



Annual Report

1 April 2023 - 31 March 2024



HEALTHY | ACTIVE | CREATIVE



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Who We Are

The charity ANGUSalive is the culture, sport and leisure trust for the county of Angus. ANGUSalive offers residents and visitors to Angus a wealth of services which inspire healthy, active and creative lifestyle choices through the use of our sports centres, country parks, theatres and venues, museums, galleries, archives and libraries. We have five service areas which form our culture, sport and leisure offering:

- Libraries
- Museums, Galleries & Archives
- Sport & Leisure
- Countryside Adventure
- Theatre & Venues

ANGUSalive is led by a Chief Executive and Senior Leadership Team. The Chief Executive reports to the ANGUSalive Board of Directors which consists of five independent directors and four council directors who are elected members (see page 17 for more details). The Company is governed by its Articles of Association. Angus Council is the sole member of the company.

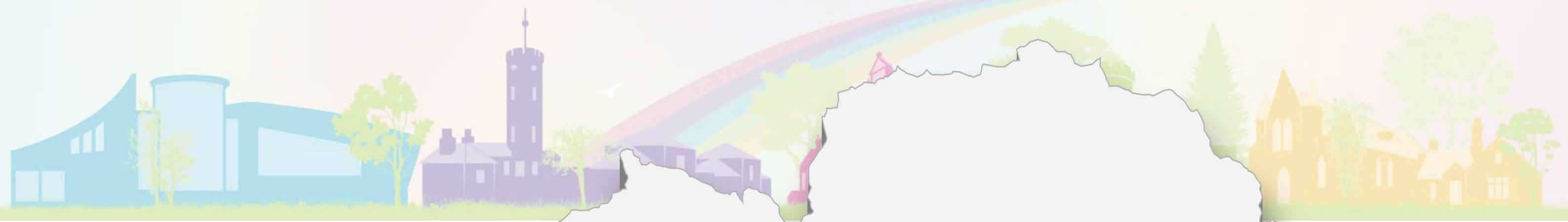
ANGUSalive’s core establishment as of 31 March 2024 was 217 employees who together with supply staff and volunteers were responsible for contributing to the delivery of services to the Angus community.

You can find out more about all that we do by visiting our website:



“Changing lives by inspiring healthy, active and creative lifestyle choices.”





Where We Are

You might not know it, but we are just about everywhere in Angus - something we're proud of and showcases how involved in the community we are.

You can see on this map what services we have and where!



- Arbroath
- Brechin
- Carnoustie
- Forfar
- Kirriemuir
- Monifieth
- Montrose
- Mobile Libraries
- Home Delivery Service



- Angus Archives, Restenneth Priory by Forfar
- Arbroath Art Gallery (within Arbroath Library)
- Montrose Museum
- The Meffan Museum & Art Gallery, Forfar
- The Signal Tower Museum, Arbroath



- Crombie Country Park
- Forfar Loch Country Park
- Glen Doll Ranger Base
- Monikie Country Park



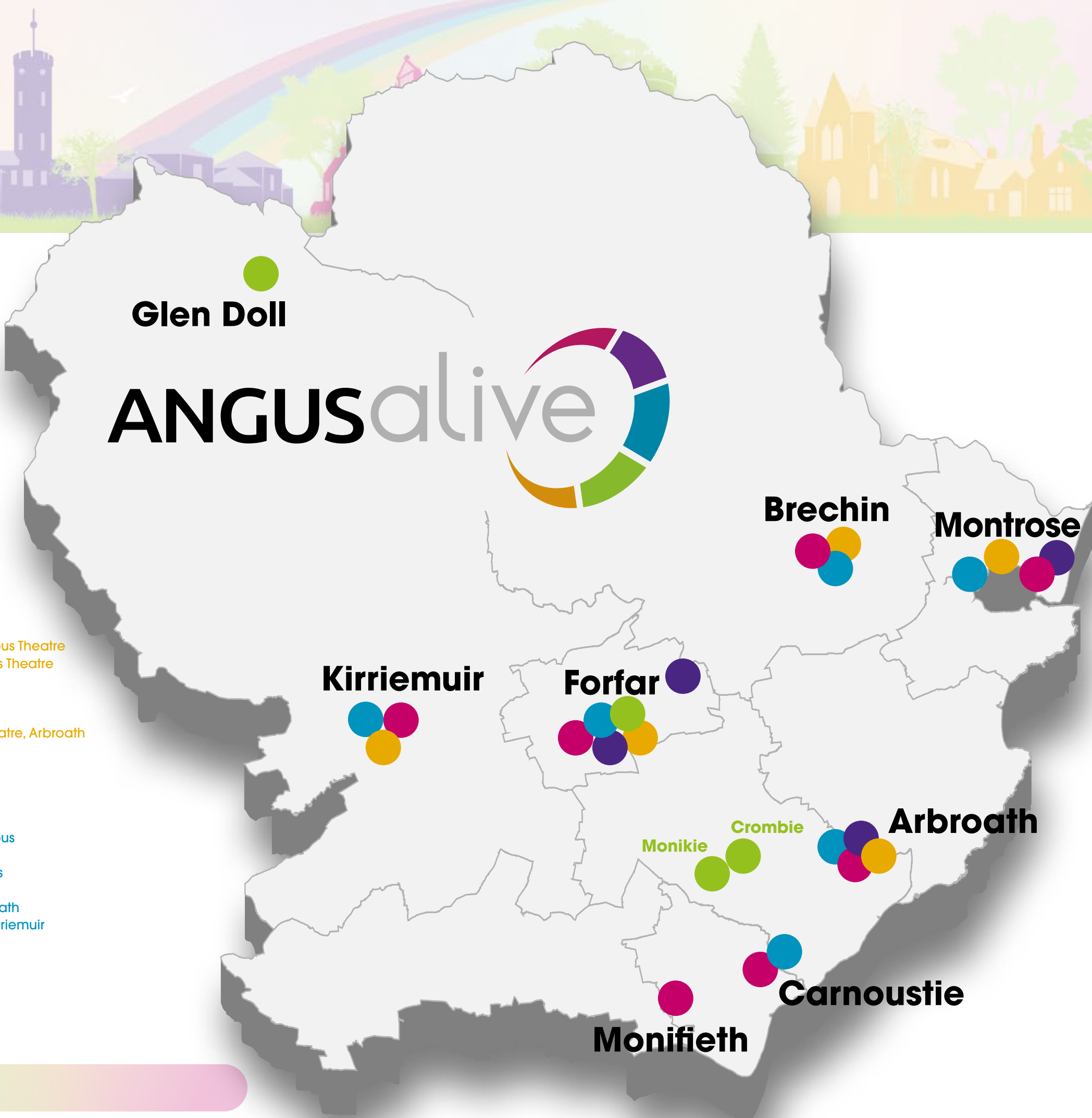
- Brechin Community Campus Theatre
- Forfar Community Campus Theatre
- Kirriemuir Town Hall
- Montrose Town Hall
- Reid Hall, Forfar
- The Webster Memorial Theatre, Arbroath



- Arbroath Sports Centre
- Brechin Community Campus
- Carnoustie Sports Centre
- Forfar Community Campus
- Montrose Sports Centre
- Saltire Sports Centre, Arbroath
- Webster's Sports Centre, Kirriemuir

Offices

- Head Office, Forfar





Our Charitable Objectives

We are as committed as we have ever been to meet our charitable objectives and contribute to local outcomes.

We follow the 9 strategic aims for ANGUSalive, of which you'll see signposted throughout the case studies in our annual report.

- 1 Ensure strong, transparent governance and demonstrate community benefit
- 2 Deliver best value and create investment opportunities
- 3 Champion the positive benefits of our services

- 4 Encourage participation for all
- 5 Promote a culture of diversity and equality
- 6 Improve outcomes through effective partnerships at local, regional and national levels
- 7 Engage and communicate openly
- 8 Recognise the value of our employees
- 9 Promote use of our spaces as community hubs



Our Mission

With a clear focus on customer service excellence and continuous improvement, our engaged workforce will deliver innovative services providing opportunities for all people to connect with the richness of activity available in Angus.

Demonstrating Community Benefit



We cover an enormous volume of work throughout the year across our services, making it difficult to showcase all the incredible contributions made by our teams. However, in this Annual Report, we aim to give you a glimpse of the breadth and depth of our achievements. But where do we begin?

Like many organisations, we face a challenging period. Against a backdrop of soaring inflation, reduced public sector budgets, and the unique financial pressures ALEOs experience, we must navigate a path that ensures we continue delivering for the Angus community. These pressures mean we are reimagining how we deliver our services to ensure we remain efficient, sustainable, and impactful in the years to come.

Despite these challenges, our team has never wavered in their commitment to making a difference in the Angus community. By offering diverse and innovative services, we ensure that people in Angus can enjoy incredible opportunities close to home.

Our partnership working through community planning remains at the heart of our approach, enabling us to continually enhance our services and meet the evolving needs of our community, especially for those who need them most. As an active member of the Angus Community Planning Partnership, ANGUSalve contributes to the following community planning priorities for 2017-2030:

- **Reducing child poverty**
Eradicate child poverty in Angus by 2030 with activities grouped around three drivers of poverty – income from employment, cost-of-living and income from social security benefits and benefits in kind.
- **Improving mental health and wellbeing**
People in Angus can get the right help at the right time, expect recovery and fully enjoy their rights, free from discrimination and stigma.
- **Improving accessibility and connectivity**
The rural nature of Angus presents challenges both in terms of the digital and physical access which if supported will help to reduce inequalities across the whole area.



Chair's Introduction



Kenneth Fraser | Chair

A warm welcome to ANGUSalive's Annual Report for the financial year of 2023-24, a year in where we have witnessed some incredible contributions from our services to the Angus community, despite ever mounting challenges that ALEO's (Arms Length External Organisations) like ours face.

The past year has been a testing time for ALEOs across Scotland, and ANGUSalive has not been immune to these difficulties. However, as an independent charitable trust, we continue to work tirelessly to deliver vital cultural, leisure, and sports services for the community.

It's important to recognise that while we work closely with our partners at Angus Council, ANGUSalive operates as a distinct organisation with its own governance, strategy, and accountability; an autonomy that allows us to be agile and responsive to the evolving needs of the people we serve.

Despite the budgetary pressures we face – including a significant reduction in our management fee from Angus Council – we have doubled down on an investment strategy to ensure we are offering a variety of enjoyable services that our Angus residents and visitors deserve as we strive to reach our overarching vision: Changing lives by inspiring healthy, active and creative lifestyle choices.

For example, in our Sport & Leisure service we have invested into our gym spaces offering some of the latest technology and modern, on-trend settings. Our Countryside Adventure team have invested in a suite of materials, ensuring customers on our water sports activities have an enhanced experience with us at Monikie Country Park.

