

HEALTHY | ACTIVE | CREATIVE



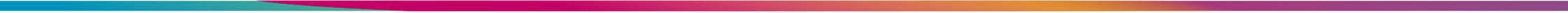
Annual Report

1 April 2020 - 31 March 2021





HEALTHY | ACTIVE | CREATIVE



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

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## Our Mission

**W**ith 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**.

# Meeting our charitable objectives and contributing to local outcomes

The charitable objects of ANGUSalive are recognised by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) under the Charity and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005. Aligning to our charitable objects and our Articles of Association, ANGUSalive has identified the following strategic aims for the charity:

## **ANGUSalive Strategic Aims**

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



# Demonstrating Community Benefit

**W**ith such a comprehensive offering it is impossible to include everything we do across the charity within our review of the year. This report provides an overview of ANGUSalive activities during 2020/21 and demonstrates some of the key services and benefits delivered to our communities despite the challenges presented by the Coronavirus pandemic.

Community planning provides a focus for partnership working to improve local services, ensuring that they meet the needs of local people, especially for those people who need those services most.

As an active member of the Angus Community Planning Partnership, ANGUSalive contributes to the following community planning priorities for 2017-2020:

- **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 well-being**

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.



# Chairperson's introduction

Kenneth Fraser | Chairperson



The past 12 months for the charity, country and wider world has been a year that no-one could have foreseen. At the turn of 2020, it would have been hard to imagine many of our venues would spend the majority of the year closed. During this period our staff have adapted to this new operating environment and have worked closely with all our partners in supporting local communities and making arrangements to deliver our services safely as and when appropriate.

The opportunity to open our facilities, albeit at a greatly reduced level to comply with the government guidance, has presented a number challenges both financial and at service delivery level. Nonetheless despite a very difficult year, our team rallied to meet the challenge head-on, and I'm delighted to say we still have some fantastic achievements to highlight in this report.

We rapidly pivoted from being mainly a face-to-face, on-site service provider to being able to provide engaging and motivating virtual classes and activities, initially online and then via our newly created ANGUSalive App developed during the pandemic. At the start of the lockdown in March 2020, our team quickly programmed a variety of activities which were promoted via our new At Home webpage and through our social channels for the local community to get involved in safely from their own homes. These included instructor-led workouts; online museum exhibitions; cultural podcasts; outdoor scavenger hunts and access to thousands of books via the digital library to name but a few. Through the tough times, the important role of our Country Parks and their ability to remain open for the public to enjoy outdoor spaces safely as well as support the health and wellbeing of residents, was emphasised.

We also provided help to many of our local partners in their response to the pandemic. Colleagues from our Libraries team supported the multi-agency Humanitarian Assistance Angus Response Team (HAART) helpline for isolated and vulnerable residents requiring a helping hand during the lockdown; the

team also worked with NHS Tayside to support the local Test and Protect contact tracing team. Our electric vehicles supported Angus Council's waste management service to maintain social distancing and our facilities were used to enable critical essential services such as blood donation to continue, as a welfare base for COVID-19 mobile testing units and three were converted into vaccination centres.

There was also increased governance in place within our organisation to reflect the quickly evolving situation, including additional Covid briefings – often weekly or fortnightly – being held with the ANGUSalive Board, increased communications to employees in-work and on furlough via monthly All Hands Calls as well as regular meetings with Angus Council. Our priority was on responsible stewardship of the charity through a very difficult time for the nation and the county.

I'm really proud of our response to the pandemic and the fact we have been extremely agile and ready to adapt to what was, and still is, a constantly changing and challenging operating environment. We've continually had to keep abreast of shifting Covid rules and regulations, adapting services to ensure compliance and putting in place the measures required to protect our customers and colleagues so we could open safely.

I would like to say a huge thank you to all our colleagues for the work they have undertaken in what has been an extremely tough year. I'd also like to acknowledge our colleagues who were furloughed and thank them too for their patience and welcome them back. In addition, I'm tremendously grateful for the contribution of my fellow Directors and their time which they have given so generously throughout the pandemic.

We recognise the extra pressures on all of our team across the organisation and how hard they have worked to maintain and recover services. They have been committed to ensuring the charity came through 2020/21 in a strong position, well placed for the recovery period over the coming months and years.

ANGUSalive has an essential role in providing culture, sport and leisure services to the local community but also in contributing economically and socially to Angus. Despite the difficult year we have remained dedicated to serving the people of Angus and as we prepare for 2021/22 we are ready to welcome everyone to get healthy, active and creative with us once again – whether in a venue or virtually!



# Foreword

Kirsty Hunter | Chief Executive



I am delighted to present our annual report for 2020/21 and very proud of all our colleagues who have worked in challenging circumstances to safely close down and successfully restart culture, sport and leisure services - virtually and in person - during a most unusual year for everyone both professionally and personally.

I would also like to recognise the significant contribution of our Board of Directors who freely gave their time and skills on a very regular basis throughout the pandemic. In what has been a particularly turbulent period, the Board provided strategic direction and ensured strong governance of the charity.

Our team's resilience and ability to adapt, as restrictions and guidance evolved, meant local communities and visitors to Angus once again had the opportunity to participate in our healthy, active and creative activities and events.

The COVID-19 pandemic has fundamentally changed our wider operating environment and customer expectations. It has also had a detrimental impact on the ability of the charity to operate and generate income, as it has for many other organisations.

Close partnership working with Angus Council has therefore been vital and we are grateful for the Council's commitment to the ongoing payment of the Management Fee, which has been essential to maintain the charity as a going concern.

Finding a solution for ANGUSalve to operate within a sustainable budget position over the longer term, given the new reality, is going to be crucial to the charity's future survival and we are committed to working within the financial envelope available.

Prior to the pandemic, ANGUSalve had successfully delivered the Management Fee savings requested over the 3 year period to 2020/21. It is anticipated further savings will be required in subsequent years based on the Council's medium to long term financial planning assumptions.

The charity had indicated prior to the pandemic, that culture, sport and leisure services would need to be creatively reimaged by the Council and ANGUSalve working in partnership to realise additional savings in future years.

To support this process, the outcomes, priorities and expectations of the local community, the Council, as well as other local and national partners need to be understood since these services play such an important role in the lives of our customers across all areas of the charity.

Angus Council has therefore approved the 'ANGUSalve Transformation Project' in its capacity as commissioning body and sole member of the organisation. This project is currently being progressed to develop proposals, including new ways of working and opportunities for future growth.

In the meantime, the Council has committed to continue paying the agreed Management Fee during 2021/22, notwithstanding the high likelihood that the full range of services included in the current services specification will not be delivered due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Although almost all the formal lockdown restrictions have now been lifted and ANGUSalive is using best endeavours to re-open our range of services, subject to taking cognisance of any remaining restrictions, there are also other pressures in relation to the affordability position which continue to have a significant influence on our reopening and recovery plans.

Our ability to operate and generate income will still be impacted as we move into the new financial year. A draw down on at least some of the unutilised support measures in the package put in place by Angus Council is consequently predicted to be required during 2021/22, these measures have been extended and remain available to the charity until 31 March 2023.

We have reopened gradually, in line with demand and affordability as well as to ensure the safety of our colleagues and customers. It's vital that we continue to manage the negative financial implications of the crisis on our organisation carefully to ensure the longevity and sustainability of the charity in the months and years ahead.

A significant investment plan is being put in place by the charity to ensure fitness suites in our sports facilities can be reimagined to enhance the customer experience and we look forward to bringing you these changes from 2021/22. This investment will be funded through the Renewal & Repair Fund, which the charity has made annual contributions towards since it was established in 2015.

As we continue to live with the current global pandemic, ANGUSalive's vision of 'changing lives by inspiring healthy, active and creative lifestyle choices' has become even more important with the focus on supporting the physical and mental health and wellbeing of the country through and beyond this public health emergency.

