

East Ayrshire Leisure ANNUAL REPORT

2024 – 2025





Calum Wallis
Waiting for a good photograph
2014
Oil on canvas
180 x 120 cm
The artist's work is often characterized by a sense of narrative and a focus on the human figure. In this painting, the figure is depicted in a state of waiting, perhaps for a good photograph, as suggested by the title. The use of oil on canvas allows for a rich, textured surface that enhances the overall impact of the work.

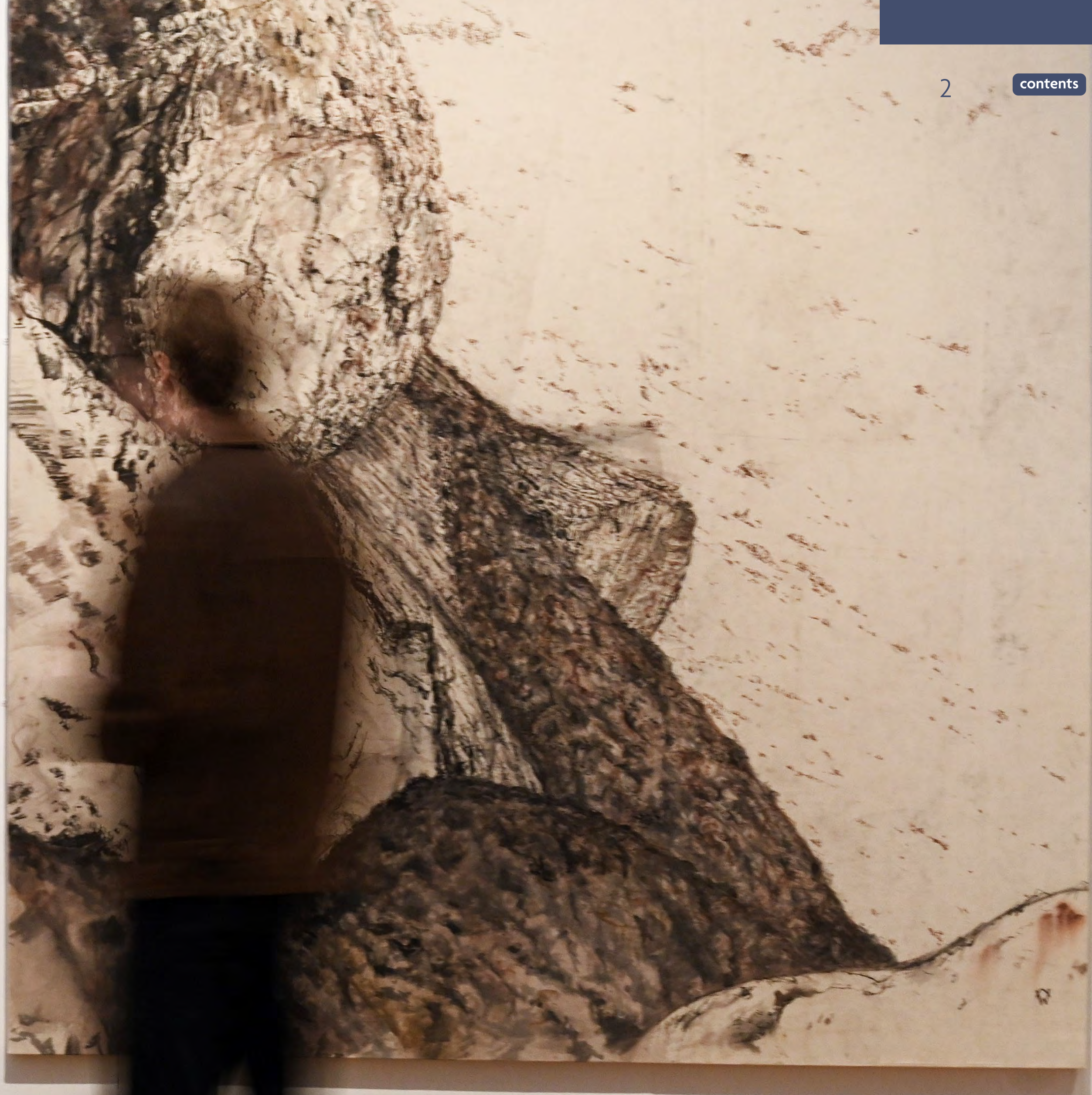


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Message from the Chair



I am delighted to introduce East Ayrshire Leisure Trust's Annual Report and Accounts, covering the financial year 2024-25.

In the 11 years that East Ayrshire Leisure Trust has been in existence, they have continued to present the most outstanding and varied programme of events and activities, serving our communities, visitors and tourists alike - and 2024-25 has certainly been no exception! I am extremely proud to be Chair of the Organisation, representing all that the Trust delivers, and I am continually impressed by the staff who work tirelessly to build on their reputation for being an organisation that aspires to the highest standards in everything that they do; the skilled workforce never fail to impress with their commitment, passion and enthusiasm in their field.



As ever, it is a struggle to narrow down my highlights for the year as there are so many to choose from, but I wanted to give particular note to the beautiful and thought-provoking exhibition *Somewhere To Stay* by Diana Forster. Exploring a story of forced migration through installation, sculpture and print, the exhibition was commissioned by the Visualising War and Peace Project, as part of their wider exploration of war and its impacts. The recent, horrific events in Ukraine mirror those of 1940, when Russian troops invaded eastern Poland at the beginning of the second World War. A million Polish people were forced from their homes at gunpoint and sent to labour camps in Siberia. Diana Forster's mother, Anna Sokulska Forster, and her grandparents were among them. Her stunning laser-cut images of the story panels were influenced by the traditional Polish craft of paper cutting (wycinanki); the cut-out images cast shadows, adding another dimension to the artwork, symbolising the 'long shadow of war'.