Meanwhile, our Theatre & Venue's team have grown an extensive programme which has a variety of performances for people to enjoy - from bands to tribute acts, to drama and comic acts. These are also being programmed more regularly in Montrose Town Hall and the Reid Hall, Forfar instead of almost exclusively at the Webster Memorial Theatre.

What's also pleasing to highlight in this Annual Report is further proof of impact that our services have.

For example, you'll see first hand the impact of our Learn to Swim programme where we helped an 80-year-old lady finally overcome her fear of swimming. You'll also see how our Libraries on the Move project helped combat social isolation. We also launched our very own Theatre Stars School, classes that are designed to develop youth confidence, whilst learning about the joy of performing.

Meanwhile, our Museums, Galleries and Archives team secured an Adam Christie collection, where in addition to being an inspiring exhibition, it has helped shine light on mental health awareness. You may have also noticed our Countryside Adventure team's Healthy Steps Angus initiative which saw significant growth, with new routes and programmes popping up frequently, helping those living with long term conditions or in recovery from illness, injury or at risk of isolation.

As well as showcasing our services, you will also be able to see our financial review, where again we have been able to achieve an operational surplus - something we have accomplished every year since our inception in 2015 - which is credit to our team for sound financial management in difficult circumstances.

Notwithstanding these success stories, as a charitable trust there is room for us to grow as we look to future proof our charity.

In the last Annual Report, we had touched upon the pending "Transformation Review" which was initially a process that, while necessary, often felt overshadowed by the potential for reduction in services and difficult decisions. Faced with budgetary challenges, it is easy to fall into a narrative that seems primarily about cutting costs and scaling back, which risked dampening the spirit of innovation that has always driven us.

However, we are pleased that we are now approaching this with a forward-thinking and dynamic initiative - which we have renamed Project 2030.

Project 2030 is focusing on how we can incrementally improve our organisation for the future, identifying new opportunities, new ways of working and new revenue streams that will help our charity grow. Although we are pleased with several aspects of our service, we are in no way complacent and want to continue improving on these year on year.

This is essential to ensure we remain relevant, resilient, and financially sustainable in an increasingly competitive landscape. Project 2030 is helping us identify areas for improvement and embrace new opportunities that align with our mission while also creating avenues for revenue growth. A more commercially focused approach allows us to not only safeguard the services our community values, but also to bring better ones in to our portfolio.

Ultimately, Project 2030 envisions a future where ANGUSalive not only offers services that the community values dearly, but thrives by diversifying its income sources and squeezing every ounce it can out of our existing ones.

As Chair, I am deeply grateful for the trust and support of our partners and stakeholders. As an ALEO, we benefit massively working independently while collaborating closely with Angus Council and other key partners, and their support is appreciated. We are also grateful to our Angus community of which we pay a huge thanks for their support by using ANGUSalive services.

I would like to thank all members of our Board for their contribution this year and indeed an extended welcome to Campbell Archibald who has recently joined. His commercial nous will be a real asset to our Board. I would also like to thank departing members for their service and contribution to ANGUSalive.

We as a Board would also like to thank the Senior Leadership Team led by Iain Stevens and Colin Knight, who have both acted up in the role as Acting Chief Executives with Kirsty Hunter being on temporary leave from the business.

We would also like to place thanks to the wider ANGUSalive team for all the work they do.

I hope you enjoy this report, and I look forward to the opportunities and achievements that the coming year will bring in 2024-25.



Kind regards,
Kenneth Fraser

If you have comments or any feedback on this report, I would more than welcome them. You can reach out to me by filling out the form linked to this QR code.



Foreword

Colin Knight and Iain Stevens
Acting Chief Executive's of ANGUSalive

With our Chief Executive Kirsty Hunter on maternity leave for the duration of the 2023-2024, we had both been tasked with leading the organisation in her absence.

As joint Acting Chief Executive's, it has been a rewarding and transformative year for us both as we've had the privilege of leading ANGUSalive through a time of change, growth and resilience in some quarters. Working together has allowed us to draw on our complementary skills and experiences of ANGUSalive to steer the organisation through the last year.

If we were to sum up this experience, it's fair to say in many ways it has been 'business as usual', but in other ways it has been an inspiring experience in a year where there has been so much that has happened in our charity.

And indeed, so much for us and our teams to be proud of.

You'll see littered throughout our Annual Report the many ways that our services have contributed to delivering on our mission statement of "changing lives by inspiring healthy, active and creative lifestyle choices."

Our Library service launched their "Lend + Mend Hub" and demonstrated the importance of libraries through their pioneering "Libraries on the Move" campaign, which brought a typical library service to people in rural communities.

The Museums, Galleries & Archives service has become more accessible, where collections are now available to be viewed digitally. On site, our venues have become dog friendly, and our opening hours have changed to allow visitors a better chance to see the fantastic exhibitions the team deliver.

In Countryside Adventure, our team has seen our health walk provision grow fantastically well, with new walks and initiatives being launched regularly throughout the year. Our team have also worked closely with the local community in environmental projects to help protect these deeply cared for locations.

And much to the publics' (and our own!) delight, work was completed to remove the devastating impacts that Storm Arwen had created in November 2021 at Monikie and Crombie Country Parks in particular.

In our Sport & Leisure service, we have continued our investment programme seeing 3 more gym refurbishments, providing Carnoustie Sports Centre, Saltire Sports Centre and Forfar Community Campus with state-of-the-art fitness equipment, meeting the demands and trends of the fitness industry – we've been blown away by the feedback – which has seen us have over 100,000 additional sports centre attendances in the last year (908,873 this year compared to 808,152 last year).

Meanwhile in our Theatre & Venues service, we have embarked upon a new programme of events as we look to relaunch Montrose Town Hall and Reid Hall, Forfar as destination venues for performers. We also saw the launch of our very own Theatre Stars School, showing the beauty of theatre to young people in Angus.

But it's more than just the services we provide the community. And as we noticed this year, sometimes we have to do more than that.

In October 2023, Storm Babet devastated many communities across Angus, with Brechin particularly hard hit by severe flooding and widespread damage. During this challenging time, we were proud to see how our teams went about supporting the community, demonstrating our deep commitment to the people we serve.

In the immediate aftermath of the storm, our teams acted swiftly, helping transform our facilities into emergency support hubs and safe spaces for those affected by the flooding. We worked closely with Angus Council, emergency services and local organisations to ensure that those in need had access not only to basic amenities, but also to emotional support during this difficult time.

A big thank you to our team for stepping up at a time where their community needed them the most.

We know that there are challenging times ahead for ANGUSalive - much like any Sport, Leisure and Culture trust such as ours. But seeing first hand the hard work that our teams do, combined with their talent to bring fantastic services to Angus, we know we are in a great position to face these challenges and grow in the years ahead.

Finally, we want to thank those in Angus who use our services for choosing ANGUSalive. By choosing our service, you're choosing to reinvest in amazing services on your doorstep.

As a not-for-profit charity, every single penny of profit we make is reinvested back into the Angus community, helping us deliver the work which we're delighted to showcase in this report.

**Kind regards,
Colin Knight & Iain Stevens**



If you do have any feedback that you'd like to give us, or any queries we could help with, please complete this form by following this QR code.



Governance and Board of Directors

To achieve our ambition and continue our journey of becoming an enthusiastic, customer-focussed, forward-looking organisation equipped for the future, we will ensure we have the right people driving our business.

Our people demonstrate a commitment to delivering our vision for the benefit of the people of Angus and understand the need to continuously monitor and report our financial performance, allowing us to invest every penny back into the services we deliver.

We also work closely with local and national partners, in collaborative planning and delivery as well as sponsorship, to improve outcomes for Angus.

Board Structure

The Board of Directors meet on average every eight weeks throughout the year, with the Chief Executive and Senior Managers supported by shared service representatives, to consider the business of the charity.

Recruitment, Induction and Training of Directors

New Directors are recruited and appointed according to vacancies on the Board. Induction information is provided to all new Directors and on-going training is available to all existing Directors as required. Several Board Development sessions are also scheduled every year.

Our Board met from 1 April 2023 to 27 September 2024 (date of signing for the Report and consolidated financial statements for the year to 31 March 2024). There is also a Finance & Audit Sub-Committee that meets on average four times a year to consider and scrutinise specific items of business and to present formal recommendations to the full Board of Directors.

Decision Making Process

At a Directors' meeting, unless a quorum is participating, no proposal is to be voted on. The decision-making process by Trustees is that any decision must be either a majority decision at a meeting or a decision of the Directors is taken in accordance when all eligible Directors indicate to each other by any means that they share a common view on a matter. If the numbers of votes for and against a proposal are equal, the Chair or other Director chairing the meeting has a casting vote.

Board Governance Review

Scotland's Third Sector Governance Forum has developed a Scottish Governance Code for the Third Sector. The Code sets out the core principles of good governance for the boards of

charities, voluntary organisations and social enterprises in Scotland. The Code is not a legal or regulatory requirement, but instead is designed to be aspirational, for trustees to reflect on and improve governance.

A 'Good Governance Checkup' has been designed to be used in conjunction with the Code to help trustees regularly review their governance. It has five sections which mirror the five core principles in the code: Organisational Purpose, Leadership, Board Behaviour, Control and Effectiveness.

ANGUSalve complete their Board Good Governance Check-Up annually to ensure we are reaching the high standards our organisation expects from its board.

The Board is led by two Independent Directors who act as Chair and Vice-Chair:



Mr Kenneth Fraser
(Chair)



Mr Derek Waugh
(Vice-Chair)



Mr Campbell Archibald
Independent Director



Mr Kenneth Christie
Independent Director



Mr Thomas Ferry
Independent Director



Cllr Kenny Braes
Council Director



Cllr Lynne Devine
Council Director



Cllr Ronnie Proctor
Council Director



Cllr Serena Cowdy
Council Director

Financial Year Review

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

An overview of the Charity’s financial performance is included in the series of pie charts and table in this section, which provide a helpful breakdown of our income and expenditure.

Year End Position

The Trust’s operational net income (before actuarial pension adjustments required by accounting regulations and after transfers between reserves) for the period ending 31 March 2024 was £214,000.

In terms of strategic planning for financial sustainability, the operational surplus has allowed the Charity to strengthen its previously built-up Investment Fund and maintain its reserves position.

Investment Fund

The Board of Directors approved an investment programme of £543,000 across the county in 2023/24. This covered a broad range of activities to build on ANGUSalve’s recently completed equipment replacement programme at sports centres, previously funded from ANGUSalve’s Investment Fund.

Regular equipment refresh is essential as this programme of work contributes to the maintenance and growth of the Charity’s customer base and facility usage through provision of a high-quality customer experience.

