

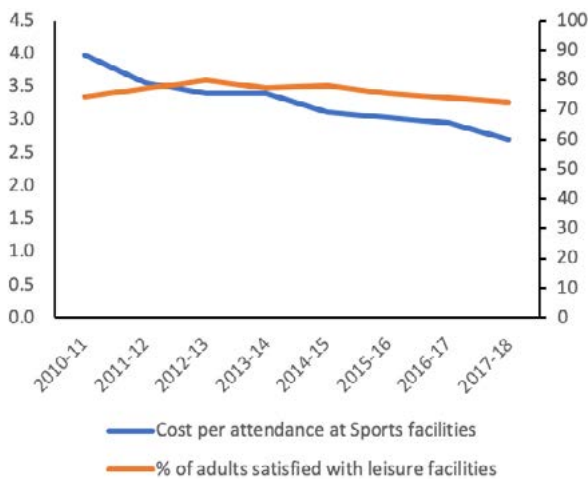
# Sports Briefing 2019

Culture and leisure services play an important role in the quality of life in local communities. In addition to the social and economic benefits delivered, the impact they have on promoting better health and wellbeing of the population and in reducing demand on other core services is well documented.

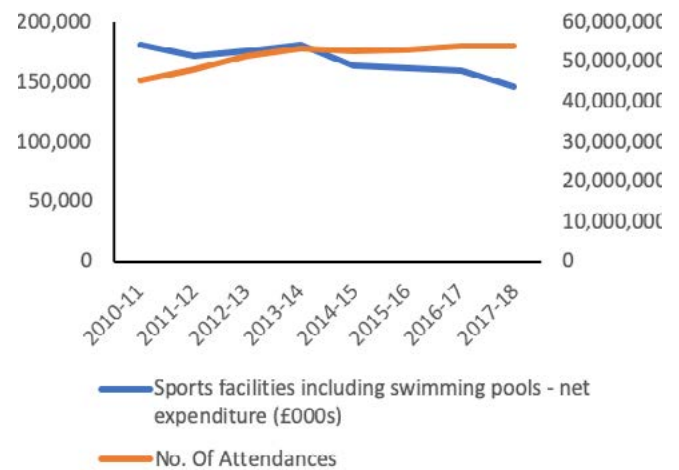
Culture and leisure services also connect well with communities who more traditional and regulated services often struggle to reach. This unique relationship provides real potential to achieve impact for people in the greatest need. However, given there is little in the way of statutory protection for culture and leisure spending, culture and leisure services face a particularly challenging financial context across the coming period.

Over the eight-year period from 2010/11 to 2017/18 the average unit cost has reduced year on year from £3.97 to £2.71 in real terms. In percentage terms, this represents a 31.9% reduction. The cost per attendance figures on their own do not give a complete picture of what has been happening in sports services over the period. Significant increases in visitor numbers have been achieved against a backdrop of reductions in real net expenditure. The growth in service users has slowed in recent years, showing a 0.1% reduction in the past 12 months.

## Cost per visit and Satisfaction



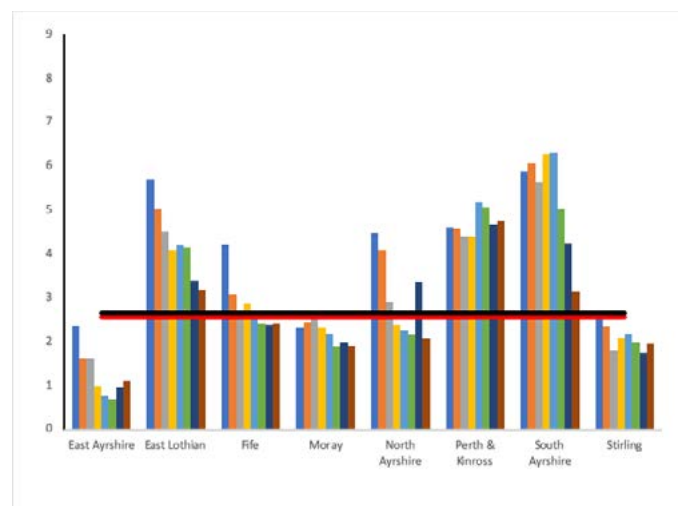
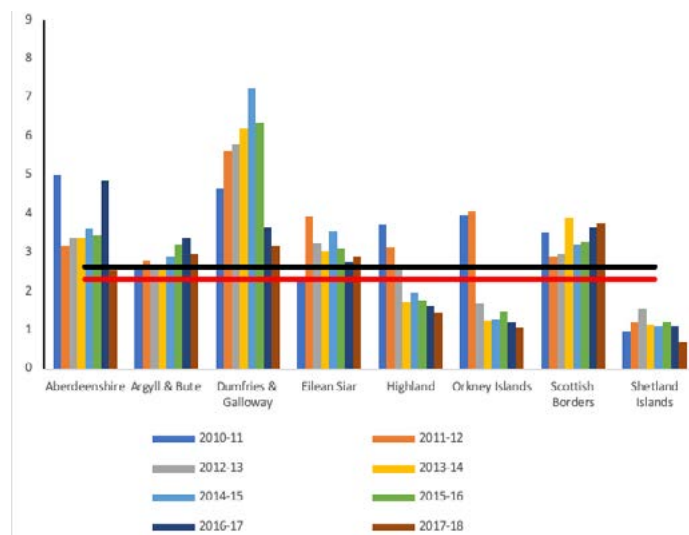
## Expenditure and Usage