On behalf of everyone at ANGUSalive, I'd like to thank the local community for their support and understanding over this difficult past year, whether you've joined us from home or visited our venues.

An essential aspect of our ongoing recovery will be local residents and visitors to Angus participating in the range of activities we are able to offer right now.

**We invite you to join us - in person or remotely – our team is ready to welcome you back!**





## Who we are

The charity ANGUSalive is the culture, sport and leisure trust for the county of Angus and offers residents and visitors to Angus a variety of services which are 'changing lives by inspiring healthy, active and creative lifestyle choices' through our sports centres, country parks, theatres and venues, museums, galleries, archives and libraries. As a not-for-profit company, every penny is reinvested back into the communities we serve.

We have five service areas which form our culture, sport and leisure charity:

- **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 comprises of five independent directors and four council directors who are elected members. 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 2021 was 251 employees who together with supply staff and volunteers; were responsible for contributing to the delivery of services to the Angus community.

Across the county of Angus we operate a diverse and unique culture, sport and leisure portfolio.

### **Libraries**

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

### **Museums, Galleries & Archives**

- Angus Archives, Restenneth Priory by Forfar
- Arbroath Art Gallery (within Arbroath Library)
- Brechin Town House Museum
- Gateway to the Glens Museum, Kirriemuir
- Montrose Museum
- The Meffan Museum & Art Gallery, Forfar
- The Signal Tower Museum, Arbroath

We also support volunteers at the Inglis Memorial Library Visitor Centre.

### **Countryside Adventure**

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

### **Theatre and Venues**

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

### **Sport & Leisure**

- Arbroath Sports Centre
- Brechin Community Campus
- Carnoustie Sports Centre
- Forfar Community Campus
- Montrose Sports Centre
- Saltire Sports Centre, Arbroath
- Webster's Sports Centre, Kirriemuir
- High School Pools, Monifieth and Carnoustie

# ANGUSALIVE SERVICE-WIDE ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS

**D**ue to the Coronavirus pandemic resulting in the closure of our services in March 2020, many of the activities and projects we'd normally provide the local community and visitors had to be cancelled, postponed or moved online. A number of activities and programmes were developed to be suitable for online platforms and we also worked closely with partners and organisations in the local community and further afield.

## Partnership Working

**D**uring the pandemic ANGUSalive worked with partner organisations to support the county's local response to the demands and pressures of the Coronavirus pandemic. We were members of the Angus Council Strategic (Gold) and Operational (Silver) Incident Management Teams and through this structure were linked into the Tayside Local Resilience Partnership and updates from National Government.

These resilience arrangements will continue to have a pivotal and co-ordinating role, influencing the recovery plans for the charity and the community going forward.

## Supporting the Community

**T**he charity has helped the Angus community through the Coronavirus pandemic in a number of ways.

Colleagues from our Libraries team supported the Humanitarian Assistance Angus Response Team (HAART), the helpline for isolated and vulnerable residents in Angus requiring a helping hand during the lockdown. Our Information Advisors volunteered to be part of this critical lifeline service which answered calls and supported residents to receive help with food shopping, prescriptions, financial assistance and more.

When this service came to an end, colleagues continued to support Angus Council's ACCESSline given the increased demand on this telephone channel to access council services.

Two employees from our Libraries Digital Team continue to work in partnership with NHS Tayside to support the Test and Protect contact tracing team; they were ideally placed to assist by using their transferrable skills to carry out this important role from home.

The use of our ANGUSalive vans helped Angus Council's Waste Management Service follow social distancing guidance. By providing additional transport for their bin collections this resulted in employees feeling a lot safer and reduced the impact on service delivery.

Three of our facilities (Reid Hall, Forfar; Arbroath Community Centre and Montrose Town Hall) have been temporarily handed back to Angus Council for use by NHS Tayside as vaccination centres to support the rollout of the vaccine across the county of Angus.



## Communication with customers and colleagues during COVID-19

During this very difficult time for the charity, communication with our current members across all our services as well as the general public was paramount. Various communications channels were utilised to help ensure people understood the changing situation; the ways we could help customers stay healthy, active and creative from home; reopening plans and the safety requirements associated with reopening.

Activities and communications undertaken included the creation of a new 'At Home webpage' on our website which featured activities that people could participate in safely from home.

The marketing and communications team also drafted and activated regular newsletters, press releases, direct email communications and social media posts to help keep customers informed and to stay engaged throughout the closure, pre-opening and reopening periods.

A new COVID-19 webpage was created on our website containing information on reopening plans and providing answers to Frequently Asked Questions. There was also a 'Staying Safe' webpage that outlined the safety guidelines that were in place for our colleagues and customers to follow at sites.



On reopening signage and posters were installed at all our sites to help customers and colleagues adhere to COVID-19 safety regulations as well as Test and Protect processes.

A walk through video was filmed at our Montrose Sports Centre pre-opening in September 2020 to help raise awareness of the safety processes and procedures that would be in place on reopening.

Communication with our colleagues who were working from home and on furlough was also essential during the pandemic and on the lead up to reopening. Engagement with their trade union representatives was also maintained on a regular basis through the establishment of a new Recovery Steering Group.

Employee communications included weekly leadership meetings with programme and operation leads; monthly 'All Hands Call' meetings led by our Chief Executive; updates were issued via email distribution and through our workforce management system as well as the creation of an employee only webpage to ensure colleagues on furlough could access employee communications that were shared from their home.

## Customer Survey

In May 2020, ANGUSalive, in partnership with Community Leisure UK and MyCustomerLens, conducted a customer survey. This was designed to capture the public's feelings towards returning to sports venues and to identify what aspects of reopening were most important to them, such as safety and communication.

The survey showed that over 40% of customers said they'd return to their local ANGUSalive sports centre as soon as it reopened and over 40% would return once they knew how their sports centre is complying with government requirements.

The survey also highlighted the public's appetite for online and outdoor activities which fed into our development of the ANGUSalive app and programming of outdoor exercise classes.

This customer feedback was essential in helping the trust improve its services and to inform our reopening, programming and operational plans.

The survey also fed into our strategic and operational recovery groups to manage and plan for the reopening of our sites. We worked with colleagues, partners and fellow trusts to ensure we took all the necessary steps to reopen our venues safely in accordance with Scottish Government guidance to protect the health and wellbeing of our customers and colleagues.

## Preparing colleagues to return to sites

The portfolio of venues managed by the charity varies from older listed buildings to new state-of-the-art campuses. As a consequence of these differences, the new regulations to keep customers and colleagues COVID-safe, such as capacity constraints, ventilation standards, social distancing, the wearing of PPE for different scenarios and Test and Protect, required significant research, planning and training.

We gave colleagues a comprehensive insight into why we had to make these adjustments so they could understand, enforce and educate the public when they returned in what was 'a different to normal' culture, sport and leisure setting. The way many colleagues worked when they returned also had changed – moving from face-to-face to more digital and telephone for instance with some library services.

Refresher sessions were carried out to familiarise colleagues who had been on furlough with some of the more 'business-as-usual' topics such as manual handling, respirator fitting, risk assessments, policies and procedures, cash handling and health and safety.

We trained over 170 colleagues who were not working over lockdown and continue to train any other members of the team who are coming back into the workplace so they are refreshed on the working practices and any gaps in their knowledge were addressed before starting back.

Training methods included online sessions, team meetings, presentations, specially created manuals, walk through videos and actual in-site walk-throughs. Following



the training sessions, colleagues said that they felt confident and comfortable being back and were pleased to be getting back into a routine at work.

Once our venues had reopened the leadership team undertook support audits to ensure the new ways of working were being implemented correctly across all service areas, identify actions to deliver continuous improvement and complement colleagues on areas of excellence.

## Tailored outdoor holiday activities

ANGUSalive was pleased to offer a great selection of activities for all interests at our Country Parks and Sports Centres to keep school children entertained in October 2020. Although the number of activities had to be reduced compared to our usual offering, there were still lots of activities programmed in a safe, supervised, open air environment.