It has been possible to contribute further to the Investment Fund from the 2023/24 operational surplus with the Board approving the setting aside of £179,000 for this purpose.

The Investment Fund covers equipment used by customers as well as the Information Technology that supports the provision of services to customers. The ability to perform regular investment is essential to the overall financial resilience of the company.

Reserves

Unrestricted funds carried forward amount to £3,791,042 (2023: £3,200,616). This reflects the continued financial stewardship of the Directors and Senior Leadership Team to maintain the Company’s reserves that the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator requires to be set aside on a prudent business operation basis. The Company had no reserves when it started trading on 1 December 2015. Through regular contributions to the Company’s reserves since establishment, the Company’s future resilience has been strengthened.

The Company has previously made annual contributions to the Investment Fund since it started trading to ensure resources are available for future investment across its culture, sport and leisure facilities and has been able to contribute again in 2023/24 as noted above.

Going Concern

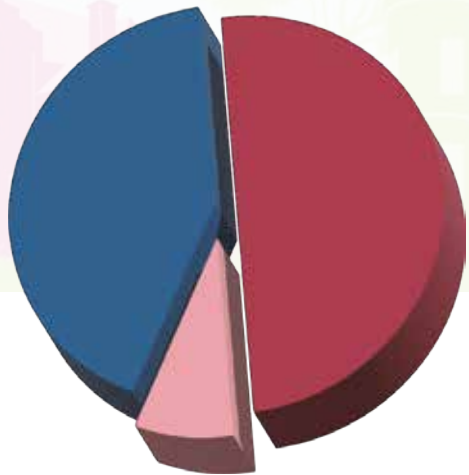
Reserves also form a significant part of our going concern assessment since they are included in the forecasts for the next 12 months, maintenance of these funds for a ‘rainy day’ protects our ability to continue to operate and prepare our annual accounts on this basis.

In addition, the Council’s commitment to the ongoing payment of the Management Fee has been essential to maintain the charity as a going concern.

Our 2023/24 accounts were prepared on a going concern basis following external auditor assessment of forecasts, budgets and a Letter of Comfort from Angus Council which confirms the support package measures available to ANGUSalve next year should these be required.

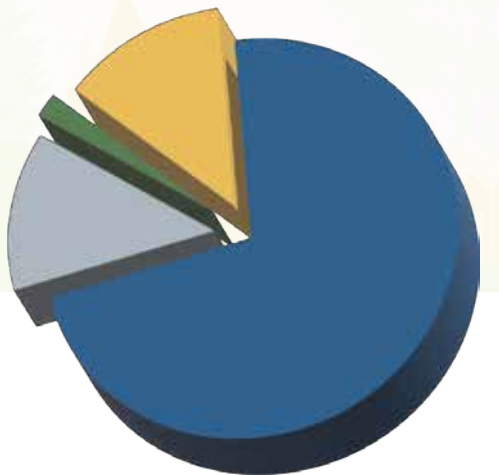
The operational net income position was achieved despite the ongoing challenging economic climate. This was possible through very close control of expenditure on employee costs, building costs and supplies & services costs, as well as a pro-active approach to maintaining and growing income levels.

This position was also achieved despite the management fee received from Angus Council for the provision of culture, sport and leisure services being reduced by £500,000.



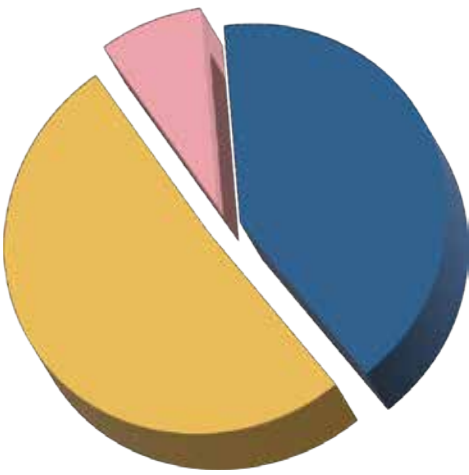
ANGUSalve Income - Charity

50% Management Fee 42% Grants and Contributions
8% Sales, Fees and Charges



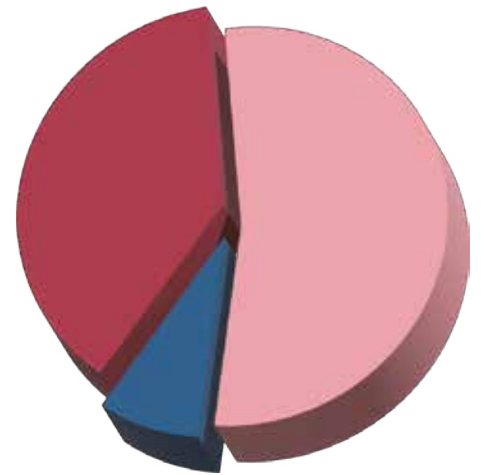
ANGUSalve Expenditure - Charity

74% Staff Costs 13% Property Costs
1% Transport Costs 13% Supplies and Services



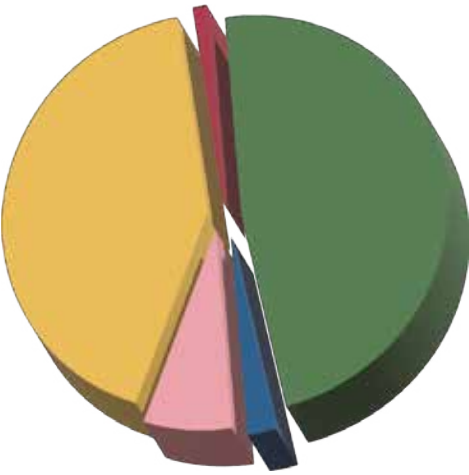
ANGUSalve Income - Trading

41% Access Fee 51% Sales, Fees and Charges
8% Other Incomes



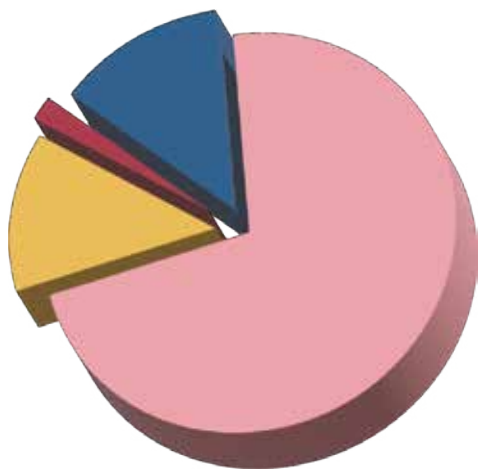
ANGUSalve Expenditure - Trading

53% Staff Costs 8% Property Costs
38% Supplies and Services



ANGUSalve Group Income

48% Management Fee 1% Access Fee
7% Grants and Contributions 42% Sales, Fees and Charges
0% Other Incomes



ANGUSalve Group Expenditure

73% Staff Costs 13% Property Costs
1% Transport Costs 13% Supplies and Services

These outline the income and expenditure across ANGUSalve’s five service areas (see from page X) that sit within the Trust’s three functional business units (Libraries, Customer and Culture, Sport & Leisure and Business Management and Development).

	23/24 Charity £000	23/24 Trading £000	23/24 Total Group £000
Management Fee	4,808		4,808
Access Fee		141	141
Grants & Contributions *	822		736
Sales, Fees and Charges	4,041	174	4,215
Other Incomes		27	27

Total Income *	9,671	342	9,927
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Staff Costs	7,050	118	7,168
Property Costs	1,212	18	1,230
Transport Costs	84		84
Supplies & Services	1,235	85	1,320
Total Expenditure	9,581	221	9,802

Surplus/(Deficit) prior to actuarial adjustments and reserves movements *	90	121	125
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Actuarial Adjustments	(332)		(332)
Transfers Between Reserves	421		421

Net Surplus/(Deficit) *	179	121	214
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* ANGUSalive Group position differs from the ANGUSalive Charity and ANGUSalive Trading companies combined due to the exclusion of Gift Aid on consolidation.

Accounts Position

Accounting regulations require actuarial pension adjustments to be made which are notional rather than real in-year cash transactions. Once these adjustments are included, the Company's consolidated financial position shows a net expenditure of £7,569,000.

FINANCIAL OUTLOOK

The charity successfully delivered a Management Fee saving of £500,000 in 2023-24.

The overall continued difficult economic environment, particularly the financial pressures on Council budgets, remains challenging. The most recent Council Change Plan agreed in March 2024 confirmed that a further Management Fee saving of £500,000 required to be delivered in 2024/25 and that further Management Fee savings totalling £750,000 would be required in the two-year period 2025-26 to 2026-27. As an organisation whose costs are dominated by staff costs, this is a substantial challenge for the charity.

The impact of the cost-of-living crisis continues to affect our wider operating environment and customer expectations, impacting our ability to generate income as availability of discretionary spend for culture, sport and leisure activities continues to be testing for our communities.

The Angus Council Finance & Change Programme for 2024 - 2027, agreed by elected members on 29 February 2024, includes an ask for savings of £1.25m from the £4.667m ANGUSalive base Management Fee for 2023/24. This saving is to be delivered over the period 2024/25 to 2026/27 and will reduce the level of management fee paid to ANGUSalive.

It is anticipated additional management fee savings will be requested in future years due to the Council's financial outlook.

Together all these factors have further compounded the immediate situation faced by the Charity. Our revenue budget now brings in less income from the Angus Council Management Fee and faces challenges to grow other income streams - at a time of increased expenditure, particularly staff costs.





How We Stack Up

You will find a summary of the services of Libraries, Museums Galleries & Archives, Sport & Leisure, Countryside Adventure and Theatre & Venues at the start of each section in this report, including an overview of how they stack up for this period.

You'll be able to see by the infographic information alone, the sheer volume of people who are using our services across the county which is humbling to see.


Business Management and Development

In addition to the five service areas, business support, development and marketing & communications is provided by the business management and development team.

This unit manages all the service level agreements for the support services and contracts that the Charity has with third party providers. This team also supports customer care, safety, health and wellbeing and information governance for the charity.

Customer Care

ANGUSalive has a clear focus on customer service excellence and our Customer Charter outlines our commitments. We actively welcome and value feedback from our customers so we know how well we are doing and what we can do to improve.



CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

Complaints

121



CUSTOMER SATISFACTION RATING

(Survey introduced 01/10/2019)

Very Satisfied

66.79%

Satisfied

8.31%

Safety, Health and Wellbeing (SHW)

Our SHW framework ensures that all incidents are monitored by the Senior Leadership Team, in conjunction with the Health & Safety Compliance team, to ensure compliance with policy and associated guidance with remedial actions taken where required.



