Sustainable Development Confirmation Notice in August 2025, confirming it as an eligible body under Community Right to Buy.

Leadership

CCT is governed by a Board, which must consist of between 3 and 10 Trustees. Unless co-opted to the Board under the terms of the Constitution, Trustees must be elected from the Ordinary Members of the charity. No more than 4 Trustees may be co-opted, and Elected Trustees must always make up the majority of the board. Employees of the charity are not eligible for membership of the charity and may not be co-opted as Trustees. Full information on election, appointment, retiral and re-election of Trustees and office-bearers can be found in CCT's Constitution.

Our Board recognises the importance of best practice and strong governance in establishing CCT as an effective, resilient and sustainable charity. As the Trust grows and our projects progress, suitably qualified and experienced volunteers will be recruited to take on key operational roles, with staff being recruited to fill paid positions if this becomes necessary to secure successful outcomes.

As part of CCT's core aim to support aspiration and ambition, there will be a plan for succession by encouraging members to play an active role in the running of the charity. This will include appointing members to key volunteer leadership roles, inviting members to be observers at Board meetings, and providing a clear path for advancement within the charity. Supported by CCT's Diversity and Inclusion Policy, the Trustees aim to maximise diversity of thought on our Board and Management Committee by encouraging those from under-represented groups to put themselves forward for Board and management positions. After each AGM, the Board will seek to co-opt an Ordinary Member aged between 16 and 25 years as a Trustee, with the specific role of representing the interests of young people in Coulter Parish.

The Board aims to maintain the highest standards of governance, integrity and leadership; Trustees are expected to act as role models to those aspiring to personal development.

Operation, policy and procedures

CCT has implemented the following policy documents, which complement and build upon the governance framework set out in the Constitution:

- Acceptance of donations policy
- Code of conduct
- Complaints procedure
- Data protection policy
- Delegation of authority policy
- Disciplinary procedure
- Equality, diversity and inclusion policy
- Expenses policy
- Fire safety policy
- Gift and hospitality policy
- Health and safety statement and policy
- Overnight hiring policy
- Reserves policy
- Risk management policy
- Safeguarding policy
- Social media policy
- Trustee conflict of interest policy
- Trustee code of conduct
- Whistleblowing policy

Induction and training will be provided to new trustees, staff and (where appropriate) volunteers on the use of these policies.

The Trust supports the Scottish Government's principles of Fair Work First, Community Wealth Building and Just Transition to net zero. We will reflect these principles in the way we govern the charity, procure goods and services, develop projects and work with our partners, ensuring that environmental, social and economic benefits are delivered together.

CCT is also committed to The Scottish Governance Code for the Third Sector and the Scottish Fundraising Adjudication Panel's Code of Fundraising Practice, and we will sign up to a variety of other good practice badges when appropriate, including the Business Pledge, Disability Confident, Dementia Friendly, Breastfeeding Friendly Scotland etc.

Risk management

Effective risk management is fundamental to the responsible governance of the Trust. All organisations face uncertainty, and the successful delivery of our charitable purposes depends upon identifying, understanding and managing the risks that could affect our people, assets, projects, finances and reputation.

Our approach is not to eliminate risk altogether, but to ensure that risks are understood, assessed and managed in a proportionate and informed manner. By considering risk as an integral part of strategic planning, project development, project management and day-to-day operations, we seek to make well-informed decisions while protecting the long-term interests of the Trust and the community it serves.

Our Trustees maintain strategic oversight of organisational risk through a formal risk management framework supported by the Trust's Risk Register. Risks are identified, assessed, assigned to responsible individuals and reviewed regularly to ensure that appropriate mitigation measures are in place and remain effective. This process enables the Trust to respond proactively to changing circumstances and emerging risks.

Risk management is embedded throughout the Trust's governance and operational activities. It informs the development of projects, the management of community assets, financial planning, regulatory compliance and the protection of the Trust's reputation. Lessons learned through monitoring, evaluation and operational experience are incorporated into the ongoing review of risks and mitigation measures, supporting continuous improvement across the organisation.

Further information on the Trust's approach to risk management is contained within the Risk Management Policy, which sets out the governance arrangements, responsibilities and procedures that support this strategic commitment.