This included Explorer activities, where inquisitive young people can explore the varied wildlife and habitats with our Countryside Ranger. The Hedgehog Hotel workshop helped demonstrate how to create a hedgehog winter home from logs, and water confident 8-15 year olds enjoyed Paddle to Pedal with a variety of fun activities including Mountain Biking and Canadian Canoeing.

Family Bike Bubble Sessions enabled everyone to access cycling in a safe environment using our new fleet of bikes suitable for all abilities, ensuring everyone can enjoy the physical and mental benefits of cycling. Tri-Golf and Football classes with SFA qualified Coaches were also on offer during the school holiday period.



## ANGUSalive at 5

In December 2020, ANGUSalive celebrated 5 years as a charity since our formation on 1 December 2015.

We marked this milestone via an online social media campaign to share who we are and what we do with the local community and stakeholders as well as remind everyone what the team has achieved and reinforce our charitable status as the local culture, sport and leisure trust for Angus.

Through social media we created a number of posts, including features about some of our colleagues to explain what they do at ANGUSalive; promoting some of our achievements over the five years through 'Did you know's' such as the number of classes we offer, number of people we have helped learn to swim, number of Bookbug sessions carried out amongst others.

We also showcased some of the benefits of coming to our sites via '5 reasons to visit...' using information such as the fantastic boost to health and wellbeing. We also provided opportunities for people to engage with us and share our social posts through the likes of competitions and requesting feedback and responses via the comments sections.

The Marketing & Communications team also developed a short video featuring our vision and values alongside some of the activities and achievements we have undertaken over the five-year period. It was

a positive piece of activity considering many of our venues were closed or about to close for the second lockdown which started on 26 December 2020. At a difficult time, this milestone gave us the chance to look back on feel-good memories of our shared experiences and achievements with customers and colleagues.



## Our time to talk employee forums

Our Time to Talk forums launched on 4 February 2021 which coincided with the National Time to Talk Day.

The forums were set up to allow any employee of ANGUSalive, whether on furlough, flexible furlough or in work to join with other colleagues to have a chat and a cuppa and enjoy a little social interaction. The overall objective was to help colleagues connect with each other in an informal gathering to discuss and feedback on any changes or improvements that can be made to the workplace, particularly around health and wellbeing.

Topics discussed at these forums have included health & wellbeing; thoughts, feelings and anxieties around COVID-19; what the workplace could put in place to help support colleagues; sharing of funny stories; looking at how we can support each other; new projects people have undertaken during furlough; reminiscing and sharing nostalgic happy experiences and returning to work and how colleagues are feeling about it.

Our Time to Talk forums are continuing into 2021-22 and will progress to 'Talk and Walk' sessions, encouraging colleagues to meet with each other out and about so they can also benefit from being in nature.



## Dundee & Angus College Workforce Development Fund

ANGUSalve secured £14,850 in funding through the Dundee & Angus College Flexible Workforce Development Fund in 2020 for delivery of a Leadership Development Programme.

This was offered as part of ANGUSalve's commitment to offer continuous professional development opportunities for its employees. Courses were delivered as remote online learning workshops using Microsoft Teams to 30 members of ANGUSalve's leadership team.

Subjects covered included: Leading a Team; Managing Change; Communication; Motivating Teams; Assertiveness; Constructive, Difficult and Challenging Conversations. A Q&A session was also undertaken with members of the Senior Leadership Team.

There are plans to deliver a second phase of the training working as part of project teams in 2021. This training will develop and support managers to effectively extract and analyse data, produce standardised internal and external stakeholder reports as well as review and improve internal and external communications.

## ANGUSalve grants and funding awards

Throughout year 2020/21 ANGUSalve received in excess of £412,000 of external funding grants and awards following a number of successful applications.

Amongst the awards and grants given over the period, £230K was provided through the Coronavirus Business Support Fund to assist non-domestic rate payers within retail, hospitality and leisure properties.

Creative Scotland's Performing Arts Venue Relief Fund awarded £92,411 to help us to welcome back audiences in person and virtually, retain our team as well as ensure we deliver a COVID-secure environment for our customers, performers and colleagues when we reopen our doors.

Transport Scotland awarded over £12,000 to support ANGUSalve's aim to increase physical activity, improve health and wellbeing as well as promote more sustainable transport solutions. The funding helped us to purchase ebikes and an etrike to support long term trials and promote the use of electric bikes across Angus.

The Covid Recovery Programme's Mental Health Fund awarded £76,500 in February 2021 to help deliver outdoor learning and skills-based activity to targeted groups of children and young people with programmes starting in summer 2021.

Paths for All, Get Out Get Active and Angus Council awarded £25,000 as part of the Walking for Health Fund to help us to recruit a Health Walk Co-Ordinator and develop a Health Walk Network in Angus.

Bòrd na Gàidhlig's COVID-19 Support Fund awarded £10,575 to purchase tablets to provide support and develop digital skills for people who have been identified as two or more of the following - digitally excluded, on low incomes or at risk of isolation due to coronavirus because they are in the extremely high vulnerability groups or the higher risk of severe illness group.

A total of just over £4,000 was received from Scottish Book Trust, FABB Scotland, Blazing Saddles, The Kiltwalk and Hunter Foundation towards a number of projects across the charity, including Book Week Scotland, Reading Ahoy and inclusive family bike bubble sessions.

Museums Galleries Scotland made three awards of £6,600 from the Adaptation Fund, £1,152 from the COVID-19 Digital Resilience Fund and £55,072 from the ALEO Museum Development Fund. These projects are described in more detail in the Museums, Galleries & Archives section of this report.

In addition, £2,265,533 was secured in grant funding from the UK Government as part of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme to support our employees who were furloughed during the Coronavirus pandemic.



## Angus Cultural Strategy

In early 2020, ANGUSalive partnered with the Creative Scotland Angus Place Partnership at Hospitalfield to commission development of the first Angus Cultural Strategy. Together we recognised an urgent need to address the ongoing shift in policy and funding for culture and heritage (and then the immediate impact of COVID-19) from an Angus perspective.

With momentum building in the broader Tayside region through the Tay Cities Deal, we acknowledged that Angus' ability to contribute to and benefit from future regional opportunities would be missed without a plan being in place. COVID-19 has delivered a serious blow to culture, heritage and related tourism industries globally, and it has impacted the resilience and sustainability of culture, heritage and tourism in Angus too.

What our shared experience of COVID-19 has also done, is help us articulate what we all value about culture and creativity in our daily lives, and better appreciate its role in the health and wellbeing of our communities, particularly its ability to 'bring people together' in a time of social distancing.

Over 200 separate activities and organisations were identified and mapped during lockdown in 2020 with many artists, writers, singers and musicians from across Angus contributing to consultations.



Photo Credit:  
Neil Hanna

The process has demonstrated a high quantity and variety of culture and heritage activity going on in Angus, there is no shared programme, approach or communication which brings that activity together and helps people access it. This was a key driver for developing the very first overarching cultural strategy.

The strategy will be launched in August 2021 and an Angus Culture & Heritage Consortium will then be established to drive forward the delivery of the action plan.

## Digital Services

In 2020/21 we continued to invest in technology to help streamline and automate business processes, create efficiencies, improve customer experiences, and facilitate agile/home working.

Prior to the pandemic we had already embarked on a strategy to improve the hardware for our employees to allow them to work in an agile manner at home or across the ANGUSalive estate. During 2020/21 upgraded hardware and systems continued and was critical to maintain business operations during the pandemic. The rollout of Office 365 was accelerated during 2020 to facilitate the implementation of Teams. The rollout of the Softphone feature of the telephone system was expedited to allow telephone calls to be made over the internet.

