

A photograph of two children playing in the snow at night. The child in the foreground is wearing a red jacket with Marvel Comics characters and a red and blue beanie. The child in the background is wearing a green jacket and a blue beanie. They are both covered in snow, and the air is filled with falling snow. In the background, there are blurred lights and a white 'L' shaped marker.

East Ayrshire Leisure ANNUAL REPORT

2023-2024

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



I am delighted to introduce East Ayrshire Leisure Trust's Annual Report and Accounts, covering the financial year 2023-24.

East Ayrshire Leisure Trust was formed on 1st July 2013, so this year we celebrated our 10th anniversary, and I was both proud, and honoured, to serve as the Trust's Chair during this momentous year. On 1st July 2023, we held our 'Party at the Palace', where we looked back on all the major achievements of the organisation over the past decade, celebrated our staff and all the amazing work they do, and the considerable impact that we have had on leisure services across the area.



Fittingly, we also re-opened Dean Castle this year, after 4 long years of closure. Following extensive refurbishment and renovation works, the Castle reopened on 1st April. Set in the heart of the country park, the castle has always been considered the jewel in East Ayrshire's crown, but following the programme of works, it is looking even more spectacular than ever.

Offering increased access to our extensive collections of musical instruments and armoury, new collections on display and enhanced interpretation and visitor information, the re-opening was met with such enthusiasm and anticipation, attracting over 35,000 visitors in the first few months.





We welcomed over 64,000 visitors throughout the year; a massive increase on our previous average of 12,000 people each year

The Castle provided the most beautiful setting for one of my favourite events of the year; Starry Nights, an interactive Christmas-themed light trail with Santa's Grotto, funfairs and street food. Over 30,000 visitors attended from far and wide. The event received much press coverage, receiving over 60 articles across many major papers.

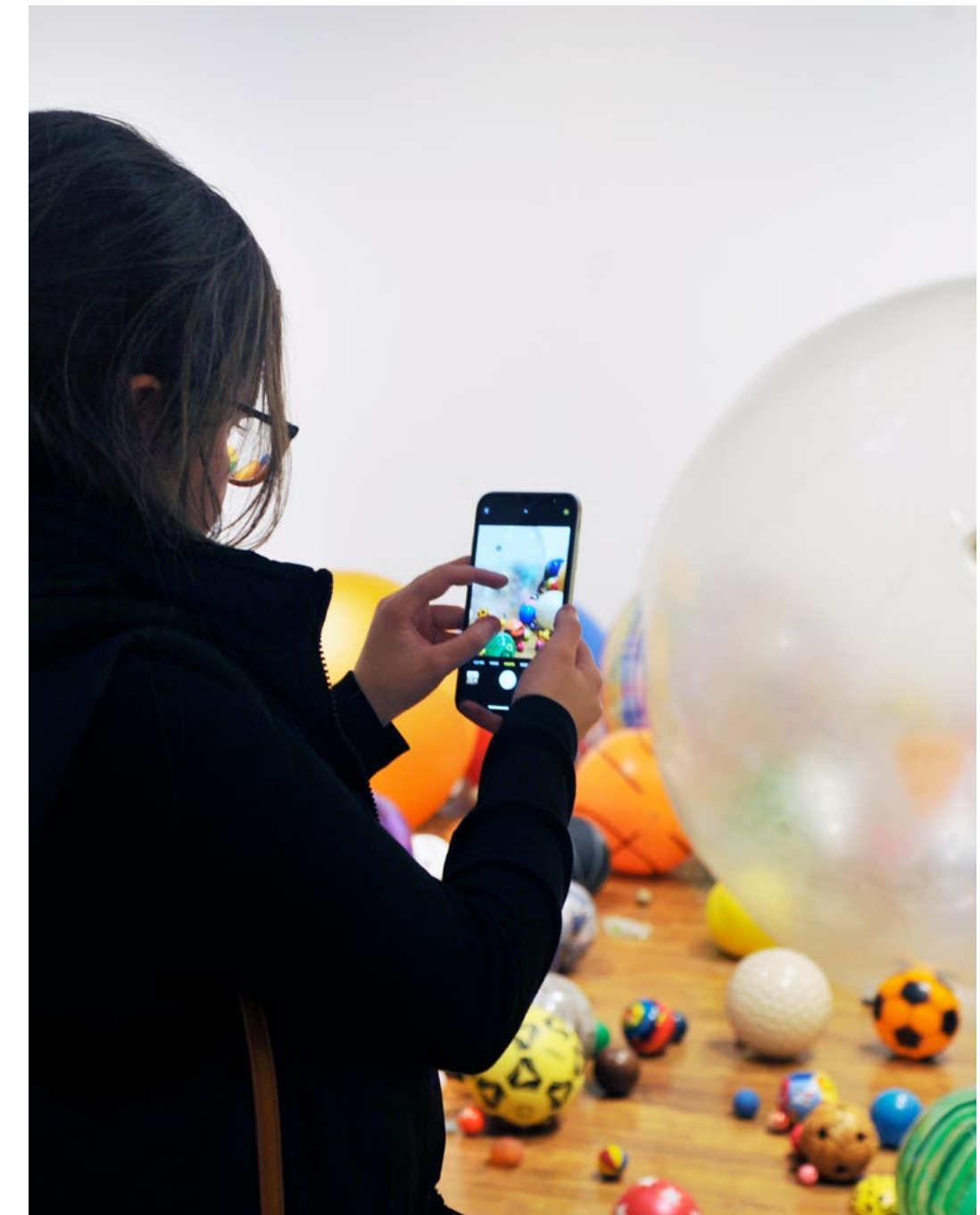


The Herald wrote “At this time of year a bit of sparkle and enchantment goes a long way to lift the gloom and I found an abundance of both at Dean Castle in Kilmarnock where a magic wand has been waved over the country park, transforming it into a wonderland of light and music”.

Another exciting highlight for me was the Cycling Tour of Ayrshire. To coincide with the UCI World Championships that took place in Glasgow in 2023, the Trust was successful in securing funding from Events Scotland to promote cycling in the community. Over the course of two weeks, we had events at Barony Sports Village, Rose Reilly Sports Centre and the Ayrshire Athletics Arena. Over 1000 people attended these events which included a mobile pump track, all ability bike ‘come and try’, balance bikes, Cycle Station with Dr Bike and E-Bikes to try, slalom sessions, arts and crafts and a spin challenge.



Our exhibition programme for 2023-24 has been another year for demonstrating our commitment to diverse, accessible and ambitious programming. Exhibitions supporting local artists at the Dick Institute Open and Showcase at the Baird stood alongside representation from internationally renowned artists Cornelia Parker and Martin Creed through partnerships with national institutions Hayward Gallery and Tate/National Galleries Scotland. We showcased genre from the visual arts to heritage: our exhibition Lost Villages at the Baird explored coal mining communities through oral histories with Scottish Oral History Centre at the University of Strathclyde, and was part of the Coalfield Communities Landscape Partnership. I am incredibly proud of the team for continuing to reflect the broad communities we serve, and for fulfilling our aims of provide exciting cultural opportunities for all.



We also worked in collaboration with East Ayrshire Council and local businesses to bring festive cheer to Kilmarnock Town Centre, hosting the Christmas Festival to coincide with the Christmas lights going on. The event was a major success, attracting approximately 10,000 visitors to the town, with so many people commenting how lovely it was to see such a large scale event being held again, following the Covid years. As always, I look back on all we have delivered with a deep sense of pride and look forward with great anticipation for the next year and look forward to all that it will bring.



Councillor Clare Maitland

Chair, East Ayrshire Leisure Trust

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The Christmas Festival event was a major success, attracting approximately 10,000 visitors to the town



MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF OFFICER



I am delighted to present East Ayrshire Leisure Trust's Annual Report and Accounts for 2023-24; my 5th year as Chief Officer and the year in which we celebrated turning 10!

This has been an exciting, yet challenging year for East Ayrshire Leisure Trust, we not only continued to face some of the impacts of Covid-19 and the cost of living crisis but we also carried out one of the most significant organisational reviews we have ever undertaken.

Over the past decade, we have improved the enjoyment, quality of life, health and wellbeing of communities and visitors to the area and have continued to grow from strength to strength.