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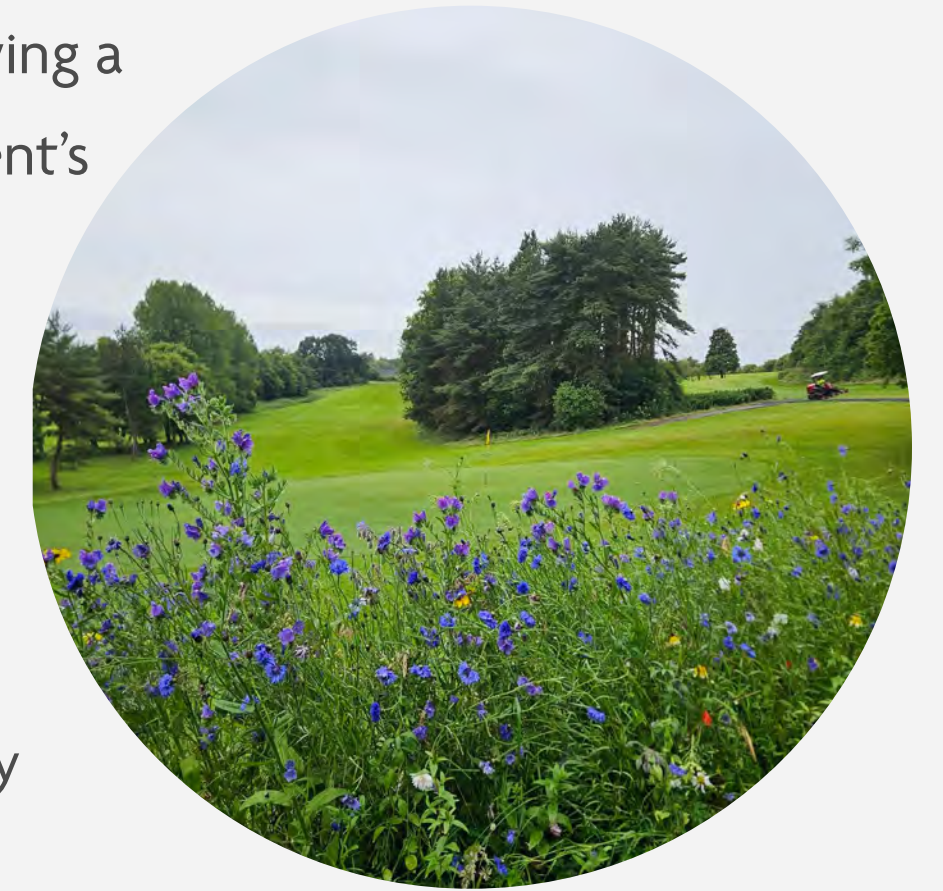


In the 11 years that East Ayrshire Leisure Trust has been in existence, they have continued to present the most outstanding and varied programme of events and activities, serving our communities, visitors and tourists alike - and 2024-25 has certainly been no exception!

In Cumnock, we held a special celebration event of the Converge:Diverge exhibition at the Baird Institute with some wonderful conversations around the powerful and moving themes in this extraordinary exhibition of work by two Ayrshire artists Gordon Cockburn and Ronald Rae. The stunning A Road Well Travelled by Ayrshire artist Jack Rigg opened in January. Through a series of stunning oil landscapes, the exhibition catalogued a journey through the historic road between Mossgiel and Ellisland, retracing the footsteps of Robert Burns. The exhibition also featured a personal story of Jack's ancestor, John Rigg, a blacksmith who forged tools for Burns' Ellisland farm, and we were absolutely delighted to host it here in the Baird Institute.

Our Estates team have been busy transforming Annanhill Golf Course, another of our much-loved facilities. As well as improvements to the course, ponds and areas of wildflowers have been created to provide wildlife corridors and enhance the biodiversity of the area, providing a beautiful burst of colour and attracting a wide variety of pollinating insects to what was previously rough grassland. A path has been constructed with new signage and interpretation panels along the way, providing a safer and more attractive route for walkers, and a perfect space for getting in your 'daily mile' – well worth a visit!

One of our key venues, the Palace Theatre & Grand Hall Complex has been closed for major refurbishment, following a successful £20 million funding bid from the UK Government's Levelling Up Fund. In true East Ayrshire Leisure Trust entrepreneurial spirit, the events team set about finding alternative venues for our theatre and entertainment programmes and community venues such as Stewarton Area Centre, Cumnock Town Hall, Darvel Town Hall and Morton Hall which have played host to a series of comedy nights, tribute acts, plays and performances.



Our annual pantomime was this year held in our very first circus-style tent 'The Big Top' within the grounds of Ayrshire Athletics Arena. The fully heated tent was transformed into a spectacular festive venue with in-the-round staging, state of the art sound and lighting and a breathtaking set, bringing a unique production of Goldilocks and the Three Bears that combined traditional pantomime with circus-inspired performance to our delighted audiences. Tennis ace Andy Murray, and his mother Judy, braved the wet December weather to join the crowds for one of our fun-filled afternoon matinees. They praised both the performance and the unique venue, staying for photos with the cast and crew afterwards.

In March, we opened our first 'Active Wellbeing suite' within the Rose Reilly Centre in Stewarton, becoming one of only two Trusts in Scotland to introduce a power-assisted exercise concept to our communities, demonstrating our ongoing commitment to finding new ways of reaching individuals within our communities that aren't engaging in physical activity. The Suite has a range of power-assisted exercise machines to provide a 'helping hand' in a low impact, full-body workout circuit and has proven to be hugely beneficial to those recovering from injury or suffering from a chronic illness. Feedback has already been massively positive with local arthritis groups attending regularly



and colleagues within East Ayrshire Health & Social Care Partnership and NHS supporting the initiative with referrals; ambitions for further roll-outs across other communities is currently being investigated.

Never an organisation to stand still, major changes are on the horizon for East Ayrshire Leisure Trust, with expansion and growth top of the priority list. Alongside the creation of a Trading Subsidiary which will focus on financial growth including hospitality, retail services and large-scale event planning, East Ayrshire Council's Vibrant Communities teams, Community and Corporate Catering and the Galleon Leisure Centre will join East Ayrshire Leisure Trust in the new financial year. We are extremely excited about the new opportunities and benefits this will bring to the organisation, and to all our communities, and I look forward to presenting them to you in the coming years.