In Summer 2020 ANGUSalive launched its online donations solution, integrated with the ANGUSalive website and brand. This increases our capacity to receive and manage online donations from anywhere in the world, fundraising and gift-aid.

In July 2020 ANGUSalive procured a new system to manage complaints and Freedom of Information requests. Phase 1 of the project was to build the system for recording and monitoring complaints which was rolled out at the end of 2020. A training plan was developed and Customer Feedback Champions identified to support employees with the complaints handling process. The technology will make our complaints procedure more streamlined and improve the customer experience. The reporting functionality will provide more visibility into our customer data.

At the beginning of 2021 the ANGUSalive App was launched, initially to provide a storefront to our sport and leisure services (see the Sport & Leisure section for more information). The App will now be further developed to form part of our wider customer digital solution.

During Spring 2021 the scheduler functionality within our workforce management system was built, tested and reviewed. Training plans were developed in preparation for implementation Spring/Summer 2021.

# ANGUSalive at Home

In April 2020, when the entire country was in lockdown due to the pandemic, and ANGUSalive had closed its doors, the team worked to deliver a programme to help support its members and the community with a variety of home-based culture, sport and leisure activities via its online and social media channels. Creation of the At Home webpage on our website supported this initiative by showcasing the range of activities on offer.

Activities included partnering with Les Mills and Future Fit to help members access free exercise classes from home. There were also some home-based activities available, such as fitness challenges via the Sport and Leisure social media pages.

Library members were still able to get their reading fix by downloading eBooks and eAudiobooks, and could access their favourite eMagazines and eComics. These services were available to both existing and new members by registering on our Digital Library. There was also fun and interactive content on ANGUSalive's Libraries Facebook page such as 'Tech Tuesdays', 'Let's get Crafty' and 'Fun with Lego' sessions.

The Museums and Galleries team presented enjoyable online activities, showcasing interesting collections, photos and fascinating facts, and interactive content. 'Road to Angus' podcasts were also recorded lifting the veil on what goes on behind the scenes to run our libraries, museums, archives, galleries and manage a world class collection, with the first podcast focusing on Pictish stones. There was also a fun social media quiz entitled 'The Great Angus Museums and Archives Quiz'.

Our Angus Archives Facebook page shared activities that the team do on a day-to-day basis and how they bring their records to the public in



helping to search for ancestors.

There were also some amazing historical documents and photos. As well as collections from the past, the team needed to document the present and encouraged the people of Angus to record their experiences of the Coronavirus pandemic, which we will add to our collections and preserve for future generations.

Our Countryside Adventure team provided ideas and activities for experiencing nature from your home, these included scavenger hunts, building dens, making natural art from materials found in gardens and learning how to spot wildlife and birds from home.

Colin Knight, Senior Manager for Sport & Leisure said, "As we faced new challenges during the outbreak of COVID-19, the health and wellbeing of our customers, colleagues and the wider community was our top priority. We quickly developed an At Home webpage as well as social media activities to help the community stay healthy, active and creative during those unprecedented times."

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
the At Home webpage  
attracted nearly 10K  
views during 3 months of  
lockdown 2020

*"I enjoyed the quiz. My  
favourites were the photo and  
online look up rounds."*  
Margaret on our  
Great Angus Museums  
& Archives Quiz

*"This is a great idea"*  
Donna  
on Make Your Own Museum

*"Thank you for all the great posts  
and shares, Shay and I loved  
still being able to do the reading  
challenge. It was great to see  
what everyone else was enjoying  
too. Lots of our old favourites."*  
Leeanne on our online  
Summer Reading Challenge

*"Fantastic energy.  
Credit to ANGUSalive."*  
Lesley Anne on our online step class



# Libraries



**A**NGUSalive is responsible for seven libraries across the county which includes delivery of Angus Council's ACCESS service. We offer a range of traditional and innovative library services through our network of seven full-time burgh libraries, two mobile library vehicles, a home delivery service and an extensive outreach programme.

Library members can select from a stock collection of over 170,000 items that includes fiction, non-fiction, local history and reference material for all ages in print and digital formats. Our growing collection of e-books, e-audiobooks and e-magazines provides customer access to material 24/7.

Each library also offers residents and visitors access to the People's Network computers for internet, email, online learning and Microsoft Office software as well as free guest Wi-Fi for customers with their own devices.

A programme of regular clubs and activities is designed to engage people with reading, literacy, culture and each other. Special events and promotions throughout the year tap in to local and national initiatives.



# HEALTHY | ACTIVE | CREATIVE



## Introduction of the new Libby app

In 2020, the Libraries team received notification that our existing RB Digital platform, which ANGUSalive used to offer our library members access to e-resources, had been sold. This meant RB Digital would be replaced with a new platform called Libby owned by Overdrive. During the time from the notification of the takeover until migration day, the Libraries team worked with Overdrive to facilitate a smooth move to Libby and ensure our customers were notified of the change by email and social media.

Before migration, we held familiarisation sessions on the website with both our Overdrive representative and the Overdrive training team, who made sure we were able to navigate all the features including purchasing, holding statistics and using the media resources to highlight benefits to customers.

We migrated to the Libby app on 24 March 2021 and worked to make sure on changeover that customers were still able to borrow the same number of items for the same time period of time as previously. In addition, the Libby App has a wider range of materials which are available to our customers, including access to hundreds of titles. We have received positive feedback from customers about the new app and the improved functions.



## ANGUSalive's Summer Reading Challenge 2020

Although our library buildings may have been closed over summer 2020 that didn't stop readers taking part virtually in the Summer Reading Challenge. ANGUSalive libraries took the Summer Reading Challenge online with an all-new digital aspect to keep children reading over the summer holidays and to inspire a love of reading for pleasure.

The challenge encouraged children and adults to read six books during the summer holiday. Although there is a different theme each year, participants can read whatever they like - novels, fact books, joke books, poetry, comics, picture books or audio books. Everyone who successfully completed the challenge received a small goodie bag which could be collected from their local library once it reopened.

Children and adults were able to read their own books or download eBooks or eAudiobooks through our online library and the RBDigital app using their library membership card.

The challenge was open to all children and adults at all reading abilities, with the theme being 'Reading Ahoy', and took place from 29 June - 16 August 2020. Over 380 people signed up to take part in the challenge with 169 people completing it.

HEALTHY | ACTIVE | CREATIVE



## Reintroduction of Library Services

ANGUSalive was delighted to start introducing on-site library services in mid July 2020 after over three months of closure during lockdown.

We started with the launch of our new Click & Collect services on a phased approach from 15 July 2020, with all ANGUSalive libraries offering the service by 15 September 2020. Limited Browsing was then introduced from 5 October 2020 enabling members to enter sites once again to browse and select their books in person.

Our mobile libraries Isla and Glen then returned to provide a library service to the county's rural communities in December 2020 after being parked up for eight months due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Isla and Glen provide a traditional book lending service as well as community information and a hearing aid battery supply service. Customers could also collect books from the vans via the new Click & Collect service. There's a wide range of stock on board for people of all ages to enjoy and both vans are fully accessible with disabled lift access. The vans also provide tailored services to rural schools, nurseries and playgroups as well as support partners to deliver health and wellbeing information sessions.

Both the library and mobile library services were COVID-secure when they reopened. New processes and procedures were put in place to ensure colleagues and customer safety including the wearing of face masks, pre-ordering, safe collection and quarantining of books.

All of these services were sadly required to close once again on 24 December 2020 and remained closed during the second lockdown through to the end of 31 March 2021.



# Celebrating Bookweek Scotland

## Libraries

ANGUSalve was delighted to be part of the ninth Bookweek Scotland event – an annual celebration of books and reading that took place across Scotland between 16 and 22 November 2020.

Bookweek Scotland's theme for the year was 'Future' and ANGUSalve libraries had been working hard to ensure that the festival went ahead, albeit in a more digital format than in the past.