Through the delivery of a first class service to our customers and through being an employer who invests in our people and embraces our values, we are widely recognised as a provider that is firmly committed to listening to our customers, local residents, visitors and partners and developing facilities and services that meet their needs.

By focusing on our continual development and growth and by challenging existing and new business opportunities, we have received unqualified external audits throughout the past ten years and have become one of the most successful and diverse, forward-thinking Trusts in the country.

On 1st April 2023, our restructure and service redesign came into place. Setting up 6 new service areas; Sharing Our Vision, Creating A Solid Foundation for Growth, Investing in Our People, Leisure At The Heart of Every Community, Living Your Best Life and Protecting Our Environment, took a huge amount of administrative and procedural organisation. The new roles, responsibilities and overall structure were designed to allow for more cross-service working, more effective and efficient use of our employees' skills and experience and a greater integration of leisure services directly into our communities. Not only did the massive amount of preparatory work behind the scenes mitigate against any disruption to service delivery, the positive effects have been felt not only within the workplace through greater communication and collaborative working, but also within our venues and communities with facilities having enhanced programmes and project development. I have great confidence in the new structures that have been developed, and know they will continue to support collaborative leadership, remove silo working and establish strong foundations for growth.

We have a large number of employees who have been with us since the inception of the Trust and also many who have continuous service with East Ayrshire Council prior to our formation. Therefore, it felt appropriate that as part of our 10th

anniversary celebrations, we implemented our 'long service awards' in line with 10, 20, 30 and 40 years of service. In 2023-24 we had 43 employees who have been with us 10 years, 24 for 20 years, 25 for 30 years and 3 employees have been with us for an incredible 40 years+. All employees received a fabulous hamper full of sweet treats from local company Threepwood Fayre, and for those with 20, 30 and 40 years' service, they also received an East Ayrshire Gift Card to spend in a range of local shops and businesses. Looking forward, long service will be calculated every year on the 1st July.

We also introduced our 'Chosen Charity' this year; prior to this we were frequently asked to provide support for other charities and organisations or were asked to fundraise on their behalf. As a charitable organisation ourselves, we are unable to provide this support to everyone who requests it, so this new initiative formalised our process and provided all staff and Trustees the opportunity to nominate one charity annually. For 2023-24 we raised money for Marie Curie who provide care and support through terminal illness. The charity's logo is the daffodil, which symbolises rebirth and hope and is also the flower which symbolises the 10th anniversary, so was a very fitting charity to launch with. We collected money at our major events and staff and customers were able to donate directly through QR codes



on our website and intranet. We planted daffodil gardens at the Dean Castle Country Park, Dick Institute and Annanhill Golf Course in partnership with Ayrshire College and plaques have now been installed to commemorate this. We are delighted to have raised almost £6000 for this amazing charity.

The Chair has outlined some of her favourite large scale events that have happened during this past year, but I know these represent only a fraction of the work that is carried out by our staff and teams. The sheer volume of projects, activities and events that have taken place, and the impact they have within our communities is invaluable.

I want to thank the staff for the way they have handled everything during our 10th year as a charitable trust; with the continued passion, enthusiasm, innovation and commitment that we have now become so well known for. We delivered initiatives with, and for, our communities and raised the profile of our services, venues and programmes. We have already exceeded many of the 10 year targets set within our Strategic Vision document – that's 6 years ahead of schedule and we are still always looking for ways to improve and grow.

And of course I want to thank East Ayrshire Council, all our other partners, funders and our dedicated Board of Trustees, without whom, none of this would be possible.

Anneke Freel

Anneke Freel Chief Officer, East Ayrshire Leisure Trust

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I want to thank the staff for the way they have handled everything during our 10th year as a charitable trust; with the continued passion, enthusiasm, innovation and commitment that we have now become so well known for.



TRUSTEE'S REPORT

The Trustees are pleased to present their Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2024. The financial statements comply with the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

EAST AYRSHIRE LEISURE TRUST – THE ORGANISATION

East Ayrshire Leisure Trust is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation recognised by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR), registration number SC043987. The organisation took responsibility for a wide range of cultural, countryside, sports and

community facilities and services across East Ayrshire on 1st July 2013.

We improve the enjoyment, quality of life, health and wellbeing of communities and visitors to the area. Through an innovative, welcoming and ambitious programme of cultural, sport and outdoor activities we operate a huge portfolio of libraries, galleries, museums, community venues, sport/fitness facilities, performing arts spaces, a theatre and concert hall, country park with medieval castle, golf course and a vast network of paths and outdoor spaces.

Delivering a first class service to our customers, we are widely recognised as a provider that is firmly committed to listening to our customers, local residents, visitors and partners and developing facilities

and services that meet their needs.

Ensuring that Leisure is truly at the heart of every community, we focus on developing and challenging existing and new business opportunities fulfilling our strategic and charitable objectives whilst being committed to environmental best practice and the promotion of sustainability and biodiversity.

GOVERNING DOCUMENT

The East Ayrshire Leisure Trust Constitution was approved by the Board of Trustees on 13th March 2013. Our Strategic Vision document covers a ten year period from 2020-2030, outlining our Key Themes and Objectives for the organisation with the accompanying 2 year Delivery Plan detailing what actions will be taken to achieve the required outputs.

VISION, MISSION & VALUES



OUR VISION

“Always with a focus on continuous improvement, we will deliver inclusive, sustainable and accessible services to enable our communities and visitors to live their best life.”



OUR MISSION

In order to engage our people, partners and communities we will ensure:

the creation of real and sustainable partnerships

that we deliver services which meet the needs of our communities

that we invest in, and empower our people



OUR VALUES

Being **honest** and demonstrating **integrity** at all times

Engaging and **inclusive** with our people, partners and communities

Striving for continuous improvement by being **ambitious** and **aspirational** in all that we do

Taking **responsibility** and being **accountable** for our organisation and our service delivery

SERVICES

East Ayrshire Leisure Trust is responsible for managing a range of facilities and services across a broad cultural, countryside, outdoor activities, sport, fitness and community remit.

The range of facilities managed by the Trust has been subject to change since July 2013 as the Council has undertaken a programme of Community Asset Transfer and Asset Rationalisation.

We undertook a major service review and reorganisation which would enable us to be better placed to fulfil our ambitions by removing silos, improve cross-service working and ensure we were making better use of the skills, experience and knowledge of our staff teams. New service areas were developed and we also introduced a new structure, which created 'family groups' amongst all roles across the Trust. This full review was implemented in April 2023 and a brief description for each service area has been provided below.



SHARING OUR VISION

"East Ayrshire Leisure Trust will be widely recognised and acclaimed as a leisure provider that is firmly committed to listening to our customers, local residents, visitors and partners and developing facilities and services that meet their needs." This service area incorporates Marketing & Tourism, Organisational Administration, Training & Engagement and Visual Communications.



INVESTING IN OUR PEOPLE

"East Ayrshire Leisure Trust will be an employer that encourages all employees and volunteers to be fully engaged in the operation and development of our business and where opportunities are provided for them to realise their potential." This service area incorporates Corporate, Systems & Data, Finance and Volunteers & Placements.



CREATING A SOLID FOUNDATION FOR GROWTH

"East Ayrshire Leisure Trust will achieve continuous improvement in the operation of the Trust and will focus on developing and challenging existing and new business opportunities in order to fulfil our strategic and charitable objectives." This service area incorporates Accountancy, Commercial and Hospitality & Retail.



LIVING YOUR BEST LIFE

“East Ayrshire Leisure Trust will contribute to improving the enjoyment, quality of life, health and wellbeing of communities and visitors to East Ayrshire through an innovative, welcoming and ambitious programme of cultural, sport and outdoor activities.” This service area incorporates Visual Arts, Sports, Museums and Performing Arts.



LEISURE AT THE HEART OF EVERY COMMUNITY

“East Ayrshire Leisure Trust will contribute to improving the enjoyment, quality of life, health and wellbeing of communities and visitors to East Ayrshire through an innovative, welcoming and ambitious programme of cultural, sport and outdoor activities.” This service incorporates Cultural Hubs, Library Hubs, Lifestyle Hubs and Sports Hubs.



PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT

“East Ayrshire Leisure Trust will be committed to environmental best practice and will use resources as efficiently and effectively as possible in the operation of our business. We will also explore new opportunities to promote sustainability and biodiversity.” This service incorporates Countryside, Estates and Sustainability.



KEY VENUES & ATTRACTIONS



ANNANHILL GOLF COURSE

An 18-hole course situated on the outskirts of Kilmarnock which is open to residents and visitors. Set in the scenic surroundings of Annanhill Estate, the 5954 yard parkland course has a par of 71 and has something to delight and challenge all players from beginners to seasoned pros. The course has recently undergone extensive improvement works and a path has been constructed to provide a safer and more pleasant route for walkers. Ponds and areas of flowers have been created to provide wildlife corridors and enhance the biodiversity of the area.



AYRSHIRE ATHLETICS ARENA

Designed and built to the highest standard, this premier athletics and sports training facility boasts a UK Athletics Class-A outdoor athletics facility with Mondo surface and 6 lane 63m indoor training area with strength and conditioning area. It has been designed to meet the highest of training and competition requirements for a wide range of athletes, sports clubs, schools and community groups and our athletics event calendar has grown year on year.



BAIRD INSTITUTE

First opened in 1891, the Baird Institute has world class collections of Mauchline Ware, Cumnock Pottery, artefacts of local and social history and contemporary exhibitions. The Keir Hardie Room presents the life and career of the founder of the Labour Party with an interactive audio-visual screen, a large collection of his personal belongings and souvenirs of his travels.



BURNS HOUSE MUSEUM & LIBRARY

The Burns House Museum and Library is in the centre of historic Mauchline, where stories of Robert Burns and his friends and family can be found in every nook and cranny. The Burns House Museum offers the chance to visit the room where Burns and his wife Jean Armour lived, see original Burns manuscripts and objects that tell the story of his life and work.

KEY VENUES & ATTRACTIONS



CUMNOCK TOWN HALL

Designed by Robert Ingram and built in 1883/4, Cumnock Town Hall has undergone extensive restoration, designed to restore it to its former glory using traditional materials and to update facilities to cater for the needs of its 21st century users. The newly refurbished facility hosts a variety of shows as well as being available to hire for meetings, shows, weddings and parties.



DEAN CASTLE & COUNTRY PARK

East Ayrshire's only Country Park provides a great day out all year round with woodland walks, an urban farm, adventure playground, visitor centre with shop and cafe, and a fantastic 14th century castle housing world class collections. The Park also hosts a number of large scale events as well as a programme of outdoor learning activities.

The Castle re-opened in April 2023 after a period of extensive refurbishment works. East Ayrshire Council,

supported by East Ayrshire Leisure, was awarded £1.5m from The National Lottery Heritage Fund towards the restoration and modernisation of the castle. The project had a total cost of £5.2m, with funding of £500k also secured from Historic Environment Scotland, and the remainder coming from EAC. The result is a sensitive and beautiful restoration, which means that the castle and its collections can be enjoyed for many generations to come.



DICK INSTITUTE

The Dick Institute is one of the most important cultural venues in the south-west of Scotland, featuring the largest museum, galleries and Library in Ayrshire with a range of arts and literary events throughout the year, including our book festival Imprint. With a programme of nationally important exhibitions, events and innovative works by leading and contemporary artists,

filmmakers and young people as well as permanent displays of the museum's diverse collections including natural sciences, archaeology and local and social history. The café situated in the main lending library serves barista coffee and selection of sweet treats and cakes.

KEY VENUES & ATTRACTIONS



LEISURE CENTRES: AUCHINLECK, DOON VALLEY, GRANGE, LOUDOUN, STEWARTON AND ST JOSEPH'S

Our Leisure Centres offer a wide range of activities and facilities with a wide range of equipment, FIFA *1 synthetic grass pitches, swimming pools and a range of fitness classes and activities. Many of our venues also house a variety of versatile halls suitable for staging competitions and larger events as well as badminton, football, netball as well as seated events such as shows, presentations, conferences, events and parties.



PALACE THEATRE & GRAND HALL COMPLEX

Ayrshire's premier entertainment venue offers a wonderfully varied programme throughout the year including comedy, music, drama, dance, variety and much more. The venue closed at the end of the year to enable large scale restoration and refurbishment programme to take place. These developments form part of the wider 'Cultural Kilmarnock'; an extensive project that involves an area to the east of Kilmarnock's town centre and includes culturally significant buildings also including the Dick Institute and former Kilmarnock Academy building. The project was awarded £20m from the UK Government's Levelling Up Fund.



RIVER AYR WAY

The River Ayr Way is designated as one of Scotland's Great Trails and is included in the family of long to medium distance routes in Scotland. It is 44 miles from the source of the River Ayr in Glenbuck to the sea at Ayr. 22 miles of the route is managed by East Ayrshire Leisure, with the rest being managed by South Ayrshire Council.



ROSE REILLY SPORTS CENTRE

The Rose Reilly Sports Centre, named after the local football legend, offers dance studios, a multi-purpose hall, and a fitness suite with cardio equipment, free weights, and resistance machines. The centre also has a full-size floodlit synthetic pitch and a welcoming hall with seating, books, and games for informal get-togethers.

OUR STRUCTURE

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

A Board of up to 13 Trustees is responsible for providing strategic direction for the organisation.

The 13 Trustees comprise:



Independent Trustees –
one of whom is a Trade
Union nominee



Councillor Trustees,
nominated by
East Ayrshire Council



Council Officer Trustees
selected via our Constitution,
to act as Trustees but without
voting rights

Partner Trustees		Appointment date / resignation date
Clare Maitland (Chair from 24 June 2021)		18th May 2017
Iain Linton		25th June 2015 (resigned 18th May 2017) reappointed 2nd November 2017
James Adams		20th July 2021 (resigned as Independent Trustee and reappointed as Partner Trustee 19th May 2022)
Linda Mabon		19th May 2022
Graham Boyd		19th May 2022
Independent Trustees		
Robin Hume		13th June 2013 (Reappointed 27th August 2015, 17th September 2019, 6th October 2020 and 4th October 2022) resigned 28th September 2023
Jackie Livingston		1st July 2015 (Reappointed 6th October 2020 and 4th October 2022) resigned 28th September 2023
Robbie Mann		8th September 2016 (reappointed 17th September 2019) resigned 4th October 2022 resigned 28th September 2023
David Ross		20th July 2021
Andy Wilson		14th September 2021
Melanie Swan		4th October 2022
Jim Roberts		28th September 2023
Barbara McIntyre		28th September 2023
Robert Hannah		28th September 2023
Ex Officio Trustees		
Joe McLachlan		27th August 2015
Blair Millar		1st April 2022



Executive Management Team

Anneke Freel	Chief Officer
Jackie Biggart	Executive Lead: People, Policy & Performance
Paul Mathieson	Executive Lead: Places, Programmes & Projects

Senior Management Team

Michael Chadwick	Strategic Lead: Living Your Best Life
Christine Keenan	Strategic Lead: Protecting Our Environment
Isabel Pick	Strategic Lead: Investing in Our People and Embracing Our Values
Dianne Reid	Strategic Lead: Sharing Our Vision
Greig Russell	Strategic Lead: Leisure at the Heart of Every Community
Lorraine Russell	Strategic Lead: Creating A Solid Foundation for Growth

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Registered Office: Dick Institute
14 Elmbank Avenue
Kilmarnock KA1 3BU
www.eastayrshireleisure.com
01563 554710

Auditor: Azets Audit Services
Exchange Place 3
Semple Street
Edinburgh
EH3 8BL

Solicitors: East Ayrshire Council
London Road Headquarters
Kilmarnock
KA3 7BU
Bankers: Royal Bank of Scotland
8 John Finnie Street
Kilmarnock
KA1 1DD
Charity Number: SC043987



FINANCIAL REVIEW

The period to 31st March 2024 was the Trust's tenth year of activity. In the period, East Ayrshire Leisure Trust reported an unrestricted deficit (including pension reserve) of £257,503 (2023: £742,312). The management accounts reported a surplus of £13,000.

Four restricted fund were in deficit at the year end by a total of £219,548. Funding has been awarded for these funds and can only be drawn down retrospectively once the project is completed or when milestones have been met.