SAFETY, HEALTH & WELLBEING:

Number of instances recorded

98

Incidents reportable under RIDDOR

2

% days lost to sickness absence

3.54%

Information Governance


As a charity, we have policies and procedures in place covering the key information governance themes as below. The Senior Information Officer and Information Office monitor all requests for information and data breaches with appropriate action taken where required. This information is also shared with the Leadership Team.

As is required by the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, we have produced and maintain a publication scheme setting out the types of information that we routinely make available. This is available on our website.

INFORMATION GOVERNANCE		
	Freedom of Information Requests	27
	Data Protection Breaches	10
	Environmental Information Requests	0
	Access to Personal Information Requests	0
	Responded to Within 20 Day Timescale	26

Gender Pay Gap

Under The Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017, it is now a legal requirement for any organisation with 250 or more employees to publish and report specific figures about their gender pay gap annually. In accordance with the requirements, our gender pay gap data is reported on the UK Government website. It is also published on our website, accompanied with a written statement from our Chief Executive.

ANGUSALIVE SOCIAL MEDIA		LIKES	FOLLOWERS
	FACEBOOK		
	ANGUSalive	5,300	6,200
	Libraries	3,600	4,100
	Sport & Leisure	9,300	10,000
	Museums & Galleries	3,300	3,900
	Countryside Adventure	6,117	6,747
	Archives	6,700	7,400
	Theatre & Venues	4,600	5,500



X (Formerly known as Twitter)

Followers

3,222



Instagram

Followers

1,727



LinkedIn

Followers

572



Now, time to
take a look
at everything
we've achieved!



Libraries

“*The only thing you
absolutely have to know
is the location of a library.*”
(Albert Einstein)

How We Stack Up

 **198,062**
Total Physical Visitors

20,513 
ACCESS Enquiries

159,217 
Items borrowed

 **9,616**
Peoples' Network sessions

34,883 
Attendances at Library Events

 **15,415**
Bookbug attendances
579 Sessions

Libraries on the Move project combats social isolation

We know that libraries play such a pivotal role in the community, with one of its key features being that it can be a safe place for people and a place for socialising.

Sadly, for some people, those social interactions may be the only conversations they have with someone in their week.

The ANGUSalve 'Libraries on the Move' project was launched in June 2023, marking the beginning of an innovative initiative aimed at expanding library services to rural and socially isolated communities in Angus, where that isolation can be even wider. The project was designed

to highlight the diverse services offered by libraries and demonstrate their crucial role in enhancing the lives of community members.

The 'Libraries on the Move' project was one of eight initiatives funded by the Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC), with financial support provided by the Scottish Government. ANGUSalve was awarded £11,530 to execute this project.

The ANGUSalve libraries team adopted a pop-up library format that brings a variety of resources that customers would typically expect in a library, but delivered directly to community spaces across Angus. These services include book borrowing, author visits, Bookbug sessions and workshops conducted by various partner organisations, including the NHS, Macmillan Cancer Support,



Move More, Voluntary Action Angus, the Community Police Service and the Angus Health & Social Care Partnership. These sessions were intended to not only promote reading but also to support health, wellbeing and digital skills development.

The project also looked to upscale digital skills among participants, contributing to overall community development. The initiative is a natural extension of ANGUSalve's current Mobile Library Service, which already covers a large area of the Angus community.

Watch it here!



Aligned with strategic aims:



Lend + Mend is launched at Forfar Library

In July 2023, Forfar Library opened its Lend + Mend Hub!

This is a brand-new facility which is designed to provide free access to equipment for repairing, reusing and upcycling everyday items. The hub is part of a pioneering project funded by the John Lewis Circular Future Fund, which aims to establish a long-term model for circular economy activities within public libraries across Scotland. The initiative in Forfar is one of only nine libraries across Scotland to be selected.

The project also aims to address the cost-of-living crisis by providing free resources that enable individuals to repair and recycle items, reducing the need for new purchases. The Lend + Mend Hub at Forfar Library is expected to significantly enhance the services provided to the local community and will offer resources that were previously inaccessible to many residents, and aligns with the Scottish Government's commitment to sustainability and aims to be an invaluable resource during the ongoing cost-of-living crisis.

The hubs were developed using a co-design approach, incorporating insights and expertise from local teams and library members. This ensures that the services provided by each hub are tailored to the specific needs of the community. The John Lewis Partnership's £1m Circular Future Fund provided the financial support necessary for purchasing equipment, training staff, and upgrading the library spaces to accommodate these new services. Following the launch, the Lend + Mend Hub at Forfar Library has introduced a series of educational programmes aimed at skill development which has seen a positive reception.



Aligned with strategic aims:



Record Breaking Summer Reading Challenge

Our libraries team launched its annual Summer Reading Challenge in July 2023, under the theme of "Race into a Book". The annual challenge encourages both children and adults in Angus to read a minimum of six books over the course of eight weeks. Participants who completed the challenge received a medal and certificate in recognition of their efforts.

But let's face it, this is more than just getting a medal. Reading, as we know, is so good for us!

This initiative aimed to promote reading among the local community during the school summer holidays, where it's well recognised that children in particular read a lot less due to being out of school. The challenge was inclusive, allowing people of all ages to participate and benefit from the numerous advantages of reading, such as increasing general knowledge, reducing stress and improving mental health.

ANGUSalive's libraries team recorded 1,008 residents of Angus signing up, broken up between 808 children and 200 adults - this was the highest number of sign-ups the team's Summer Reading Challenge has ever received and across all seven ANGUSalive libraries, a total of 6,223 books were borrowed specifically for the challenge!

One of the standout stories from this year's challenge was the participation of the Opata family, whose three children collectively borrowed and read over 100 books from Kirriemuir's library.



Aligned with strategic aims:



How we've grown

Following the introduction of the "Libraries on the Move" project, both footfall and library issues have seen a significant increase, with mobile library footfall rising from **12,952 to 14,749** (reflecting a **14%** increase) and Mobile Library Issues (items borrowed) increased from **18,465 to 19,719** (showing a **7%** rise).



Museums, Galleries & Archives

“*The museum is the place where we can reconnect with the past and understand the present through the objects, stories, and experiences of those who came before us.*”
(Stephen Fry)

How We Stack Up



24,588
Visitors

3,757

Items added to catalogue



18

Exhibitions Held



2,176

Collection and
Research Enquiries

1711

Attendances at Museum,
Galleries and Archive Activities



1,581

Number of Archives
Items Viewed

ANGUSalve Museums become more accessible with new opening hours and our dog friendly initiative

Operationally, there has been a big change for our Museums Galleries & Archives. We have changed our opening hours to become more accommodating, and have become dog friendly services so guests can bring their furry friends!

From 1 July 2023, museums across Angus were open on Sundays and Mondays. An increase in open hours means that a wider range of people, including those with busy schedules, can now visit ANGUSalve museums.

This is particularly beneficial for working people, students, and families, who may find it difficult to visit during more limited hours. The extended hours also offer tourists greater flexibility to include museum visits in their itineraries, which can enhance their overall experience in Angus. And it's wasted little time in

having an impact because since its introduction, 2,763 visits on Sundays from 1 July to the end of the financial year, 31 March 2024 took place!

To complement these new hours, ANGUSalve museums have also implemented a dog-friendly policy which many venues are now accustomed to. This inclusive approach was implemented to enhance the visitor experience and attract a new audience who would be pleased to be able to bring their dog.



Allowing dogs makes the museums more appealing to dog owners who might otherwise forgo a visit due to the need to leave their pets at home. This can increase foot fall, especially among local residents who enjoy outings with their pets.

And yes, we do love our dogs at ANGUSalve!

Since our dog-friendly initiative started, we have worked alongside 'Therapets' to host events which brings visitors together in light-hearted circumstances. Several studies have proven that pet therapy is beneficial and can have a range of health benefits, including promoting social interactions and



behaviour, increased emotional comfort and physiological factors such as reduced blood pressure and heart rate. And, as bias as it may sound...we have to agree!

"Lighting the Future" sees major upgrade at the Meffan Museum

The Meffan Museum & Art Gallery in Forfar recently underwent a significant transformation following the successful completion of the "Lighting the Future" project.

Originally opened on 28 October 1898, the Meffan building, funded by Jane Meffan in memory of her father, William Meffan, has a long history of serving the Forfar community. Following extensive renovations in 1992, the Meffan Institute became an art gallery with two purpose-built exhibition spaces.

However, as time went on the quality of the set up required to be revamped.

This initiative, completed in January 2024, aimed to modernise the gallery by replacing its outdated lighting system with energy-efficient solutions. These upgrades have not only enhanced the visitor experience but also reduced energy consumption and costs, contributing to wider environmental efforts.

The project was primarily funded by a £48,091 grant from Museums Galleries Scotland's Capital Resilience Fund, awarded in May 2023, with an additional £4,130 from ANGUSalve's investment fund.

The completion of the work was marked by the opening of the exhibition Liz Douglas: A Life in Art in February 2024, the first to be held in the newly refurbished space. The refurbishment included the installation of environmentally sustainable lighting, new flooring, and repairs to storm-damaged areas, creating a revitalised gallery environment.

The work was carried out in just two and a half weeks by local contractors despite a busy exhibition schedule, and these



Dog Friendly Museum



We're thrilled to welcome you and your furry companions to our museum!

- But to ensure everyone has a wag-tastic time, we have a few small guidelines for your four-legged friends:
- Doggie Duty:** Accidents occasionally happen, so please pick up after your pup and let our team know ASAP about it.
 - Leash It, Love It:** Keep your canine buddy on a short leash and by your side. We're all about pawitive vibes and staying close!
 - Explore Together:** There's amazing things in here, but don't leave your dog roaming off to see these wonders without you.
 - Dry & Dash:** Before entering, make sure your furry explorer isn't soaking wet. A quick towel dry off will work wonders.
 - Paws on the Ground:** We're all for the "stay grounded" approach! Let's keep those paws down, no jumping on displays or sitting on the furniture, please.
 - Ruff Days Happen...:** If your pup seems a bit unsettled or is barking up a storm, it's best to step outside for a quick breather. We want every tail wagging happily!

ANGUSalve is a registered
Scottish Charity No. SC046133

www.angusalive.scot

ANGUSalve
Museums, Galleries & Archives

Aligned with strategic aims:



improvements ensure future exhibitions at the Meffan Museum & Art Gallery will be presented to the highest possible standard.

We know our visitors will be pleased with that!

Aligned with strategic aims:



31st Meffan Winter Show continues to have cultural impact in Angus

The 31st annual ANGUSalve Meffan Winter Show opened with a preview evening on Friday 10 November 2023, at the Meffan Museum & Art Gallery in Forfar. This long-standing event - which began as a Christmas extravaganza - has since evolved into a significant cultural occasion in Angus attracting a diverse range of artists and art enthusiasts from across the country.

