

# Communications and Marketing Strategy

October 2023 – December 2024



*Building the foundations for more effective communications*

# Introduction

The Calder Valley Community Land Trust is a small and dynamic charity based in the Calder Valley. Our mission is to work with the people of the Calder Valley to hold property and **create sustainable and affordable homes** in vibrant communities.

The Trust has grown significantly over recent years with multiple new projects currently under development. The need to communicate with people in our community – and further afield – has never been greater. Alongside, community support for our projects, we also **need to raise funding** to support our work and work closely with other organisations to deliver on our ambitions.

Capacity for marketing and communications within the Trust is limited. We employ one member of staff who oversees all operational responsibilities. Our Board of Trustees provide strategic oversight and support when they can but perform their role with us in a voluntary capacity on top of other roles and responsibilities.

This Communications Strategy takes into account these **resource limitations** and sets out a recommended approach for communications and marketing up to December 2024.

# Objectives

As a charity with a bold vision, **securing the funds** required to deliver on the scale of our ambition is a key objective for the Trust.

However, we acknowledge that for future fundraising efforts to be as successful as possible, work is needed initially to **raise the charity's profile** – both in the local community but also with potential funders and partners from further afield.

As such, this Communications Strategy sets out how the Trust will:

- **Raise awareness and understanding** of the Trust's work
- **Establish, build and maintain the Trust's reputation** as an exemplary provider of sustainable and affordable homes and buildings
- **Encourage ongoing engagement** with the Trust – nudging people from initial interest to active supporter of the Trust's work

Audience insight

# Audience overview

## Primary audience

As a local charity, the Trust's primary audience is **individuals and organisations based in the Calder Valley** and its surrounding places. This includes the following areas:

- Calder Valley towns and villages (Mytholmroyd, Hebden Bridge, Todmorden)
- The wider Calderdale area (Halifax, Sowerby Bridge, Brighouse)
- West Yorkshire/ Lancashire (neighboring towns and cities that have a vested interest in seeing our area thrive)

## Secondary audience

We would also like to **raise our profile nationally** to support future fundraising efforts and position us as a leading Community Land Trust. National organisations and individuals may choose to support our work if they share our values and/ or they have an interest in/ passion for the following:

- Community/ local solutions
- Housing
- Sustainability/ climate action
- Community Land Trusts

# Current audience

The Trust's current audience can be predominantly split into four main groups:

## Internal

- Trustees
- Advisory Panel
- Members
- Tenants
- Community shareholders

## Supporters

- Event attendees
- Newsletter subscribers
- Social media followers

## Partners

- Local/ regional (ie. Fielden Hall MA, Friends of Hebden Bridge station, Connect Housing)
- National (ie. CLT Network, Network Rail)
- Suppliers
- Networks (ie. Community Anchor Network, Locality)

## Funders

- Local/ regional (Calderdale Council, CFFC)
- National (National Lottery, Homes England)

*A more detailed engagement mapping exercise can be found at Appendix A*



# Aspirational audience

The Trust also has an aspiration to communicate **more effectively** with the following groups:

- **General public** – particularly those living and working in the Calder Valley and the surrounding area
- **Young people** – including 18 – 24-year-olds looking to get their own home and young families
- **Sustainability** partners and networks

*A more detailed engagement mapping exercise can be found at Appendix A*



Strategy



# Scope

This Strategy has been developed taking into account the Trust's limited capacity for the delivery of communications and marketing activity.

The approach set out in this Strategy focuses on **building a programme of core communications** to share more about what the Trust is and does. This can then be developed as the Trust grows and further resources become available.

This Strategy **does not** go into detail on project specific communications. Whilst it is acknowledged that showcasing projects and demonstrating success is a key part of the core communications function, it is recommended that anything beyond this (ie. delivering a community shares offer) has its own separate communications plan and comms budget. More information about this will be provided in the Workplan.



