



2023-2024

Healthier, happier, more connected lives.

South Lanarkshire
Leisure and Culture

Annual Strategic Report 2023-2024



SOUTH LANARKSHIRE
Leisure & Culture



Message from the Chair

On this, the second Annual Strategic Report it has been my privilege to present, it is impossible to say anything other than that 2023/2024 has been a year of challenge.

The Board has faced difficult decisions in the wake of significant financial constraints. These have been occasioned by the levels of funding that South Lanarkshire Council has been in a position to provide, along with increased levels of inflation and the cost of living crisis. These will be familiar to the readers of our Annual Strategic Report.

I must reference all the decisions to rationalise services and to increase charges that we have had to take. As important, though, it is worth recording the many ways in which we have been able to sustain services, and by working in partnership with the Council, we have jointly mitigated service reductions wherever possible by modifying provision. Throughout, we have held to the key objectives in our 2022 to 2027 Strategy. It is worth emphasising that those objectives are as valid now as when they were agreed, in particular our focus on the health and wellbeing of our community.



I would also like to put on record the positive and focussed way in which the Council and the Board have worked together to ensure our partnership arrangements are robust.

Crucially, the Board and its team of executive leaders have maintained vision and a sense of positivity - that we can and will move to a position of sustained service offer, and that we will continue to have high quality in all aspects of our leisure and culture delivery in the years ahead.

Changes introduced have been robust in ensuring that not one member of staff lost employment, and staff leaders and Unions have worked together to maintain open and focussed communication with our staff. The Board is indebted to the whole staff group for their maturity in addressing the inevitable changes that followed the savings that we were required to make.

The Board itself, comprising both independent and local authority Trustees, has pulled together and shown commitment and focus at all our meetings and my personal thanks go to them.

The work of SLLC could not progress without a robust leadership team and the Board is indebted to Kay Morrison, our Chief Executive, and her Leadership Team, for their resilience, focus and commitment to the services we provide on behalf of the Council.

As a SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation), an organisation of charitable status, we attract resources beyond those the Council can provide and this brings additional opportunities to enhance service offers for the community. This remains a key focus in our planning and delivery.

Finally, as Chair, I feel confident in speaking on behalf of the Board that we are proud to present this report as a positive statement of our progress in difficult circumstances and with enthusiasm for the year ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Avril Osborne". A horizontal line extends from the end of the signature across the page.

Dr Avril Osborne
Chair of the Board



Message from the Chief Executive

South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture saw significant challenges in 2023 with the exceptional circumstances of the previous year continuing in terms of limited availability of funding, high levels of inflation and a cost of living crisis.

Since Covid-19 we have rebuilt through governance, strategy, values, vision, mission and structure and created a strong base from which to move forward. We continue to build on that momentum, progressing towards a more sustainable model, strengthening our partnerships and raising the profile of all our services and the positive impact they have for our communities.

We have worked through the difficult circumstances of the past year as 'one team' with everyone doing their bit to support service delivery despite limited resources, and we even managed a few smiles along the way.

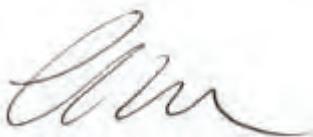
We also welcomed our new Leadership Team into a modernised structure aligned with the core functions of the business, providing support and leadership as we planned for the year ahead.

As always, our commitment, and that of all the staff at SLCC, has seen our ability to continue to deliver outstanding results in the face of adversity win through once again. Our ability to adapt quickly and maintain a high level of customer service demonstrates the resilience of the teams and the organisation and the determination to continue to deliver for our communities.

The success of what we provide to the community is evidenced by over 8.7m attendances across all our services, with an overall 94% customer satisfaction rate from surveyed attendees. Examples of the hugely positive impact we make on the health and wellbeing of South Lanarkshire residents and local communities are included throughout our annual report.

The success of the past year is testament to the dedication, passion and positivity of everyone in the organisation, working together through tough times to deliver for our communities. It is also due to the great partnerships built with South Lanarkshire Council, the Health and Social Care Partnership, local community groups, sportscotland, Creative Scotland and many more. We all continue to work together to deliver on national and local priorities, secure funding and deliver programmes that target those most in need across our communities.

This year's report highlights just some of the ways in which this has been achieved and is framed around our four strategic objectives of Health and Wellbeing, Connected and Engaged, Equality and Inclusion and Organisational Sustainability.



Kay Morrison
Chief Executive



Introduction to South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture

South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture SCIO is a not-for-profit Scottish charity responsible for the operation, management and development of indoor and outdoor sport and leisure facilities, community halls, arts venues, country parks, libraries and a museum and associated initiatives and events throughout South Lanarkshire.

We work in close partnership with our main funder, South Lanarkshire Council, to ensure the highest possible service is offered to residents and visitors to the area.