Councillor Clare Maitland

Chair, East Ayrshire Leisure Trust

East Ayrshire Council's Vibrant Communities teams, Community and Corporate Catering and the Galleon Leisure Centre will join East Ayrshire Leisure Trust in the new financial year.





MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF OFFICER



I am delighted to present East Ayrshire Leisure Trust's Annual Report and Accounts for 2024-25; my 5th year as Chief Officer.

In April last year, our restructure and service redesign came into place, so this financial year marks the first complete year of operating within our six 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. Our vision was to create an organisation that focused on the best use of our employees' skills and experience, a more cohesive and collaborative leadership approach and more cross-service working -



and I am delighted with the many positive changes and outcomes which have already been achieved as a result, many of which are highlighted within this report.

We have always been an organisation that puts staff – and our communities – at the heart of everything that we do and have continued to develop our communication strategies to ensure everyone has the opportunity to contribute to growth and development plans and that they have access to all appropriate information. We are very aware that our organisation is fast-paced and driven, and change can be daunting, so our staff are issued with regular newsletters and bulletins and are invited to our series of



‘Coffee Chats’ where they have access to the Executive Management Team. We run online surveys and produce forums where they are able to submit questions or comments and have held in-person and online information sessions. We also regularly create ‘Working Groups’ where employees at all levels throughout the organisation meet to address a specific issue, topic, programme or organisational objective, such as Health & Safety and Summer and seasonal programming.

Employee wellbeing has always been a priority for us, and we are committed to finding new ways to enhance our policies and processes and in ensuring that a wellbeing ethos becomes embedded within our organisation. A Working Group was charged with programming an event with this in mind and ‘Wellbeing Wednesday’ was created,

with our first all-day event taking place in September within the beautiful surroundings of Dean Castle Country Park. Wellbeing and self-care mean different things to different people, so it was vital we pitched the event appropriately. All staff were invited to attend, and venues were closed, if required, as part of our commitment to allow access to all. Activities ranged from climbing walls, boxing and archery to creative classes like origami, drawing and outdoor yoga and mindfulness. The event was met with such positivity and everyone agreed it was a massive success, so we are now committed to making this an annual event.

In terms of our Protecting Our Environment services, we made great strides towards becoming Net Zero by 2030. Our Net Zero Climate Strategy was released in 2024, and we now support recycling and sustainable consumables in all our venues. We have created a bespoke Carbon Literacy Course which has been certified for in-house training and have embarked on biodiversity improvement and carbon reducing work procedures at Annanhill Golf Course (as outlined above by the Chair) and this project has been nominated for a Sustainable Project of the Year award.

We have also achieved our bronze award for being a Carbon Literate organisation and hope to move on to our silver award soon. The launch of our very own East Ayrshire Leisure Trust App was one



which took many, many hours of behind-the-scenes work, from both the technical and design aspects, but it has been well worth the wait! Our app launched in December and keeps our customers informed and connected by being able to book into fitness classes, easily track and edit bookings, receive notifications, latest news and offers, and view what's on across the Trust; it has been met with such positive feedback, and an increase in our membership numbers!

One of my own personal highlights from 2024-25 is the launch of our live Osprey cam. We are thrilled to have taken over the license from Forest Land Scotland to monitor and care for the Osprey nest cam and satellite tech at the Loch Doon site.

One of my own personal highlights from 2024-25 is the launch of our live Osprey cam. We are thrilled to have taken over the license from Forest Land Scotland to monitor and care for the Osprey nest cam and satellite tech at the Loch Doon site. With new equipment installed on site, we have been able to live stream every movement of our resident ospreys, so the public can see what is happening with the nest from anywhere in the world. Visitors from all over the world have been keeping an eye on the eggs and eagerly awaited the arrival of chicks!

One of the biggest developments for the Trust to date was the proposed transfer of services from East Ayrshire Council and Kilmarnock Leisure Centre Trust. While the transfer will be massively beneficial to our communities, it is undoubtedly a significant change, both in terms of the numbers of employees we will now have – we will effectively be doubling in size – but also from an administrative perspective and our teams have been working flat out to ensure as seamless a transition as possible. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those involved for their hard work and unrelenting commitment to make it happen. Communities, and staff, will be given the opportunity to feedback any concerns, ideas for consideration and opportunities for development through our programme of Roadshows and accompanying online engagement.



In order to maximise the potential of bringing these services together, the Trust is planning to develop a new operating model, which will provide the most efficient, effective and economic service that will ensure that all services are fully integrated by 2026 and meet the needs and demands of the community.

With regard to our financial performance for 2024/25, the outturn for East Ayrshire Leisure at 31st March 2025 is a deficit position of £30k. 2024/25 was a particularly challenging year for the Trust with the closure of the Palace Theatre and Grand Hall, which resulted in a significant income shortfall. The teams have done a fantastic job to offset this and minimise the impact on our financial position. However, financial sustainability is incredibly vital and plans are already underway to look at financial growth options through the creation of our Trading Subsidiary, which we are very positive about and look forward to the opportunities and expansion to come.

To all our staff, I want to thank you for all that you do. I know that the work that goes on behind the scenes is often the work that goes unnoticed by many, but I am well aware that everything you do is what keeps us going, what keeps us producing the programmes, events and activities, and keeps us providing continuous, quality services to our communities and visitors. I also

want to thank East Ayrshire Council for their continued support. We are very fortunate to have such a valued local authority partner. It is also important to note the contribution from all our other partners and funders, as well as our dedicated Board of Trustees; without their knowledge, skills and extensive experience, none of this would be possible.

Finally, I look forward to welcoming our new colleagues to East Ayrshire Leisure in 2025/26 and working together to improve the enjoyment, quality of life, health and wellbeing of communities and visitors to the area.