# Suggested approach

In order to **build solid foundations** on which future communications work can be layered, it is recommended that activity for 2023/24 is focused on three key areas:

## Building the brand

- Clearly define the Trust's brand positioning (who we are, what we do, why support us, how you can support us) – simplify and build on existing messages to win hearts and minds
- Develop the Trust's visual identity to reinforce positioning (logo, look and feel, photography, templates etc.)
- Ensure brand positioning and visual identity are rolled out across all existing channels/ touchpoints

## Building on existing strengths\*

- Review existing channels and implement improvements to improve effectiveness
- Predominantly focus on improving frequency, consistency and quality of current communications, rather than introducing new channels/ tactics at this time

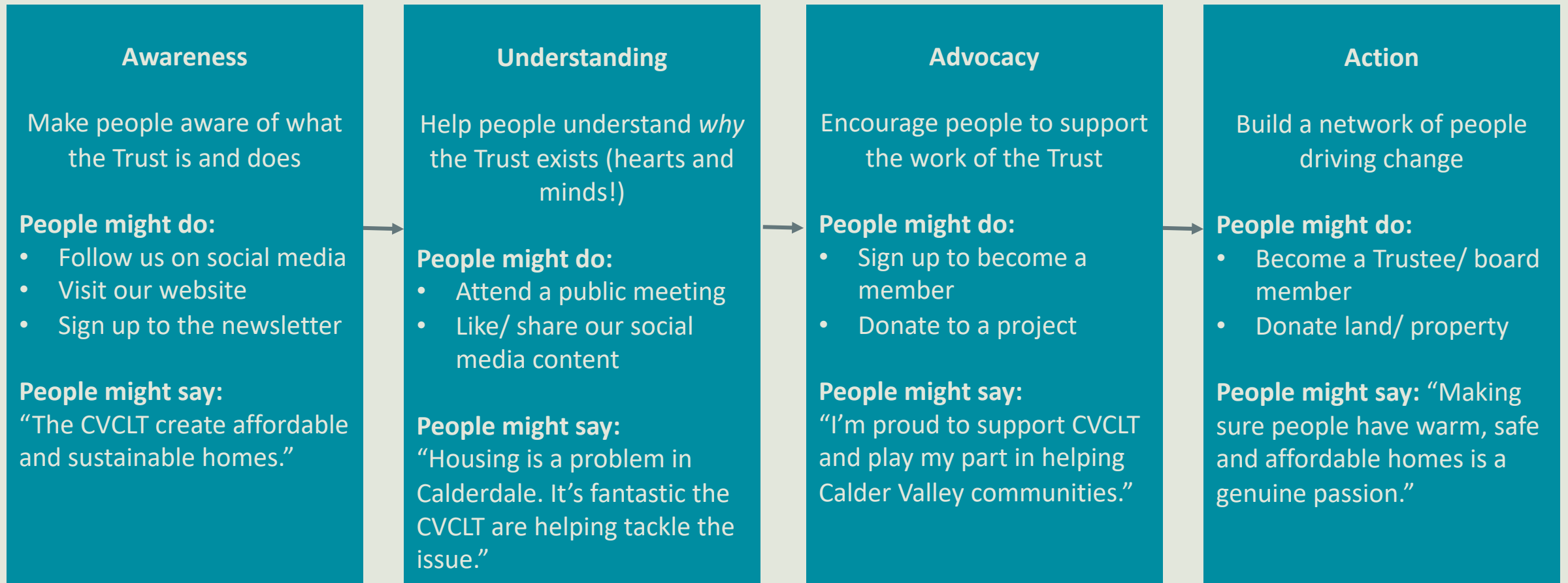
## Building capacity

- Strengthen internal/ member communications
- Give internal audience groups and supporters the tools to communicate on the Trust's behalf
- Identify external opportunities for promotion (such as local events and partner websites)

*\*A SWOT analysis and list of current communications activity/ assets can be found at Appendix B and C*

# Audience journey

Once the foundations are in place, we will then be able to **take people on a journey** from first interest to active supporter of the Trust's work:



Implementation

# Workplan

For further detail about the **specific activity** that will be completed up to December 2024 please see the separate Workplan document.

