



Annual Report

2024/2025

VISION STATEMENT

We offer easily accessible, high-quality Culture and Sport experiences delivering improved mental and physical health and wellbeing, fun and learning from mountain to sea for everyone living in, working in or visiting Aberdeenshire.

FOREWORD



Avril Nicol,
Head of Service

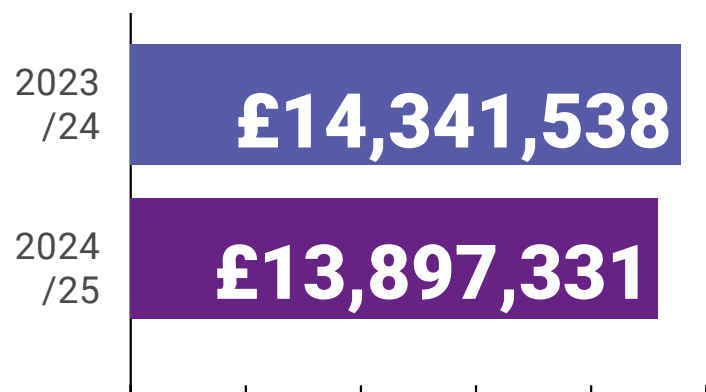
Over the past 12 months, Live Life Aberdeenshire has continued to deliver exceptional cultural, sporting, and wellbeing services to our communities—achieving more with less, and doing so with heart. We welcomed nearly 3 million physical visits, reduced our cost per visit, and increased income all while delivering vital capital projects within budget. From expanded swimming lessons and inclusive sports to digital growth and reducing our carbon footprint, our community impact has been wide-reaching and deeply meaningful.

These achievements are a testament to the dedication of our staff, the support of our partners, and the enthusiasm of every individual who engaged with our services. Your commitment has helped us navigate challenges and embrace opportunities with resilience and creativity.

As I step back from my role, I do so with immense pride and confidence in the future of this service. Thank you for being part of this journey.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCES

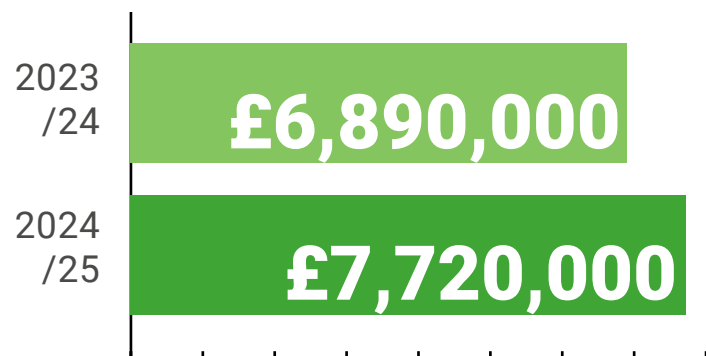
Total LLA cost



£600k less

costs to deliver the LLA service in 2024/25

Total income generated



£840k more

income generated than last year

£5.16
23/24 subsidy cost

£4.61
24/25 subsidy cost

DID YOU KNOW...



A **subsidy** is how much it costs LLA to provide the service per visit

The subsidy per head reduced by

55p
per visit



Annual staff costs reduced by over

£306k

ATTENDANCE



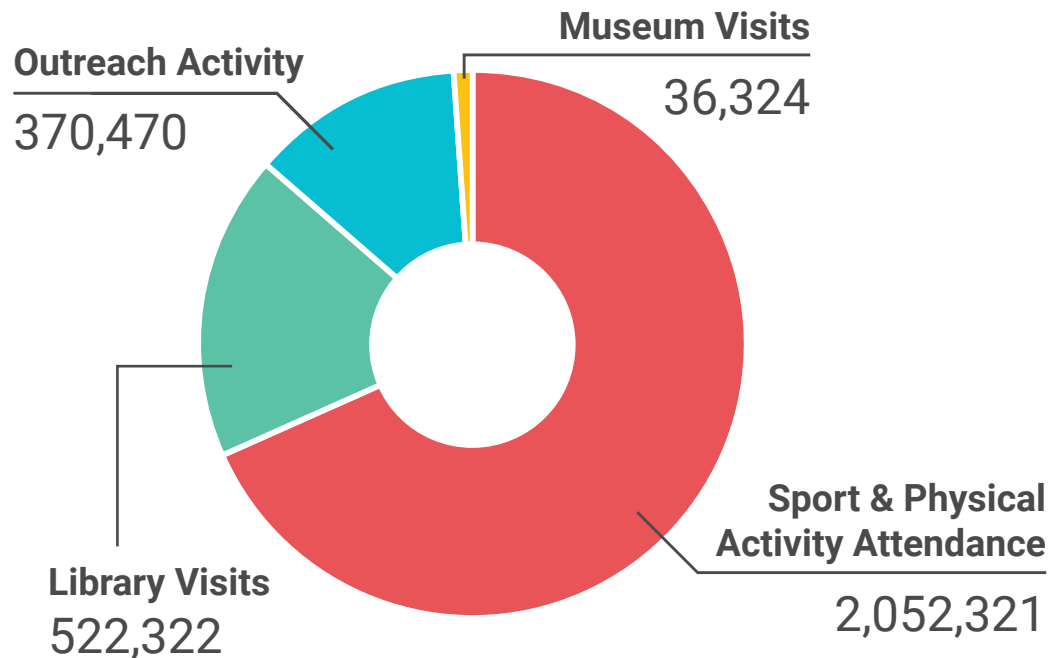
2,779,297
physical visits
23/24 value (actual)



2,981,437
physical visits
24/25 value (actual)



Physical usage of LLA facilities increased by
over 200,000!