Anneke Freel

Chief Officer, East Ayrshire Leisure Trust



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TRUSTEE'S REPORT

The Trustees are pleased to present their Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2025. 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 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.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SERVICES



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.

OPERATIONAL SERVICES



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.



AGREEMENTS WITH EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

A series of agreements underpin East Ayrshire Leisure Trust's relationship with the Council. Services Agreements are in place to cover support services that the Council provides for us i.e. Health and Safety, Internal Audit. Payroll etc. A Provision of Services Agreement is in place to cover the services, which the Council expects us to deliver, including the facilities for which East Ayrshire Leisure is responsible.

In addition, a Collections Agreement covers how the Council's museum collections will be managed by East Ayrshire Leisure and an Asset Agreement covers the ownership of assets required to support the delivery of services which are the responsibility of East Ayrshire Leisure.



STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS

In addition to our Strategic Vision and Corporate Delivery Plan, we have prepared a suite of Strategies, which explain our priorities, our governance, the processes, and protocols we adhere to and any other relevant regulations or documents that apply.

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2022-2030

Whilst East Ayrshire Council owns the East Ayrshire Collection, it is managed and cared for by East Ayrshire Leisure Trust through a Service Level Agreement. The Collection Development Strategy sets out the vision for collections to 2030, related collection Delivery Plan Outputs and provides a review of East Ayrshire Council’s object groupings, stating collecting priorities for the future.

FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2022-2026

The Financial Strategy sets out how the organisation plans to finance its overall operations to meet its objectives, now and in the future. Sound financial management is essential for the success of the Trust, assisting in the successful transition from where we are now, to where we want to be.

LEISURE FACILITY STRATEGY 2022-2030

The Leisure Facility Strategy outlines our vision and ambitions for all our venues and facilities to 2030, and is accompanied by an extensive, over-arching Cross Service Action Plan providing detailed outputs for each area. As our portfolio grows, the Action Plan will be updated accordingly.

NET ZERO CLIMATE STRATEGY 2024-2030

This strategy outlines how East Ayrshire Leisure Trust will reach Net Zero by 2030, aiming to reduce all associated Green House Gas (GHG) emissions as far as possible and how we will offset any residual emissions through sequestration projects, also known as carbon capture projects.

PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2022-2026

Our Programme Development Strategy sets out the priorities and opportunities for event selection, how events will be managed and how our event development strategy relates to delivery plan themes and objectives for the period up to 2026.

KEY VENUES & ATTRACTIONS

We manage a wide range of facilities covering the full leisure remit and operate throughout all of East Ayrshire. Our key venues and tourist attractions are highlighted below. The star ratings listed are provided by VisitScotland following their accreditation visits and assessments, however it should be noted that their scheme is coming to an end shortly and alternatives are being investigated.



ANNANHILL GOLF COURSE

Annanhill is an 18-hole course situated on the outskirts of Kilmarnock which is open to residents and visitors alike. 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, including a new 'daily mile' route. Ponds and areas of flowers have been created to provide wildlife corridors and enhance the biodiversity of the area.



AYRSHIRE ATHLETICS ARENA (4 STAR LEISURE FACILITY)

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 (4 STAR VISITOR ATTRACTION)

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 (4 STAR VISITOR ATTRACTION)

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 (4 STAR VISITOR ATTRACTION)

The redeveloped Dean Castle Country Park is East Ayrshire's only Country Park and 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 Country Park also hosts a number of large scale events every year as well as a programme of outdoor learning activities.

The Castle re-opened to the public 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 East Ayrshire Council. The project involved the refurbishment of the Keep, Palace, Gatehouse, Courtyard and Laundry buildings as well as returning the collections for a redisplay and new interpretation for visitors. 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 (4 STAR VISITOR ATTRACTION)

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



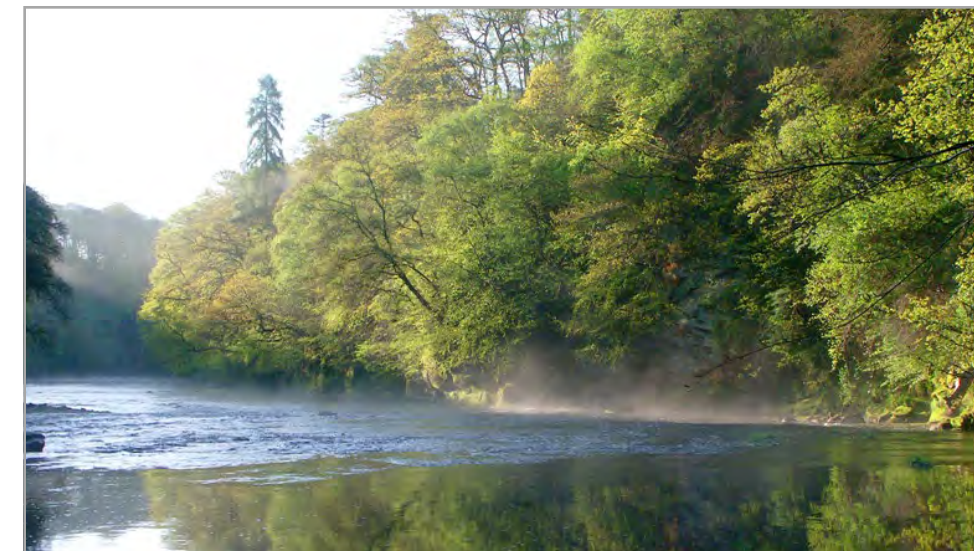
LEISURE CENTRES: AUCHINLECK, BARONY, DOON VALLEY, GRANGE, LOUDOUN, STEWARTON AND ST JOSEPH'S

Our Leisure Centres offer a wide range of activities and facilities for all the family including fitness suites 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 (4 STAR ARTS VENUE)

Ayrshire's premier entertainment venue offers a wonderfully varied programme throughout the year including comedy, music, drama, dance, variety and much more. The venue is currently closed 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

Named after the local World Cup winner and trailblazer for women's football, the Rose Reilly Sports Centre offers a specialised dance studio for dance and fitness classes, has a large multipurpose hall and a fitness suite. The fitness suite has a range of cardiovascular equipment, free weights and resistance machines for a full body workout and our staff are always on hand for support and advice. The full size floodlit 11-a-side Synthetic Grass Pitch is also suitable for 7-a-side games. The Centre also has a large welcoming hall with comfortable seating, selection of books and board games for informal get-togethers and is home to our first Active Wellbeing Suite, housing power-assisted equipment to help those recovering from injury or long-term health issues.