The 2023 show featured 156 selected pieces from over 230 submitted artworks, showcasing the talent and creativity of local artists. The exhibition, which ran from 11 November 2023 to 8 January 2024, offered visitors the opportunity to experience a wide array of visual art forms and to participate in selecting the 'Visitors Choice' award.

The Winter Show provides a platform for both amateur and professional artists to showcase their work in a public setting where each artist also had the chance for their work to be chosen as a permanent addition to the Angus public art collection, highlighting the exhibition's significance in the region's cultural landscape.

Watch it here!



Aligned with strategic aims:



HMS Montrose Artifacts on Permanent Display at Montrose Museum

Montrose Museum held a special event on Friday, 9 February, to unveil a permanent display celebrating HMS Montrose, a Type 23 Frigate with a significant historical connection to the town. The new display features key artifacts from the warship, including the ship's bell, nameboard and kickplate, all of which were brought to the museum through the efforts of local naval veteran David Moxey, supported by Angus MP Dave Doogan, following the ship's final visit to Montrose in May 2023.

HMS Montrose was built at Yarrows Shipbuilders in Glasgow and officially launched on 31 July 1992. Over her 30 years of service, the warship participated in numerous Royal Navy operations, including deployments to the South Atlantic as a Falkland Islands guardship, and joint security operations in the Persian Gulf. One of her notable missions was Operation RECSYR in 2014, where she escorted vessels removing Syrian chemical weapons. She was equipped with advanced technology, including sonar, sensitive radar, and a helicopter with torpedoes, making her a formidable asset in maritime security.

In 2019, HMS Montrose was stationed in Bahrain, where she conducted joint operations, including counter-piracy and counter-narcotics efforts, until her retirement in April 2023. Her final visit to her namesake town, Montrose, in March 2023, welcomed over 5,000 visitors on board, marking the end of her illustrious career spanning 400,000 miles.

The display now serves as a key educational resource for both locals and visitors, offering insight into the ship's contributions to global maritime security. The ship's bell - a focal point of the exhibit - holds a personal connection to the crew, as it was engraved with the names of their children who were christened with it. This display not only commemorates

HMS Montrose's naval history but also reinforces the deep bond between the ship and the town that shares its name.

Aligned with strategic aims:



Montrose Museum secures permanent “Gentle Shetlander” Adam Christie display

Montrose Museum was delighted to announce a new permanent display dedicated to outsider artist Adam Christie (1868-1950), which opened on Saturday 16 September 2023. The exhibition features 11 pieces of Christie’s artwork, which became unexpectedly available at Taylor’s Auctions in Montrose in April 2023. Securing these works posed a financial challenge for ANGUSalive, but Montrose Burns Club and Dave Ramsay B.E.M. intervened, raising £6,000 to acquire the collection. These pieces are now on long-term loan to ANGUSalive and will be rotated as part of the museum’s permanent display.

Born in Shetland, Adam Christie was largely unknown during his lifetime, with his work only gaining wider recognition after the publication of “The Gentle Shetlander” by Ken Keddie in 1984. Christie was admitted to Montrose Asylum (later known as Sunnyside) in 1901, following severe struggles with his mental health, and remained there until his death in 1950. While at the hospital, Christie discovered and developed his artistic talent, focusing on stone carving and painting. He used basic tools such as nails and pieces of glass to create his distinctive works, which were inspired by biblical characters, Celtic art, and Shetland folklore.

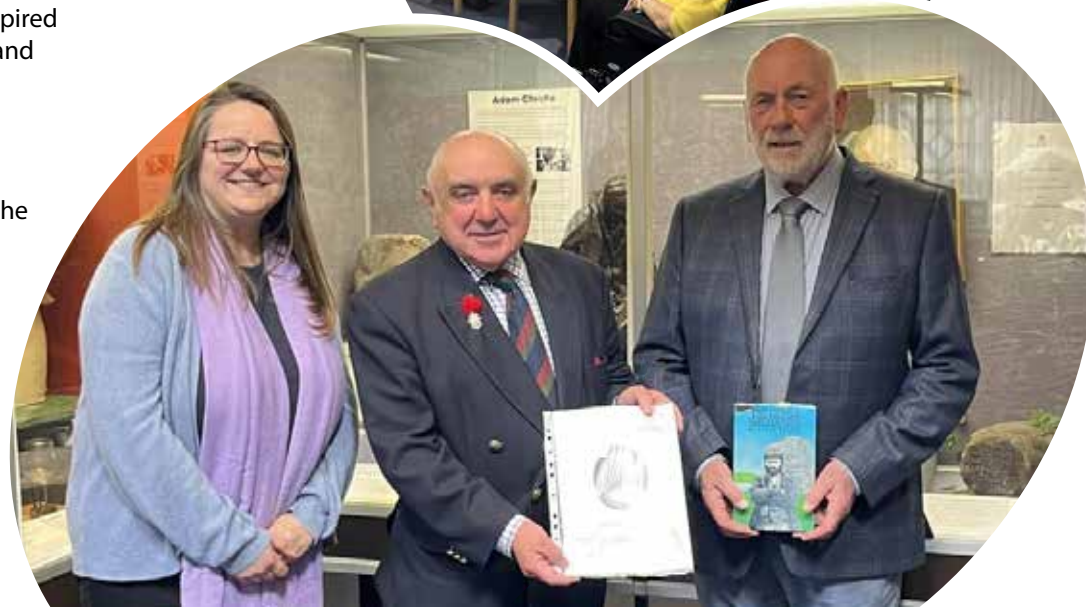
Christie’s most prolific period coincided with the 1930s, when Montrose became the centre of the Scottish Renaissance, an artistic movement that influenced his creative output. His work,

Aligned with strategic aims:



shaped by both personal challenges and the cultural climate of the time, reflects a remarkable combination of resilience and artistic expression.

This new display at Montrose Museum not only preserves Adam Christie’s artistic legacy, but also serves as an important platform for raising awareness about mental health, particularly in young men. Christie’s story encourages a deeper reflection on the impact of mental illness and promotes a more compassionate approach to those affected by it. The exhibition offers both an artistic and educational resource, fostering discussions around mental health while celebrating Christie’s unique contributions to art.



Significant funding for ambitious Natural History Project

ANGUSalive Museums were awarded £52,646 from Museums Galleries Scotland for their ‘World Cultures Project’, a two-year initiative that will focus on cataloguing, researching and safely storing Angus Council’s extensive ethnographic collection, which spans a wide range of historical objects from across the globe. The project will culminate in a co-curated exhibition and educational resource for schools, developed in collaboration with local minority and advocacy groups.

ANGUSalive Museums go Digital

ANGUSalive officially launched its Digital Archive and Museum Collections, an innovative online platform that allows users to explore



The World Cultures Project arrives at a significant time, as museums across the world are engaging in conversations about the legacy of colonialism and the British Empire in their collections, including the potential repatriation of artefacts. The project also aims to ensure that these are examined with an ethical lens.

The funding has supported the appointment of a Curatorial Assistant Ingrid Leon, who is leading efforts to explore the history, cultural significance and origins of the objects.

the rich history and culture of Angus from their own homes. This new resource offers unprecedented access to a vast range of historical materials, spanning centuries of the region’s heritage, as well as significant items from across the globe.

The online portal provides users with the opportunity to browse rare documents, vintage photographs, and cultural artefacts with ease, offering a unique insight into Angus’s past. For those wishing to view specific items in person, appointments can be arranged with the ANGUSalive team, further enhancing access to these valuable collections.

The launch of this platform marks a significant achievement in making



The World Cultures Exhibition, scheduled for Autumn 2025 at Montrose Museum, will showcase a selection of these objects, many of which have been part of the museum’s collection since the 1830’s – get it in your diary as we look forward to seeing this project unfold!

Aligned with strategic aims:



Angus’s heritage more accessible to a wider audience. While nothing can replace the experience of seeing these historical items up close, the use of digital technology ensures that a global audience can now engage with the region’s past in a contemporary way.

Whether you are a history enthusiast, a student, or simply curious about the cultural heritage of Angus, there is something for everyone to discover in this comprehensive archive at your fingertips.

Check out the Digital Archive and Museum Collections here!



Aligned with strategic aims:



How we’ve grown

With a change in our opening hours combining with becoming dog-friendly and having great exhibitions in our spaces, we have seen a **9.46%** increase in museum attendances. This has also been supported by a **41%** increase in activities that we’ve hosted, a pertinent reminder to how important these spaces are valued by its community and as a tourist destination.



Sport & Leisure

*“The most important thing
is to try and inspire people
so that they can be great in
whatever they want to do.”*
(Kobe Bryant)

How We Stack Up

908,873

Sport centres
attendances



bactive

9,629

bACTIVE
memberships

4,200

bACTIVE
sales

6

Community
Sport Hubs

37

affiliated
organisations



33

National Athlete Support
Awards (NASA) members

9,762

Total
number of group
fitness sessions



123,612

Total number
of group fitness
attendances



Significant investment in gym refurbishments wow Angus community

ANGUSalve's Sport & Leisure service continued on a reinvestment programme into their sports and leisure centres, ensuring the Angus community have access to some of the latest gym equipment from Life Fitness and Indigo Fitness, as well as cardio and fixed resistance machines, multi-functional training rigs, complete with colour-coded training zones and enhanced audio and visual solutions.

The redeveloped spaces also feature the latest technology including Myzone, an accurate fitness tracker and online social platform that rewards effort for all physical activity which also acts as a retention tool for those who invest in the equipment.

And breathe!

These refurbishments took place at Forfar Community Campus, Carnoustie Sports Centre and

the Saltire Sports Centre in Arbroath. This complements the previous years' refurbishments at Arbroath Sports Centre, Montrose Sports Centre and Brechin Community Campus.



Forfar was first up, opened by local athletes Eva Finnie and Lyall Webster. This was quickly followed by a bumper opening weekend at the Saltire and Carnoustie Sports Centres. The Saltire was opened by Arbroath FC players Jay Bird and Jess Norey, meanwhile the ribbon was cut in Carnoustie by Celtic FC Women's captain and Scotland international Kelly Clarke.

The reinvestment programme has continued to pay dividends for the service, with bACTIVE members beginning to stretch beyond pre-covid levels.

Watch them here!



Aligned with strategic aims:



ANGUSalve's Learn to Swim Programme helps 80-year-old Gloria finally overcome fear of swimming

It's never too late to do anything in life. And Gloria Mitchell – a participant on our Learn to Swim programme is proof in the pudding.

Making a splash with us in April 2023, Gloria confided that she had held a fear of swimming for much of her life where in the 1970's an instructors insensitive reaction to her struggling to swim had left her terrified to go back in the water. Since then, she had been limited to the children's paddling pool while watching friends and family swim and have fun when on holidays abroad.