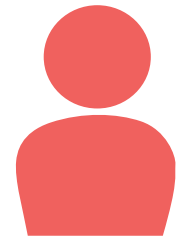


DID YOU KNOW...



The **population** of Aberdeenshire is approximately 264,320 (2023)

Nearly 3 million visits is the equivalent of nearly **one visit per month** for each resident in Aberdeenshire!



DIGITAL STATISTICS



Total orders
10,034

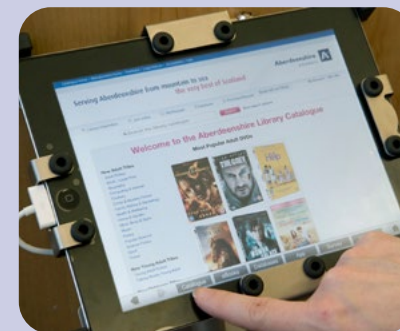
**18%
more
orders**



**23%
more
revenue**



Number of
users joining the
library service
online in 24/25
1,663

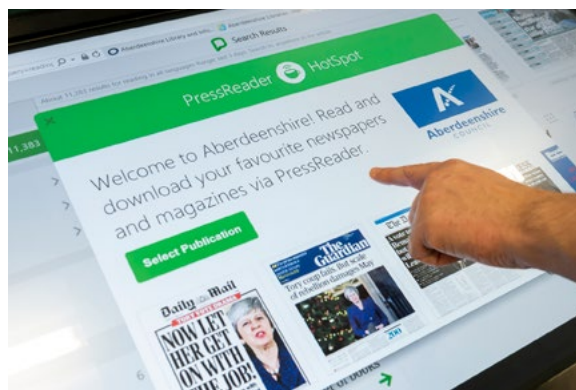


OverDrive®



Users up
10.28%

4,003 total users

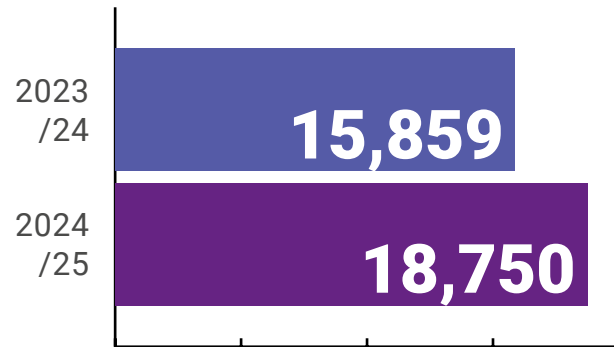


 **pressreader™**

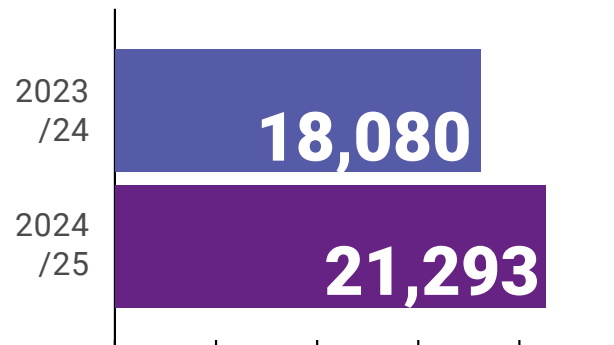


Average number of
sessions per month
54,712

DIGITAL STATISTICS



Monthly app users up **18.23%**



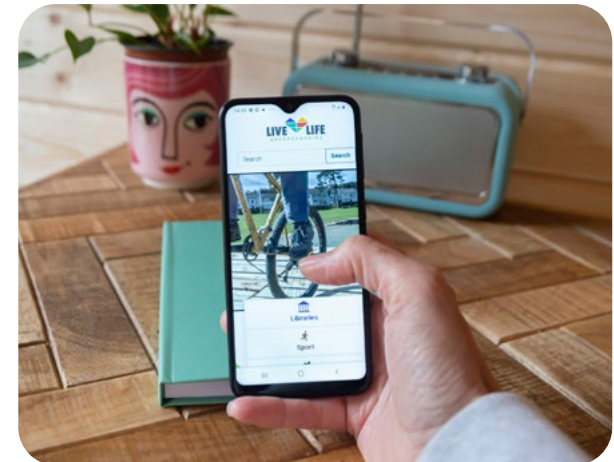
Monthly app downloads up **17.76%**



Youtube views increased by **37.55%**



Website traffic up **2.37%**



Total visits across all webpages
1,295,222

CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROJECTS

 In total, just over **£6 million** was invested in **Live Life Aberdeenshire projects** completed in 2024/2025.