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) and reappointed 2nd November 2017
James Adams	20th July 2021 (resigned as Independent Trustee and reappointed as Partner Trustee 19th May 2022)
Linda Holland	19th May 2022
Graham Boyd	19th May 2022
Richard Grieveson (ex officio)	24th September 2024
Joe McLachlan (ex officio)	27th August 2015
Blair Millar (ex officio)	1st April 2022 (resigned 24th September 2024)

Independent Trustees	
David Ross	20th July 2021
Andy Wilson	14th September 2021 (Trade Union Representative)
Melanie Swan	4th October 2022
Jim Roberts	28th September 2023
Barbara McIntyre	28th September 2023 (resigned 19th August 2024)
Robert Hannah	28th September 2023

The Board meets regularly throughout the year and is supported by a Performance and Audit Sub-Committee made up of 5 Trustees. In addition, development sessions are also held to support Trustee training and to allow discussion to focus on key issues i.e. Business Planning and specific service areas.

Trustee training is available on an as required basis in addition to an induction training programme for new Trustees. Development sessions to enhance Trustees knowledge of service areas are organised throughout the year. Trustees are recruited following East Ayrshire Leisure’s HR recruitment policies and procedures. When a vacancy arises, adverts are circulated amongst appropriate platforms, outlining the key skills, experience and knowledge required for the particular Trustee Ambassador, and candidates are assessed against the Essential Criteria outlined for each role. On appointment, Trustees will undergo induction and training sessions required for the overall role of Trustee and also any specific training required within their portfolio remit.



Management Arrangements

The Chief Officer and Senior Management Team are responsible for the day to day management of East Ayrshire Leisure Trust’s operations.

A Scheme of Delegation is in place to allow responsibilities for key tasks to be allocated to appropriate staff. Staff salaries and terms of conditions of employment follow those of East Ayrshire Council and this is expected to continue.

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 (resigned October 2024)
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 2025 was the Trust's eleventh year of activity. In the period, East Ayrshire Leisure Trust reported an unrestricted deficit (including pension reserve) of £1,036,444 (2004: £257,503).

Five restricted funds were in deficit at the year end by a total of £86,006. 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 2025, the actuarial valuation of the pension scheme resulted in a net pension liability of £112,000 this being recognised in the Balance Sheet. The valuation has resulted in an actuarial gain of £550,000 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.

At 31st March 2025 the Trust held £783,020 (2024: £1,388,890) in reserves. Of this, £327,662 (2024: £762,1261) was held in the unrestricted fund, £275, 565 (2024: £342,545) was held in designated funds, (£112,000) (2024: (£127,000)) was the pension scheme reserve and £291,793 (2024: £411,219) was held in restricted funds.

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 £120,000 to be achieved in by the Trust in 2025/26.

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	£8,814,290
Savings target	£120,000
Baseline budget after savings	£8,594,290

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 2024-25 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.

We continue to monitor the performance aspirations set out in our Strategic Vision with many projections already exceeding our 2030 targets. With future organisational changes planned for the near future including the transfer of additional services from East Ayrshire Council, the Strategic Vision and associated targets will be reviewed in 2025/26.



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.

2024 - 2026 CORPORATE DELIVERY PLAN

We are now halfway through our third Corporate Delivery Plan, which covers the period 2024-26.

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:

- Customer and community engagement has been extensive this year, and we have consulted on a variety of topics including community venue services, programmes and opening hours and a stakeholder session was held at the Palace Theatre as part of the planning process for the Cultural Kilmarnock project. In line with East Ayrshire Council's Leisure Review, and as part of our overall stakeholder engagement programme, an online survey was carried out to establish feedback on the proposals; with over 750 people contributing to the survey, respondents were generally positive about the proposals and commented on the opportunities that they could bring.
- We conducted a comprehensive Staff Satisfaction survey, our first since before Covid. An online questionnaire was issued to employees and bank workers, with a response rate of 52%. An action plan was developed to ensure any actions arising from the survey, whether at a corporate level or a service level are addressed.

- We created our own “The Customer Journey” course and began rolling it out to front line members of staff. The course is based on Visit Scotland’s assessment criteria used in their Accreditation and Mystery Shopping programmes and is also outlined as part of our Customer Services Protocol. The course explores the complete experience that we want to provide for every one of our customers and visitors and demonstrates that outstanding customer service is at the heart of everything that we do.
- As there is so much scope for expansion in our partnership with SAMH (Scottish Action for Mental Health) and many more opportunities which we have yet to explore, the agreement for them to be our ‘Charity of Choice’ was extended for an additional year. Further enhancement of workplace wellbeing schemes will support the upcoming and extensive organisational change.
- We completed a project to install a number of TV screens and digital signage across multiple Trust venues which can be used to advertise our events, programmes and services, and includes the live stream of our Osprey cam. We procured software which will allow key, and targeted, messaging to be delivered across multiple sites from one central point within the Sharing Our Vision Team.



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:

- The Cultural Hubs have been positively impacted by the introduction of the community performing arts programme following the temporary closure of the Palace and Grand Hall. This relocation and introduction of a community programme has seen an increase of 26% in Stewarton Area Centre and Cumnock Town Hall. The programme has been well received by our customers, and the programme is being evaluated and developed with the intention of keeping it going after the Palace Theatre and Grand Hall reopens.



