

## Museums Briefing 2019

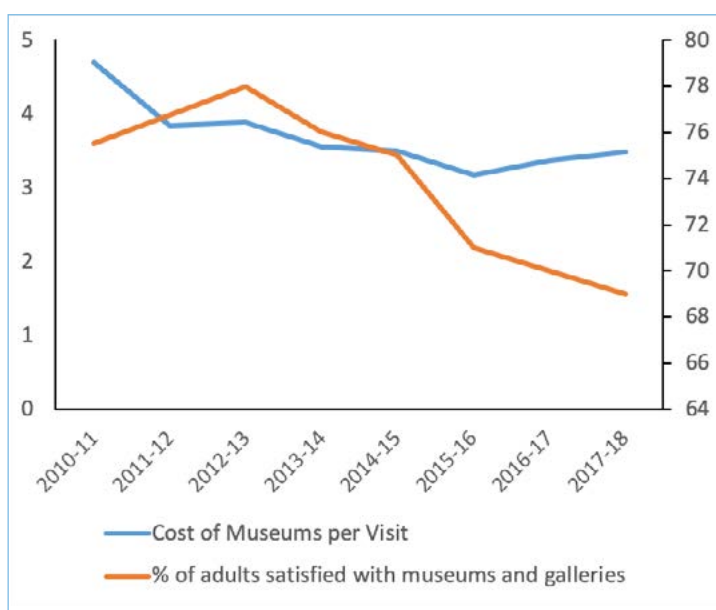
Culture and leisure services play an important role in the quality of life in local communities. In addition to the social and economic benefits delivered, the impact they have on promoting better health and wellbeing of the population and in reducing demand on other core services is well documented.

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.

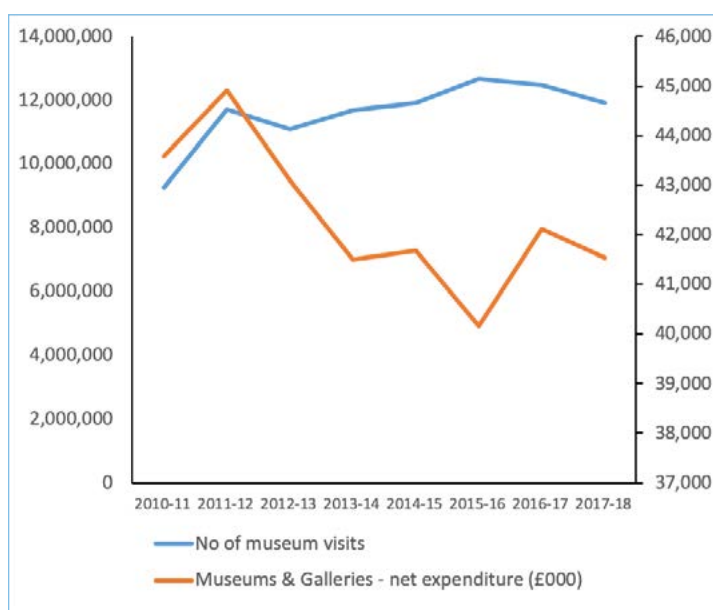
However, given there is little in the way of statutory protection for culture and leisure spending, these services face a particularly challenging financial context across the coming period.

Over the eight-year period, there has been a real terms reduction of 25.8% in cost per visit to museums, from £4.70 to £3.49. However, the past 12 months have seen a slight increase of 3.3% from £3.38 to £3.49 per visit. Meanwhile, satisfaction has steadily reduced since 2012/13 when a peak of 78% was reached; the Scottish average of satisfaction with Museum services is currently 69%.

### Cost per visit and satisfaction



### Expenditure and usage



Since the base year, visitor numbers have increased by 28.6%. After reaching a peak level of 12.6 million in 2015/16, numbers have since fallen year on year. The past 12 months have seen a reduction of 4.4% in visitor numbers.

2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Change 16/17 to 17/18	Change 10/11 to 17/18
£4.70	£3.84	£3.88	£3.56	£3.50	£3.17	£3.38	£3.49	3.2	-25.9%

Over the past two years however, unit costs have begun to rise. This is due both to visitor number reductions in recent years, and a levelling out in expenditure reductions. This has resulted in an increase in cost per visit of 3.2% over the last 12 months.