Stonehaven Town Hall stage curtain and lifting systems upgrade - **£110k investment**



Sir Arthur Grant Outdoor Centre upgrade - **£2.5 million investment**

Fraserburgh gym upgrade - **£300k investment**



Refurbishment of Stonehaven Leisure Centre - **£1.8 million investment**

ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT (CARBON REDUCTION)

36 tCO₂e
saved in the year
2024/25 through
leisure centre operation
5% reduction vs last year



281 tCO₂e
saved
since
April 2023



16% reduction
in emissions
from recorded
in the past 2
years



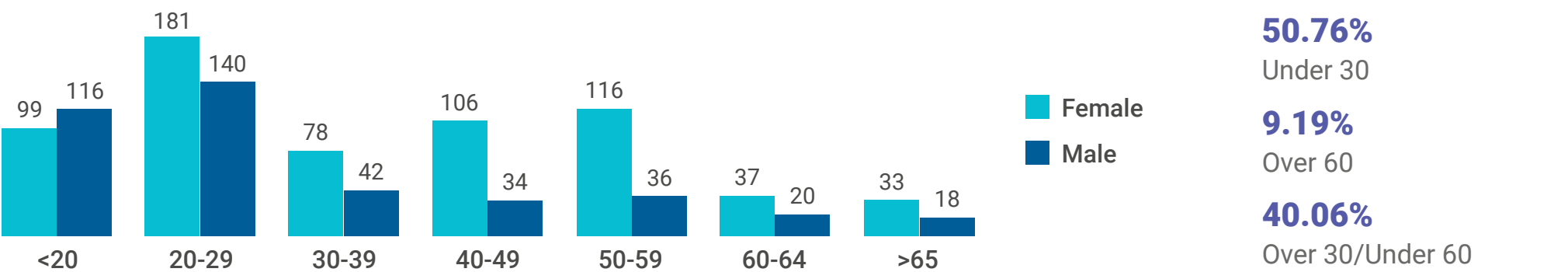
In the past year:

- Capital investment through LED light replacement (floodlights)
- Installation of variable speed drives
- Pool cover replacement
- Installation of solar panels at Stonehaven Leisure Centre

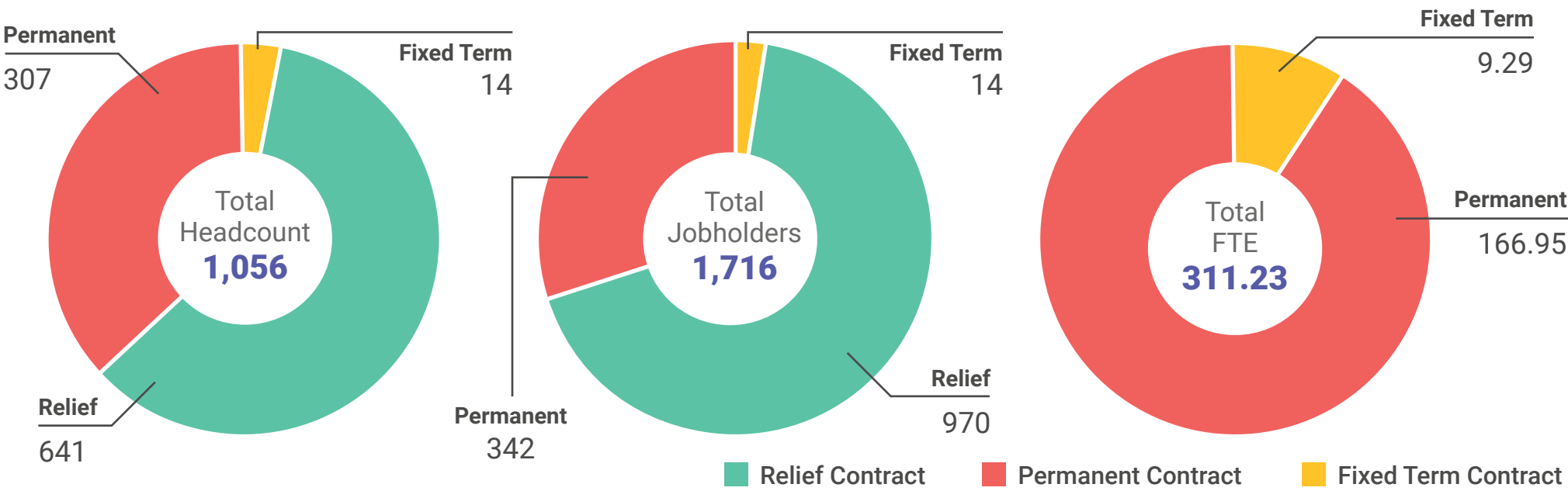


EMPLOYEE STATS

WORKFORCE DISTRIBUTION BY AGE AND GENDER



CURRENT WORKFORCE METRICS BY CONTRACT TYPE



ACTIVE SCHOOLS

Sports Festivals and Events

Active Schools have delivered the Run For Fun series and Netball, Football, Basketball and Athletics festivals right across Aberdeenshire.

**WATCH
HERE!** 

[Click here](#) or scan the QR to see more about our junior cross-country



Pupil Leadership

Active Schools have delivered a number of leadership opportunities including **Playleaders** to primary pupils, whilst **120** S2-S4 pupils have completed the certified '**I can Lead**' programme.

ACTIVE SCHOOLS



Volunteering

Volunteers continue to deliver on over **95%** of our programme - this year our youngest volunteer is aged **10** and our oldest is **84**.



**WATCH
HERE!** 

[Click here](#)
or scan
the QR to
see more
about Active
Schools
netball



Inclusive Sports
Various targeted activities have been organised including Grampian sportshall athletics, inclusive swimming Gala and localised programmes in **every network**.



POSITIVE ACTION GRANTS

The Positive Action Grant funding has **significantly enhanced community well-being** by enabling various projects that support mental and physical health, inclusivity, and social engagement.



community groups/
clubs/organisations
funded



settlements benefitted

Community Sports Hubs

**409** individuals took
part in activities**29** people
received training**4,000+**
attendances**6** **NEW** activities started
with regular
ongoing sessions**41**
people
volunteered**368**
individuals
have been more
active through attending
activities funded**6** **brand
new**
activities have
started and
are on track to be
fully sustainable

USER ENGAGEMENT



The service continually engages with our communities through various ways such as **Town Centre Planning initiatives, Place Planning groups** and **Local Action groups**. We also work to improve the service delivery for the customer through our **Venue User Engagement** and **Pitch User Groups**.