- St. Joseph's Leisure Centre has been a hive of activity this year and has seen an increase of 74% in attendances, mainly due to the relocation of dance shows from the Grand Hall to the Leisure Centre. Janie Burrows held her annual dance show, raising over £1045 in the process for the charity, 'Doing it for Daniel' and said that in the 40 years of hosting shows she couldn't have been any happier with the show here and the support from staff. Margaret Bunten's School of Dance also held their 38th Annual Dance Show here; with 6 shows over 4 days and audiences of over 300 people, the event also raised an incredible £2200 for local charity 'Beautiful Inside and Out'.
- It was identified that there are no longer any banks in the Cumnock area so have been working with Cash Access UK to operate a banking hub from Cumnock Library until they are able to secure premises within the town. The hub has been installed in an area of the library and gives local people access to banking services that they would not be able to use otherwise unless they travelled to Ayr or Kilmarnock.
- Libraries have been performing well as new activities and services for the community have been added to the provision and have been extremely well received by our customers. We've been working in partnership with SSPCA to offer advice hubs in the Dick Institute. On a monthly basis, the SSPCA visit and offer advice and support to our customers on animal care and to raise awareness of the services that they offer. There was also a collaboration with our resident Yarn Group who knitted blankets for animals in their shelters.



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:

- Attendances at our museums have seen increases of approximately 20% across the Burns House Museum, The Baird Institute, Dean Castle Country Park and the Dick Institute, predominantly due to our engagement programmes; examples include our interactive workshops that explored Tam O' Shanter through shadow puppetry, character dress-up, creative storytelling and our schools' workshops exploring Ayrshire's rich mining heritage.
- Our first Mayfest held in the Dean Castle Courtyard was a huge success, hosting the EAC Awards Ceremony 'Live @ The Dean' music sessions and the 'Tastes of Ayrshire' food festival across a weekend in May.
- Our partnership website, **futuremuseum**, underwent major re-development. The online resource is a partnership between East Ayrshire Leisure Trust, East Ayrshire Council, Dumfries and Galloway Council, North Ayrshire Council, South Ayrshire Council and the independent museums of the south-west of Scotland which provides access to the region's museum and gallery collections as well as delving into the fascinating history and heritage of the area. Pupils and college students were consulted as part of the redevelopment and the result is a more visually attractive, user friendly, interactive website which is proving to be a valuable resource tool for schools.

- The Time Travel Trails launched across our cultural venues and brought together our fantastic Dean Castle Textile team volunteers, Yarn A Go-Go Knitting club and staff from Burns Monument Centre to create a series of tours that tell the stories of our buildings and connections with local figures and characters in a fun and interactive way. This included Robert Burns and Jean Armour, Keir Hardie and the Suffragettes and James Dick, who gifted the Dick Institute to Kilmarnock.
- Our extensive exhibition programme continues to be complemented by our resident 'ArtClub?' of care-experienced young people in partnership with EAC's health & Social Care Partnership, who meet each week and inspire with their creative energy.





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:

- Further development of our Spektrix ticketing system has been integral in the delivery of our Big Top Panto and the Community Programmes, with the capability to create and amend seating plans, introduce multi layered pricing structures, promote special offers and tailored ticketing promotions. We continue to work closely with the Spektrix Team to ensure we provide an improved customer journey, developing plans for improved scanning and reporting. Development plans are also underway to integrate the App to provide a one stop shop for customers.
- With the new ticketing system going live we focussed on online sign-ups and invoicing; compliance checks and mandatory training were completed, enabling the Trust to continue to be a BACS approved organisation.

- We hosted a party to celebrate our volunteers and all the many projects and events they are involved in. Giving over three thousand hours of their time this year between seventeen different roles, our volunteers' contributions are invaluable to the organisation.
- Verifone devices have been installed in our venues which are integrated with Legend, our Leisure Management System. This has been supplemented with mobile devices for our hospitality service for large scale events.
- A student previously on placement within Hospitality gained the valuable knowledge and experience they needed to allow them to secure employment within the Trust.



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:

- Our updated Growth Plan (outlining the significant changes and aspirations for the future of The Trust) was approved by the Board, actions identified and Working Groups established. A detailed Implementation Plan was developed in conjunction with key partners and the services/organisations affected. The first phase of the Growth Plan will be implemented with the transfer of East Ayrshire Council's Vibrant Communities teams and Community and Corporate Catering and the Galleon Leisure Centre.
- A Working Group has been established to review the current memberships on offer across all services with the objective of developing a comprehensive range of membership packages. Implementation is scheduled for April 2026 when the new operational model for the Trust will be in place.
- Our hospitality offer is being adapted to suit our range of community and large-scale events in line with our Programming Strategy and will be further developed by the newly appointed Strategic Lead: Hospitality & Retail.
- Azets was commissioned to carry out some advisory work around VAT/Tax implications for our Organisational Growth plans. The Business Plan was submitted to Board November 2024 and development of Trading Subsidiary has been included in the Detailed Implementation Plan.

PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

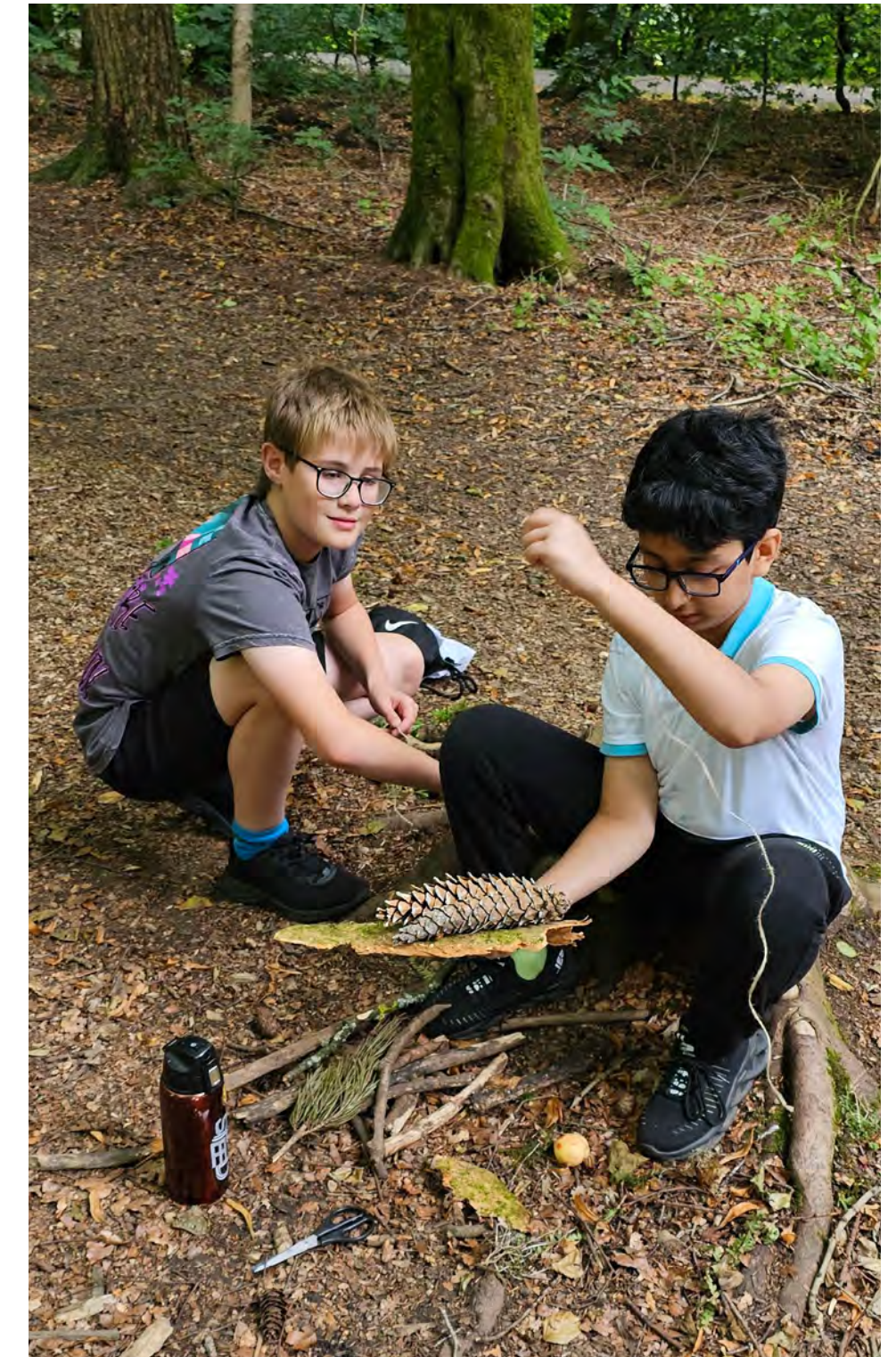
- To prepare and adopt a Climate Change Declaration on an annual basis which audits our carbon footprint and outlines priorities for carbon reduction.
- To adopt the principles of Visit Scotland's Green Tourism Business Scheme to reduce the environmental impact of our business.
- To implement a Sustainable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



KEY POINTS & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Our team have worked extremely hard to make the changes to Annanhill Golf Course which have already been mentioned by the Chair. As well as improvements to the course, paths and ponds, we carried out wildflower and daffodil planting as part of World Rewilding Day. This was in conjunction with East Ayrshire Council's Modern Apprentices and Skills and Learning 33 with Parental Employability scheme. Our Friends of the Dean Volunteers and Kilmarnock College helped plant 160 birch, beech and oak trees.
- We gifted a stay at the Treehouse Residential Centre for the secondary schools' winner of East Ayrshire Council Clean, Green Awards. Precious memories were made for the eco group from Park School who took part in a host of activities including a trip to the Urban Farm and deer watching, a Castle tour and a woodland art competition, they also enjoyed a movie in the Treehouse Auditorium before bedtime.

- Our journey to Net Zero is officially underway after successful approval of our new Net Zero Climate Strategy 2024-2030 by the Board. The strategy outlines our ambitious target of reaching Net Zero by 2030 and goes into detail of how we plan to achieve this goal. Many of our objectives have already been achieved including recycling and sustainable bathroom consumables and dispensers. In all our venues, a water reduction pilot with tap aerators within three venues and 2 fully electric quads at the Ayrshire Athletics Arena and Annanhill Golf Course which will be used as utility vehicles.
- The Trust has officially become a Bronze status Carbon Literate Organisation highlighting our dedication towards tackling climate change, reducing organisational carbon emissions, and our commitment to working towards a zero carbon future.
- We have been working with 'Release Ayrshire', an online men's support service that has been set up to help provide confidential support and advice to men of any age who are down, in crisis or who need to talk. They aim to increase awareness and reduce the stigma of men's mental health. They have donated a bench to the Dean Castle County Park to create a nice calm space where people can sit, relax and reflect.



ONLINE VISITORS

eastayrshireleisure.com

Our website is our main source of information for visitors, hosting our full 'What's On' Guide, venue details and opening hours, access to information regarding Organisational development, Board papers and details of our Trustees plus a whole host of other information about the Trust.

With the introduction of Google Analytics 4 (GA4) in 2023 our statistical reporting changed and unfortunately visitor numbers initially took a slight dip. 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 are now however back to projecting ongoing year on year growth within sessions numbers.

We had 447,750 sessions on the site throughout 2024/25, an increase of over 6000 since 2023/24.



