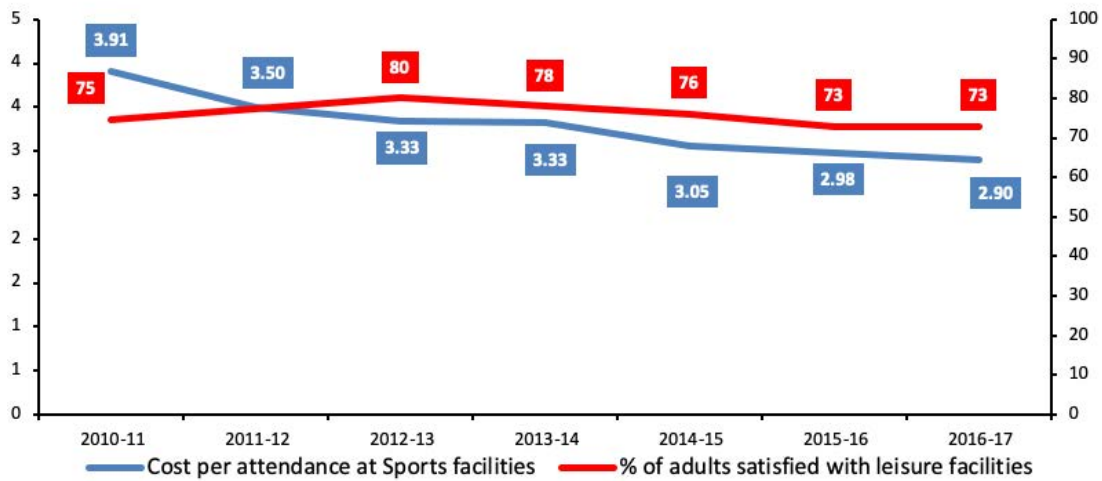


Sports Briefing 2018

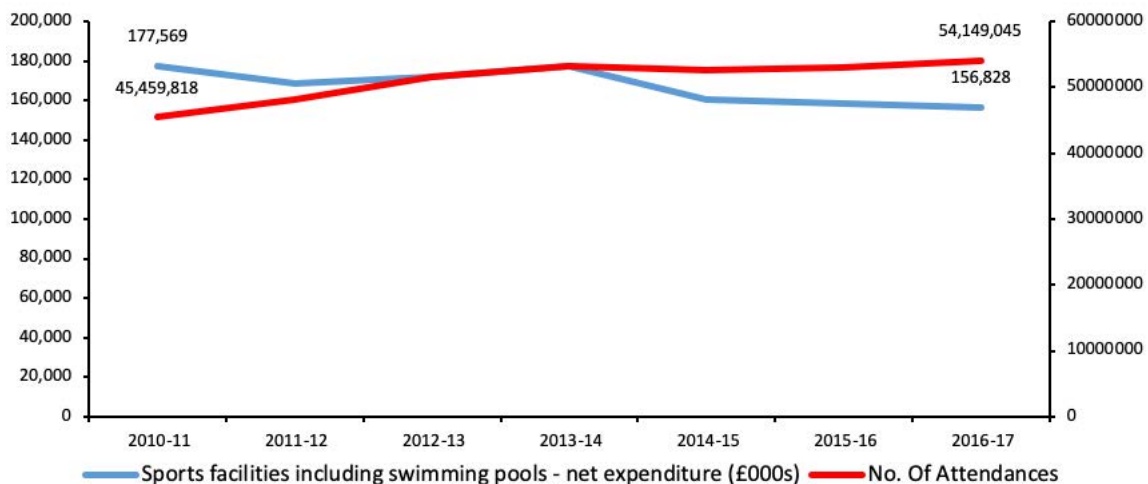
Culture and leisure services continue to play an important role in the quality of life of the population. They have a positive impact on the social and economic outcomes of communities, as well promoting increased health and wellbeing and reducing demand on other core services.