Feeling left out among her friends, she decided to face her fear.

At her own request, her participation in our Learn to Swim programme at

Webster's Sports Centre was kept confidential as she intended to surprise her friends with her newfound swimming ability during an upcoming holiday in Turkey. Her success was revealed when she confidently swam in the deeper sections of the pool, much to the astonishment and admiration of her friends. The story made national news and was reported on STV.

Gloria's story highlights the inclusivity and supportive nature of the Learn to Swim National Framework which ANGUSalve has adopted, helping her overcome her fear and showcase that age is no barrier to swimming!

Go Gloria!

Aligned with strategic aims:



ANGUSalve's Ukrainian Speaking Club helps Ukrainian refugees settle in Angus

In July 2023, ANGUSalve's Community Sports team in collaboration with Voluntary Action Angus and the Angus Council Resettlement Team, established a safe and supportive space for Ukrainian refugees in Montrose. This initiative aimed to facilitate social integration, improve English language skills, and enhance community engagement for Ukrainian residents who had been displaced due to Russia's invasion of their country.

A group of Ukrainian people experiencing difficulties in finding employment due to language barriers and a lack of awareness about local services, reached out to Voluntary Action Angus. They expressed the need for a venue where they could improve their English and connect with others as part of their effort to integrate into the local community.

In response, Ross Taylor, the ANGUSalve Community Sport Hub Coordinator, initiated the "Ukrainian Speaking Club" at Montrose Sports Centre. This weekly activity has provided a safe and inclusive environment for Ukrainian guests

to practice English conversational skills.

The speaking club features a "special guest" each week who discusses various topics in English, ranging from sports and Scottish culture to property renting and welfare rights. This format helps participants build confidence and improve their English proficiency whilst providing social respite where Ukrainian people can integrate with their own community who share similar experiences to theirs.

One of the participants, Iya Pavlova initially volunteered with ANGUSalve and has gone on to secure employment with us as a Sports Advisor!

Watch it here!



Aligned with strategic aims:



Thousands raised at Carnoustie Sports Centre through "Pedal for Pounds"

In March 2024, ANGUSalve coaches and colleagues at Carnoustie Sports Centre hosted a 24-hour

'Pedal for Pounds' spin class event. This initiative successfully raised over £5,200, which was equally divided between supporting Beth Greig – a local swimmer who competes with the GB Down Syndrome Swim Team and who coaches with ANGUSalve's ASN swim classes - along with Maggie's Dundee.

Participants took turns cycling for periods ranging from 1 to 5 hours each. The event was supported by the staff at Carnoustie Sports Centre, members of the spin class and

the Arbroath St Thomas swimming community.

The event also featured activities such as a DJ and quizzes to maintain enthusiasm and engagement throughout the 24 hours. The event saw extensive community involvement, from participants cycling to the contributions of donations and raffle prizes.

We were blown away by the contribution of the Carnoustie community and a well earned sleep for our staff was well and truly earned!

Aligned with strategic aims:



Be Active, Live Well: Relaunch and growth of life changing programme

Be Active, Live Well is an ANGUSalve programme that provides a range of activities and supports people who are living with a long-term health condition, identified as at risk of developing one or who are currently inactive, to become more active.

But in a nutshell, it's changing lives.

Since April 2023, there are several success stories that have emerged from the programme.

One participant, Ranald McLeay was diagnosed with advanced prostate cancer, and experienced a significant transformation after enrolling. The challenges associated with his diagnosis had taken a toll on both his mental and physical health. Following excellent care from Macmillan, he was referred to a Macmillan Development Officer at ANGUSalve, where he joined the "Move More" programme. He has since credited this programme, along with the supportive network he built through ANGUSalve classes for profoundly changing his life and by his own admission, has never been fitter.

Watch it here!



Aligned with strategic aims:



Spearheaded by a new Health and Wellbeing Lead, Kirstie Abbey, her team has grown to meet rising demand in the service. In response to growing demand in the 2023/24 financial year, the Be Active, Live Well team has expanded significantly.



If you're living with or at risk of developing a long-term condition, recovering from illness or injury or simply looking for support to become more active, "Be Active...Live Well" can support you in using physical activity to improve your health and wellbeing.

Activities on our programme include:

- Active Start Referral Programme
- Stay Active Exercise Classes
- Health Walks

CLASSES INCLUDE

- **Seated Yoga**
chair based yoga class using gentle moves and breathing exercises
- **Seated Exercise**
chair based exercise to music class
- **Gym**
closed, supervised, gym session with an initial programme provided
- **Strength & Balance**
low intensity class designed to improve your overall fitness and balance
- **Circuits**
a mix of cardiovascular and resistance exercises, designed to improve your overall fitness

HEALTH WALKS
Health walks are short, free, low-level walks which can help you build confidence in walking, connect with nature and make new friends.

As part of Healthy Steps Angus, we have walks starting from our leisure facilities which offer a short introductory level walk to complement our other Be Active...Live Well classes.

ACTIVE START
This 12-week programme is designed to build confidence in being active and increase your awareness of how physical activity and other lifestyle changes can help to self-manage or prevent a long-term condition. Our specialist team will work with you during the 12 weeks and upon completion will support you to find the right activities for you.

STAY ACTIVE
A range of classes led by our specialist team, graded to encourage your progression over time. Classes are suitable for Active Start graduates, or, if you are living with a health condition and already active but looking for a suitable activity for your needs.

How to Refer
To access Be Active...Live Well activities, a referral form must be submitted. This can either be done as a self-referral, or by your Health Care Professional who can directly refer you. Just scan the QR code to access the form, or visit: anguslive.scot/sport-leisure/be-active-live-well

The team now includes a full-time Health & Wellbeing Coordinator and three part-time Health & Wellbeing Advisors. This expansion reflects the programme's increasing popularity and additional resources required to meet participant needs. To further support the programme's growth, ongoing recruitment efforts are focused on hiring additional Be Active, Live Well coaches and expanding the activity timetable.

Watch it here!



Collaborative Review to Enhance Inclusive Sports Opportunities

In alignment with ANGUSalve's newly adopted collaborative approach, the Angus Disability Sport Partnership embarked on a comprehensive review of services aimed at creating more inclusive and meaningful opportunities for sport and physical activity across the region. This initiative represents a phased, collaborative effort to ensure our services meet the diverse needs of the community, particularly in the area of Additional Support Needs (ASN), Disability, and Inclusive Sport.

The review process has been structured into four key phases, involving close collaboration with multiple partners, including ANGUSalve, Active Schools, and Angus Disability Sport. The work also draws upon the expertise and input of ASN schools, the ASN PEPAS group, Community Sports Hubs, connected clubs, and community organisations. This inclusive approach ensures that all stakeholders are engaged in shaping a future that better serves our young people.

The purpose of this review is to establish a framework that delivers high-quality, accessible, and connected opportunities for young people. By removing barriers and reducing unnecessary challenges, we aim to create pathways for lifelong participation in sport and physical activity.

The purpose of this is clear: "To provide better quality, purposeful and connected opportunities for our young people to participate in a lifetime of sport and physical activity, without unnecessary challenges and barriers."

Reflecting on 2023-2024: A Year of Growth and Success!

The 2023-2024 period has been a highly successful year as we look to make sure our provision is as inclusive as it can possibly be. This is work we are passionate about and proud of. This year has seen the establishment of new events, activities, and clubs, alongside the continued success of existing clubs that are thriving in their respective areas and growing their membership.

It has been particularly encouraging to see clubs actively supporting disability provision and strengthening the links between schools and community pathways. Over the

year, 11 events were held, attracting an impressive 493 attendees across various sports and activities including: Boccia, Sports Hall Athletics, Swimming, Golf, Football, Track & Field and a Parasports Festival.

All of this work bodes us well for an exciting calendar of events delivered through the Disability Sport Network and our key partners, of whom this work couldn't happen without, so big shout out to: Active Schools Angus, Angus Disability Sport, Get

Out Get Active (GOGA), and Scottish Disability Sport!

Aligned with strategic aims:

1 3 4 5 6



This work underpins our commitment to building a more equitable and accessible landscape for sport and physical activity, empowering young people to lead active, healthy lives!

ANGUSalve Launches 1:1 Swimming Lessons for Children with Additional Support Needs

ANGUSalve has introduced a new programme of one-to-one swimming lessons designed for children and young people aged 4 to 18 with Additional Support Needs (ASN). These lessons began on Thursday, 2 November, at Forfar Community Campus, with support from GB Down Syndrome Swim Squad athlete Beth Greig.

Swimming offers significant benefits for those with ASN, helping to develop motor skills, muscle tone, strength, and coordination.

Beth Greig - who began her swimming journey at Arbroath Sports Centre with St Thomas Swimming Club - went on to represent Great Britain as part of the Down Syndrome Swim Squad. Her journey has now come full circle as she is volunteering to assist coach Elizabeth Buzta in delivering these bespoke ASN lessons with ANGUSalve.

Speaking with Beth, she told us: "I always refer to the pool as my 'Happy Place' and feel fortunate that I have had the opportunity to travel all over with my swimming. I'm excited to see where these sessions lead to for others with disabilities. Coaches believed in me when I started

swimming, and I want to give that same support back to the new generation of swimmers coming through ANGUSalve pools. I can't wait to see where this volunteering journey might take me and what I can achieve."

This programme represents yet another step forward in ANGUSalve's commitment to inclusive opportunities and supporting young people in reaching their full potential through sport and physical activity!