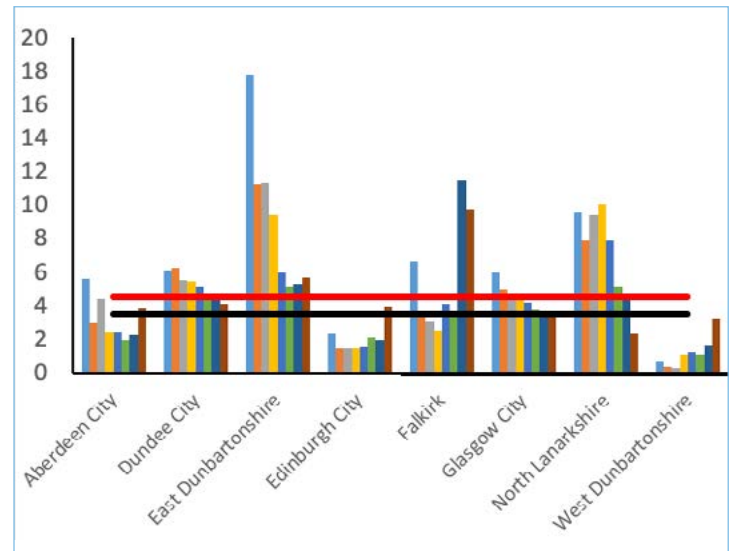
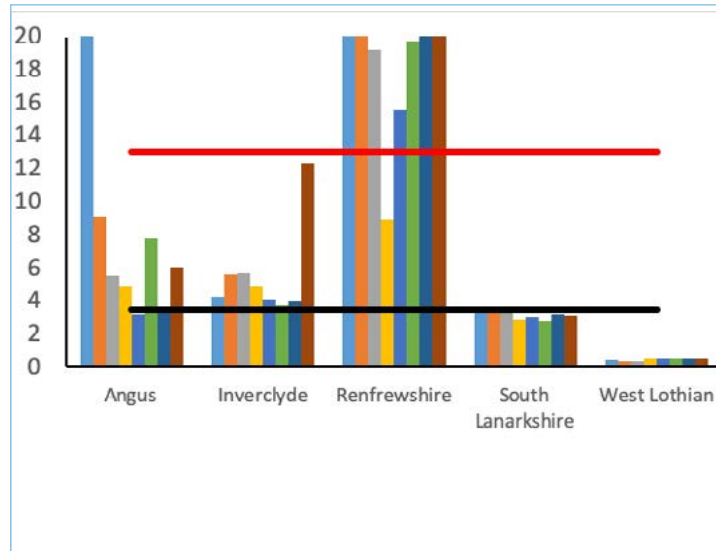
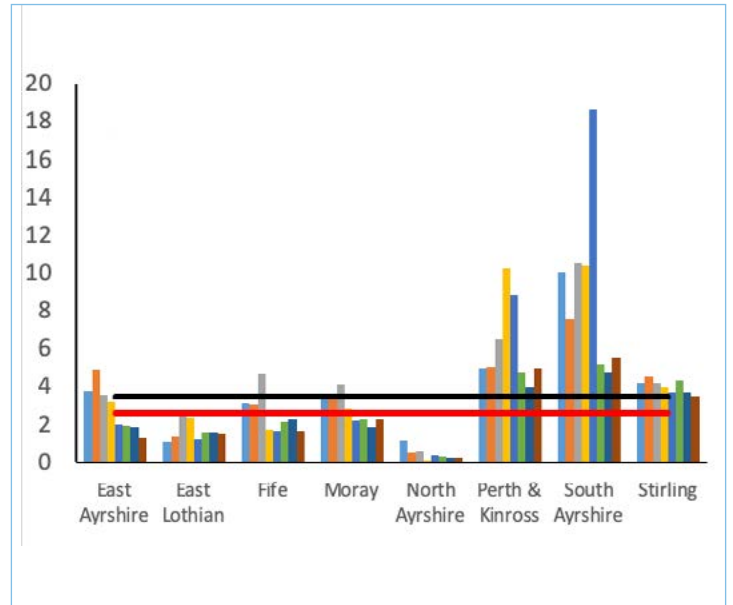
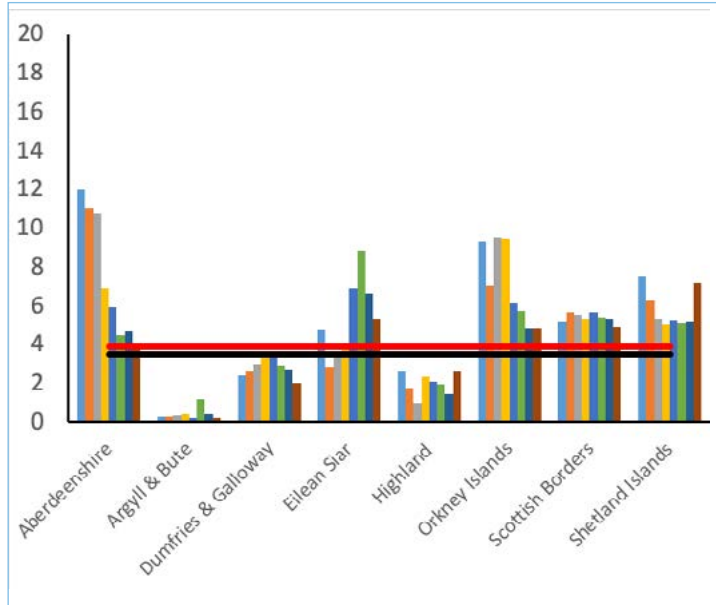
## Variation