Over the six-year period from 2010/11 to 2016/17 the average unit cost for leisure facilities has reduced year-on-year by 25.9%. 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. However, the growth in service users has slowed slightly in recent years, growing only 2.0% in the past 12 months.



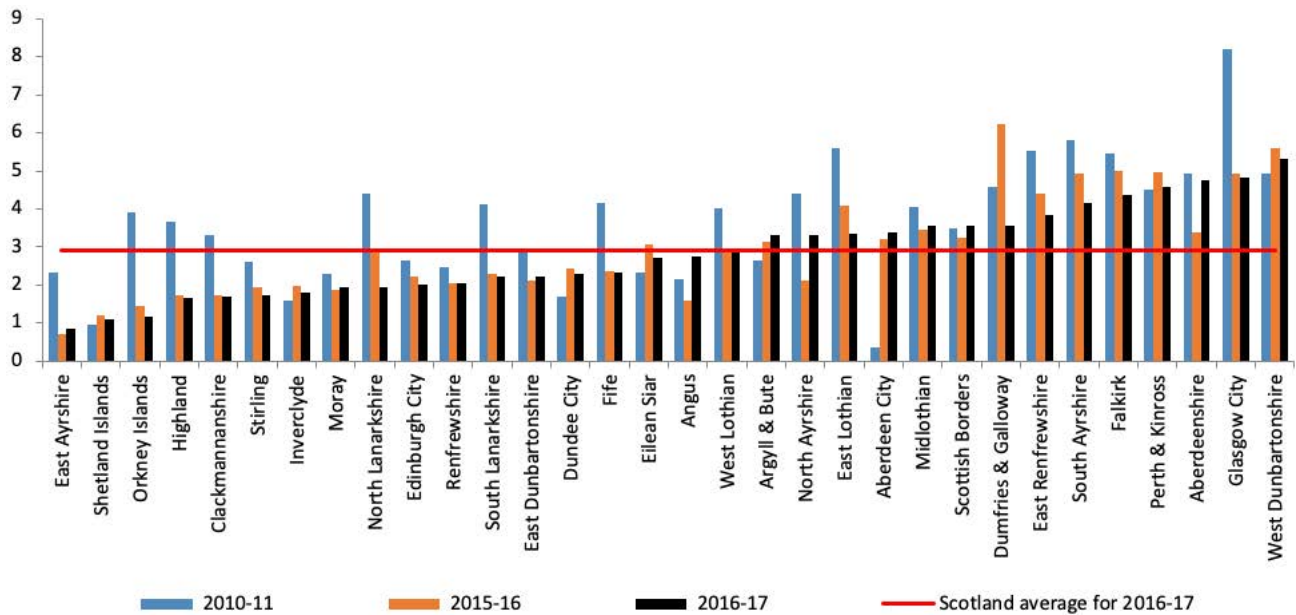
Over the seven-year period, the significant increase in user numbers while the unit cost of sports attendances has fallen indicates that leisure and recreation services have managed to attract more people into using their facilities while managing significant financial pressures.

National Trend: Visitor Numbers & Expenditure



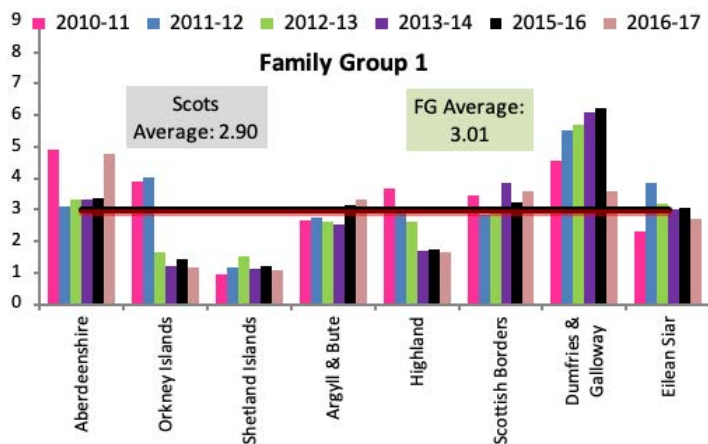
However, the picture across councils with respect to the general trend is not universal. In 2016/17, costs per attendance at a sports facility ranged from £0.84 to £5.34. The variation in unit costs has narrowed in recent years due to reductions at the higher cost end. There is no systematic relationship with deprivation, rurality or size of council.