The business delivers services in the following main areas:

- Sport and Physical Activity (leisure centres, swimming pools, Development Services, ice rink and Active Schools)
- Cultural Services (community halls, venues, school lets and Arts Development)
- Libraries and Museums Service
- Outdoor Recreation (outdoor pitches, Outdoor Learning and Adventure, water sports centre, country parks and golf)

Key to delivering on our **Vision** and **Mission** are the **Values** that we hold:



Main facilities

Entertainment

- East Kilbride Arts Centre
- East Kilbride Village Theatre
- Town House, Hamilton
- Lanark Memorial Hall
- Rutherglen Town Hall

Libraries

- East Kilbride Central Library
- Hamilton Town House Library
- Lanark Library
- Rutherglen Library

Halls and centres

- Carluke Lifestyles
- Fairhill Lifestyles
- Stonehouse Lifestyles
- Whitehill Neighbourhood Centre
- Fernhill Community Centre

Museum

- Low Parks Museum

Outdoor activities

- Biggar Golf Course
- Calderglen Country Park
- Chatelherault Country Park
- Hamilton Palace Sports Ground
- Hollandbush Golf Course
- James Hamilton Heritage Park
- Langlands Golf Course
- Larkhall Golf Course
- Strathclyde Park Golf Course
- Torrance House Golf Course

Sport and leisure

- Blantyre Leisure Centre
- Carluke Leisure Centre
- Dolan Aqua Centre
- East Kilbride Ice Rink
- Hamilton Water Palace
- John Wright Sports Centre
- Larkhall Leisure Centre
- Eastfield Lifestyle
- Lanark Lifestyles

A full list of our facilities is available at www.slleisureandculture.co.uk



Customer satisfaction

Over **8.7m visits** to our centres and
venues this year.

Up almost 900,000 on last year reflected
across all our services!

SPORT & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

2022-23 2,511,940

2023-24 up 248,122 to **2,760,062**

CULTURAL SERVICES

2022-23 1,436,574

2023-24 up 210,895 to **1,647,469**

LIBRARIES & MUSEUM

2022-23 1,428,565

2023-24 up 310,513 to **1,739,118**

OUTDOOR & COUNTRY PARKS

2022-23 2,453,540

2023-24 up 121,493 to **2,575,033**

Wedding at Rutherglen Town Hall

'The entire experience was wonderful due to the efforts of the staff... every part of the day was first class'



Afternoon tea at Low Parks Museum

'Couldn't rate it highly enough, staff were attentive, couldn't be more helpful, nothing a problem. Great value and a lovely way to relax, will definitely be back'

What our customers said about our services...*

98% said our staff were excellent

94% said our overall service (value for money, cleanliness, and quality of equipment) was very good

87% said their visit had a positive impact on their health and wellbeing saying they felt:

- healthier
- better
- happier
- satisfied
- energised
- achieved their goal

Swimming lessons

'...children loved every minute of their lessons and it's given them so much confidence to get into the water now and swim on their own'

83% said our website and booking processes were easy to navigate

85% thought it was easy to interact with our social media pages

Mud Madness Chatelherault Country Park

'Event was fantastic again; this is the third time we have entered as a family. It was brilliant'

*We invited our service users to participate in a series of short surveys, throughout the year, with approximately 1500 customers responding.



External recognition

The quality of service we provide is one of our greatest responsibilities. External verification of the standards of both our facilities and the service we deliver is further evidenced through VisitScotland awards.

VisitScotland is Scotland's national tourist board. Working closely with private businesses, public agencies and local authorities, VisitScotland works to ensure that visitors experience the very best of Scotland and that the country makes the most of its outstanding tourism assets and realises its potential. VisitScotland provides quality assurance to visitors and quality advice to industry partners to help the industry meet - and strive to exceed - visitors' expectations.



5 star
Town House, Hamilton
Rutherglen Town Hall



4 star
Chatelherault Country Park
Low Parks Museum
Lanark Memorial Hall





3 star
Calderglen Country Park
James Hamilton Heritage Park



Additionally, The VisitScotland Information Partner (VIP) programme applies to the Town House, Hamilton, Rutherglen Town Hall and Lanark Memorial Hall.



SLLC Strategy 2022-2027

In line with our Vision, Mission and Values, the South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture Strategy 2022-2027 was published in June 2022, outlining our strategic objectives.

The creation of the strategy was the result of extensive consultation with our staff, partners and stakeholders who provided input via a range of surveys and workshops.

During the development of the strategy we also worked closely with our Council partners and in particular we made use of the evidence provided by the Council including social, economic and health related data.

Objectives

Health and Wellbeing

Help the people of South Lanarkshire to live healthier, happier lives with a focus on physical and mental wellbeing

Connected and Engaged

Enable people to connect with each other and with their community through the services we provide

Equality and Inclusion

Provide accessible wellbeing and learning services through targeted interventions

Organisational Sustainability

Develop a business model that allows sustainable provision of quality services in priority areas

Cross Cutting Themes

- **Reduce inequality**
- **Recover, progress and improve**
- **Work towards a sustainable future**

These objectives sit alongside the cross-cutting themes of 'reduce inequality', 'recover, progress and improve' and 'work towards a sustainable future' identified by the Council Plan and Community Plan.



Our objective: Health and Wellbeing

We will: Help the people of South Lanarkshire to live healthier, happier lives with a focus on physical and mental wellbeing

Pathways to health

Our health programmes support conditions such as mental health, diabetes, weight management and social isolation to name a few. Our physical activity and social prescribing referrals programme, delivered by our Health Team, has seen an increase in the number of referrals from partners such as GP's and physiotherapists.

Over 6,000 referrals translated to **over 100,000 uses** of our services for popular activities including swimming, gym sessions and specialist classes for the conditions outlined above.