The week-long campaign gave Angus library members the opportunity to collect the book 'Future' written by residents of Scotland, free of charge from any Angus library.

Future is a collection of true personal stories by various authors. Moving with the times, our digital offering to celebrate the week included featuring three local authors who presented engaging Facebook sessions.

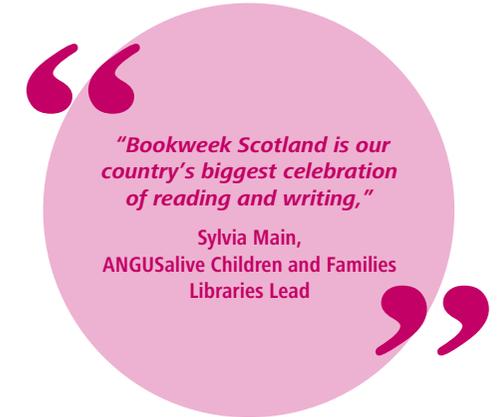
Dundee Author, Wendy Jones shared what she was reading in lockdown and also narrated her popular rhyming book 'Bertie the Buffalo' for younger children.

Crime writer, Jackie McLean, gave a fascinating insight into how being brought up in Arbroath influenced her into becoming the author of three popular Scottish crime novels 'Toxic', 'Shadows' and 'Run'.

Plus, Chris Longmuir talked about her book 'Devil's Porridge', a police procedural that was featured on the Susan Calman TV series Scotland's Hidden Places.

Competitions and puzzles were also available on Facebook every day throughout the week, with a book token to be won for both adults and children.

Angus schools also benefited from Bookweek Scotland activities. ANGUSalve distributed over 1,200 Bookbug bags which contained three shortlisted books in the Bookbug P1 Family Bag, and children were able to vote for their favourite. In addition, the Read, Write and Count pack which included two picture books, educational toys and a notebook, was distributed to all pupils in primary 2 and 3 in Angus Schools.





**DID YOU KNOW?**  
Bookweek Scotland has been running for 9 years.

*"I really enjoyed the book. Now I want to see the film!"*  
Fiona commenting via Facebook

*"Thank you for yesterday's event. Started to read Jessie's Journey. Quite enjoying her stories,"*  
May Doreen, via Facebook

*"I love the book about the dog (This is a Dog). She's really naughty!"*  
Millie,  
Bookbug bag recipient



# Museums, Galleries & Archives



Visitors to Angus and residents enjoy a varied programme of temporary and permanent exhibitions, talks and activities in the five museums managed by ANGUSalive.

A well-received programme of fine and contemporary art exhibitions is held at the Meffan Museum & Art Gallery in Forfar, with exhibitions held throughout ANGUSalive gallery spaces. Community art exhibitions also remain popular in our exhibition spaces.

ANGUSalive cares for and manages the museum object-based and fine art collections of Angus Council for the people of Angus. Our museum collections include archaeology, social history artefacts, natural history, geology and ethnography.

All the items in our collections have local significance and many have national significance. The fine art collection encompasses over 4,000 paintings, watercolours, drawings and sculptures. We are actively enriching both collections through generous donations, Treasure Trove items and purchases, with objects and art works that contribute to the collections' historical yet dynamic development.

ANGUSalive manages Angus Archives, caring for historical documents and primary source material relating to Angus. Located in a rural setting at the Hunter Library, Restenneth by Forfar, Angus Archives is a treasure trove of 800 years of the history of Angus and its people. The collections cover Arbroath, Brechin, Carnoustie, Forfar, Kirriemuir, Montrose, Monifieth and many rural areas of Angus. Angus Archives collects, preserves, and makes available the written and photographic heritage of Angus.



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## Online exhibition - Arbroath 2020

The 700th anniversary of the Declaration of Arbroath took place on 6 April 2020. The declaration is a letter written on the 6th April 1320 by the Barons of Scotland on behalf of the realm, to Pope John XXII, which asked for Scotland to be recognised as an independent country and acknowledge Robert I as the country's lawful king.

The letter was accompanied by two others, one from Robert I himself and one from his ally William Lamberton, Bishop of St Andrews. Robert I, known as Robert the Bruce, had become King of Scots in 1306 but was not recognised as King by King Edward II of England or the Pope. The Pope desired peace between England and Scotland so that both kingdoms could help in a crusade to the Holy Land.

Museums Galleries and Archives marked this important anniversary through an online exhibition featuring the fascinating stories behind related items from the Angus Council collections, cared for by ANGUSalive on behalf of the people of Angus, as the joint heritage exhibition planned to take place in Arbroath Library Brothock Gallery was postponed due to the pandemic. The objects, which all have a unique background, included William the Lions tooth, a fine bronze of Robert the Bruce and popular china souvenir ware which many people may have collected.



## Online Exhibition – ArchiveZ

Beginning in May 2020, Angus Archives took part in '#ArchiveZ', a national engagement event which was initiated by the Archives & Records Association and Explore Your Archive.

#ArchiveZ was a 26-week A to Z social media event through which archives across the United Kingdom could engage with different audiences to share their collections on subjects which corresponded to that week's particular letter.

Some of the many articles included subjects such as the Abbot's House in Arbroath, the Forfar Witches, the Queen Mother, the Privateer attack on Arbroath and X-ray.



## Online Exhibition - Victory in Europe Day 75

Friday 8 May 2020 marked the 75th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day (VE Day). On that day in 1945, celebrations erupted throughout the western world, but especially in Great Britain and North America. More than one million people celebrated in the streets throughout the United Kingdom to mark the end of the European part of the war.

To mark the anniversary, Angus Archives hosted Victory in Europe Day 75, a week-long online exhibition which featured items from the collections documenting aspects of Angus' experiences during World War II.

The exhibition included a selection of war diaries from the archives' collections; a focus on Luftwaffe air raids which targeted Angus' towns during 1940; the 10th Polish Mechanised Brigade, who from 1940-1942, were based in Forfar and the story of one of Brechin's most famous sons, Robert Watson-Watt was also shared.

To mark the 75th anniversary of the exact time and date of Sir Winston Churchill's address to the nation, Angus Archive posted a special video of images from across Angus during World War II. To accompany it was a recreation of Churchill's famous words kindly delivered by Councillor Ronnie Proctor, Provost of Angus.

The Archive's regular Friday Feature took a closer look at the Home Guard, who were the last line of defence in the event of enemy invasion, and concluding the week on Saturday 9 May 2020 we highlighted the 'Red Lichtie', the Spitfire paid for by the residents of Arbroath and named in their honour. We followed its journey from the start of the Arbroath Spitfire Fund to its home at Montrose Air Station.

## Online exhibition - Brechin Cathedral 800th Anniversary

In June 2020 ANGUSalive Museums Galleries and Archives featured a week-long social media event commemorating the 800th anniversary of Brechin Cathedral, by exploring the history of the Cathedral through a fascinating selection of objects and documents from our Angus Council collections, cared for by ANGUSalive, as the planned exhibition at Brechin Town House Museum had to be cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

There are few buildings in Angus with such a long and rich history as Brechin Cathedral, it is a unique spiritual building, thought to date back to 1220 although there may have been an earlier chapel, and important religious community.



## Museums Galleries Scotland - Adaptation Fund

The £6,190 funding awarded to ANGUSalive for the Museums Galleries & Archives Comeback Project benefited Arbroath Signal Tower Museum, Brechin Townhouse Museum, Forfar Meffan Museum & Art Gallery, Kirriemuir Gateway to the Glens Museum, Montrose Museum & Art Gallery and Angus Archives by supporting the purchase of equipment to facilitate their safe reopening in accordance with Scottish Government Coronavirus guidance.

Engagement with our teams before reopening to share the news of the award allowed us to reassure staff and create an opportunity to share concerns about how the workplace would change, taking steps to allay these concerns and reduce anxiety about coming back to work with the public. Training sessions held in the venues prior to re-opening were also improved because the award allowed the purchase of equipment for all sites, which could be demonstrated prior to opening (even though some museums did not reopen before the second lockdown) and front of house staff could be involved in setting up signage to have a thorough understanding of how to direct visitors to new layouts.