At 31st March 2024, the actuarial valuation of the pension scheme resulted in a net pension liability of £127,000 this being recognised in the Balance Sheet. The valuation has resulted in an actuarial loss of £262,000 being recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities in the period. The balance on the pension fund will change annually according to economic conditions and the trustees will keep the position under review.

RESERVES POLICY

The Board approved a revised Financial Reserves Policy in February 2020. The policy was amended from a range of 3-5% of incoming resources (approx. £210k - £350k) to a minimum of 2% (approx. £140k) as the target for unrestricted funds not committed. This target has been achieved and the appropriate level of reserves is now in place.

FINANCIAL PROFILE

East Ayrshire Leisure Trust receives funding from East Ayrshire Council to support the delivery of an agreed range of services. Significant savings have been generated since the inception of the Trust. East Ayrshire Council have confirmed a savings requirement of £181,000 to be achieved in by the Trust in 2024/25.

East Ayrshire Leisure Trust also generates income from charges for services and has the ability to submit bids for funding from a wide range of external bodies. Trust staff will bid for funds to support and develop service quality and delivery wherever appropriate opportunities and resources are available.



The agreed baseline budget is set out below

Baseline budget exc savings	£5,210,550
Savings target	£198,000
Baseline budget after savings	£ 5,012,550

RISK MANAGEMENT

East Ayrshire Leisure Trust has well-established Risk Management procedures which allow the Board to manage risk in a pro-active manner and priorities areas of concern. The Risk Register is reviewed regularly as part of the Trustees consideration of the quarterly performance report.

Key risks in 2023-24 included: significant reduction in funding received from East Ayrshire Council, partners and external stakeholders not seeing East Ayrshire Leisure Trust as a partner of choice, failure to deliver Business Plan targets and the loss of external funding, a lack of capital investment or maintenance, reduction in facilities and loss of income.

Managing our risk effectively is essential in achieving our strategic outcomes and targets, creating confidence among service users and the public, and ensuring effective governance. Effective Risk Management will also enable us to deliver service improvements taking account of prevailing circumstances.



PROPERTIES

East Ayrshire Leisure Trust has 25 year leases in place for each of its properties. These properties continue to be in the ownership of East Ayrshire Council and the Council remain responsible for repair and maintenance.

The stock of properties is consistently under review and we work closely with East Ayrshire Council and other organisations to explore all partnerships that will improve the leisure opportunities for communities in East Ayrshire.

The Council has a major capital investment programme and there are projects being developed, particularly new school campuses that may see new community facilities built that will become the responsibility of East Ayrshire Leisure Trust in due course.

Our new Leisure Facility Strategy and accompanying Cross-service Action Plan outlines ambitions for development of all our facilities and ranges from large scale refurbishments to smaller scale improvements such as signage and redecoration and introduction of new programming and hospitality services.

EQUIPMENT

East Ayrshire Leisure Trust has access to a wide range of specialist equipment and vehicles that support service delivery, including mobile libraries, grounds maintenance equipment, computers and sports equipment.

Ownership of equipment did not transfer in July 2013 and rests with East Ayrshire Council. Inventories that clearly show ownership of equipment are now being kept, as items purchased by East Ayrshire Leisure Trust belong to East Ayrshire Leisure Trust, not the Council.

MUSEUM COLLECTIONS

East Ayrshire Council significant museum collection assets which are held within its museums, libraries and archives and is responsible for the management and maintenance of any assets given on loan. East Ayrshire Leisure Trust has been granted licence to use these assets through the Collections Agreement and will maintain and preserve them on behalf of the Council. Our Collection Development Strategy sets out the vision for collections until 2030, and it provides a review of East Ayrshire Council's object groupings, stating collecting priorities for the future.

ACHIEVEMENT & PERFORMANCE

The Strategic Vision document covering the period of financial years 2020-2030 highlights our priorities, with the accompanying Delivery Plan outlining our two-year Action Plan. Our Performance & Audit Sub-Committee considers reports and information provided by the Trust's Internal and External Auditors, reviews performance information prior to submission to the Board and EAC, sets and monitors performance against the Delivery Plan priorities and sets future targets.

Progress towards the targets set in the Delivery Plan is reviewed on a quarterly basis by the Board and fully reported annually.



2022-2024 CORPORATE DELIVERY PLAN

The Strategic Vision document covering the period of financial years 2020-2030 highlights our priorities, with the accompanying Delivery Plan outlining our two-year Action Plan. Our Performance & Audit Sub-Committee considers reports and information provided by the Trust's Internal and External Auditors, reviews performance information prior to submission to the Board and EAC, sets and monitors performance against the Delivery Plan priorities and sets future targets.

Progress towards the targets set in the Delivery Plan is reviewed on a quarterly basis by the Board and fully reported annually.

We have now reached the end of the second corporate delivery plan which is aligned to our Strategic Vision 2020- 2030. Of the 91 outputs, 73 have been completed, 14 have been carried forward to the 2024-26 Corporate Delivery Plan, 3 have been integrated into a strategic project and 1 was unable to be delivered due to a change in national policy.

The key Points and achievements for each service area are detailed below:



SHARING OUR VISION



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

- To create a programme of community engagement activities which includes consultation with our customers and potential customers about existing and future facilities and services and to adopt a positive approach to feedback.
- To ensure our use of creative marketing led activities effectively promote our high quality services, maximise customer engagement and make a real difference to how people view East Ayrshire Leisure Trust.
- To work collaboratively with key partners and stakeholders in the development of programmes and activities whilst exploring innovative delivery models which ensure best value for our customers.
- To introduce customer service related performance targets.

KEY POINTS & ACHIEVEMENTS:

The team developed a number of initiatives as part of the 10th anniversary celebrations this year. The Board approved our new Staff Long Service Awards and our annual Charity of Choice project which were implemented in 2023-24 and have been detailed earlier in the report.

Our Staff Ambassador project was introduced for staff at Co-ordinator level and below. The project provides staff with great professional and personal development opportunities, and the chance to work on an area of particular interest. Our first Staff Ambassador will be in their role early 2024-25

We carried out a number of community consultations as part of our Customer Exchange, looking at opening hours, events and programming at some of our community venues, as part of a larger facility review and consultation projects

Working with Visitscotland, our accreditation scheme and assessment visits were put back in place following Covid restrictions, with resultant recommendations and action plans in place and/or under review.