To provide additional support, this year also saw the implementation of an automated email system, improving our engagement with those referred and with the aim of encouraging behaviour changes and improvements in their journey to better health and wellbeing in partnership with NHS Lanarkshire.



Mental health and the arts

Art can help improve mental health by reducing stress, encouraging creative thinking, increasing brain plasticity, and providing opportunities for self-expression. Funding was acquired by Arts Development from the Scottish Mental Health Arts Festival to deliver arts workshops in our local communities as part of the annual event. The workshops were open to anyone and everyone who felt their mental health could benefit by participating in the sessions. We ran creative painting sessions in the Town House, Hamilton and Lanark Memorial Hall, along with drama therapy sessions in the Town House, dance workshops in East Kilbride Arts Centre and a photography workshop at Cuningar Loop, Rutherglen. Feedback was extremely positive with participants enjoying the opportunity to express themselves, be creative and try something new.





Suicide Prevention Week

Suicide Prevention Week took place in September. Supporting the key messages around suicide prevention, mental health and wellbeing, we staged various events throughout the month including a football tournament at John Cumming Stadium in Carluke which **over 120 people attended.**

Most of those attending were male - a target group in terms of suicide prevention. Signposts to suicide prevention, mental health and wellbeing resources, as well as links to local and national services, were available on the day.

The joy of reading...

Library Services hosted an extensive programme of reading and literacy events with the aim of inspiring people to discover the joy and benefits of reading and to foster a culture of creativity, curiosity and collaboration through books and libraries. Events were aimed at all ages and reading tastes, with highlights including criminologist Professor David Wilson's visit to Carluke Lifestyles in November 2023, The Robin Jenkins Memorial Lecture at Hamilton Town House Library, delivered by Michael Russell in February 2024, and bestselling authors Alexander McCall Smith and Kate Mosse entertaining readers at Biggar Library.

The hugely successful Bookbug programme alongside Meet the Books school visits and library book groups all contributed to **220,000 plus adults and children participating in over 3,000 events** held in libraries to promote reading as an activity which encourages wellbeing.



Our objective: Connected and Engaged

We will: Enable people to connect with each other and with their community through the services we provide

Events

SLLC delivered **over 500 events** this year, across all areas of our business, including various versions of the ever popular pantomime...oh yes we did! November and December saw our inhouse production of Cinderella, developed in partnership with New College Lanarkshire, perform at both the Town House, Hamilton and Rutherglen Town Hall. Inside Out's professional production of Sleeping Senga took place at East Kilbride Village Theatre and Lanark Memorial Hall, and our collaboration with Studio 32 showcased Aladdin at East Kilbride Arts Centre.

Collectively these pantos enjoyed combined audiences of almost 23,000 theatre goers. Over and above this, community pantos throughout our venues **played to another 7,000 theatre goers.**



Active days

SLLC continues to offer opportunities for all members of the community to connect. During our 18th annual Young at Heart Festival, the John Wright Sports Centre delivered an 'Act Your Age' event, the first of its kind, which saw older participants engage in a variety of taster arts and culture and physical activity sessions and sports workshops.

Some comments received -

'Absolutely fantastic event, great staff, need more of these events – one a month'

'What a great opportunity to try new things out!'

'Never thought I would enjoy drumming as much'

The success of this event resulted in the continued development of the John Wright Sports Centre programme offering Active Days and Culture Days every week.



What our young residents think

In early 2024 we wanted to find out what our young residents think about sport and leisure so with the help of South Lanarkshire Young People's Sports Panel we asked them! The purpose of our survey, with the snappy title '*South Lanarkshire Young People's Sport and Physical Activity Survey*', was to engage with local children, teenagers and young adults and gather their views and thoughts relating to the provision, benefits and potential barriers to participating in sport and physical activity. Findings will shape the creation of a two year action plan with the aim of increasing young people's engagement with our programmes and profiling the benefits of regular sport and physical activity.

Of the 1,087 responses received, some of the notable findings were:

- 72% enjoy the current provision of extra-curricular activities offered
- Over 85% said they participate in sport to develop their interpersonal skills
- 79% said they're aware of opportunities to play sport within their local community
- Over 70% said they would consider volunteering in school or community sport
- 83% said they're aware of their local SLLC facilities and services they provide
- Outdoor spaces and swimming pools were the two most popular answers when asked which type of facilities they are likely to use



Digital connectivity

Investment allowed our IT team to progress procurement of improved hardware projects such as on-site Wi-Fi, tablets and an SLLC app, transforming the way customers interact with our products. We are also seeing the beginning of digital transformation in the form of phone line upgrades ensuring we meet national digital transition targets. Our digital connectivity and capabilities continue to improve with upgrades to our system to enhance our libraries, museums and leisure business systems, as well as our overall customer experience.

Our objective: Equality and Inclusion

We will: Provide accessible wellbeing and learning services through targeted interventions

Anyone for tennis...

In partnership with Rutherglen Tennis Club, we delivered a multi-session programme of tennis events for young people in the Cambuslang and Rutherglen area. Funding was successfully secured from Cambuslang and Rutherglen Sports Council, Clyde Gateway and Rutherglen Tennis Club. Activities were delivered within both school and club settings, with the programme including primary school PE sessions and extracurricular club sessions. Additionally, competitions and events, high school Sports Leadership sessions and Tennis Leaders' courses, as well as free community sessions took place.