Variation Across Councils: Cost per Sports Visit

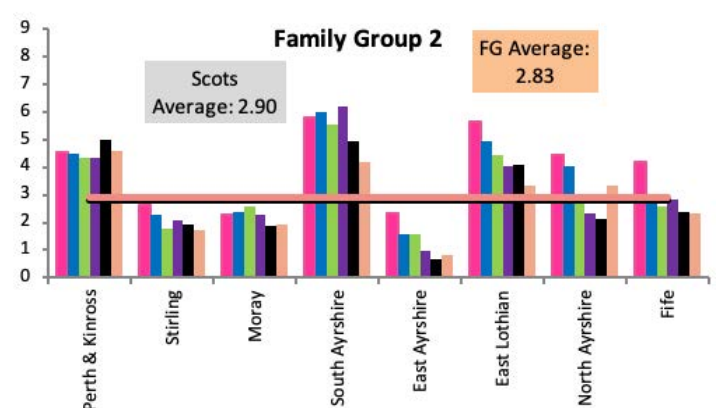


Family Group Comparison: Cost per Sports Visit

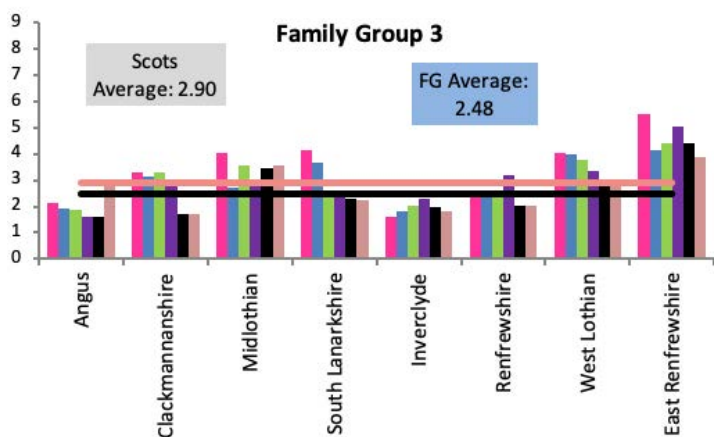
Family Group 1



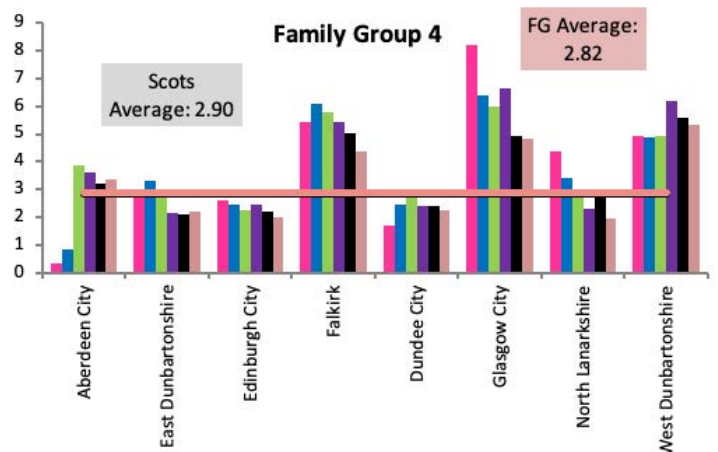
Family Group 2



Family Group 3

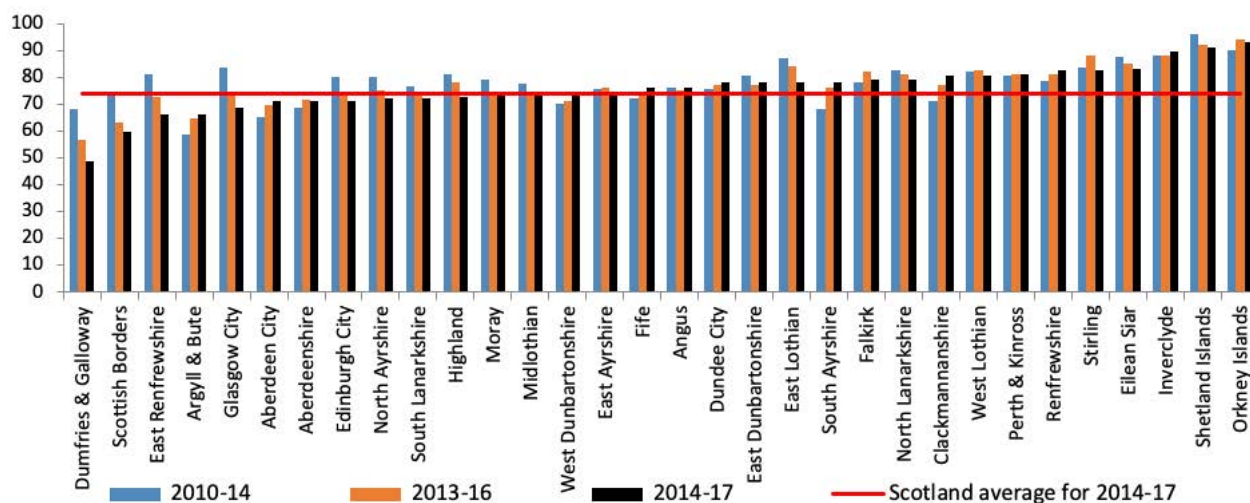


Family Group 4



For all culture and leisure services, satisfaction levels vary across councils. In leisure, satisfaction rates range from 49% - 93%. Variation between councils has widened in the most recent year for all services except parks. There are no systematic effects of deprivation, sparsity or council size on satisfaction levels in relation to culture and leisure services.

Variation Across Councils: Cost per Sports Visit



Sharing Practice – March 2018 Benchmarking Event

More than ever, Sports services require a robust **evidence base** on how sports services **impact** their local communities, link in with wider outcomes and contribute to improvement in outcomes. Councils are approaching this in several ways, including partnership working with colleges and universities as well as developing in-house analysis and evidence bases.

Improving access for hard to reach groups, as well as developing and growing user numbers, continues to be key for Sports services across Scotland.

A more commercial approach is increasingly being taken by council sports services and trusts across Scotland. In a climate of reducing management fees and economic uncertainty, **income generation and efficiency** in business practices are key for success and sustainability. Providing unique services to differentiate themselves from the private sector was of importance to a lot of the trusts. Services discussed their increased focus on soft play facilities and cafes to increase their offering to customers, and attract new customers.

Evidence & Impact

Sports services require a robust evidence base on how they impact their local communities, link in with wider outcomes and contribute to improvement in outcomes to attract investment and service plan.

- **East Renfrewshire** Culture and Leisure trust aims to close the attainment gap by improving educational outcomes through sports and leisure in East Renfrewshire. As part of the project, some 6,000 pupils have been surveyed in East Renfrewshire on what kinds of activities they participate in. From this, ERCL can track participation in sport within and out with schools (i.e. in the community), as well as SIMD rank, gender etc. to gain a picture of the participation levels of every schoolchild in East Renfrewshire.
- **Glasgow Life** conducted a comprehensive baseline study on their customer data. They looked at customer retention, how active the customers were, and many other factors. This enabled them to analyse the link to health outcomes and the contribution that using the facilities has. The findings from this analysis then fed into business improvement strategy.
- **High Life Highland** recognised the importance of tangible evidence and measured the success of implementing the High Life card system. They found that they had increased their income by around 90%.