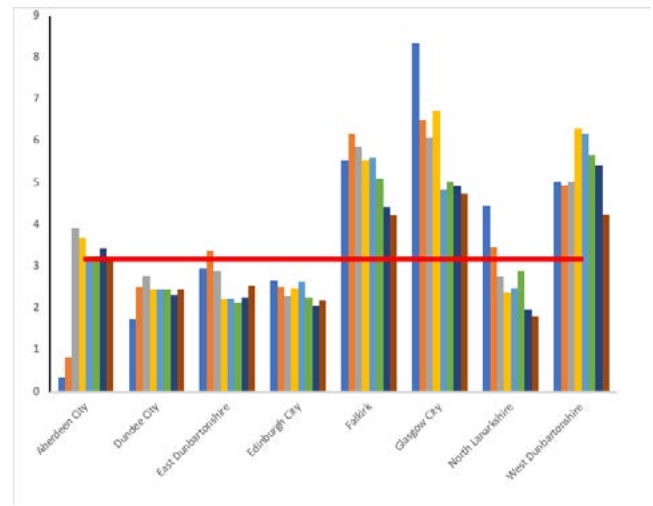
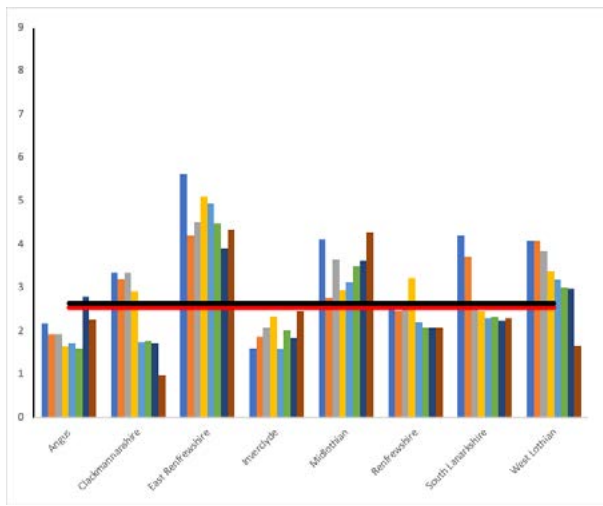


## Variation

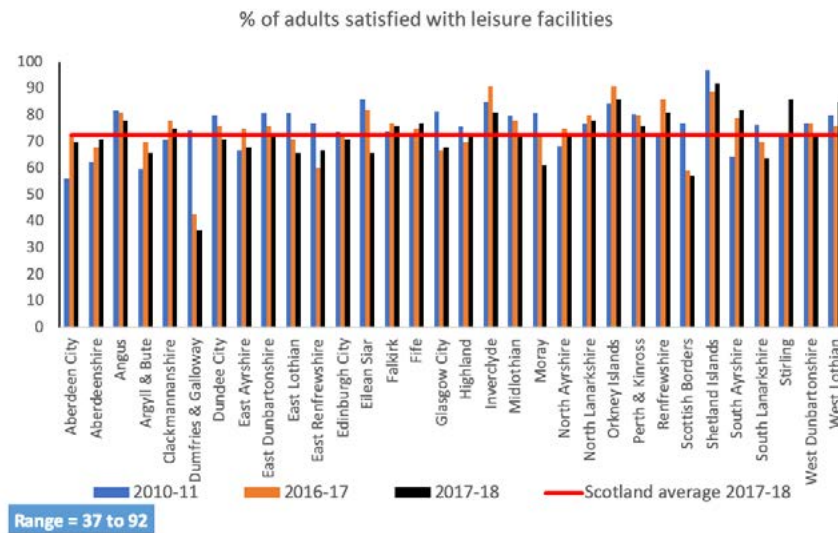
However, the picture across councils with respect to the general trend is not universal. In 2017/18, costs per attendance at a sports facility ranged from £0.70 to £4.75. The variation in unit costs has narrowed in recent years due to significant reductions at the higher cost end. There is no systematic relationship with deprivation, rurality or size of council.