Alongside channels and tactics, this document also sets out:

- Recommended **budget allocation and timescales** for delivery
- Suggestions for how the work could be **resourced** for the Board to consider

The following pages give an **overview** of the activities that are included in the Workplan – grouped under the three key areas:

- Building the brand
- Building on existing strengths
- Building capacity





# Building the brand

## Brand review

- Review and update the Trust's key messages for different audience groups
- Produce 'elevator pitch' standard copy about the Trust (ie. 50 words, 100 words, 250 words)
- Develop the Trust's existing visual identity to ensure that it speaks to key audience groups and produce guidelines for how to use it to ensure consistency of communications
- Develop templates in the developed visual style (ie. Letterhead, Powerpoint template, social media headers/post templates etc.)
- Commission professional photographer to take images of key projects to 'bring to life' the Trusts work (images to be used on website, social media, printed materials, annual report etc.)

## Brand rollout

- Conduct a website audit and user journey mapping exercise to identify structural, visual, functionality and wording changes needed on the current site
- Implement changes across the site, including adding new pages and/or functionality as required (ie. FAQs)
- Rollout the visual identity across other digital channels (ie. newsletter and social media)



# Building on existing strengths

## Business-as-usual

- Continue to issue bi-monthly newsletters
- Organic posting on social media as required
- Member communications including member surveys and AGM invites and minutes

## Strengthen current comms

- Delivery of x3 public meetings in 2024, including the implementation of a booking system for data collection
- Conduct audit of current newsletter system to identify improvements (ie. design, evergreen copy, functionality, welcome sequence etc.)
- Produce an evergreen leaflet/ poster and distribute to key sites (libraries, sports centres, local noticeboards, shop windows etc.)
- Continued development of case studies to show human impact of the Trust's work – explore potential PR opportunities to maximise reach

# Building capacity

## Building internal capacity

- Deliver a social media training session for interested Trustees
- Develop a digital communications pack/ handbook for Trustees, Advisory Group participants and members of the Trust to enable them to share information about the Trust across their own networks
- Develop an 'events pack' for use at Trust and external events (ie. pop up stand, leaflets, merch)

## Exploring external opportunities

- Identify local/ partner websites that would be willing to include some information about the Trust (ie. HebWeb) and reach out to build relationships
- Identify exhibition and speaking opportunities at local events that are taking place in the Valley - book slots as appropriate
- Explore opportunities for strengthening links with Calderdale Council and local councillors and MPs (including CultureDale opportunities)

# Measurement

Communications activity will be reviewed on an ongoing basis throughout the lifetime of this strategy using the success measures set out below:

Objective	Success measures
<b>Raise awareness and understanding</b> of the Trust's work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase in social media followers</li><li>• Increase in newsletter subscribers/ open rate and click-through rate</li><li>• Increase in website visitors/ dwell time</li></ul>
<b>Establish, build and maintain the Trust's reputation</b> as an exemplary provider of sustainable and affordable homes and buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase in social media engagement (likes, comments, shares)</li><li>• Improved social media sentiment</li><li>• Increase in attendance at public events</li><li>• Increased media coverage</li></ul>
<b>Encourage ongoing engagement</b> with the Trust – nudging people from initial interest to active supporter of the Trust's work  <i>Baselines and specific targets to be established</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase in membership (target: 400 members by July 2024)</li><li>• Increase in donations</li><li>• Increase in engagement with future fundraising/ community shares initiatives</li></ul>

# Thank you

Prepared by: Janine Radcliffe, Radwood Communications  
Prepared on: 28 October 2023 (updated 12 November)

# Background and research

# Appendix A – Audience mapping

Current stakeholders	Current marketing/comms activity	Level of engagement with the Trust (High/Medium/Low)
Trustees	Receive member comms, emails and Annual Report	High
Advisory Panel	Receive member comms, specific requests for support and Annual Report	Medium
Members	Receive member comms and emails; Annual Report	Low
Tenants	Tenant newsletter, Christmas cards, Annual report, phone, visit, resolving issues.	Low
Partners (1)	Project/task specific communication. Some subscribe to newsletter.	High
Funders (2)	Project/task specific communication e.g. monitoring reports. Some subscribe to newsletter and receive annual review.	High
Individuals/firms who have worked with us e.g. accountants/builders/banks/printers/consultants etc.	Project/task specific communication. Some subscribe to newsletter.	Low
Attendees at CVCLT Public Talks	None after talk unless they are members or subscribers to the newsletter.	Low
Community Shareholders	As members they receive all member communication plus a share interest certificate or payment with accompanying email annually.	Low
CLTs visited or advised	Ad-hoc email or meeting with specific purpose, e.g. advice on engaging members.	Low
General public	Website; Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter	Low
Networks / organisations we are a part of (3)	Quarterly zoom meetings; emails, receive their newsletters, send our newsletters and annual review.	Low