### Cost per visit and Satisfaction Expenditure and Usage

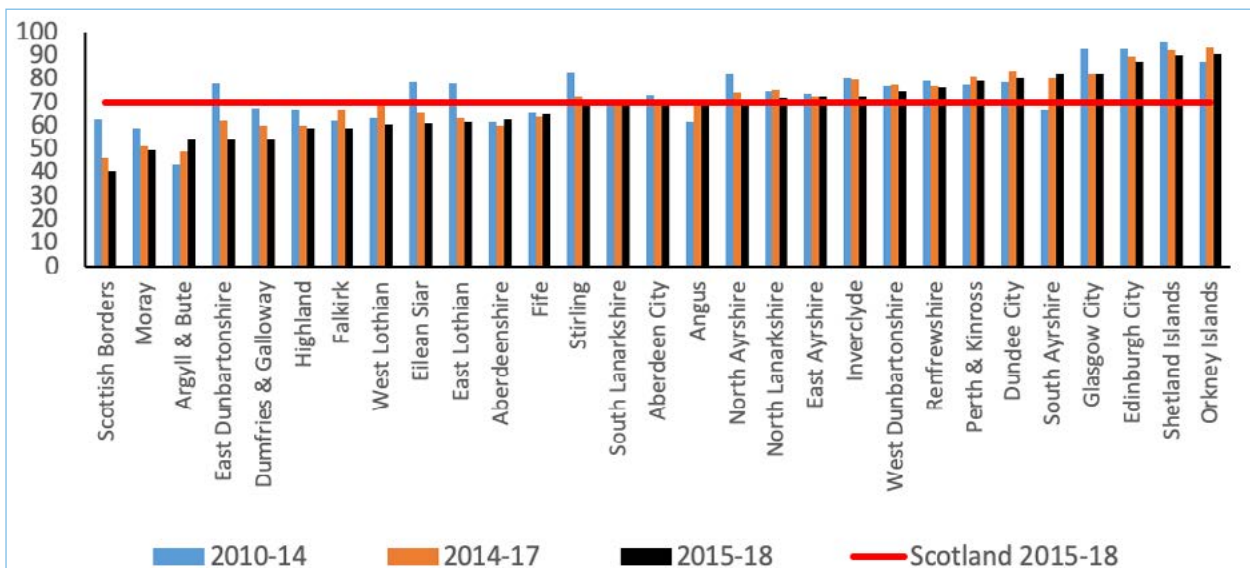
The picture across councils with respect to the general trend is not universal. In 2017/18, costs per attendance at museums ranged from £0.21 to £43.06 (£0.21 to £12.34 excluding Renfrewshire as an outlier). This variation is presented

below by Family Group (councils are grouped by rurality). Satisfaction levels vary considerably across Scotland, ranging from 40.7% - 90.3%.

### 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:

- Local political and strategic priority given to the role of culture and leisure in supporting improvement in wider outcomes, e.g. health and wellbeing, educational outcomes, tackling inequality, economic development, community empowerment, etc.
- Scale of provision and level of service (e.g. opening hours)
- Digital channel shift
- Service delivery model and level of in house and trust delivery
- Staffing composition, level and roles
- Level of volunteering, community involvement and asset transfer
- Income generation capacity
- Asset management and co-location/multi-use premises

## Sharing Practice—February 2018 Benchmarking Event

Against the challenging financial climate, museum services are increasingly required to balance competing priorities around improving outcomes, tackling inequality and promoting community empowerment, with the need to maximise income generation. There are changing perceptions around museums as they evolve digitally, and increasingly provide a wider range of services and experiences than ever before.

## Generating Income and Charging Policies

Councils and leisure trusts agree that forecasting must be done in order to calculate how much income charging could potentially generate before introducing charges in the first place. Any level of charging must consider demand, value, and perception of value.

**Glasgow** are addressing uncertainties regarding their donation boxes: are they purely for the museum in which they reside, or are donations shared between all cultural services in the area? Targeted fundraising days ensures that people who wish to donate specifically to, for example, the Gallery of Modern Art, can do so with confidence. Anyone wishing to donate online to Glasgow's museums has the option to choose which specific campaign or museum they want their money to go to.