A programme highlight was the leadership taster sessions. Overseen by experienced club coaches, the young sports leaders gained knowledge and understanding in the delivery of tennis training to primary pupils. All leaders then had the opportunity to complete a Tennis Leaders' qualification, a formal award allowing them to support coaches in delivering tennis to young people. The newly qualified leaders subsequently put their skills to good use supporting tennis competitions and events.

And the benefits kept coming. Keen for more infants to take up tennis, Rutherglen Tennis Club ran sessions allowing P2 pupils to participate in free of charge tennis lessons. With tennis often regarded as a costly sport, this programme has helped break down some barriers, offered high quality lessons and made tennis more accessible.



Welcome all...and all welcome

This year, the village of Forth became the new home for six children from two relocated Syrian refugee families. With significant language and literacy barriers, communication with the families has been a challenge. Our Active Schools team first came across the two oldest boys during a Sidekicks session where they sat with an iPad using Google translate trying to piece together what was being said to them. Following this the two attended clubs and activities within their school as well as P7 transition festivals. Through these interactions it became clear how much enjoyment they got from sport and physical activity and how much this broke down language barriers for them.

After conversations with their school, our Active Schools team connected with South Lanarkshire Council's refugee resettlement team and with their assistance helped the boys, and another little brother in P4, to attend Biggar Rugby Club activities. The rugby club welcomed the young boys with free memberships, playing kit including tops, tracksuits, gumshields and boots and assistance transporting the boys to and from weekly training sessions.

As a sign of their continued integration into Forth village life, local families regularly engage with and support the boys in playing rugby.



Lending Voices

The 'Lending Voices' initiative by our libraries provides community members with support and access to portable podcasting kits.

We supported an ASN class at Lanark Grammar in the creation of a 'breaking news' podcast, 'live' from the Battle of Bannockburn. The script was collaboratively written by the group and was brought to life by the pupils with support from their teacher and classroom assistants.

Karen Bennett: Principal teacher of Pupil Support at Lanark Grammar School

'I have nothing but admiration for Lending Voices! Iain and Dave did a fantastic job working with young people who are a part of our ASN department, and my students were really involved in the podcast recording process. The workshop had so many wonderful advantages; our young people learned how to set up the technology and how to create a podcast, complete with sound effects. They improved their listening, vocabulary, and comprehension skills by writing a podcast recording. Seeing one of our students, who faces major literacy challenges, get enthused about recording was just wonderful!

Additionally, we have utilised the podcast as a teaching tool in class, and this has helped to solidify the learning objectives and can be used and shared with other pupils, teachers and parents.

Having this in South Lanarkshire is such an amazing learning tool and it greatly benefits our young people!'



Our objective: Organisational Sustainability

We will: Develop a business model that allows sustainable provision of quality services in priority areas

National Treasure:

South Lanarkshire's Sir Harry Lauder Collection

In the 2021-2022 Annual Strategic Report, we celebrated the fantastic achievement of South Lanarkshire's Sir Harry Lauder Collection becoming the 51st collection to be recognised as of national significance to Scotland, awarded by Museums Galleries Scotland on behalf of the Scottish Government. The award recognises the importance of the Sir Harry Lauder Collection in relation to Scottish history, culture and identity, and opened up additional avenues of external funding to help improve how people can experience and engage with this important collection.

Following the award, the Museum Development team secured funding to deliver an exhibition and programme of events to showcase this nationally significant collection and introduce Sir Harry to new audiences, young and old.

Sir Harry Lauder (1870-1950) is world renowned and one of Scotland's most successful entertainers. He was a talented singer, actor and comedian and an inspiration to Scottish performers who came after him.

Sell-out tours, celebrated pantomime appearances, and record-breaking song sheet and recording sales helped him become the highest paid entertainer in Music Hall history.

Lanarkshire held great significance for Harry. As a boy he worked in Hamilton coalmines; he married Hamilton woman Annie Vallance; and it was here he built his reputation as a comic-singer, performing to local audiences. Though he toured all over the world, Sir Harry returned to Lanarkshire to settle at Lauder Ha', his home in Strathaven from 1934 until his death in 1950.

Supporting the exhibition, a programme of events, activities, performances, talks and tours helped examine different aspects of the collection, and of Sir Harry's success story from Lanarkshire coalminer to the most highly paid entertainer in the world.

In partnership with Ambassador Theatre Group, The Harry Lauder Experience brought his songs and immense fame to our youngest visitors and gave our senior secondary pupils the rare chance of a creative industries taster day with the illustrious National Theatre.



'What a superb exhibition'

'Moving, informative and it made me laugh and chuckle so many times'



The legacy of Sir Harry's iconic comedy characters and songs, and his immense influence on perceived Scottish culture, gave us the inspiration for our challenge to the Hair and Make-up Artistry students of South Lanarkshire College. Inspired by Sir Harry and our exhibition, students created new characters for today as captured by fellow college students of Photography.

We are delighted that a condensed version of the exhibition remains in the museum to enable further engagement with this fantastic collection. Additionally, a small touring display has been developed to introduce the collection and Sir Harry's story to the wider community, starting with venues identified by members of the Lanarkshire Heritage Forum.