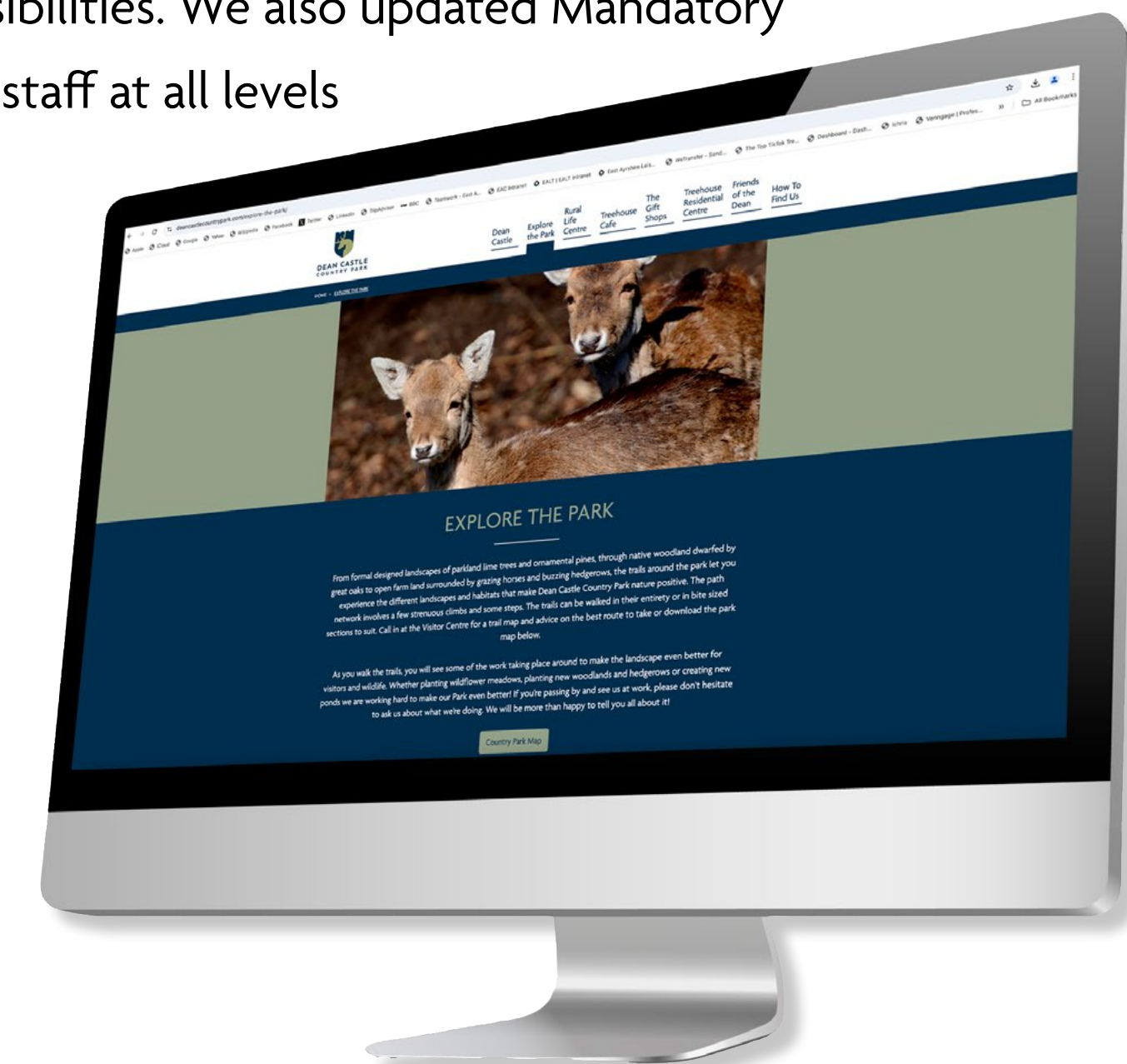
With Dean Castle re-opening, it seemed an appropriate time to create a microsite within the main East Ayrshire Leisure website. This allowed us to provide more in-depth information for visitors, improving their online journey and experience, as well as allowing us to tie in the design of the website with the new branding developed for the Castle and Country Park. This has vastly improved the pre-arrival information for visitors, which was clarified by the VisitScotland accreditation report giving it a score of 89/100.

We designed a Communications Strategy which delivers accessibility, diversity, equality and a multilingual approach and produced our Advertising Plan, identifying areas for growth and development.

Both eastayrshireleisure.com and deancastlecountrypark.com can now be translated into over 100 different languages due to the installation of a software package called Reachdeck. This can also help with accessibility as information can be read aloud, downloaded into MP4s to be saved and played back at a later date and can easily be monitored for accessibility issues.

We created our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion statement and accompanying training course which was rolled out to all employees across the organisation. We continue to tailor, develop and deliver training to all staff in accordance with our Training & Development Plan.

We created 'Key Activities' documents for all levels of staff which have assisted with the recruitment process and provide staff with detail of role responsibilities. We also updated Mandatory Training Matrices for staff at all levels throughout the organisation.



LEISURE AT THE HEART OF EVERY COMMUNITY



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

- To work with community, local authority and private providers to develop a Leisure Facility Plan that identifies all leisure provision throughout East Ayrshire and maximises the opportunities for our communities to participate in leisure activity
- To work with partners to explore funding opportunities for refurbishment and development of leisure facilities
- To work with East Ayrshire Council in reviewing and refining repair and maintenance plans and schedules for all facilities within our remit which include an annual programme of planned maintenance and decoration.

KEY POINTS & ACHIEVEMENTS:

We have developed a plan for our outdoor spaces which supports priority sports, community activities, events and programmes with funding proposals developed for the outdoor spaces at Rose Reilly Sports Centre, the Ayrshire Athletics Arena (including Scott Ellis) and Merlin Park.

We installed community cinema facilities at Stewarton Area Centre as part of larger plans to expand the programme and develop the facility.

Grange Leisure Centre was once again host for the Scottish Secondary Schools Badminton Championship. The event saw over 200 competitors from all over the country taking part, whilst McIlvanney Leisure Centre was host to the Recovery Football Tournament and the Scottish Secondary Schools Pipe Band Championships.

Scottish Secondary Schools Badminton Championship



Barony Sports Village hosted the Cumnock Juniors football festival in August; with over 30 teams competing, over 4000 people participating and spectating over the weekend. The Barony also hosted Cumnock Rugby Club's first ever Ladies Game for the rugby club at Barony Sports Village in December 2023 and it was a win for the home team!

We invested in Bodytrax machines to support health checks throughout our community venues. These have been piloted at Doon Valley Leisure Centre and have been used by both staff and customers. As part of our lifestyle approach in the Doon Valley, we have also introduced a regular gentle circuits class to engage members of the community on the pathway to physical activity. Attendees undertake monthly body scans to measure health benefits such as reduced body fat, increased muscle mass, reduced visceral fat, bone mass, fat free mass, cellular integrity, metabolic age and finally body mass index, and compare monthly progress.



CUMNOCK RUGBY Club's first ever Ladies game

LIVING YOUR BEST LIFE



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

- To support the development of sustainable pathways that encourage lifelong participation in leisure activities
- To contribute to a programme of high profile regional and national events, exhibitions, programmes and projects, that are ambitious and outward facing, whilst maximising the impact on our customers and visitors
- To develop activities and services that contribute to the Scottish Government's aspirations for 'A Healthy and Active Nation' and 'A Creative, Open and Connected Nation' and that ensure that East Ayrshire Leisure is at the heart of future trends and initiatives.

KEY POINTS & ACHIEVEMENTS:

Throughout the year, alongside exhibitions and our wider arts and museum programmes, we have expanded our delivery of special creative learning with schools, colleges and community groups. Our community programme of specially targeted engagement is going from strength to strength, building upon partnerships with initiatives such as Artclub?, iDance, SL33 and Learning Disability Week to work collaboratively to promote health & wellbeing and skills & learning through cultural activities.

Several award-winning authors chose our venues to host their events as they not only love our venues but our commitment to libraries and reader development. In October we welcomed both of our IMPRINT patrons, Zoe Strachan and Liam McIlvanney, to the Dick Institute to launch Zoe's latest book "Catch The Moments As They Fly". Set in Kilmarnock, it was very fitting to launch the book at the Dick Institute as it is a venue that inspired her from an early age.