Arbroath Signal Tower Museum reopened in September 2020, and the public were more than happy with the additions especially the children who enjoyed the floor signage.



## Museums Galleries Scotland - ALEO Museum Development Fund

Montrose Museum Reimagined is a project to protect, redesign and ensure the future of one of Scotland's oldest purpose-built Museums. The dynamic project to place the museum at the heart of the community and explore the untapped potential of the collections involves planning, collections research and consultation.

This has been made possible through a successful application to the Museums Galleries Scotland ALEO Museum Development Fund. The first phase of the project will be undertaken next year supported by the £55,072 funding secured and in-kind contributions from the charity.



## Museums Galleries Scotland – COVID-19 Digital Resilience Fund

The aim of ANGUSalive's application to the Museums Galleries Scotland's COVID-19 Digital Resilience Fund was to purchase equipment and a licence for the platform Sketchfab, which could facilitate the production and distribution of innovative and exciting quality content for our virtual visitors during the closure of ANGUSalive Museums Galleries and Archives venues because of the Coronavirus pandemic and beyond.

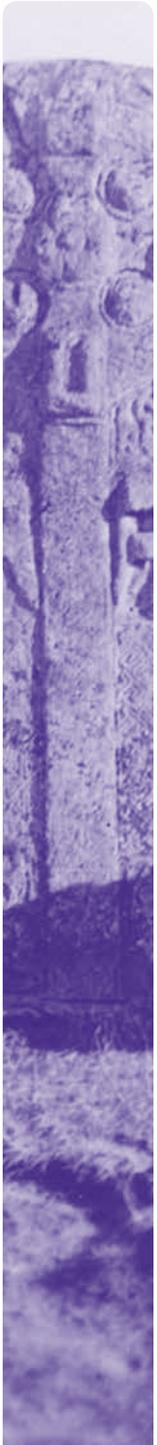
On receipt of the £1,152 grant we ordered and received recording and videoing accessories for smart phones; the three sets of mounts, lenses, tripods and microphones have been distributed to Collections, Exhibitions and Engagement Leads who are working at home but now have scheduled access to museum buildings, collections and educational resources.

Receiving the smart phone accessories has provided our teams with the equipment to take photographs in new ways, record video and sound, so they can produce new content to engage with wider audiences. We have already used these accessories to create content for the forthcoming Doors Open Festival in September 2021. The team has also used the equipment to be able produce virtual presentations and tours of the museums which would not be otherwise accessible for this event.

The purchase of a one-year subscription to Sketchfab has been confirmed and this has allowed the setup of our ANGUSalive Museums Galleries and Archives at <https://sketchfab.com/Angusalive>



The grant enabled us to meet our objectives; to make new quality content for our virtual visitors online, reach out to new audiences by providing content in different formats (i.e. videos and podcast), keep our audiences engaged in our social media pages and museum activities and improve the skills of our workforce in making and recording content.



# Visual Art and Craft Maker Awards

Museums, Galleries & Archives

Established by Creative Scotland, the Visual Artist and Craft Makers Awards (VACMA) are a programme of small bursaries delivered with a range of local authorities, charitable trusts and art agencies across Scotland to support visual artists and craft makers in their creative and professional development. In Angus, the awards are hosted by ANGUSalive and delivered in partnership with Angus Council and Creative Scotland.

VACMA: Angus is for Visual Artists and Craft Makers who can demonstrate a commitment to developing their creative practice and are living, working or maintaining a studio space within Angus. This fund is open to creative practitioners at all stages of progression: both art college graduates and those without qualifications.

Across Scotland VACMA can be a crucial transition point – for both emerging and established artists and makers. The awards provide a valuable opportunity for practitioners to undertake specific projects, and to develop and advance their creative practice in ways they may not otherwise have been able to do.

We offered three rounds of VACMA: Angus funding:

- March 2020 - 9 Applicants - 3 Visual Artists and 2 Craft Makers received funds of £3,000 in total.
- November 2020 - 5 Applicants - 1 Visual Artist and 2 Craft Makers received funds of £2,000 in total.
- March 2021 - 8 Applicants - 6 Visual Artists received funds of £3,750 in total.

With VACMA: Angus, we aim to improve mental health and wellbeing through art as well as empower our creative communities. The long-term benefits of VACMA will empower our local communities to further develop skills, attractions, job opportunities and access to support.

The VACMA awards have been especially crucial for artists and makers working during the pandemic. The COVID-19 outbreak has been devastating for creative practitioners, resulting in the closure of equipped studio spaces, preventing practitioners from working and the cancellation of exhibitions, workshops and events, which has decimated livelihoods. The VACMA: Angus awards have been a welcome boost for Angus artists.

The project has enabled us to build relationships with individuals and groups of creatives. These relationships have opened new opportunities such as co-curating exhibitions, making links with other organisations such as Applied Arts Scotland and Angus Creatives, allowing for us to map out creative communities across Angus.

We have also developed our existing partnerships with organisations such as Creative Scotland and Hospitalfield who joined us on the VACMA Selection Panel.

Gill Ross, ANGUSalive's Visual Arts Lead said "With the impact of COVID-19, funding is especially crucial for our creative practitioners across Angus. We're delighted to be able to support artists and craft makers to develop their creative practices by working in partnership with Creative Scotland and Angus Council. It is also wonderful to build relationships with visual artists and craft makers across Angus and help their creativity thrive."



*"The VACMA bursaries are helping artists and makers focus on their development. Angus is new to the scheme, so it is good to see the demand and the ambitions of local artists and makers,"*

Stephen Palmer,  
Visual Arts Officer  
at Creative Scotland

*"I'm really pleased to be allocated funding, it will allow me to buy important equipment and provide me with some vital time and space with which to develop my project."*

VACMA bursary winner and  
photographer Jeni Reidis



*"I'm delighted to be receiving this Visual Art and Craft Maker Award. This Award will give me the opportunity to learn about enamelling techniques, and I'm excited to be able to explore new ways to bring colour into my jewellery,"*

VACMA bursary winner and  
jeweller, Rose Brodie

**DID YOU KNOW?**

VACMA offers small grants to visual artists and craft makers for their creative development at all stages of their career ranging from £500 to £750.



# Sport & Leisure



**A**NGUSalive operates seven sports centres and two high-school pools.

We offer a varied programme for the local community including group exercise classes featuring LES MILLS® classes, a junior programme, swimming lessons, family swim and inflatable sessions, gymnastics, racquet sports and regular club activities.

ANGUSalive bACTIVE sports membership holders can access all of our sports centres under their membership. Booking has been made easy too with the ANGUSalive app. Our monthly and annual bACTIVE members can also add live streaming and on demand classes via the ANGUSalive App.

Our Community Sports Team provides support and advice to individuals, clubs, sports associations or groups on a range of issues. They also establish and co-ordinate a number of sport and physical activity opportunities linking local, regional and national programmes across a variety of sports. As part of the team's commitment to developing sport and physical activity throughout Angus, they have adopted the sportscotland Community Sport Hubs initiative, as part of the Scottish Government's Glasgow 2014 Legacy Plan. The initiative is aimed at supporting local sports clubs to help increase the number of people participating in sport in our local communities.



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## Reopening of Sport & Leisure

After nearly six months of closure, ANGUSalive welcomed back the Angus community to its Sports and Leisure centres with a phased reopening from 14 September 2020.

Planning for the reopening of ANGUSalive's facilities had been complex due to the safety processes and procedures required to ensure they are COVID-secure.

Training was carried out with colleagues to help them prepare for their return, and ensure the safety and hygiene measures put in place to protect the staff, public and visitors were fully understood and could be followed to instil the highest confidence in colleagues and customers returning to our sites.