Throughout, we have built good relationships with other Lauder experts and enthusiasts which will be beneficial for future projects and partnership working. We have enhanced the collection with a fantastic selection of objects offered to the museum since gaining recognised status and the exhibition itself has resulted in further offers of donation.

'Most interesting and educational'



'Loved it. Perfect venue'



We were delighted to welcome Iona Shepherd, who specialises in heritage and collections photography, to the museum to photograph the assembled stage costumes and accessories prior to them being returned to store. The images will enhance the online museum collection and be used for future online development and publications.

...contd Our Objective Organisational Sustainability



Inflatable fun

The much loved Friday night pool inflatable sessions returned to Coalburn Leisure Complex this year following the purchase of a new assault course inflatable and associated equipment.

This purchase, in partnership with local community group Coal-Play, followed a successful funding application to the Dalquahandy Windfarm Fund and demonstrates the strong community partnerships at play in South Lanarkshire.

2023-2024

Annual Strategic Report

Investing in our equipment...

November 2023 saw significant financial investment in our health and fitness provision when we took delivery of new gym-based cardiovascular equipment as well as indoor group fitness class bikes.

The acquisition of **over 130 individual items of fitness equipment, distributed across twelve gyms**, will make a tangible difference to the user experience. In addition, it gives our health and fitness teams quality resources with which to guide, assist and enhance our customers health and wellbeing experience.



...contd Our Objective Organisational Sustainability



...and investing in our staff

Keen to invest in the professional development of our staff, 11 employees were identified to complete a National Pool Lifeguard Trainer Assessor qualification. To date, nine of them have completed the three elements of the course - a three-day trainer assessor course, the delivery of a lifeguard training course and the completing of a lifeguard assessment. The remaining two employees are on track to complete all three sections by the November 2024 deadline.

As well as enhancing the training and assessing function across our nine swimming pools, this investment in our staff has ensured a planned approached to our lifeguard training courses, resulting in increased income and a sustainable number of new employees coming through the recruitment pathway.



Our online portfolio

We are delighted to report our online presence has continued to grow, **increasing our current audience base to 1,483,211.**

Our presence on these platforms enables us to raise brand awareness, showcase instant information on our services and build a strong online community. We are committed to continuing to grow in this area delivering fresh content to ensure we are meeting our audiences' expectations.

We raised the profile of our library service by launching library-specific online platforms in April 2023, connecting the communities of South Lanarkshire to their local libraries and celebrating what they have to offer.

Six main Facebook accounts

72,900 followers

- Children's activities in South Lanarkshire
- Cultural activities in South Lanarkshire
- Leisure in South Lanarkshire
- Libraries South Lanarkshire
- Low Parks Museum
- South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture

Three YouTube channels

1,875 subscribers

- South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture
- SLLC Libraries Children's Team
- SLLC Online Arts Classes and Courses

Five X accounts

16,204 followers

- @ActiveSchoolsSL
- @blantyreleisure
- @LibrariesSL
- @SLLeisCulture
- @SportnHealthSL