Aligned with strategic aims:

1 3 4 5 6 9



How we've grown

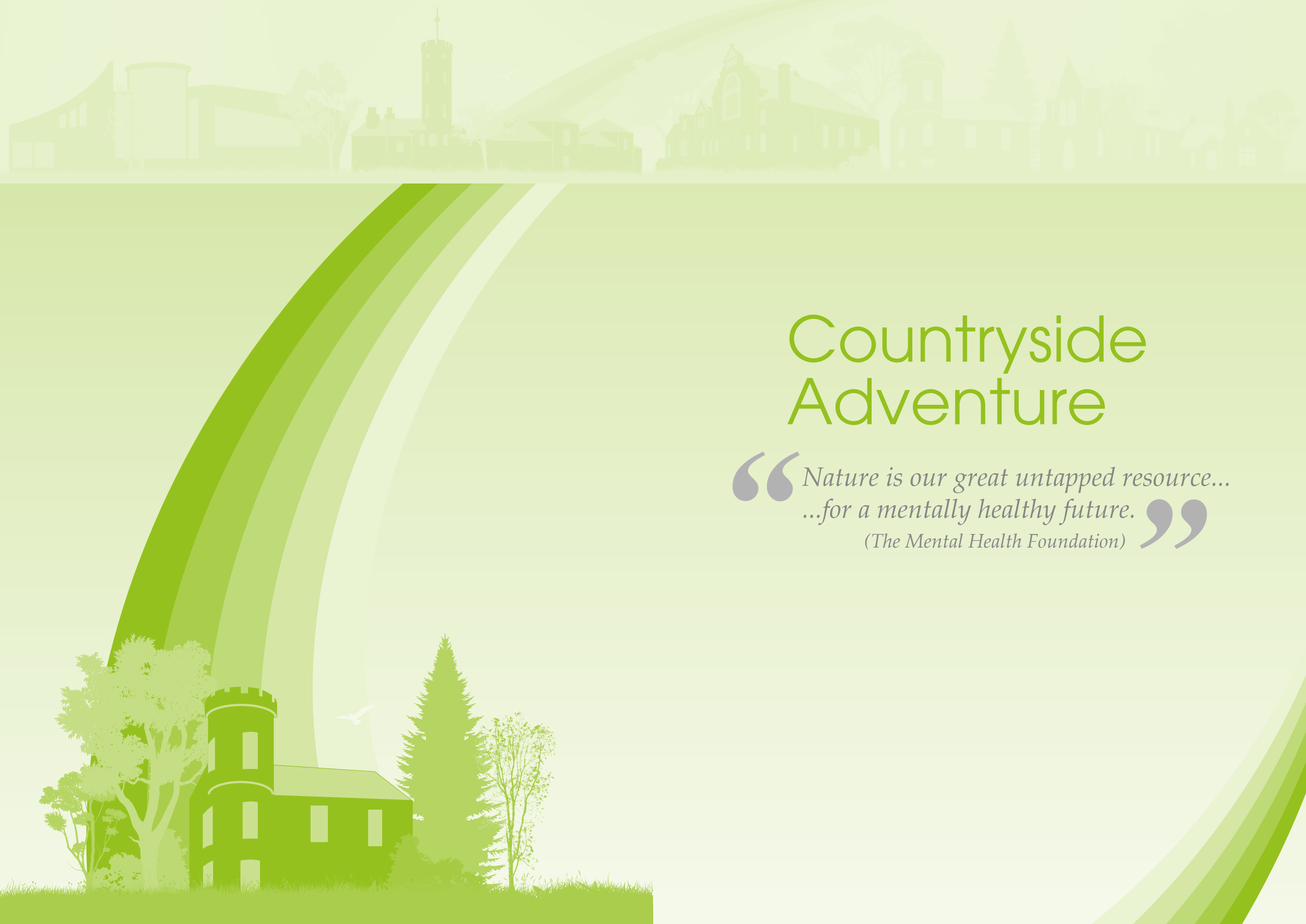
The reinvestments in our gym portfolio have been hugely popular and the numbers speak for themselves.

Compared to last year, we have been able to increase our footfall from **808,152** attendances in our sports centres to **908,873**.

This marks an incredible **12.46%** increase, and on average roughly 2,500 people are attending our sports centres daily throughout the year!

This number was similarly reflected in our number of **bACTIVE** memberships which have gone from **8,537** to **9,629**, meaning a **12.79%** increase in memberships.





Countryside Adventure

“Nature is our great untapped resource...
...for a mentally healthy future.”
(The Mental Health Foundation)



How We Stack Up

490,946

Total Visitors

436

Education Activities

Total Countryside Adventure Activities

968

5,802 Attendances

2,930

Education Activities Attendance

Monikie and Crombie Country Parks finally re-open after Storm Arwen disruption!

Storm Arwen and other unprecedented weather events caused extensive tree falls, blocking main pathways and rendering large parts of the parks inaccessible.

Restoration efforts began on 5 September 2023, with the work being carried out through a contractor in collaboration with ANGUSalive and Angus Council, ensuring that the restoration was completed efficiently and with a strong emphasis on safety and environmental considerations.

The restoration process took into account the importance of preserving the parks' biodiversity. Some of the felled trees were intentionally left in place to support the parks vibrant wildlife, as trees provide essential habitats and contribute to the ecosystem which reflects a commitment to maintaining a balance between restoring public access and protecting the natural environment.



Monikie and Crombie Country Parks hold great significance for the Angus community and offer fantastic spaces for outdoor activities for locals and visitors, providing opportunities for recreation through ANGUSalive's activities provision and ranger service, connecting with families and friends and as local beauty spots to be enjoyed.

The restoration of these parks have been carefully navigated but are essential as they contribute to the physical health, mental wellbeing, and social fabric of the Angus community and its visitors.

Aligned with strategic aims:

678



70-year-old Imke makes a splash with Stand Up Paddleboarding Ladies (SUP Ladies)

ANGUSalive continued its work in Stand Up Paddleboarding (SUP) with 'SUP' Ladies - a programme designed specifically to support and encourage women in what is traditionally a male-dominated sport. It also offers a safe environment for women who may not be comfortable wearing a wetsuit around their male contemporaries.

SUP Ladies offers women of all ages and skill levels the chance to learn and enjoy stand up paddleboarding in a supportive and empowering environment.

Since its launch, SUP Ladies has received an overwhelmingly positive response from the community. Participants have praised the programme for its supportive environment, expert coaching, and the opportunity it provides to connect with other women who

share a passion for paddleboarding – so much so the group now interact regularly out with the programme at social events.

One particular highlight has been the introduction of 70-year-old Imke Thomson, who upon walking her dog one day around picturesque Monikie decided she would like to "give it a go" and was encouraged to do so by an ANGUSalive member of staff. She has since gone on to be an inspirational member for the group and helped convey the inclusive nature of the Countryside Adventure Team's Activities.

Aligned with strategic aims:

458



Healthy Steps Angus – Major growth in routes, services and volunteers

ANGUSalve's Healthy Steps Angus initiative has continued to grow. Since its inception in 2022, Healthy Angus has provided regular, short, free, low level walks led by trained staff or volunteers to support the community, particularly those who are currently inactive, living with long-term conditions or in recovery from illness, injury or at risk of isolation.

Throughout the 2023/24 period, 20 health walk leader training sessions were delivered across Angus by our Health Walk Coordinator with a total of 112 individuals trained, including ANGUSalve staff and partners from the following organisations: Dundee & Angus College, Dementia Meeting Centres (Kirriemuir and Arbroath) Isla, Northmuir, and Southmuir Primary Schools, Murton Trust, Brechin Community FC Trust, Care sector organisations (Deirdre Knight, Gables, and Seton Grove) and Edzell Community which has strengthened the pool of people available to deliver these walks but also demonstrate the benefit of partnership working.

We also welcomed Scottish Disability Sport to deliver "All Abilities Health Walk Leader", aimed at supporting leaders to build knowledge and confidence to accommodate participants of all abilities.

This has led to recruiting 18 new volunteer Health Walk Leaders into ANGUSalve, who are now actively supporting the delivery of our bACTIVE Health Walks and Buggy Walks under the Healthy Steps Angus programme. This has contributed to ANGUSalve now growing 11 new Health Walks in Angus, 8 of which are owned by ANGUSalve.

We also commissioned three first aid training sessions from Angus Council, which were successfully delivered to our volunteer health walk leaders. This training ensures that our leaders are equipped with essential first aid skills, enhancing the safety and security of our Health Walks.

The ANGUSalve Health Walks initiative has made significant strides - pardon the pun - in expanding its

reach and impact over the past year. With the support of our partners and volunteers, it has enhanced the health and wellbeing of the Angus community through accessible and inclusive Health Walks. Ahead of the 2024/25 session, the team will look forward to increasing the availability of walks in the community whilst continuing to increase participation.

Aligned with strategic aims:



Healthy Steps Angus



ANGUSalve Countryside Rangers continue to support the environment

Countryside rangers are part of a service provided by our team and play a vital role in managing the countryside parks and caring for its environment.

Branching Out is one such example.

Branching Out engaged with 12 adults over a 12-week period, supporting them with access to mental health services. The programme offered three-hour weekly sessions, focusing on building conservation practical skills and fostering a connection with nature. As a result, eight of the participants successfully earned their John Muir Award - a nationally recognised, individual award scheme from the John Muir Trust who are dedicated to the conservation, protection and restoration of the UK's wild places.

Throughout the year, the Countryside Ranger team also welcomed the Craigmill Skill Centre from Strathmartine Hospital to collaborate with the technical team. Their work ranged from rhododendron cutting to path maintenance, enabling participants to gain valuable practical skills while connecting with the natural environment.

The Ranger service also supported local students, including Forfar Academy pupils

who participated every Monday throughout the term as part of their Prince's Trust Award. The pupils spent their class time at Forfar Loch engaging in activities such as litter picking, habitat creation, and tree maintenance which was an essential contribution to the conservation of the Loch.

Additionally, over a five-week period, the Dundee & Angus College Supported Learning Department worked with the ranger service at Crombie Country Park where the students undertook tasks such as rhododendron clearance, squirrel transects, and pond maintenance, all of which contributed towards their qualifications.

Aligned with strategic aims:



“Friends of” Volunteer Groups created to engage with local communities

The “Friends of” volunteer groups at Crombie Country Park, Monikie Country Park, and Forfar Loch have been established to engage local communities in the preservation and enhancement of their natural surroundings. Meeting once a month, these groups alternate between Crombie and Monikie, with a separate monthly meeting at Forfar.

During 2023/24, the “Friends of” groups in collaboration with the Trees for Life “I Dig Trees” project have successfully planted 100 trees across the sites. This initiative not only enhances local biodiversity but also contributes to long-term environmental sustainability. A significant focus of the groups’ work has been the removal of invasive non-native species, particularly rhododendrons and Himalayan balsam. These species are known for

their detrimental impact on our local ecosystems.

Another significant project is the transformation of the walled garden at Monikie into a hidden wildlife garden.

This initiative, chosen by the group members themselves, aims to create a space for local wildlife while providing an educational and recreational space for the community.

The long-term intention is the group will be able to steer their own projects with group specific funding. This will allow the group to be self guided and allow them to become a community based group that will work towards achieving the wants and needs of the community which is its next point of growth in the 2024-25 session.

Aligned with strategic aims:



Countryside Adventure visitors enjoy new wetsuits!

In March 2024, just in time for our season, we made a significant investment in new equipment to enhance the safety, comfort, and overall experience of participants in their water sports activities at Monikie Country Park.

The team invested in new 5mm wetsuits from CIRCLEONE representing a major upgrade to the equipment provided to participants. These wetsuits are designed to prioritise safety of participants by keeping them warm while engaging in water activities, even in cooler conditions.

And as we know...Monikie and Crombie Country Parks can get chilly!

This will allow the water sports offering to extend its season into the colder months.