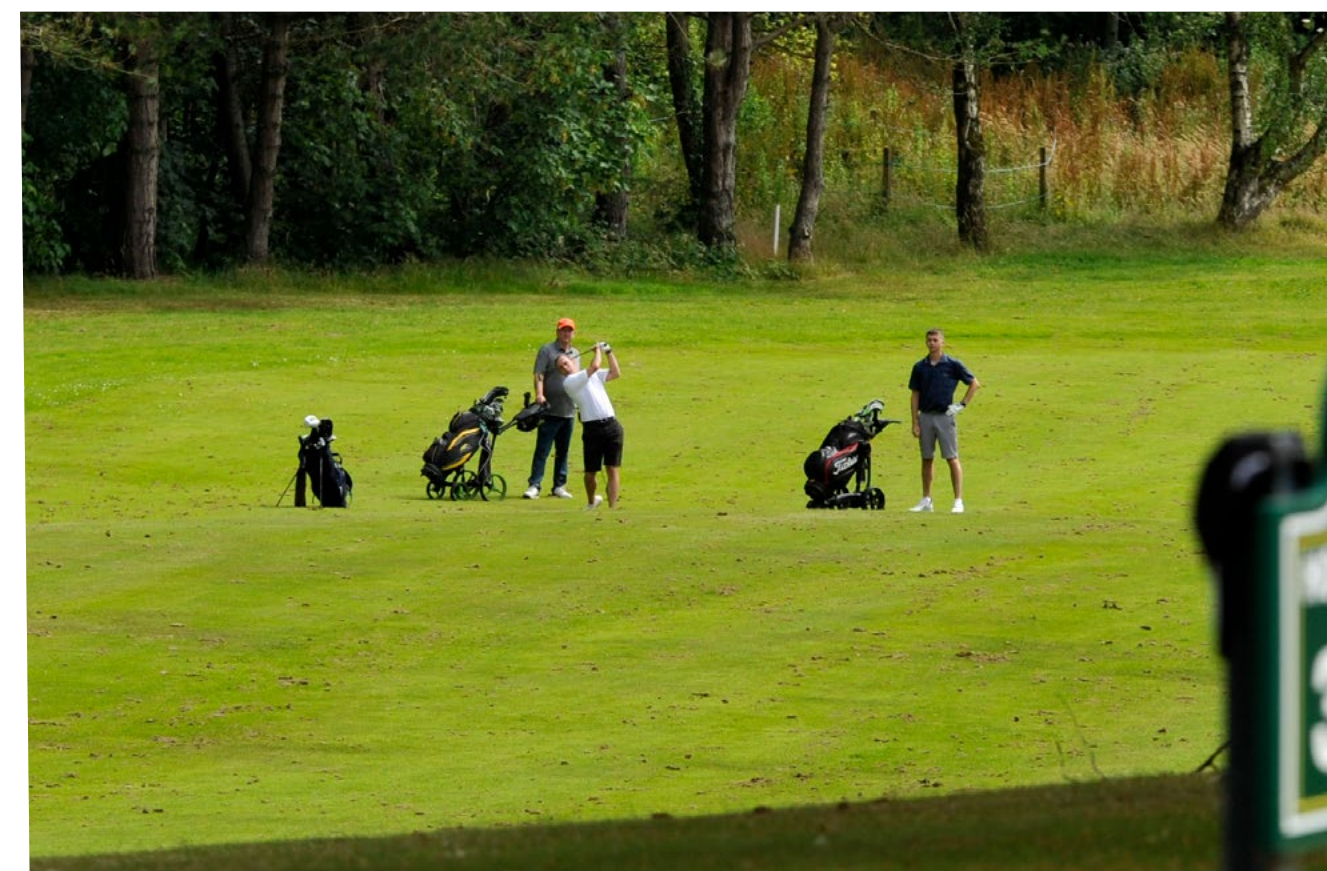


In November, writer and broadcaster Billy Kay launched his latest book “Born in Kyle” - which he describes as ‘a love letter to an Ayrshire childhood’ - in a series of events across our venues. The book features life in the Irvine Valley in the 1950s and 60s and we held events in Galston Community Centre, Galston Library and the Dick Institute.

The museum development team worked with Strathclyde University and the Coalfield Communities Landscape Partnership to develop and host an exhibition of their research work.

The exhibition, Lost Villages of East Ayrshire, focuses on the miners’ rows and villages that no longer exist across the Ayrshire Coalfields area. This project and exhibition is so important in re-telling the history, the mining industry of the area and people who lived and worked it. With 2024 being the 40th anniversary of the miner’s strike, the exhibition gained a lot of local interest.

Our 2nd Open Championship at Annanhill Golf Course took place, with 82 golfers playing. The Open was held on the same weekend as Roon the Toon and West District Archery Competition, forming an informal ‘festival’ which will be further developed to establish an annual Festival of Sport.



INVESTING IN OUR PEOPLE & EMBRACING OUR VALUES



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

- To develop and embed our People Strategy so that employees at all levels are engaged and can contribute to the business
- To offer work placements, volunteering and apprenticeships
- To integrate our values into all aspects of our business including Review and Development programme, recruitment, training and meetings. To focus on skills, knowledge and experience in the development of our business and to ensure we invest in industry specialist training which is tailored to meet the needs of our programmes
- To ensure that our board of Trustees reflects the community we serve and the need to be both a charitable and commercial organisation

KEY POINTS & ACHIEVEMENTS:

Key developments were made with regards to the implementation of the organisational redesign; introduction of generic job roles, development of myjobscotland site, rebranding of key documents such as Policies, H&S Standards, Protocols and the updating of network drives and HR and H&S systems e.g. HR 21, LD 21, payroll, civica, SHE system

We developed our IT and telephony infrastructures to support new ways of working; working from home strategies are in place, 'one device' approach implemented and smart phones been issued to relevant staff

The procurement of both a Leisure Management and Ticketing System was undertaken with a communication and engagement plan developed. Both systems will make a massive difference to our customers and staff due to ease of use, more streamlined customer journey and robust reporting mechanisms

The Trust now supports 131 individual volunteers and over the last year, they have contributed over 2500 hours of their time to projects and events all over East Ayrshire and provided significant added value to our services.

We held our first Volunteer 'Thank You Party' in June 2023, at the newly reopened Dean Castle. All our current volunteers were invited, greeted by a piper and welcomed into the banqueting hall for a congratulatory speech by our Trustees and enjoyed drinks and nibbles provided by the hospitality team. It was a great opportunity for volunteers to meet and to see the difference that their volunteering has made to the Trust and our customers.

In partnership with Greener Communities and SL33's Parental Employability team, the team delivered an 8 week Introduction to Working Outdoors Course, for parents in East Ayrshire who are looking for employment. The participants learned new skills and gained practical experience in the Country Park and at Annanhill Golf Course. One of the parents who took part in the course has since gained employment with a landscaping company.



Volunteer Thank You Party

CREATING A SOLID FOUNDATION FOR GROWTH



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

- To review and continually improve and enhance our systems and processes to ensure that they are effective and appropriate in the transformation of our business
- To develop a collaborative approach with relevant partners to explore wider opportunities that fit within the Trust's vision and values and to explore opportunities to share resources across all of our services internally and with key stakeholders
- To maximise the return from commercial opportunities, especially around retail, hospitality and membership packages, so that we are in a position to fulfil our charitable obligations and become a sustainable organisation
- To develop an effective performance management framework

KEY POINTS & ACHIEVEMENTS:

The financial performance quarter 4 report provides detail of the Trust's financial performance for the period January to March 2024. The outturn for East Ayrshire Leisure at 31st March 2024 is a positive position of £13k.

We produced our Financial Strategy which sets out how the organisation plans to finance its overall operations to meet its objectives, now and in the future. The strategy outlines how sound financial management is essential for the success of the Trust and will assist in the successful transition from where we are now, to where we want to be

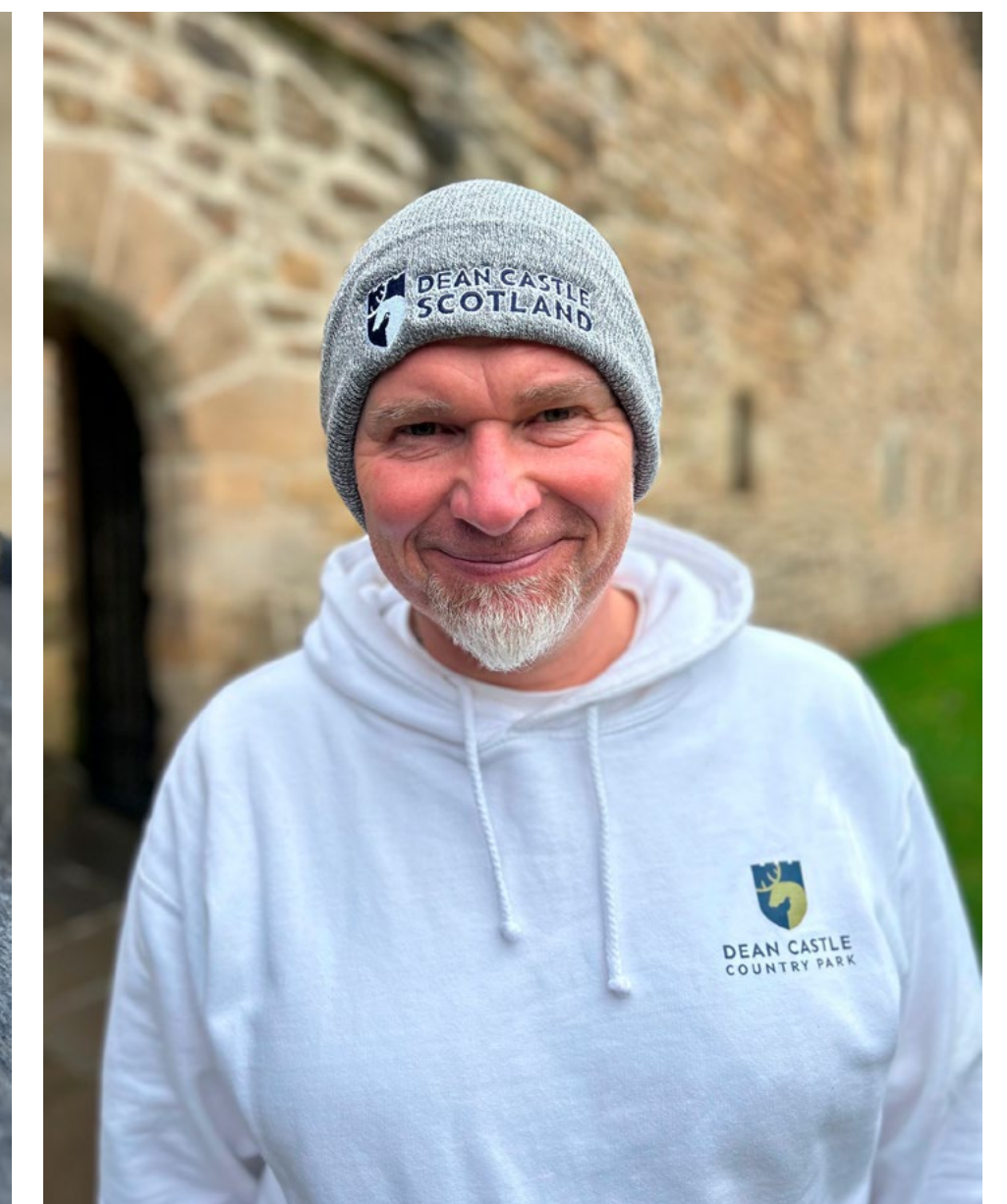
The Treehouse Café in Dean Castle Country Park has undergone development this year with a fresh new look including new signage and displays and we launched a new menu. The café's popularity has continued to grow, providing fresh quality products that are great value for money. We have seen an increase in regular