Two Instagram accounts

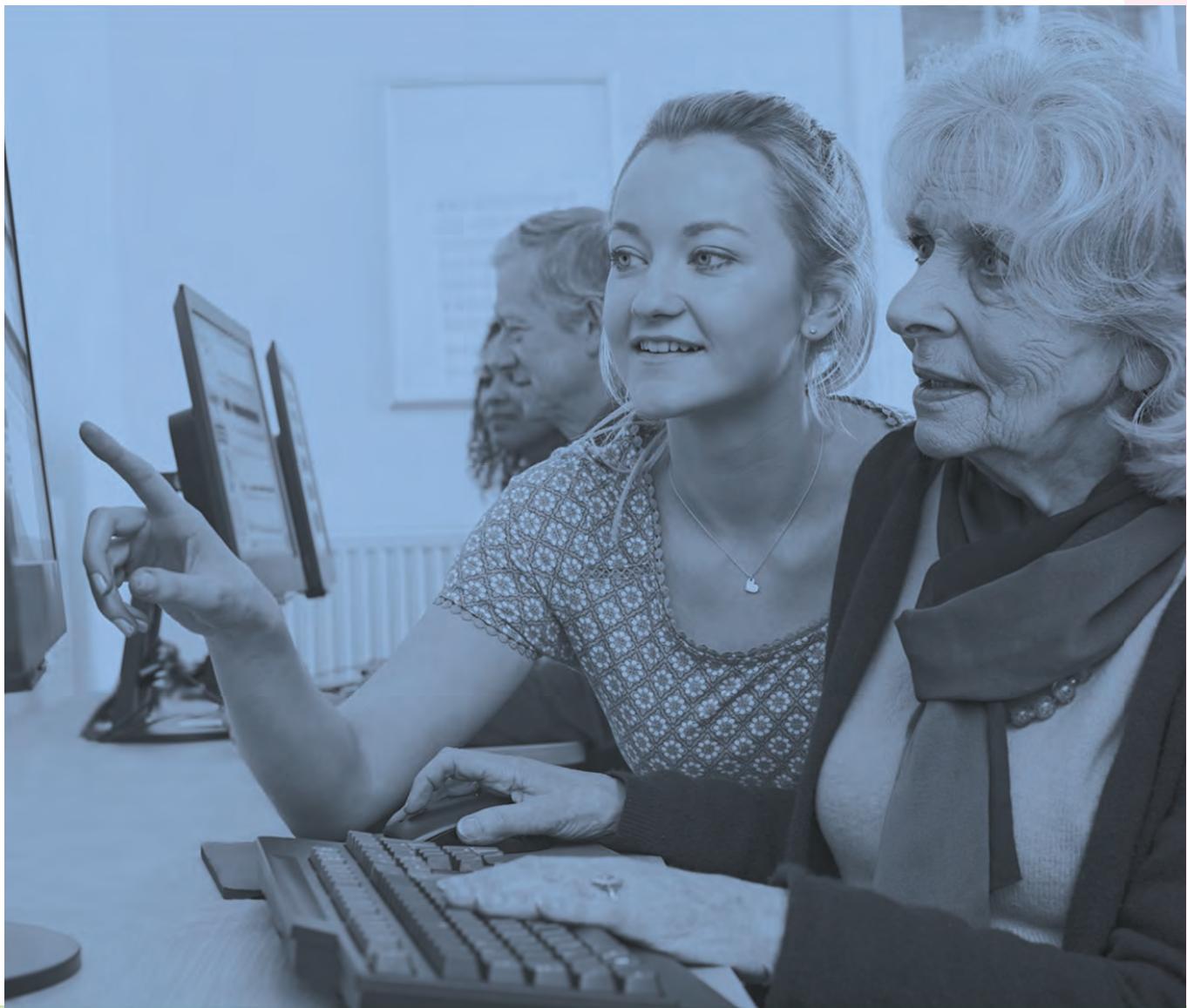
2,014 followers

- Libraries South Lanarkshire
- SLLeisCulture

One website

www.slleisureandculture.co.uk

During 2023-2024 our website visitors increased from
917,167 visitors to 1,390,218



Working for SLLC

In line with our Vision, we are working to ensure we have a healthier, happier and more connected workforce.

Healthier

SLLC supports managers and employees by having policies and processes in place to help our employees live happier and healthier lives.

We provide early intervention and prevention initiatives to address health and wellbeing matters at their root cause, as well as advice and providing signposts via a monthly Healthy Working Lives communication on specific health topics.

In 2023, new wellbeing resources were made available to employees through the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). These resources, provided by PAM Wellbeing, offer free and confidential counselling and support for personal or work-related problems that can affect an employee's home life, work life and general wellbeing.

Access to PAM Wellbeing's health and wellbeing portal and app has also been made available, empowering and enabling users to take responsibility for their wellbeing and provide support to hybrid and remote workers.



Happier

Around 20% of people in the UK are neurodivergent with Tourette's Syndrome, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), dyslexia and autism being just some examples of neurodivergent conditions. Inclusivity is an ongoing task for any employer - providing awareness, education and support to staff. Individual tailored adjustments can be put in place along with assistance for managers and employees to implement supportive workplace measures.

One member of staff, Jacqui Young, has dyslexia, a neurodivergent condition. Jacqui's story is below.



'My career in Human Resources followed redeployment from lifeguard duties at the Dollar Aqua Centre in 2008. As a lifeguard I could easily mask my dyslexia, however, when redeployed into HR I was completely out of my comfort zone.

I was 30 years old before being diagnosed with dyslexia, having created coping mechanisms throughout my educational years without realising I was doing so. Receiving my diagnosis raised concerns I would be treated differently to my colleagues. I felt ashamed and embarrassed to reach out for support.

It's not just about my ability to read and write, as I also have visual stress in my eyes linked to dyslexia. Documents on screen or on paper can appear warped, there can be slight movement of words and I can see shapes appear between the word spaces. To help, I was prescribed specialist glasses that have purple tinted lenses. Wearing these made me feel vulnerable and that I was highlighting that I have something wrong with me. However, I can say with confidence now that having these glasses has been life changing for me.

Software packages help with my day-to-day tasks, helping me to relax as it supports my writing. Instead of feeling ashamed, I now recognise my strengths and weaknesses and have the confidence to ask for help when I need it.

The support of colleagues is very important for those with a neurodivergent condition and my colleagues have been an amazing support to me. They have helped me embrace my dyslexia and given me the strength to talk about it. With their support, I have gained my CIPD qualification in HR Practice and am confident in moving forward and progressing in my role.