In-person public engagement around the new Museum of Aberdeenshire initiative



54 participatory sessions delivered



18 community groups worked with



596 people in and around Peterhead engaged with



MMA free pop-up animal handling

Deveron
Community &
Sports Centre

115
participants

10
sessions

USER ENGAGEMENT



Remembering Together Aberdeenshire

An artist-led COVID memorial project that engaged communities through creative works, installations, and events.

 **14** touring
community events

 **20** musical
compositions
available online, along with
artists' map and short film

 **300+**
residents
attended

9
benches
installed 
along a new walking route

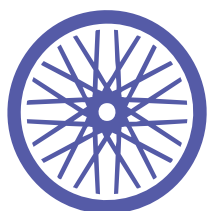
WATCH HERE! 

[Click here](#) or scan the QR to watch the
short film created as part of Remembering
Together Aberdeenshire



In Summer 2024, a **Museums-led pilot in Peterhead** saw refugees and asylum seekers collaborate with an award-winning photographer. Using analogue techniques, they **explored museum collections** and co-created images, informing the **new Museum of Aberdeenshire**.

CYCLE ABERDEENSHIRE



The Live Life Outdoors (LLO) programme **promotes active travel** among children through cycle initiatives. **Balance**

to Pedal builds cycling confidence - the programme includes a **6-week course** for P1-P5 (ages 5-9) and **junior cycling sessions** for P1-S4 (ages 5-14).



Bringing the Bike to You

- School and community engagement
- Activity days and fun sessions
- Balance to Pedal and transition days



44
bookings



2,101
individual sessions

Impact and Collaboration



Supported by
Cycling Scotland



Positive
community
feedback



Promoting active,
sustainable travel

SWIMMING LESSONS

Swimming Lessons delivered
at LLA pools per year

2023
/24

360,000

2024
/25

400,000+



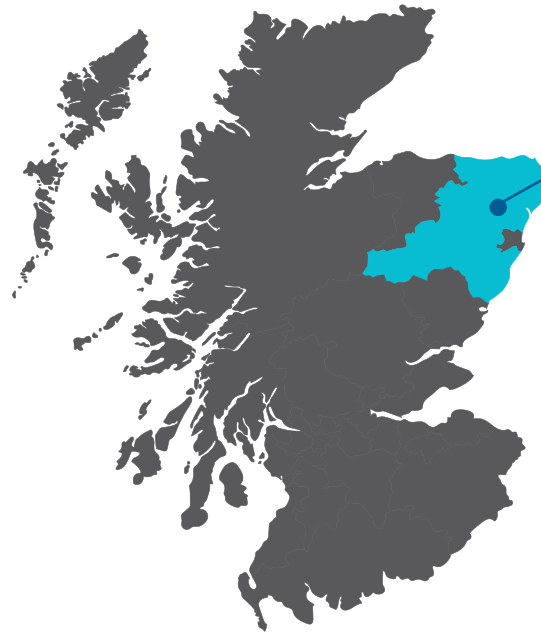
9,000

swimming lessons
delivered per week



40,000

extra lessons in 24/
25 to meet demand

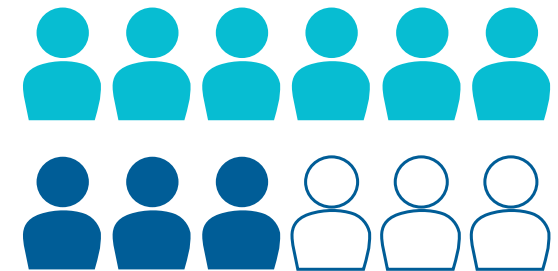


Aberdeenshire's swimming
lesson programme is the
largest in Scotland



Additional lessons have
reduced waiting lists

by half



VENUES

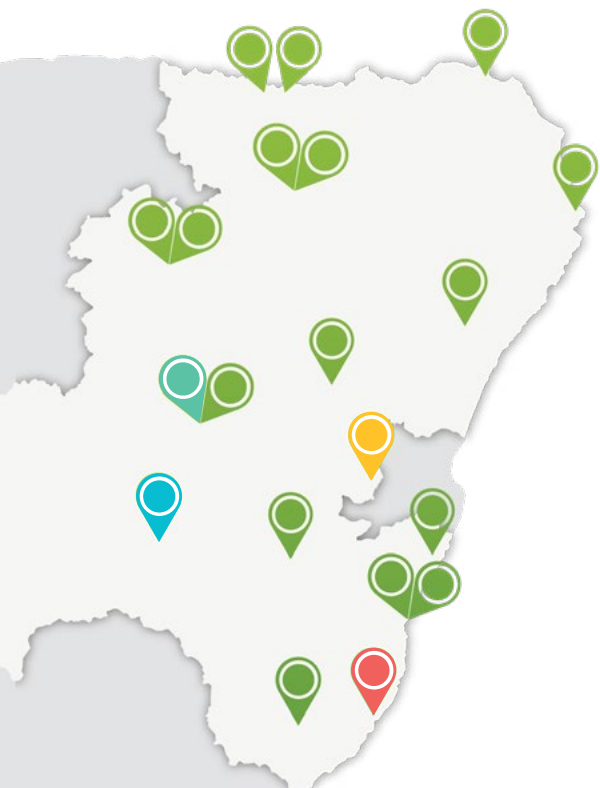


Leisure centre visits increased by almost

140,000!