A walk-through video was created to help customers and colleagues understand what to expect at our centres and how they can help us all stay safe. Signage and sanitising stations were also installed to support safety messaging and mitigating actions. Various communications were also emailed directly to members and customers as well as information being shared on our website and social media pages to ensure people knew the measures we were putting in place, how to stay safe and what to expect on their return.

Although enhanced cleaning, social distancing as well as other safety measures made the experience a little different to what it was like before COVID-19, access to gyms, our wide range of fitness equipment and variety of fitness classes enticed the local community back to be healthy, active and creative.

In addition to individual access to gym and fitness classes, outdoor synthetic and grass pitches were available for club bookings. In November 2020, junior coached classes for the under 16s, including football, gymnastics and trampoline, made a brief return as well as racquet sports.

Family Swim and Splash Back swimming lessons also made a return early December at Arbroath and Montrose Sports Centres and Brechin and Forfar Community Campuses. Families were allocated an individual area of the pool to enjoy and were asked to bring their own floats and toys for their safety.

Splash Back swimming lessons were made available for children who were attending lessons prior to lockdown. It was a great way for children to get back into the pool following the period of closure. Sadly, despite beginning to re-introduce more activities into our leisure spaces by December 2020, we had to shut our doors once again on Christmas Eve 2020 for the second lockdown which lasted until mid-April 2021.





## Supporting the return of clubs to facilities

As part of our re-opening and re-introduction of clubs to facilities, the Community Sport team created a COVID-19 resource and club walk-through videos to ensure a safe return to our sites in September 2020. Clubs were required to complete all information within the resource and watch our site walk through video prior to their return.

Support was available from the Community Support team to provide guidance to clubs. The resource ensured clubs were fully informed of their responsibilities and club governance that had to be adhered to prior to returning based on the national guidance. Communication with the clubs and production of the resources helped provide clubs with a safe environment for participation and helped everyone to work together to achieve a safe return to our facilities and sport.

The team also worked in partnership with sportscotland throughout July and August 2020 to deliver three webinars to support local clubs returning to sport and sport facilities. The webinars focused on facilities, the role of a COVID officer and risk assessment. 55 participants took part in the webinar sessions from across 20 clubs in Angus.





## Review of Creche Provision

Over recent years we have seen an increase in private and public early years childcare provision offered to families in Angus. This is great news for families although has had a negative impact on customer demand for our creche provision in sports centres.

Our creches were closed in March 2020 due to the Coronavirus. Whilst the COVID-19 restrictions could be achieved in an early years and childcare setting, it was not possible in our creche facilities given the drop-in nature of the service. The creches remained closed during the course of the year with no information available from the Scottish Government to determine when creches could resume.

These factors in tandem meant it was no longer financially viable to run creche facilities from our sports centres and the ANGUSalve Board made the decision in early 2021 to discontinue the service with immediate effect. The Senior Leadership Team worked closely with all employees affected together with support from trade unions and human resources. Some employees took the opportunity for redeployment into other roles across ANGUSalve.

## Sport & Physical Activity Framework

The Angus Sport and Physical Activity Planning Partnership is a unique collaboration involving a number of partners, including ANGUSalve, Angus Council, NHS Tayside, sportscotland, Dundee and Angus College and third sector agencies.

The Partnership has been working together on a new Sport & Physical Activity Framework since early 2020 to help create, promote and enhance opportunities for people to access sport and physical activity in Angus. The Framework will be based on the Scottish Government's Active Scotland Outcomes.

The creation of the local outcomes and potential solutions which will be outlined in the Framework were identified through a survey of Angus residents in 2020 which asked them about barriers to physical exercise. The responses received included lack of time, work commitments and accessibility challenges. When asked about potential solutions, residents cited more variety, flexible times and affordable opportunities that would most help them become active.

The Framework will be launched in July 2021 and will aim to help build a healthier, resilient and more prosperous community and ensure Angus is a place where an active life is accessible for all.





## Membership Review

As a charitable trust for culture, sport and leisure in Angus, we regularly review our memberships to ensure we remain competitive, our offering is fit for purpose and provides best value to the local community. Throughout 2020 we undertook a review of our bACTIVE membership categories to streamline the offer to make it simpler for people to join as well as help improve the online experience for members and new joiners.

The review included collaboration with other trusts across Scotland who had carried out similar reviews, assessment of sportscotland data, competitor data and trend analysis. The changes made were in line with other trusts and the marketplace overall.

Many of the changes resulted in existing members seeing a decrease in their monthly payments. For instance, the bACTIVE adult monthly membership reduced by £7 per month with the annual membership seeing a reduction £77 a year. Where there was an increase, we still felt the membership offers value for money and was in line with other similar offerings.

Other changes included the introduction of a new off-peak membership, joint memberships no longer requiring members to be from the same household as well as the removal of corporate membership rates creating a fairer membership structure for all people living and working in Angus.

Employees of organisations benefiting from the previous corporate discount saw their annual and monthly direct debit memberships decrease or stay the same under the new membership offering.

The changes came into effect on 1 January 2021, although as a result of the sport facilities being closed during the lockdown these were implemented in May 2021 after venues reopened on 26 April 2021.





# Development of ANGUSalive App

Sport & Leisure

The ANGUSalive app was launched in January 2021. The initial aim of the app was to introduce virtual group fitness sessions that enabled us to provide classes to members whilst government restrictions prevented us from providing sessions in our sites. A range of classes were available via live stream and on demand, including classes for every fitness level so the whole family could get involved.

Launch of the ANGUSalive app during the pandemic provided customers with an opportunity to feel part of a community, reconnect with other members and their favourite instructors, safely exercise from the comfort of their own home and exercise at a time convenient to them. At such a challenging time, the app provided support to customers physical and mental wellbeing.

Working in partnership with Innovatise and Alliance Leisure TA6, ANGUSalive held a training session for all group fitness instructors who would be involved in the live streaming ahead of the app's launch since this was a new and slightly daunting challenge for our instructors. The training provided the instructors with added support and knowledge to make the transition from delivering on-site to doing this via a virtual platform.

The entire app project was developed, created and launched within a short time period of around two months.

We had attracted over 2,000 people to download the app by the 31 March 2021, with over 900 people viewing our live streamed classes per week and over 370 using our on-demand library to exercise.



**Download the ANGUSalive App Today**

Take us with you wherever you go.

- Make bookings on the go
  - Workout at home
  - Check timetables
- Receive the latest news and offers

Head to the App store to download

Get it on Google Play | Download on the App Store

#feelgoodvibes | ANGUSalive

When restrictions allowed Sport & Leisure facilities in Angus to reopen their doors from April 2021, the app provided additional functionality to enable members to check timetables, book fitness classes, gym or swim sessions, add themselves to a waiting list, and cancel classes at the touch of a button.

“Great Grit class. Worth getting up early to do. Tough workout, but feel a great sense of achievement.”

GRIT participant.

”

**MAKE HEALTHY A HABIT**



WITH THE **ANGUSalive APP**

**ANGUSalive**  
Sport & Leisure

#feelgoodvibes

**DID YOU KNOW?**

The majority of people (65%) believed exercise helped them with their mental health during the pandemic.

Source sportsScotland

“Brilliant workout and instructor- just like being back in class,”  
Bodycombat participant

“I found the **ANGUSalive** app a fantastic way to connect with members during a very difficult time. The app is fantastic and feedback I received suggests it really made a difference to so many of our members,”  
Jade Young,  
Group Fitness Instructor

**JOIN ME LIVE**



**Jade Young**

**ANGUSalive**  
Sport & Leisure

DOWNLOAD NOW

GET IT ON Google Play

Download on the App Store

**GET THE FAMILY INVOLVED**  
WITH THE **ANGUSALIVE APP**



GET IT ON Google Play

Download on the App Store

**ANGUSalive**  
Sport & Leisure

#feelgoodvibes

**DID YOU KNOW?**

The COVID-19 lockdown may have helped increase interest and engagement in physical activity since Google Trends records began in January 2004. Report by Ding, D., del Pozo Cruz, B., Green, M.A. and Bauman, A.E., 2020.