The team also invested in children’s sized paddleboards in response to the growing interest in the activity among younger participants. These boards are tailored to the dimensions and weight of children, ensuring a safer and more effective learning experience opposed to them learning on an adult sized board which can

be more challenging. These more appropriately sized boards mean children have the potential to grasp the skills required more quickly and enjoy the sport more as a result.

The Countryside Adventure team have also invested in bright, easily recognisable staff buoyancy aids to their equipment fleet. These aids are designed to make staff members stand out during activities, ensuring that they are always easily identifiable by participants. The presence of these buoyancy aids contributes to a safer environment by ensuring that participants can quickly locate

and communicate with instructors, particularly in busy or challenging conditions.

Finally, the team also invested in a rescue sled which is predominantly used during Open Water Swimming sessions. This sled is a critical tool which will enable instructors to rescue any potential casualties much quicker and get them to the bank where first aid can be carried out much more efficiently.

Aligned with strategic aims:



How we’ve grown

The number of activities with our Countryside Adventure team has grown significantly, increasing by approximately **59.16%** from 2022/23. This has similarly reflected the number of activity attendances which has seen a substantial rise, growing by about **55.18%**. This indicates strong engagement and participation growth over the last year, meaning people are enjoying our Countryside Adventure Activities as much as we do!






Theatre & Venues

“*I like the ephemeral thing about theatre, every performance is like a ghost - it's there and then it's gone.*”
(Dame Maggie Smith)

How We Stack Up


32,787

Total Theatre Attendances




133

Total Performances




473

Total Venue Hires



9,284

Pantomime attendances to Freezin'



Montrose Town Hall reopens with Variety Performance

ANGUSalive was delighted to announce the reopening of Montrose Town Hall, a historic venue that had served as a key community hub since the early 1960s. After its temporary closure due to its use as a COVID-19 vaccination centre, the Hall has resumed its role as a centre for local events and performances.

Notable acts have performed at the Montrose Town Hall including The Proclaimers, Average White Band, Ocean Colour Scene, and Cream DJs, with Seb Fontaine being the last to perform before the pandemic-induced closure.

The official reopening took place on Sunday 7 May 2023 and was marked by a Variety Concert featuring local talent from Montrose. This charity event aimed to raise funds for the local charity DEBRA. The concert showcased performances by Robina

Addison with The Gordon School of Dance, Fraser McGlynn with The Song Shop, Beryl Cooper with The Esk Academy of Dance and The Town Band, with local entertainer Joe Wishart serving as compère.

Aligned with strategic aims:

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Kids reach for the moon with Theatre Stars School

In April 2023, our team were buzzing to launch our very own “Theatre Stars School”, an initiative aimed at introducing the world of performing arts to young people. This innovative program is designed to provide comprehensive training and opportunities for aspiring actors, singers, and dancers from ages 5 to 18.

Operating at the Webster Memorial Theatre in Arbroath, the aim of the school is to offer a dynamic and engaging programme that focuses on developing essential skills in acting, singing, and dancing, while also instilling confidence and teamwork among participants. These classes are fully coached by industry professionals, students are given the platform to explore their creativity and hone their craft in a supportive environment.

It marked its inaugural performance in February 2024 to a sell-out audience, entertaining them to “Madagascar Jr - the Musical”. The show was a resounding success, showcasing the impressive talents of the students and the effectiveness of the school’s programme.

The show also featured a voice over from local West End star Norman Bowman, who also became an ambassador for the school. He joined them for a class in October 2023, which also featured a Q&A session.

Watch it here!



Aligned with strategic aims:

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Bookbug in the Theatre

We had the pleasure of welcoming our very own Libraries team for a special outing of "Bookbug in the Theatre", at the Webster Memorial Theatre in Arbroath. This gave a special opportunity for youngsters to enjoy the ever popular Bookbug in a unique setting, and boy it didn't disappoint!

The Bookbug programme, developed by the Scottish Book Trust, is an initiative that introduces children to the joys of books, stories, and songs from an early age. Bookbug sessions usually feature in our libraries and are performed by our excellent Creative Learning Assistants and feature stories, rhymes, and sing-a-long's designed

for babies, toddlers and pre-school children, encouraging early literacy and family bonding through fun and interactive sessions.

It was fantastic to see a packed out theatre for this special Bookbug and our libraires team were humbled by a huge round of applause at the end!

Aligned with strategic aims:



ANGUSalve continues to bring a diverse portfolio of performances to the community

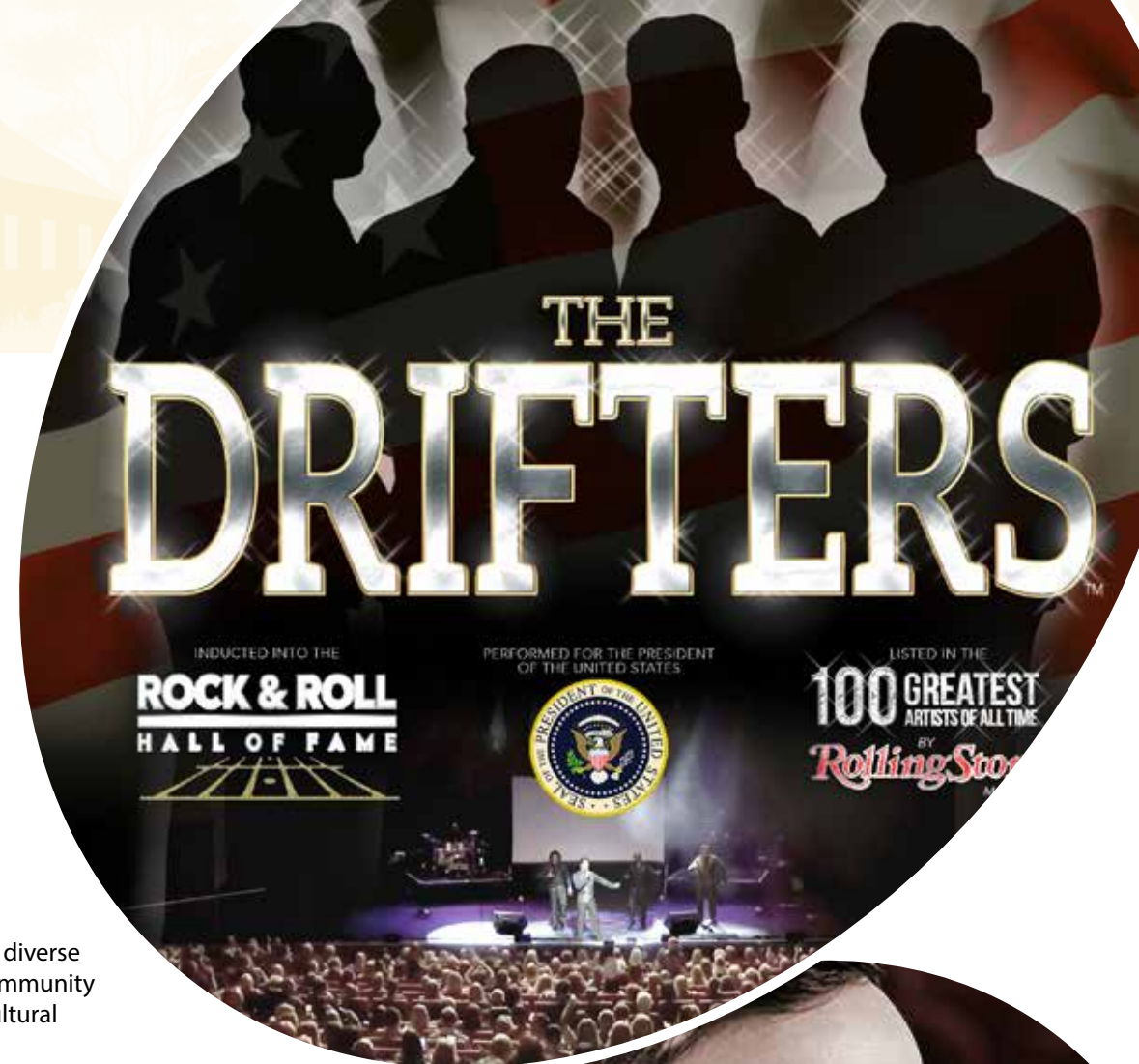
The Theatre & Venues team at ANGUSalve continued to offer a fascinating programme of events at the Webster Memorial Theatre, in addition to doing more regular programming at the Reid Hall, Forfar and Montrose Town Hall. It included a mix of drama, music, comedy, and family entertainment, catering to diverse tastes and ensuring the community had access to a range of cultural experiences across Angus.

The Webster Memorial Theatre in Arbroath continues to be a draw an audience with an extensive programme throughout 2023/24 with some new acts whilst welcoming back returning performances.

We saw performances such as comedians Gary Mickle, Carl Hutchison and Karen Dunbar; bands such as The Drifters, The Skids and The Bay City Rollers, in addition to acts such as the popular Ladyboys of Bangkok; the Alice in Wonderland Adult Panto and Family Wrestling which ensured a varied programme.

Our 2023 Panto - 'Freezin' - was performed over 15 days which saw a cumulative total of over £96,000 in ticket sales with over 9,000 people in attendance.

Aligned with strategic aims:



Step into Christmas leaves Forfar feeling festive!

Reid Hall, Forfar was home to ANGUSalive's first ever Christmas production – Step Into Christmas – which featured festive favourites for all the family, which will now become an annual performance from ANGUSalive.

Performing to over 300 people, the stellar cast sung their hearts out to all of those favourites that as you know seem to stumble upon the radio earlier and earlier each year...but that we never grow bored of!

Step Into Christmas featured a talented ensemble of 8 live singers, an energetic 11-piece band, and a delightful children's chorus to light up the room.



They did - as you'd expect - belt out all the Christmas classics such as Last Christmas, Santa Claus is Coming to Town and of course, Mariah's favourite - All I Want for Christmas Is You!

This inaugural production represents more than just a festive feel good, however.

ANGUSalive's Theatre & Venues team are determined to make the Reid Hall, Forfar and indeed the Montrose Town Hall, more than what they have been in the past.

With the programming that our team have worked hard on this year and moving into 2024/25, we are looking

forward to establishing these venues as thriving places to perform for the Angus community and beyond, making it a destination of choice for performers and audiences alike. We can't wait to show you what's next!

Aligned with strategic aims:



How we've grown

Sometimes, it's more than just numbers we look at.

This year we were extremely proud to have launched our very own drama school, meaning local children can feel the joy and passion for theatre in a safe, inclusive space. In that sense, we have grown by **100%** with our Theatre Stars School provision, culminating in a show at the Webster Memorial Theatre for their inaugural performance.

As a space in the community, our venues continue to be valued and used by the public, with our venue hire operation seeing an increase by **191.98%** (162 from 22/23 to 473 in 23/24).





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