The cost per visit reduced by 18% to

£3.04 per visit



ALFORD COMMUNITY CAMPUS

The activities offered at Alford have grown over the year through “kids for a quid” half term sessions, more spin and aqua classes, climbing wall access, “Fit to Walk” and short mat bowling now available.

WESTHILL SWIMMING POOL

- New boiler system installed at the start of the year.
- Sessions introduced to support asylum seekers in the area, in partnership with the community sport hub and funded by **sportscotland**.

INVERBERVIE SPORTS CENTRE

- A new synthetic grass surface, funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund opened in April 2025.
- Increased opening hours during the Easter holidays were tested to assess demand.

ABOYNE AND DEESIDE COMMUNITY CENTRE

- Work began at the end of 2024/25 year to improve the gym space.
- Equipment for Pickleball introduced to the venue and is proving to be very popular.

VENUES

BANCHORY SPORTS VILLAGE

- Class delivery and activities offered has increased over the year.
- Additional equipment for Pickleball has been introduced to the venue and the sport has proven to be very popular.

ELLON COMMUNITY CAMPUS

Community focus at the campus, as shown by summer open day attended by over **250** local residents.

The only LLA venue to offer Archery, this has proven very popular with **90% occupancy**



TURRIFF SPORTS CENTRE

- Synthetic grass surface at the venue replaced and is now available for tennis, 5 a side football and netball.
- Work began to replace the changing pavilion, a much-needed resource for the town.

INVERURIE COMMUNITY CAMPUS

- Membership Growth: Membership increased by **41%**
- Programming introduced to meet the community needs of the Friends of Al-Mal for Syrian ladies and the wider community.

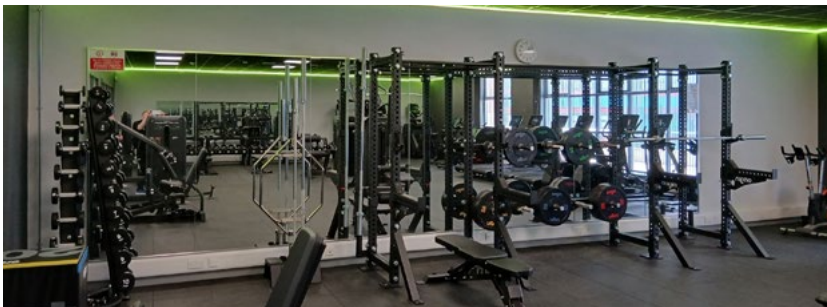
HUNTLY SWIMMING POOL



The only venue **without** a waiting list for swimming lessons!

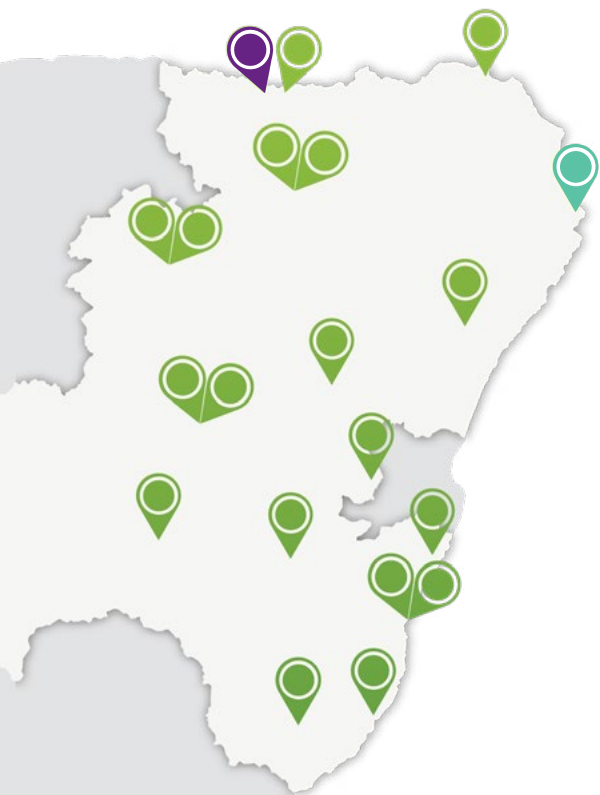


VENUES



DEVERON AND COMMUNITY SPORTS CENTRE

- Upgrade to gym space and changing village, with new equipment.
- Hosting of staff from Macduff Marine Aquarium whilst refurbishment works are carried out at the aquarium.



PETERHEAD LEISURE AND COMMUNITY CENTRE

- Come and Try Open Day on 21 September 2024 with a range of free activities and taster sessions such as: Badminton, Pickleball, Walking Netball, ASN and family indoor athletics and sports, Float Fit, Bouncy Castle, and Swimming Family and Fun sessions. The attendance was over **400** people.
- Temporarily hosting the relocated Peterhead Library, to much positive feedback.