1. Organisations or individuals with whom CVCLT has actively worked extensively at local/national i.e. Connect, John Eastwood, Fielden Hall MA, Friends of HB Station, Fielden Acre MA, National CLT Network

2. National Lottery, Homes England, Calderdale MBC, Todmorden Town Board, Community Foundation for Calderdale, Hebden Royd Town Council, Todmorden Town Council

3. Community Anchor Network (CAN), Locality, CLT network



# Appendix A – Audience mapping

Aspirational Stakeholders	Aim of Activity	Potential marketing channels and tools
Potential new donors (organisations and individuals)	To raise awareness of CVCLT and its activity and value	Social Media Attendance at conferences/events Local outreach
Potential new members, advisory board members and trustees with a diversified profile	To raise awareness of CVCLT and its activity and value To encourage becoming a member/advisor/trustee of the CVCLT To diversify membership and board population	Emails and newsletters, website Social Media posts & blogging Advertising through Charity support organisations e.g. Getting On Board Comms to partners and service providers. Local noticeboards Local events Leafleting
Engagement with new networks e.g. climate change, sustainability/ retrofitting	To raise awareness of CVCLT in the network and more broadly through joint activity	Membership Joint event and co-promotion Mutual promotion through social media

# Appendix B – SWOT analysis

## Strengths

- Existing work done via draft Digital Communications and Fundraising Strategy and Communications Strategy
- Raised profile through Todmorden Enterprise Centre and High St Hebden Bridge developments
- Existing digital infrastructure e.g. website, social media and monthly newsletter
- Existing numbers in terms of engagement are decent for a charity of the size and resources of CVCLT

## Opportunities

- Consideration of the 5 P's: product, promotion, packaging, place and pricing
- Potential opportunities to engage more with the 'grassroots': members, tenants, community shareholders, local organisations, other CLTs and the public to increase support and awareness of CLT's work
- Data collection on event attendees and potential future email contacts
- Developing, and communicating with, a list of aspirational stakeholders
- Progress and coverage of new developments such as Todmorden Enterprise Centre, High St Hebden Bridge and other projects to raise CLT profile
- Opportunities from AI: MS or ChatGPT

## Weaknesses

- Capacity: comms and marketing work previously done by Andrew Bibby and currently by Paul Brannigan as Executive Manager
- Currently a low level of engagement with the 'grassroots': membership, tenants, community shareholders, local organisations, other CLTs and potential public supporters
- Annual budget of £500 for comms and marketing: inadequate for promoting major projects and developing greater engagement across the board

## Threats

- Capacity beyond trustees to run CLT comms at an important time
- Funding environment – will funding become more competitive?
- Negative publicity around projects that local community doesn't like
- Projects that the CLT don't have the capacity to do or to complete to high standards which could impact on the CVCLT image and brand
- Potential conflict in relationships with and between stakeholders and the potential for bad communications to result

# Appendix C – Current communications activity/ assets

To date, much of the marketing and communications has been carried out by former CLT Secretary/ trustee Andrew Bibby (when Trustee and Secretary) and Paul Brannigan (Trust Executive Manager). This has taken the form of:

- Logo and slogan for promotion on all marketing materials
- Newsletter sent bi-monthly to members and subscribers
- Member communications including member surveys and AGM invites and minutes
- The CVCLT website: <https://caldervalleyclt.org.uk/>
- Social media, including:
  - [Twitter](#)
  - [Facebook](#)
  - [YouTube](#)
- Posters (digital and printed) to promote events such as the Trust's public meetings
- Production of hard copy and digital '[Annual Review](#)'
- Christmas cards for tenants
- Campaigns work using local figures such as Kevin Doyle's assistance to Fielden Acre's community share offer