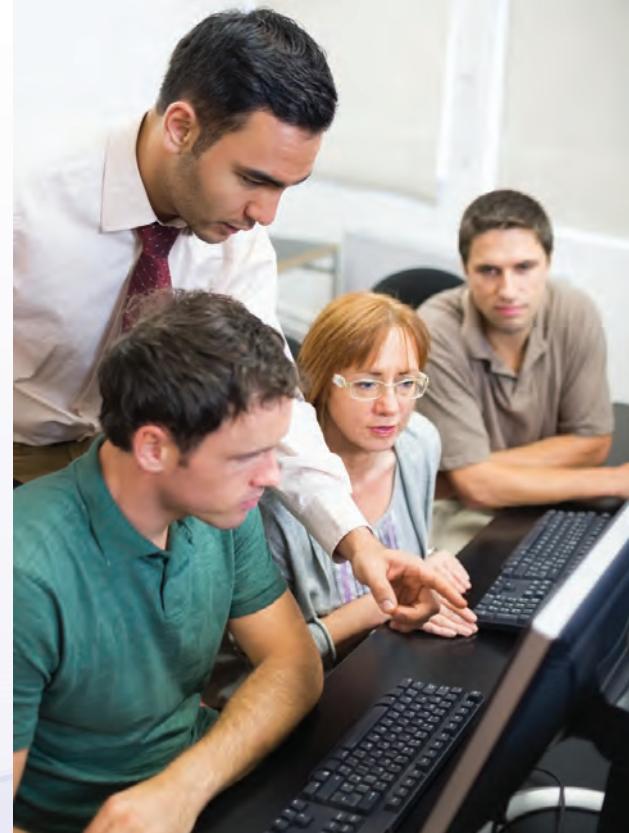
Dyslexia does not stop you from having a successful career and I am testament to that.
Be honest, be confident and be proud.'

...contd Working for SLLC

More connected

Flexible learning options ensure staff can learn at their own pace, in their own style and with support when necessary. Options include e-learning, in person, peer support and practical learning. **Over 800 staff completed 706 different e-learning modules, resulting in the completion of 12,000 training courses.**

Staff continue to use Learn on Line for legislative compliance, continual personal development and workplace updates for both work and personal learning. **Almost 500 staff completed 156 different courses, of which 83 were in-person training,** including First Aid at Work, the Institute of Occupational Safety and Health's IOSH Managing Safely certificate and autism awareness training. The remaining courses were delivered via MS Teams, including KUT Oracle Fusion Cloud training and REHIS elementary food hygiene.



Health and Safety

The Health and Safety team are currently transitioning systems and processes onto a digitised platform, with the aim of speeding up access to relevant health and safety documentation and with greater accountability.

This transition will have the added benefits of reducing paper usage and printing costs. It will contribute to reducing our carbon footprint and creating a more streamlined service, and in turn promote a more positive health and safety compliance culture within the business.

SLLC completed **36 internal audits** of facilities with a further **28 landlord audits** conducted by South Lanarkshire Council (including Fire Risk Assessment audits) throughout the course of the year.

Our ongoing commitment to health and safety training has seen us run two IOSH four-day courses this year, and one refresher course, to ensure we remain compliant in both our health and safety policy obligations and in law.



Gender Pay Gap



SLLC reported on our Gender Pay Gap based on data as at 5 April 2023. We had 1,412 full pay relevant employees (556 males and 856 female) who were included in our findings. The company has a mean gender pay gap of 4.2%, which we are pleased to note is over 9% less than the national average of 13.9% as stated on the website of the Office for National Statistics. We have a 1.0% median pay gap, compared to the official UK government figure of 14.9%.

Opportunities

This year, candidates were given the opportunity to undertake the mandatory National Pool Lifeguard Qualification (NPLQ) training course required for lifeguard posts, with funding support from SLLC. Six successful applicants have since been deployed across our pools.

We also took a new approach for staff affected by financial savings as we sought to find them suitable alternative employment, with supported re-training within the organisation. One affected employee was Melvin Dickson, who shares his redeployment journey below.

'I have worked with SLLC since 1995, initially as a General Attendant and latterly as a Senior Leisure Attendant at Hamilton Water Palace Café. I enjoyed working in these roles and took pride in them.

When told I was to be redeployed due to restructuring and savings I was shocked and concerned for my future. Although given assurances that a reasonable offer of alternative employment would be made, the process had the potential to be stressful due to the uncertainty about what I would be offered.

I was given regular updates by managers and HR regarding ongoing vacancies, none of which initially were matches for me. I was then advised of a position in the Halls Booking Team which, with training, was considered a reasonable redeployment.

I was anxious and uncertain, which is natural, but decided to step outside of my comfort zone and agreed to give it a go.

The new role was fully explained and a 12-week transition period and training plan agreed. With a lot of help from supportive new colleagues I successfully completed the training period and I am now proud to say I am part of the halls bookings section. It was a real team effort - from HR to management to colleagues playing a part - as well as my own desire to succeed.

I have learned new skills, and brushed up on old ones, and with support and training I am happy in my new role and all my fears about being redeployed have disappeared.

My advice to anyone affected by redeployment is to go in with an open mind - people are there to help you all the way. Be determined that you can do anything and take all the help offered to you as it really makes a difference.

Good luck, you can do it!'



Financial Review

On 3 April 2023, SLLC converted to a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) and is now known as South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture SCIO. All assets and liabilities of the Limited Company were transferred to the SCIO on this date and existing funding arrangements with South Lanarkshire Council remained in place. The financial statements have been prepared for the period 3 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 but the comparatives are for the period 1 April 2022 to 2 April 2023, as SLLC converted to a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) on 3 April 2023. As highlighted as part of the 2022/2023 accounts, the charitable company decided to increase the reporting period by two days which was different to that of the comparatives, as allowed by Companies Act. Reporting periods for the organisation going forward will now align to the 12 month period to 31 March.