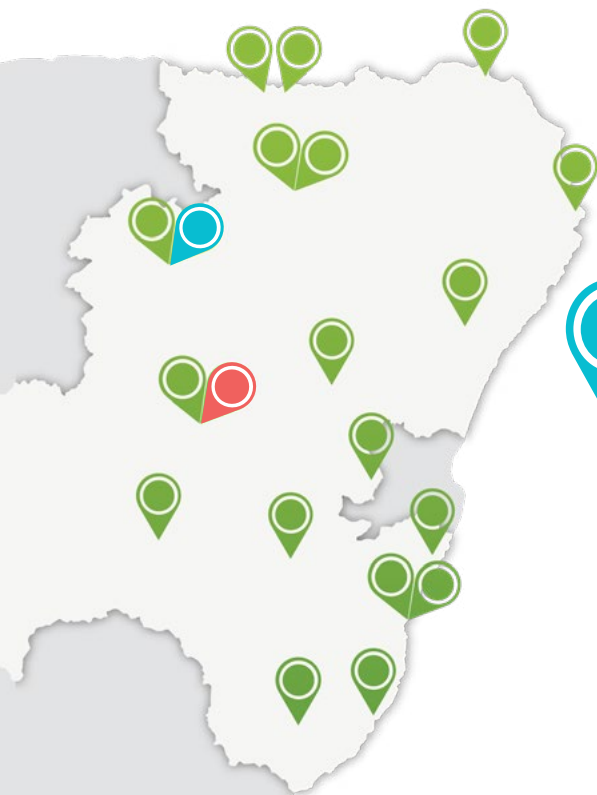


Hosted the Royal Regiment Freedom of Aberdeenshire Event in May 2024.

VENUES

WATCH HERE!

Click here
or scan
the QR to
watch our
Live Life
Outdoors promo video



ALFORD SKI CENTRE

- Live Life Outdoors continues to achieve strong community engagement, financial success, and staff accomplishments.
- Ski camps saw high participation, and income exceeded targets, supported by a robust lesson programme.
- New Sunday sessions at Alford Ski Club were well-received, contributing to a year of growth and engagement.



£169,000

income from ski camps - a high number of people want to learn to ski

HUNTLY NORDIC CENTRE

- The 'Mellow Movers' class for seniors has grown in popularity.
- A successful ski sale generated revenue for new equipment.
- Staff received training in adaptive sessions to enhance their skills.
- The After School Club engages a significant number of girls in sports, aiming to inspire continued participation.



50%
increase
in attendance
for the Junior
Development Squad

VENUES



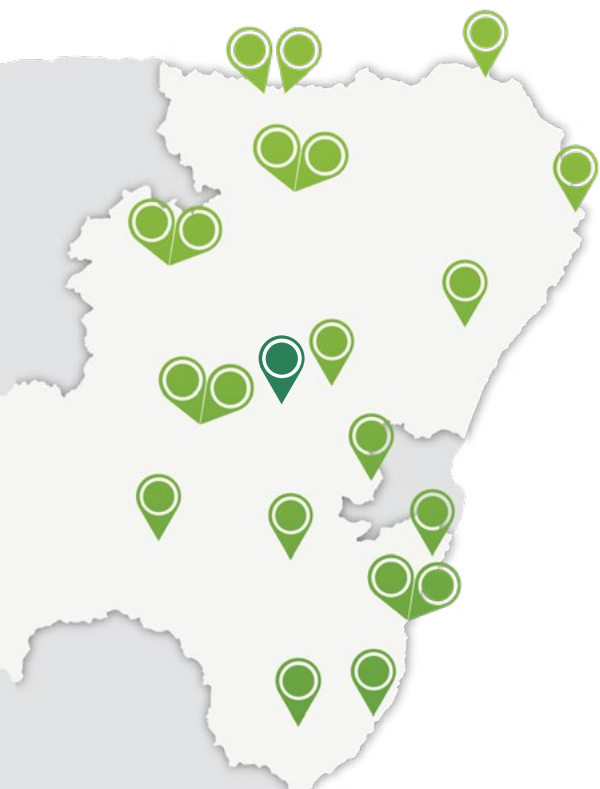
SIR ARTHUR GRANT CENTRE

- The redevelopment of the Sir Arthur Grant Centre has been completed along with the installation of new outdoor equipment.
- The upgrades include a playpark, high ropes challenge, tree climb, and a low ropes course.
- The centre now offers a variety of outdoor learning experiences.
- It has become a popular choice for local schools and clubs.



2 new minibuses

are also now offered which will save schools on transport costs and allow for expanded year-round programmes



VENUES

STONEHAVEN OPEN AIR POOL (SOAP)

- The season ran from May until September with over **35,000** visits.
- Very strong “Friends of SOAP” group who support and maintain the facility year round.
- In house cafe offer for the first time.
- The Friends of SOAP commissioned an economic assessment which shows that SOAP returns £10 per every £1 spent to the local economy.

The Princess Royal Anne opened the season on May 13, 2024, marking SOAPs 90th anniversary



VENUES

STONEHAVEN OPEN AIR POOL

Cold Water Swimming Initiatives

- Trialled for the first time ever in November 2024
- **695** visitors attending
- 32% of visitors over 60yrs old
- Average swim temperatures between 3-5 degrees



FIND OUT MORE!