Although they currently do not charge an entrance fee, **Dumfries & Galloway** have carried out customer surveys regarding potential charges. On average, respondents stated they would pay £3 per person to visit museum services in the area.

**South Lanarkshire** currently charge for all events, which include mausoleum tours, afternoon tea, and Lego clubs. **Renfrewshire** find that events work well for income generation. **Angus** currently charge for some events and are exploring ways to improve consistency in their approach to charging.

In **Glasgow**, temporary exhibitions such as 'Dippy the diplodocus' are free to attend, but the accompanying retail income is considerable.

## Community Engagement

**South Lanarkshire's** new community engagement team (established 2018) is embedded within the Council. Museum staff are working alongside them to identify communication and engagement methods.

**Perth & Kinross** developed a community engagement strategy, with a view that objectives need community engagement in order to be achieved. Local businesses are also being approached and engaged with.

During the refurbishment project of **Perth** City Hall, local people are being encouraged to apply to become 'City Hall Champions'. This opportunity will involve spreading the word, offering insight, supporting engagement projects, and getting involved in museum work. Anyone aged 16 and over can 'champion' the City Hall project, and a cross-section of the community is actively being sought so that the Champions team will be a true representation of all the residents of **Perth & Kinross**.

**Renfrewshire** Leisure are evaluating their current resources to see how they could benefit audiences. There is a strong emphasis on grass root involvement, with a key motivator being re-connecting the museum to the wider community.

## Data/Evidence

To date nearly 14,000 engagements have been made through the Big Listen in **Perth & Kinross** with over 12,000 online surveys completed, and more than 2,000 individuals involved in conversations, focus groups and participatory events which enabled a deeper exploration of people's views, perceptions and preferences. This data provides significant evidence on which marketing, service development and improvement activity is based. This evidence is also drawn on when setting key priorities for the deployment of resources and targeting fundraising activity.

## Wider Strategic Agenda

Museums continue to be utilised as ways to approach and address wider societal issues. Access to museums may be challenging for those without a lot of disposable income. Even if entry is free, transport costs getting to the museum must be considered.

In **Renfrewshire**, the redeveloped Paisley museum aims to be a hub for social and learning activities. As part of a wider community regeneration project, the aim is to engage audiences in discussions around wider community regeneration, increase opportunities for skills development, deliver meaningful, creative learning experiences which are process led, whilst implementing innovative use of new technologies. [Paisley Museum Reimagined](#) will support local people with health and wellbeing, economic development, learning and attainment, skills development and employability.

## Staffing and Volunteers

Volunteers can contribute a vast amount of support, knowledge and flexibility to Museum services. All councils present agree that role profiles are important in setting out clear expectations for both volunteers and staff from the outset to ensure successful, sustainable working relationships that contribute positively to the service. With a wide variety of individuals opting to volunteer, from school pupils through to retired people, councils and leisure trusts must be aware of the varying support needs of volunteers. Clarity is needed in volunteer management, and staff support is essential for a successful volunteer programme.

With reducing budgets, museum staff are increasingly expected to take on more duties whilst maintaining a high standard of performance;

Curatorial staff in **Renfrewshire** are currently focused on research whilst Paisley museum closed.

In **Glasgow**, additional training needs have been identified to support staff in feeling confident with approaching museum visitors and asking for donations. **Renfrewshire** are exploring ways in which staff with different skills can learn from each other to enrich their work. For example; exhibition researchers, and those working in community engagement are likely to have useful skills that may benefit the other role. Front of house staff at **Fife** Leisure are now Cultural Services Assistants, with a wider job role than previously. This shift to more generalised, evolving roles aims to increase staff confidence as they learn new skills.

Engagement with visitors is a priority for **Angus**; getting the conversation started early on means staff or volunteers will then feel more confident to ask for a donation. Staff are encouraged to be more customer orientated, with an expectation to be more flexible.

**Fife** have had some very positive experiences of volunteers. The time spent by staff in managing the volunteers can be a significant investment, but is seen as very worthwhile. Having a distinct role for volunteers where core functions are provided by staff in **Dumfries & Galloway** adds value to the service. Venue requirements tend to dictate the number of, and type of duties carried out by, volunteers.

**South Lanarkshire** Leisure and **Angus** have recently introduced their newly developed volunteer policies; Angus have identified the importance of setting expectations at the start so volunteers are able to identify if their placement is going well. South Lanarkshire are highlighting the importance of staff overseeing volunteers, and are very aware of maintaining a clear line between employee and volunteer roles.

## Other

**Culture North Lanarkshire** have recently launched their [online digital collection website](#) which provides open access to over 3,000 key items.