## Family Groups - Cost per Visit





## Percentage of adults satisfied with leisure facilities



Work within Family Groups has identified the following factors as important in understanding the variation between authorities in culture and leisure services:

- Local political and strategic priority given to the role of culture and leisure in supporting improvement in wider outcomes e.g. health and wellbeing, tackling inequality, economic development, community empowerment
- Scale of provision and level of service
- Digital channel shift
- Service delivery model and balance between in-house and arm's length/trust delivery
- Service structure and integration with other services
- Staffing composition, level and roles
- Level of volunteering, community involvement and asset transfer
- Income generation capacity
- Asset management and co-location/multi-use venues

## Partnership Working

The impact had by local sports facilities is wide-ranging, and intersects with projects outwith leisure trusts. NHS, health-specific organisations and third sector bodies address issues such as promoting preventative action, improving mental wellbeing, and improving the physical health of people. Effective partnership working is key for making the most of limited resources and reaching the wider community.

DrEAM (Drop Everything and Move) is **North Ayrshire's** approach to encouraging people to have fun, while living healthier and more active lives, and links in with their Active Communities Strategy which aims to increase the number of people who are more active more often by 10% by 2026. Key to this approach is the collaboration and

partnership between various agencies including KA Leisure, North Ayrshire council, NHS Ayrshire & Arran, North Ayrshire HSCP, and Ayrshire College. This collaboration is a key part of finding people who are harder to reach, providing them with accessible opportunities to be more active.

12 Councils are working with Macmillan on the [Move More](#) project which supports and encourages people living with cancer to become physically active, both before, during and after their treatment.

**Glasgow** have been involved in the drafting of the Primary Care Improvement Plan.

**Dundee's** [Play Framework](#) has been developed through engagement with communities as part of the development of the new Local Community Plans. The Play Framework has an important role to play in improving outcomes for children and families and therefore the governance of this Framework and associated Delivery Plan will sit within the Children and Families Executive, which reports directly into the Dundee Partnership.

Active **Stirling** have recently agreed terms with Stirling Council to become a sole member charitable trust. The new contract will be Stirling-wide, specific and sustainable.

## Data/Technology

Building upon the high-level LGBF data, Councils are digging down into locally collected information (e.g. number participating in group exercise classes) alongside more qualitative data and case studies to produce a clear and holistic view of engagement and impact of local sports services.

**Aberdeenshire** have developed a reporting mechanism that allows information relating to outcomes to be provided, as well as the quantitative outputs data. **West Dunbartonshire** are working on annual reporting which will provide both output data and outcomes information so that Councillors can see the impact sports and leisure have on the local community. **Highland** leisure services work in partnership with the NHS on falls prevention, which is a high priority issue for them. Data is available to show a clear impact here (i.e. how many less falls occur because of the programme), whereas that isn't always possible with many potential programmes because of long-term nature of many sports interventions.

Social media is an increasingly important and effective tool for customer engagement and marketing. **North Lanarkshire's** marketing team have been [using video](#) to promote the impact of the Trust on the community and have been encouraged by the views and reach.

As part of the culture side of the Trust, **Renfrewshire** are looking at technology investments, such as push notifications. North Lanarkshire have self-service kiosks and barriers that are working well. Renfrewshire are now considering an electronic counter to keep track of footfall.

## Strategic Focus: Addressing Inequalities vs. Income Generation

Sports services are increasingly required to balance competing priorities around improving outcomes, tackling inequality and promoting community empowerment, with the need to maximise income generation. Often, reductions in opening hours affect off-peak users, such as the elderly or unemployed, who tend to be targeted groups of improving healthy living initiatives. The strategic priorities within each area influence the extent to which income generation is a key goal.

**Renfrewshire** has undergone a recent redesign in the structure of their leisure provision. Previously, performance indicators related to income were the focus but that has since shifted to a focus on the customer journey.