Click here or scan the QR to visit SOAP's website



GYM REFRESH AND MEMBERSHIPS

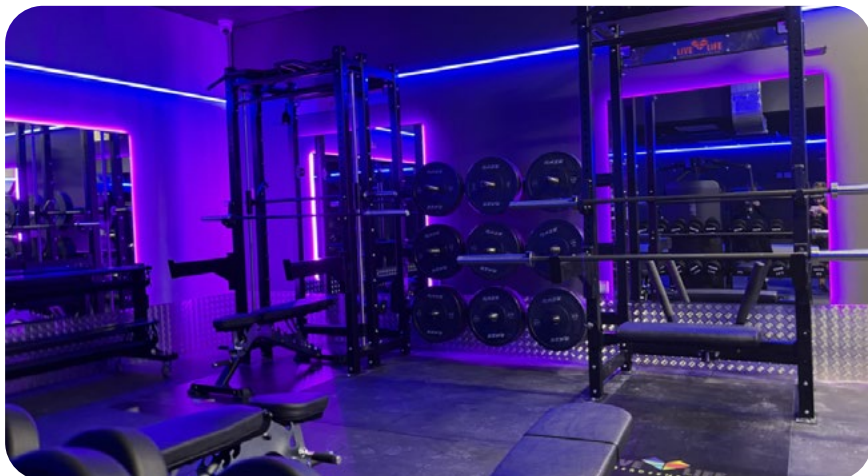
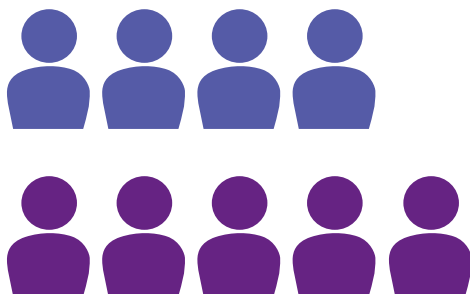
MEMBERSHIP GROWTH

23.7% increase

in paid memberships

13,240 members

in total, including our free Live Life Essentials membership



The Stonehaven Leisure Centre reopened after refurbishment, leading to a **433% growth** in direct debit memberships and increased group exercise class offerings.

Similarly, the Fraserburgh Community and Sport Centre saw an **8% growth** in membership in its first month, following its gym expansion and the introduction of a dedicated spin studio.



CULTURE

POSITIVE ACTION GRANT



 investment in
5 rural
communities

1,751 
volunteer hours

1,333
participants

 **1,393**
performance attendees


55
events

We awarded **grant funding** to support community activity and participation to the **Museum of Scottish Lighthouses and Duff House**.



The Youth Music Initiative Programme engaged **10,000 children and young people** this year in high quality opportunities, enabling them to achieve their potential in or through music making



CULTURE

The completion of re-development work at **Aden Country Park** includes a **new heritage trail** with interpretive panels and visitor leaflets highlighting archaeology, agriculture, estate history, and the natural environment; a new education pack showcases the learning opportunities offered by **Aberdeenshire Farming Museum**.



Arts team undertook extensive research and created a working group of carers and VSA/HSCP staff to develop a pilot programme of cultural activities for **older unpaid carers** called **My Time Aberdeenshire**, to be launched summer 2025, designed to improve health and wellbeing by providing essential respite from the caring role. To promote accessibility, activities will be in-person and online, supported by basic IT training.



Seven local artists received financial support to progress their professional and creative development via our partnership with **Creative Scotland**.



We were **one of only four participants** in Scotland selected to work with 22 other arts and heritage organisations across the UK in an innovative project called **Going Places**; a landmark £5.36 million UK-wide exhibition programme over the next five years, in collaboration with our communities, contemporary artists and craftspeople.

LIBRARIES



The trend for many of our libraries is an **increase in active borrowers and book issues**, with only a 1% decrease overall for issues across the year as a result of some libraries being affected by staffing challenges.

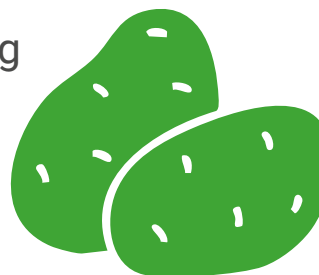
The **Seed Libraries** are into their second year and continuing to be **extremely popular**. As well as promoting the library service and bringing in new customers the initiative also brings **health and wellbeing benefits** in terms of exercise, fresh air and wellbeing to our users.



6 libraries

now provide resources, information leaflets and seeds that are provided and funded by One Seed Forward.

For this year's spring planting season we will be setting up **10 mini seed hubs** with seed potatoes



LIBRARIES

S'More Reading for Mental Health is one of our new and innovative Library projects aimed at **young students** in Aberdeenshire.

Feedback from sessions include participants feeling **relaxed, confident**, and better equipped to **handle mental**

health issues.

The initiative also addresses poverty and inequality by ensuring **equitable access** to sessions in both school and public libraries, catering to **diverse educational backgrounds**.

The initiative will play a significant role in transition activities at Inverurie and Mintlaw Academies post-Easter break. Further training sessions and workshops on reading and mental health are planned, along with an author visit.