- **Inverclyde Leisure** have conducted over four hundred free health checks to help promote health and wellbeing and encourage participation and help improve health outcomes in the community.
- **Leisure and Culture Dundee** have held nutritionist workshops with parents in their facilities to help improve health and wellbeing within the wider community, with the knowledge that this will have a positive impact on children's educational outcomes as well as health outcomes.
- **Dumfries and Galloway** re-introduced Quest as a measure service quality, and are also starting to look at energy usage (which is major issue for swimming pools).
- **Inverclyde Leisure** have started to use LGBF data as part of the evidence base for discussion during senior management meetings.

Improving Access

Improving access to sports services continues to be a key focus, especially around attracting families and competing with private budget gyms.

- **High Life Highland** have introduced a leisure card with a simple flat rate price, with concessions for those unable to afford at 50p per visit. They also have family membership offers. This has led to around 90% increase in participation, which was measured across several sites.
- **Leisure and Culture Dundee** spoke about measures they have implemented to help mitigate the necessary price rises in membership fees. The increase in fees has been used to help fund the referral programme (self and medical referrals). However, they recognised the need to ensure costs were affordable for all, so they have introduced a membership card for customers, which ensures they will not have their fees increased if purchased.
- **North Lanarkshire Leisure** have been trialling direct debits for their sports development programme, instead of requiring customers to pay for blocks of lessons. The number of direct debits has been a lot higher than expected, ensuring more customers find it easier to pay for their bookings.
- **Dumfries and Galloway** are going through a procurement process to improve their information management system. This will enable on-line booking and better access to records (and avoid the need for duplicate records) allowing the added benefit of being able to draw out data that will be useful for planning future services.
- **North Lanarkshire Leisure** hosted the British Transplant Games which helped promote sport and their services.
- **Moray** have maintained a low cost 'Fit Life' membership scheme for the past 4 years which covers 2 adults and unlimited children for £27 per month. Through this they have seen 800,000 admissions over the past 12 months and aim to have reached 1,000,000 by the end of the year. They are also developing a new low-cost membership that will include single parents, and have seen an increase in the number of users paying by direct debit.

Efficiency & Innovation

In the context of reducing management fees and a wealth of private competition, sports services continue to re-design services to work smarter and more efficiently.

- Inverclyde Leisure have maintained a focus on business development, efficiency and process development in the face of a year on year reduction in their management fee. By maintaining this focus, creating a strong brand and delivering services to rival local budget gyms, they have made significant efficiencies, increased income, made the most of their assets and seen a significant growth in memberships and users.
- East Lothian are looking at developing income from partners. They have mapped WHO research locally to identify gaps and then opened discussions with the HSCP around prevention to encourage partner investment in the sports service. This has also benefited both partners by bringing them closer together.

- North Lanarkshire Leisure are considering bringing coaches in as staff members. This will enable them to retain top talent by making the coaches permanent staff, which in turn has an impact on the quality of the service provided.
- Scottish Borders are currently imbedding a new finance system to replace two legacy systems that provided budgets and expenditures separately. This has two main benefits- allowing efficiencies in the back office, and allowing staff to better understand their spending.
- West Lothian have reviewed their club accreditation scheme to maximise the value and efficiency of local clubs.



Useful Links

- Presentation on Knowledge Hub: [Sports & Educational Outcomes in East Renfrewshire](#)
- Presentation on Knowledge Hub: [Innovation & Efficiency at Inverclyde Leisure](#)
- [Sports Briefing 2017](#)
- [Sport case studies on the LGBF website](#)
- Explore the LGBF data by service, across councils and over time using the [My Local Council Tool](#)
- See how council services contribute to improving outcomes using the online [Outcomes Tool](#)