The principal funder for the year 2023/24 was South Lanarkshire Council (SLC). The service fee we receive allows the Company to set its annual revenue budget to achieve a break-even position. There have been a number of pressures during the year including pay increases, inflation, and income pressures as SLLC tackled post covid recovery and these pressures were actively managed.

During the period, the organisation continued to undergo significant transformational change and despite a challenging year financially, the organisation was able to retain £524k in unrestricted general reserves. The net movement in this reserve shown in the 2023/24 Statement Of Financial Activities was (£282k).

SLL Trading Limited

The Company's wholly owned subsidiary, SLL Trading Limited, generated turnover of £1,197k (2022/23: £1,162k) and a profit before taxation of £30k (2022/23: £22k). The subsidiary company has gifted its profits from 2023/24 in full to the parent company through the gift aid scheme. The principal activity of the trading company is the provision of vending and catering services within the leisure and cultural facilities operated by South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture SCIO.

Reserves Policy

The Board monitors the reserves position of the Company on a regular basis. As at 31 March 2024, the General Fund excluding pension reserve amounts to £524k (2022/23: £806k). The Repairs and Renewals Fund is used mainly to fund the replacement of health and fitness equipment and other asset improvements across the Company's facilities. As at 31 March 2024, the Repairs and Renewals Fund amounts to £333k (2022/23: £235k). Free Reserves (including designated funds) at 31 March 2024 amount to £466k (2023: (£496k)). Free reserves have been calculated as unrestricted funds excluding the pension reserve, adjusted for fixed assets and related long term creditors. As at 31 March 2024, total Restricted Funds held amount to £882k (2023: £877k). This relates to balances held on projects and initiatives for which grant funding is received from external bodies and organisations. The Group Balance Sheet shows a net asset position of £259k (2023: net asset position of £2,518k). This is attributable to a net (liability) asset of the pension fund of (£1,480k) (2023: had a restated net asset position of £600k). This decrease in asset value follows further changes in financial assumptions made by the pension fund actuaries.

Investment Powers and Policy

The Board is permitted through the Constitution to invest and deal with funds not immediately required in such investments as may be thought fit. Surplus cash this year was deposited with the Bank of Scotland. For comparison purposes, the performance of the account is benchmarked against the SONIA (Sterling Overnight Index Average) which is the average of the interest rates that banks pay to borrow sterling overnight from other financial institutions and other institutional investors. During 2023/2024 the average interest rate achieved was 4.57%. (2022/23: 0.07%) against a benchmark rate of 4.97% (2022/23: 2.26%).

Disclosure of information to the auditor

In so far as the charitable trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the Company's Auditor is unaware; and
- the charitable trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Auditor is aware of that information.

Five Year Financial Performance

Group Results	19/20	20/21	Restated 21/22	Restated 22/23	23/24
	000s	000s	000s	000s	000s
Unrestricted General Funds					
Expenditure	35,651	29,350	32,541	40,112	41,571
Income	35,607	29,562	33,137	39,947	41,387
Surplus/(Deficit)	(44)	212	596	(165)	(184)
General Reserve	40	321	959	806	524
Repairs and Renewals Fund	358	289	247	235	333
Restricted Funds					
Expenditure	1,441	1,484	1,472	1,703	1,673
Income	1,471	1,101	1,606	1,591	1,678
Restricted Fund Balances	516	899	765	877	882

Governance

South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture SCIO is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) and an Arm's Length External Organisation of South Lanarkshire Council, our principal funder.

Since the establishment of South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture, new governance models have emerged. South Lanarkshire Council and the former South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture Limited worked together to consider which governance model would deliver the best outcome for both organisations. As a result the proposal to move to a SCIO was agreed by both South Lanarkshire Council and the South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture Limited Board.

The agreed date for transfer to the new SCIO was 3 April 2023. SLL Trading has become a subsidiary of the SCIO.

Trustees:

Dr Avril Osborne (Chair)
Councillor Maureen Devlin (Vice Chair)
Alan Morrison
Councillor John Anderson
Dr Angela Beggan
Neil Brown
Councillor Andrea Cowan
Craig Cunningham
Chris Goudie
Councillor Ross Lambie
Lisa Maule
Councillor Mo Razzaq
Stephen Smellie
Robert Craig

Chief Executive: Kay Morrison

Company Secretary: Nick Lansdell

External Auditors: Azets Audit Services

Internal Auditors: South Lanarkshire Council

Legal Advisers: Shepherd and Wedderburn LLP

Bankers: Royal Bank of Scotland

Charity Number: SC032549

Registered Office: Floor 5,
Council Offices, Almada Street,
Hamilton, ML3 0EW

2023-2024

Annual Strategic Report





2023-2024

Annual Strategic Report for the period ended 31 March 2024.

Further copies of this report are available in PDF format on our website or by e-mailing:
customer.services@southlanarkshireleisure.co.uk

or alternatively by contacting us at:
South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture SCIO
Floor 5, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton ML3 0EW

If you need this information in a different format or language,
please contact us to discuss how we can best meet your needs.

Telephone: 01698 476262
Text phone: 18001 01698 476262
or email: customer.services@southlanarkshireleisure.co.uk



SOUTH LANARKSHIRE
Leisure & Culture

www.slleisureandculture.co.uk

South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture SCIO is a recognised Scottish Charity, NO.SC032549

SLLC: 4050A (FIN)