1% more
visits to libraries
than last year

£6.62

Cost to LLA for every
physical library visit



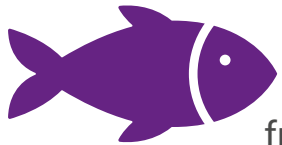
MACDUFF MARINE AQUARIUM

MMA online STEM/Climate change event, sponsored by Stromar, engaged with

1,145 pupils
from **40 schools**



Virtual Fishmas Fun session was attended online by



2,445 pupils
from **54 schools**



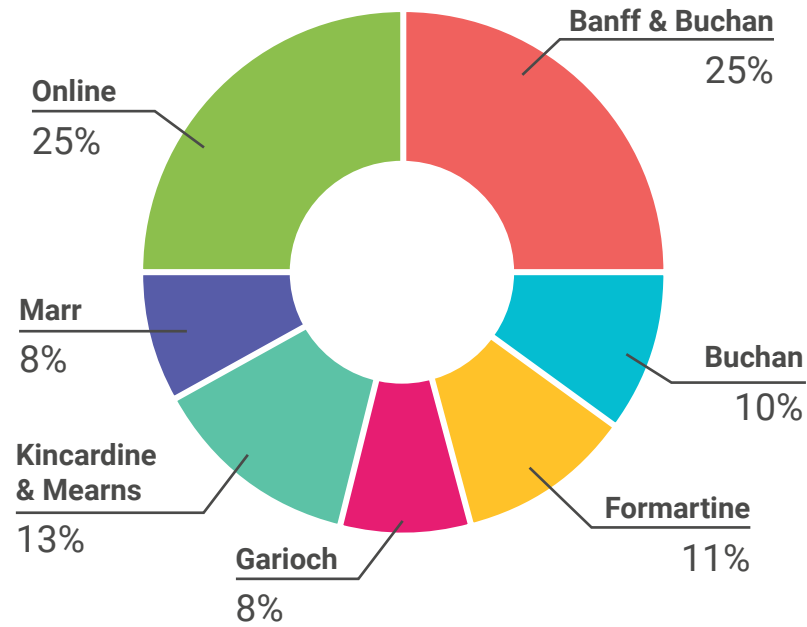
MMA team attended Aberdeen Science Centre's Marine Discovery Day with the mobile rock pools attracting **over 350 participants** and its schools outreach programme which launched in August '24 has delivered sessions to

16 schools with **1,143 participants**



HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Live Life Well Classes



743 
classes delivered
in-person and online

4,825 
total participation
across all classes

Online classes remain a popular addition for those with transport issues

Referral Breakdown

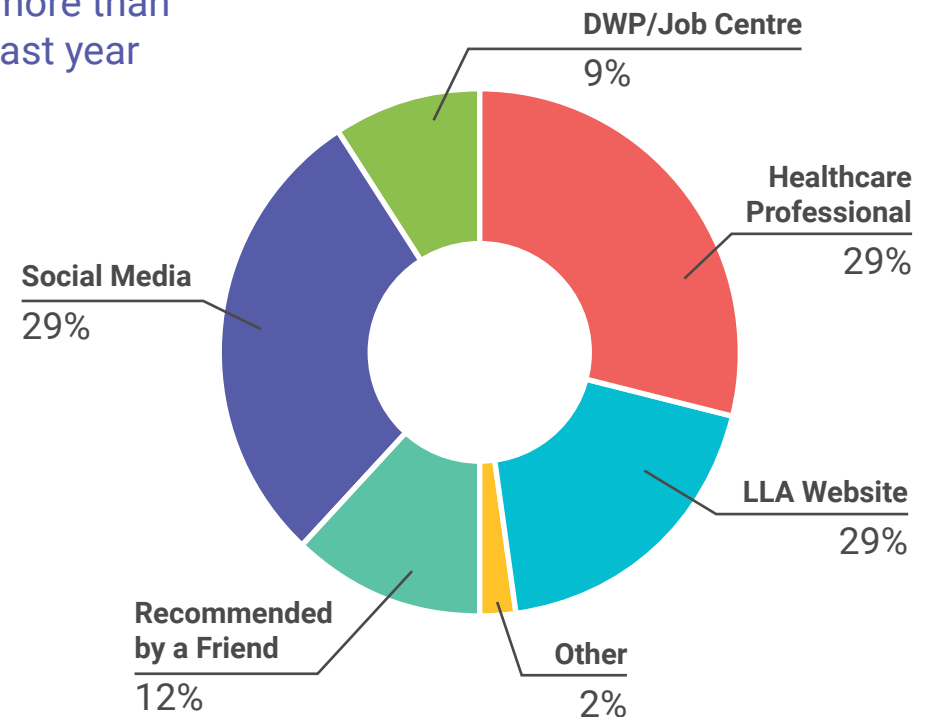
901
new referrals
in 2024/25



60%
of referrals came directly from
or were recommended from a
healthcare professional

56%
more than
last year

SELF REFERRAL SOURCES



HEALTH AND WELLBEING



Supported by **Orthopaedic Research UK**

- Group rehabilitation programme for individuals with chronic joint pain
- Educational self-management to empower participants
- Individualised exercise regimen tailored to each person's needs



Pilot in Fraserburgh, Deveron and Stonehaven



28 started the programme and 24 completed (85.7%)

WATCH HERE!

[Click here](#) or scan the QR to our Live Life Well promotional video



Counterweight

- Partnership with NHSG to deliver a tier 2 weight management programme to the community
- 12-month programme combining education, physical activity, and support

"Without the Counterweight Programme I definitely would not be where I am today"

Counterweight participant



140 enrolled into programme and 81 completed (58%)



Average weight loss 4.6kg and total weight loss – 311.94kg

Health Watch



47 sessions delivered across Aberdeenshire



624 blood pressure checks carried out

HEALTH CHECK PLUS

As well as blood pressure checks we also introduced Health Check Plus this year to monitor BP/BMI/Glucose and Cholesterol

£1,320

generated from Health Check Plus



IMPACT AND SOCIAL VALUE CALCULATOR

The Social Value Calculation (SVC) is a tool developed in partnership with Sheffield Hallam University, Experian and 4GLOBAL. It uses evidence based academic research and sector-wide benchmarks to provide operators with a tool to monetise, predict, track and evidence the impact of sports and physical activity they offer in their facilities.



In 2024/5 the social value created in LLA's leisure settings was worth **£10.67m**, an 8% increase on the previous year.



Social value is **worth more than double** what it costs to deliver our leisure facilities.

The SVC outcomes are grouped into four categories



Physical and Mental Health



Mental Wellbeing



Individual Development



Social and Community Development