Website sessions

447,750



Website Impressions

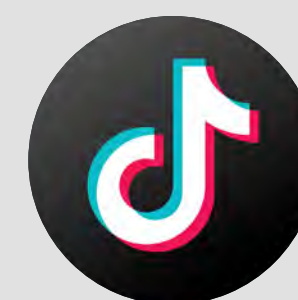
7m



Facebook Reach

5,989,347

Increase from 5,259,978 in 2023/24



Tik Tok Reach

219,320



Instagram Reach

89,670

Increase from 60,270
in 2023/24



Paid Reach

446,599

Significantly increased
from 139,237 in 2023/24

ONLINE VISITORS

These stats contain almost 45,000 sessions to **deancastlecountrypark.com** a standalone website that was launched to coincide with the re-opening of the Castle. The site contains information about the Castle and museum collections housed within, routes and pathways to explore the park, the Rural Life Centre and the Treehouse Café and Residential Centre – all the information needed to plan a great day out!

Social Media

Social media is clearly one of our fastest and most responsive forms of communication. In 2024/25 we achieved over 7 million impressions (7,028,339) – almost 1,400,000 more than last year.

Our East Ayrshire Leisure and additional facility Facebook accounts - have continued to attract significant increases, as has our Twitter and Instagram accounts. Engagement levels across all platforms were 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. With the addition of new service areas and venues in the new year, plans are in place to audit all our pages, streamline and to further maximise engagement wherever possible.

The posts which received the most interactions are detailed below:

41,600



19 November.	
Goldilocks & Three Bears Competition	
Reach	41.6k
Reactions	851
Comments	834
Shares	1k



6,200



15 March.	
Sad news Sprite (DCC page)	
Reach	6.2k
Reactions	295
Comments were turned off as this post related to the death of one of the park's much-loved horses	



76,500



21 March.	
Osprey Cam	
Reach	76.5k
Reactions	674
Comments	48
Shares	104



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. Achievements for 2024/25 have been outlined in the report above.

Some of the key developments and areas for focus throughout the 2025-26 period are highlighted below:

- The implementation of our Growth Plan, primarily the transfer of East Ayrshire Council staff/services and the Galleon Leisure Centre will be a major focus for early 2025 with Community and Staff Roadshows planned, providing the opportunity for feedback into the growth plan and all associated practices and services.
- We will have a new Headquarters and base for management – moving out of the Dower House within the grounds of Dean Castle Country Park and into Wallace Chambers, John Dickie Street will provide ample office accommodation and meeting room space, and a temporary box office during the Palace Theatre closure. It will also provide much-needed economic boost to Kilmarnock Town Centre. Further plans for the building to acknowledge its historical significance and place within the cultural heritage of the area will be developed.
- The major construction and renovation work at the Palace Theatre and Grand Hall Complex will continue throughout 2025/26 with communication plans in place, including the creation of informative and design-led hoarding, surrounding the building while closures are in force.



- Consultants have been appointed to develop the masterplan for our Regional Sports Park focussing on the grounds surrounding Ayrshire Athletics Arena. Consultation has started with local sports clubs who will form part of a new community sports hub for the Regional Sports Park.
- Contractors have been appointed to carry out external refurbishment of Burns House Museum and Nanse Tinnocks. An application has been submitted for internal layout improvements, upgrade and access improvements to the courtyard and modernisation of the display and interpretation.
- We are preparing to host a major retrospective of cartoonist and caricaturist Malky McCormick at

the Dick Institute in 2026. We have been given the opportunity to document a significant body of work left behind in Malky's studio following his death in 2019 and have secured funding to employ 2 museum interns to complete this task. A full programme of engagement activities will take place in the period leading up to the exhibition.

- With the recruitment of our new Strategic Lead: Hospitality we will explore operating models that enhance our hospitality provision throughout our venue portfolio including cafes, bars and specialist catering services as well as introducing new and enhanced opportunities for gift shops and the development of online retail.



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 23rd September 2025 and signed on its behalf by:



Clare Maitland (Chair)



Anneke Freel, Chief Officer

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Notes	Unrestricted Fund 2025 £	Pension Reserve 2025 £	Restricted Funds 2025 £	2025 £	2024 £
Income from:						
Charitable activities	3	8,650,616	-	732,637	9,383,253	9,741,471
Investments	3	23,308	-	-	23,308	26,140
Total income		8,673,924	-	732,637	9,406,561	9,767,611
Expenditure on:						
Charitable activities	4	9,175,368	515,000	852,063	10,542,431	9,964,440
Other (net interest defined benefit pension scheme)	8	-	20,000	-	20,000	(8,000)
Total expenditure		9,175,368	535,000	852,063	10,562,431	9,956,440
Net (expenditure)/income		(501,444)	(535,000)	(119,426)	(1,155,870)	(188,829)
Transfer between funds		-	-	-	-	-
Other recognised gains/ (losses):						
Actuarial (losses)/gains on Defined benefit pension schemes	8	-	550,000	-	550,000	(262,000)
Net movement in funds		(501,444)	15,000	(119,426)	(605,870)	(450,829)
Reconciliation of funds:						
Total funds brought forward		1,104,671	(127,000)	411,219	1,388,890	1,839,719
Total funds carried forward	16	603,227	(112,000)	291,793	783,020	1,388,890

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	2025 £	2024 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	9	154,188	89,968
Heritage assets	10	34,920	34,920
		<u>189,108</u>	<u>124,888</u>
Current assets			
Stocks and work in progress	11	42,870	44,227
Debtors	12	745,576	800,876
Cash at bank and in hand	17	809,931	1,605,043
		<u>1,598,377</u>	<u>2,450,146</u>
Liabilities			
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	13	(892,465)	(1,059,144)
Net current assets		<u>705,912</u>	<u>1,391,002</u>
Net assets excluding pension scheme asset/(liability)		<u>895,020</u>	<u>1,515,890</u>
Defined benefit pension scheme (liability)/asset	8	(112,000)	(127,000)
Total net assets		<u><u>783,020</u></u>	<u><u>1,388,890</u></u>
The funds of the charity:			
Restricted income funds	16	291,793	411,219
Unrestricted funds	16	603,227	1,104,671
Unrestricted fund - Pension reserve	16	(112,000)	(127,000)
Funds		<u><u>783,020</u></u>	<u><u>1,388,890</u></u>







EAST AYRSHIRE LEISURE TRUST

A Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Charity Number SC043987