customers, alongside additional visitors and tourists, thanks to the reopening of the Dean Castle.

The Café at the Dick Institute has also evolved and continues to attract new customers. When it first opened it was as an additional option for visitors to the facility, however we now attract regular customers coming specifically to the café to enjoy the quality products and excellent service on offer

We produced a Hospitality Plan which identifies opportunities for cafes, vending and event catering and details the proposed expansion of bar services across Trust venues

We expanded our retail offering with the re-opening of our new Castle Courtyard shop. We are proud to stock a beautiful range of jewellery, homeware and gifts from Ayrshire-based makers as well as Boyd tartan and Outlander gifts which are particularly popular with our tourists. The Visitor Centre shop is now well-stocked with pocket money toys and plans are in place to expand our local produce selection.



PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT



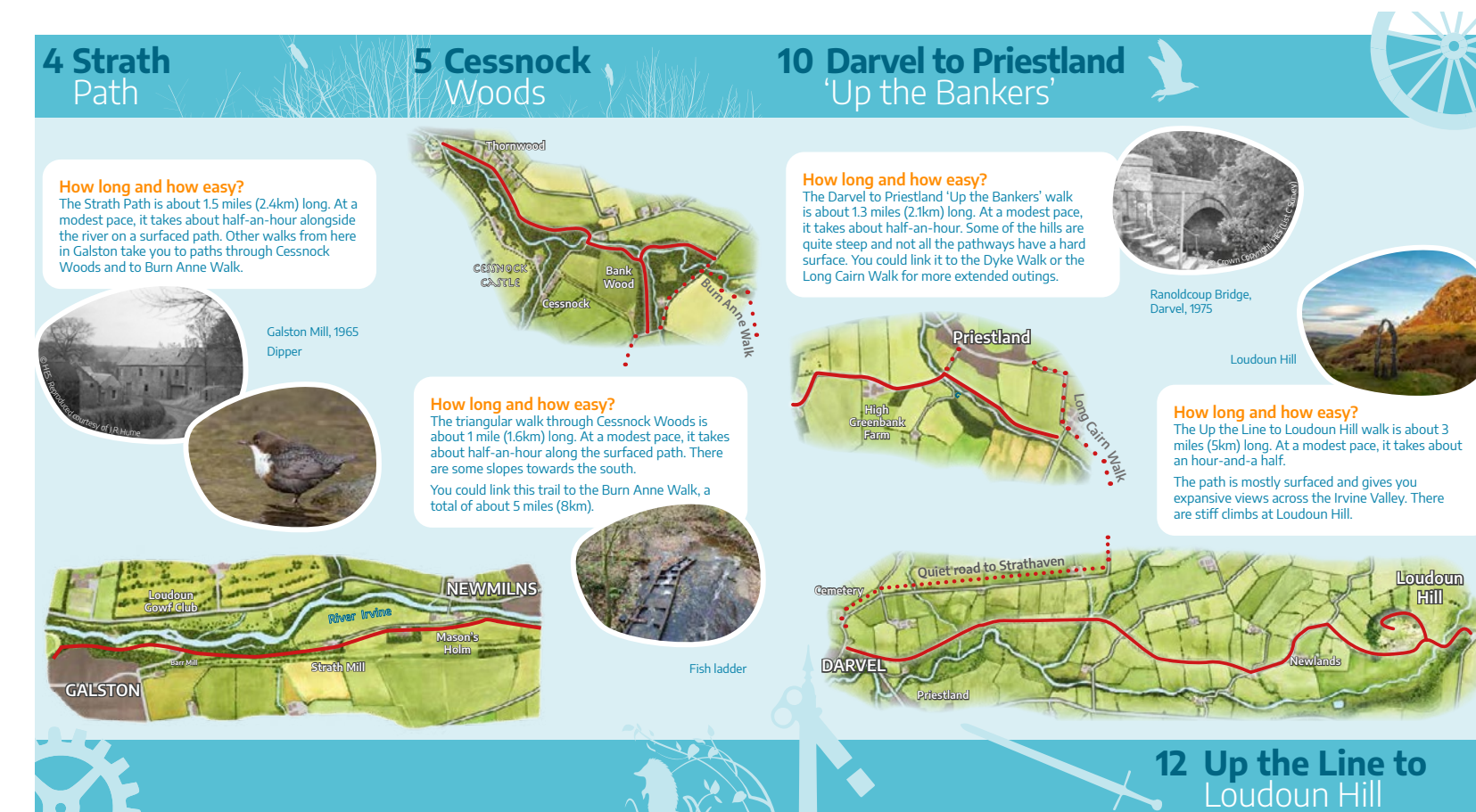
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

- To prepare and adopt a Climate Change Declaration on an annual basis which audits our carbon footprint and outlines priorities for carbon reduction.
- To adopt the principles of Visit Scotland's Green Tourism Business Scheme to reduce the environmental impact of our business.
- To implement a Sustainable Transport Strategy which encourages active travel in all of our operations and with our staff and customers.



KEY POINTS & ACHIEVEMENTS:

The Irvine Valley Trails are now complete after five years of improvements, delayed by Covid restrictions. Funding came from European Social Fund, Transport Scotland, Renewable Energy Funding, East Ayrshire Council and the Energy Saving Trust. We worked with landowners along the route to improve the path network, bridges have been upgraded, gates installed, with steps and fencing improved along the route. New directional signage, map boards, lecterns and leaflets were also produced. The Trail stretches from Crookedholm to Loudoun Hill, passing through Galston, Newmilns, and Darvel. It also connects to Whitelee Wind Farm and the River Ayr Way. Kilmarnock and Strathaven.



This year also marked the completion of the Lugar Water Trail, which allows people to walk from the Barony Campus at Cumnock through to Auchinleck and Ochiltree. This project was delivered in partnership with the Coalfield Community Landscape Partnership. Working with landowners along the route the path was upgraded and is now seeing increased use. Key destinations along the route include Dumfries House, the Barony A-frame and Ochiltree Community Hub. These destinations have reported an increase of visitor numbers and the response to the route has been exceptional with locals and visitors commenting on the improved accessibility.