Following a price increase, **Fife** are looking at ways to support low income families to continue accessing leisure services. **North Lanarkshire** noted that savings being made in education has resulted in less schools continuing the Learn to Swim programme; this has reduced from 100% to 60% of schools bringing pupils to the pools to learn to swim. A new focus on generating income means that **Renfrewshire** has seen a reduction in young people using their services but they are exploring alternative funding streams available to try and engage young people.

**Renfrewshire** Council is one of nine 'challenge authorities' in the Scottish Government funded Scottish Attainment Challenge, to close the attainment gap between those living in Scotland's least and most deprived areas. After a recent inspection from Education Scotland, Renfrewshire Council achieved an '[excellent](#)' rating for its progress in improving learning, raising attainment and narrowing the poverty-related attainment gap. Building on this work, Renfrewshire are looking at the impact of the funding and identifying where the Trust's role could be in closing the attainment gap.

**North Ayrshire** has their [Access Plus](#) scheme which provides lower prices (up to 50% discount) for many KA Leisure activities, including swimming, skating, golf and fitness studios on either a casual or subscription basis. Individuals and families in receipt of certain benefits and allowances are eligible for either a 6 or 12 month membership.

**West Dunbartonshire's** Live Active scheme sees residents referred by their GP, Practice Nurse or Physiotherapist to engage in a 12 month long programme where they receive advice, support and encouragement from a Live Active Advisor to help them become and stay regularly physically active. There are approximately 700 clients engaged in the programme at any point in time. Each year, clients participate in over 20,000 activities, which generates income in excess of £80,000. The percentage of clients remaining on the programme for the full 12 months is the highest across the whole Greater Glasgow & Clyde area.

## Attracting and Retaining Members

Many areas of Scotland are now experiencing competition from 'budget' gyms, who tend to have lower membership costs and longer opening hours, but at the expense of available staff and customer engagement. Councils and leisure trusts are responding by highlighting the benefits they can offer to individuals, and to communities as a whole.

The Clydebank Leisure Centre opened in 2017 in **West Dunbartonshire**, architecturally designed to reflect the ship building history of the area. As well as a new building, the leisure membership options were revamped. The previous membership packages were complicated, with too many options which were difficult to sell as staff and customers did not really understand what each package offered. The new 'Gold, Silver, and Bronze' tiers have been highly successful, leading to a 209% increase in direct debit sign-ups resulting in 66% increase in income.

**North Lanarkshire** offer memberships that cover all sports centres in the area and have introduced other memberships for specific centres to try and compete with budget gym. **Fife** are looking to make changes to memberships in a way that has a positive impact on their customers, and does not negatively affect the integral role memberships play in their business model. **West Dunbartonshire** streamlined membership tiers have enabled staff to feel more knowledgeable and confident when promoting the benefits to potential customers. **Renfrewshire** recognise the opportunity they have to redesign and simplify their membership structure.

According to research conducted by Community Leisure UK, surveyed 18 – 25 year olds are really engaged with the idea of charity and paying forward. Community Leisure highlighted that sports and leisure trusts have benefits of working in the community that the private sector competition does not, including employment opportunities, training, apprenticeships, and volunteering opportunities for local people. The benefit to the community is sports and leisure trusts' unique selling point.

## Other

Over the next 20 years **East Lothian** will see 10,000 new houses built in the area. The key focus will be on education and transport provision, but there is a unique opportunity for culture and leisure services around how to utilise facilities and incorporate these into multi-functional spaces. For every 400 houses built, space equating to a full-size grass pitch will be made available for leisure facilities. This methodology has been adopted into the planning policy.

**North Lanarkshire's** Culture Trust will be merging into North Lanarkshire Leisure in the next few months.

**Renfrewshire** experienced a similar merge but the culture portfolio was not previously a Trust and instead came from Renfrewshire Council.

**East Ayrshire** Leisure community asset transfer has impacted on attendances, where sports and leisure facilities have transferred to community ownership. Essential repairs saw extensive closures at three pools venues (124 days in 2017/18); and adverse weather in January and February 2018 forced facility closures. East Ayrshire are looking to increase the income generating potential of their gym and fitness facilities, and are considering a more commercial approach.

A common issue was lifetime maintenance cycles. When **Renfrewshire** Leisure agreed to take on culture venues, the Trust agreed that Renfrewshire Council would be in charge of their maintenance plan. The Council can be more reactive than proactive towards maintenance issues. **North Lanarkshire** highlighted that issues maintaining facilities can lead to issues in generating income; for example, if pools have to close temporarily then the Trust will lose customers.