Working with East Ayrshire Council's Children and Disabilities Team, we were successful in obtaining funding from 'Better Breaks' to provide Nature Therapy Breaks in our Treehouse Residential Centre. There were almost 100 notes of interest for the breaks and we hosted 35 adults and 55 children and young people staying across a four week period over the summer holidays. It was a delight to see the families get so much enjoyment from the facilities and experiences offered within the

Country Park; their responses were overwhelmingly positive and most attendees noted benefits to their mental health and wellbeing.



We launched our Net Zero Climate Strategy 2024-2030; the strategy outlines our ambitious target of reaching Net Zero by 2030 and goes into great detail in how we plan to achieve this goal. Within the strategy there are 6 key areas which we will focus our efforts on to reduce emissions and protect our environment; utilities, transport, waster, natural environment, sustainable procurement and the 'wider picture'. Each theme has be broken down into achievable targets which can be seen in full within our supporting Climate Action Plan 2024- 2028.

The 40 mile ultra-marathon River Ayr Way Challenge had a new finish at the Riverside stadium this year, South Ayrshire's flagship Athletics facility. The race took place on the 9th September in incredibly unseasonable heat with 76 Ultra runners and 24 teams. The winning time this year an amazing 5hrs and 34mins.



ONLINE VISITORS

eastayrshireleisure.com

We continue to monitor performance and develop the website regularly, adapting to digital trends and business needs as appropriate.

With the introduction of Google Analytics 4 (GA4) our statistics have unfortunately taken a slight dip from our usual year-on-year percentage growth. This however was anticipated and widely acknowledged as being unavoidable from experts within the field. Universal Analytics (used in previous years) was a measurement model based on sessions and page views. GA4 however uses an event-based model which means it focuses on tracking user interactions and decisions rather than page views.

We had 441,459 sessions on the site throughout 2023/24



Website sessions
441,459



Impressions
6.3m



Facebook Reach
5,259,000



Instagram Reach
60,200



Paid Reach
139,200

ONLINE VISITORS

Social media is clearly one of our fastest and most responsive forms of communication. In 2023/24 we achieved over 6 million impressions (6,321,000) across all of our platforms and the team continue to monitor clicks, audience reach, comments and engagement.

Our East Ayrshire Leisure and additional facility Facebook pages have continued to attract significant increases, as has our Twitter and Instagram accounts. Engagement levels across all platforms was extremely high during this financial year and we plan to capitalise on this growth with future developments and plans are underway to expand across additional platforms.

Posts with the highest level of interactions:

108,000   

1 April. Dean Castle officially reopens which reached 108k and had 1K reactions, 152 comments and 114 shares.



36,985   

14 October. Something Spooky Fright Night Quest event reached 36,985, had 140 reactions, 144 comments and 58 shares.



53,336   

15 June. Volunteer request for Dean Castle visitor assistants. Reach 53,336, reactions 145, comments 22, and shares 63.



FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

Our Strategic Vision document and accompanying Action Plan provides a 10 year vision for East Ayrshire Leisure that provides strong and ambitious objectives, outlines clear timescales for delivery and sets a strategic direction that will develop the Trust into a more independent, resilient, innovative and inclusive organisation. Within the 2020-30 period, East Ayrshire Leisure Trust will continue to grow as a leisure provider, facilitator and partner that is recognised on both a local and national stage.

To be successful in our ambitions collectively we plan:

- To work more closely with local communities and our customers to deliver services that are valued and embedded in local life;
- To engage with local and national partners to develop collaborative approaches to service design that enhance the opportunities for leisure across East Ayrshire;
- To develop facilities that are of a high quality and to support partners across the third, public and private sector in doing the same;
- To contribute to local and national agendas through the provision of an innovative programme that encourages East Ayrshire to flourish;
- To value our people, recognise their skills and talents and empower them to be solution focused;
- To integrate commercialisation and sustainability into our business model in its widest sense to explore more efficient working practices, governance and leadership arrangements and to look to the market place for inspiration.
- To be a responsible member of the community that supports a sense of place and adopts environmental best practice.



Our Corporate Delivery Plan for 2024-26 provides focussed outputs against each Strategic Objective which is then disseminated into Service Delivery Plans for each team to deliver and report on quarterly.

- Our Leisure Facility Strategy and Cross-service Action Plan combined with our Growth Plan provides an ambitious and comprehensive programme of improvements for all our venues from 2022 – 2030, from smaller scale improvements to large scale refurbishments, redevelopments and full redesigns. Combined, these plans create a solid foundation to enable us to use our venues to promote health and wellbeing and to support East Ayrshire Council and other local, regional and national partners in delivering economic growth and to ensure we continue to grow as a leisure provider, facilitator and partner that is recognised on both a local and national stage.

- As outlined in our Strategic Vision and other supporting documents, our ambition is also to establish a Trading Subsidiary which would engage in significant levels of non-primary purpose trading, resulting in profits being donated back to the charity.
- We will update and further develop our Digital Transformation Action Plan to look at infrastructure, digital signage and information boards and new means of communications.
- We will develop and implement our own Online Learning Platform to deliver a range of high quality training designed specifically for the needs of the Trust.
- Our new booking and ticketing systems will be rolled out across our venues, enabling a more streamlined and customer-focussed approach to online booking and sales.

- We will develop, implement and evaluate a Destination Campaign Action Plan for 2024-26 maximising visitor numbers and financial opportunities through tourism.
- We will identify and implement opportunities for Foundation, Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships.
- We will establish a Youth Board in line with the East Ayrshire Leisure Programme Development Strategy 2022-2026.



TRUSTEE'S RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' annual report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in Scotland requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 (FRS 102);
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures

disclosed and explained in the financial statements;

- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and the provisions for the charity's constitution. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the charity and financial information included on the charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of the financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Disclosure of Information to Auditors

To the knowledge and belief of each of the persons who are Trustees at the time the report is approved:

- So far as the Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charity's auditor is unaware; and
- He/she has taken all the steps that he/she ought to have taken as a Trustee in order to make himself/herself aware of any relevant audit information, and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of the information.

Trustees' Report

Approved by the Board on 24 September 2024 and signed on its behalf by:



Clare Maitland (Chair)



Anneke Freel, Chief Officer

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Notes	Unrestricted Fund 2024	Pension Reserve 2024	Restricted Funds 2024	2024	2023
		£	£	£	£	£
Income from:						
Charitable activities	3	8,079,469	-	1,662,002	9,741,471	8,930,027
Investments	3	26,140	-	-	26,140	6,324
Total income		8,105,609	-	1,662,002	9,767,611	8,936,351
Expenditure on:						
Charitable activities	4	8,362,112	9,000	1,593,328	9,964,440	9,646,276
Other (net interest defined benefit pension scheme)	8	-	(8,000)	-	(8,000)	11,000
Total expenditure		8,362,112	1,000	1,593,328	9,956,440	9,657,276
Net (expenditure)/income		(256,503)	(1,000)	68,674	(188,829)	(720,925)
Transfer between funds						
		-		-	-	-
Other recognised gains/ (losses):						
Actuarial (losses)/gains on	8					
Defined benefit pension schemes		-	(262,000)	-	(262,000)	1,050,000
Net movement in funds		(256,503)	(263,000)	68,674	(450,829)	329,075
Reconciliation of funds:						
Total funds brought forward		1,361,174	136,000	342,545	1,839,719	1,510,644
Total funds carried forward	16	1,104,671	(127,000)	411,219	1,388,890	1,839,719

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. None of the charity's activities were acquired or discontinued during the above period.



BALANCE SHEET

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	9	89,968	111,898
Heritage assets	10	34,920	34,920
		124,888	146,818
Current assets			
Stocks and work in progress	11	44,227	45,680
Debtors	12	800,876	1,057,847
Cash at bank and in hand	17	1,605,043	1,515,618
		2,450,146	2,619,145
Liabilities			
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	13	(1,059,144)	(1,062,244)
Net current assets		1,391,002	1,556,901
Net assets excluding pension scheme asset/(liability)		1,515,890	1,703,719
Defined benefit pension scheme (liability)/asset	8	(127,000)	136,000
Total net assets		1,388,890	1,839,719
The funds of the charity:			
Restricted income funds	16	411,219	342,545
Unrestricted funds	16	1,104,671	1,361,174
Unrestricted fund - Pension reserve	16	(127,000)	136,000
Funds		1,388,890	1,839,719



IMAGE COURTESY OF JOHN MACMILLAN