# Countryside Adventure



Our Countryside Adventure team look after five country parks and run an outdoor education programme.

There is a programme of regular activities on offer in our country parks and the Angus Glens including guided walks, Young Naturalist Clubs, holiday activity weeks, workshops, watersports, wildfowling and volunteer programmes such as Branching Out.

We work in partnership with the Cairngorms National Park Authority, Forestry and Land Scotland, Scottish Wildlife Trust, Scottish Natural Heritage and many local groups to support conservation action, including environmental fieldwork, surveys, activities and consultancy.

The team provides a warm welcome and is readily available to help visitors enjoy and care for the countryside.



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## A new working and visitor environment at Monikie Country Park

A project to transform the Ranger Centre at Monikie Country Park kicked off on 11 February 2020, however due to the pandemic it was halted on 23 March 2020. The aim of the project was to improve the employee working environment and provide a more modern and welcoming area for visitors as the building was still designed around its 170 year-old heritage.

We were able to restart the project in June 2020 with the easing of government restrictions for the construction industry. Work included installation of the corporate network, internal wi-fi and external wi-fi, as well as redecoration, building and electrical works.

The project was completed in early 2021 and now provides a bright new open plan information centre with a fully refurbished entrance reception, new reception desk and an open plan agile office area. An agile working space on the upper floor has also been created. A digital screen, information boards featuring a map, wildlife and activities at the park as well as space for promotional material will be installed throughout 2021. External signage will also be modernised with a phased installation planned for next year.



## More activities return to add Christmas sparkle

ANGUSalve was delighted to offer the popular Festive Fun activities at Monikie Country Park in November and December 2020 whilst the country was in level 3 restrictions.

Despite the event being scaled down compared to previous years, there were still activities for both children and grown-ups to enjoy. Activities included three festive trails – Santa's Reindeer, Elves and Baubles. Puzzles were also available on the ANGUSalve website for people to complete as they explored the trails. The trails were available seven days a week and were free of charge.

Craft kits were available to purchase featuring a handmade base along with materials for budding artists to craft their own Christmas wreath using local, natural and sustainable products. Assembled wooden reindeer were available for people to customise at home to create their own Rudolph the Reindeer. ANGUSalve was delighted to be able to offer some festive sparkle despite the restrictions at the time



# Family Inclusive Bike Bubble Sessions

## Countryside Adventure

In June 2020 we secured £942.00 through FABB Scotland's Wellbeing Fund as one of only four pilot projects in Scotland to look at how we could 'cycle our way out of COVID'. We relocated our fleet of adaptive bikes to Monikie Country Park from West Links, Arbroath and delivered ANGUSalive's first event to the local community during our emergence from the first lockdown.

With the funding we were able to offer four time slots a day for three days a week in the month of July - the sessions were free of charge to the 626 people who participated in the bike sessions. Bikes available included two-wheelers, mountain bikes, a wheelchair bike, tandems, side-by-side bikes, trikes and hand bikes.

The aim of the Family Inclusive Bike Bubble sessions was to enable everyone to access cycling in a safe environment, ensuring everyone can enjoy the physical and mental benefits that cycling brings.

The success of the sessions allowed us to extend it through the months of July, August, September, October and November 2020. It gave more people in Angus access to bikes and the opportunity to cycle, especially those who may previously have been excluded from participating in cycling for various reasons.

Laura Smith OBE, Disability & Inclusion Lead for ANGUSalive said: "There are so many personal and environmental benefits that come with cycling. It is hoped that the project will help break down any barriers that some people might have faced getting into this sport.

"From trikes to tandems, whether it is families, carers, people with a disability, with this project everyone can cycle out together and experience the outdoors in a way that is improving everyone's health and wellbeing."



“  
*“We had such a great time! Hoping to see some weekend dates so my partner can come too,”*  
Vicki via Facebook  
”

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
Our Inclusive Bike Bubble sessions were the very first activity we offered as we emerged from the first lockdown in 2020.



“  
*“Fantastic opportunity for our family to get out and enjoy cycling together, especially in such a beautiful location,”*  
Bike Bubble user  
”



“  
*“Such an inclusive project, well done to everyone involved, I've loved every minute of our cycling,”*  
Bike Bubble user  
”

“  
*“We should do this. Kids would like the side-by-side bike and we could go a tandem?”*  
Jennifer via Facebook  
”

# Theatre & Venues



**A**NGUSalive Theatre & Venues consists of the Webster Memorial Theatre, Arbroath; Inglis Memorial Hall, Edzell and Kirriemuir and Montrose Town Halls. The Reid Hall in Forfar is home to our Sports Awards.

We also offer event and performance spaces at our community campus theatres across the county.

The Webster Memorial Theatre has a diverse programme of events ranging from country, folk, comedy and pop music concerts to our annual panto.



HEALTHY | ACTIVE | CREATIVE



## Danny Laverty performs from Webster Theatre

Well known and popular Arbroath singer and entertainer, Danny Laverty, was invited to entertain his many fans in the first ever Live Show streamed from the Webster Memorial Theatre on Saturday 25 July 2020.

Shortly after COVID-19 Lockdown was imposed in March 2020, Danny wanted to help NHS Tayside and the people of Tayside in a practical way by raising funds to support staff and patients in hospitals. In this year, he raised over £18,000 to help fund NHS Tayside through his various live shows.

He decided to perform from his salon premises and at home as well as this one-off performance at the Webster Theatre. Over 800 viewers tuned in on the evening of his Webster performance which was a great success and paved the way for future live show possibilities at the Theatre.



## The Country Music Drive In Show

The Keltic Storm Band and Friends held The Irish Country Music Drive In Show on Friday 18 September 2020. This event saw 151 people saddle up at Monikie Country Park to enjoy the show from the comfort of their own vehicles.

Keltic Storm were joined by Philomena Begley, Joe Moore and Garry Gamble who provided live music in this scenic outdoor location which was blessed with perfect weather for the occasion.

Attendees donned their Stetsons and cowboy boots and were able to have fresh hot food delivered straight to their car from Café Byzantium, with some showing their appreciation by the way of an occasional socially distanced line dance.

# Lighting Up Angus

## Theatre & Venues

A number of public buildings were illuminated by ANGUSalive to show support for various organisations and causes throughout 2020/21. These light ups wouldn't have been possible without the assistance of local business DGLX and AML Event Hire.

Along with most of the nation who wanted to show their support for NHS and key workers throughout the pandemic, on a number of Thursdays at 8pm ANGUSalive lit up Signal Tower in Arbroath, Montrose Sports Centre, Kirriemuir Gateway to the Glens Museum (including Peter Pan himself), Reid Hall and Balmashanner monument in Forfar, as well as Brechin Cathedral.

The iconic Balmashanner Statue in Forfar was also illuminated to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day along with the tribute to front line staff.

The treasured Glamis Castle multi-coloured illumination was organised by ANGUSalive with support from Visit Angus, and saw the historic landmark illuminated in rainbow colours for the first time ever in a display of appreciation to the NHS and all frontline key workers.

Later in the year, the Signal Tower Museum was illuminated in red to support both Show Racism the Red Card and then again from Remembrance Sunday to Armistice Day to 'Light Up Red' in support of the Scottish Poppy Appeal which helps current and former members of the Armed Forces as well as their families.

In March 2021, we marked one year since the nation first entered lockdown by reflecting on our collective loss and hope for a brighter



future by lighting up Reid Hall in Forfar, Signal Tower Museum in Arbroath, the Ranger Centre at Monikie Country Park and Kirriemuir Town Hall & Library.



### DID YOU KNOW?

No payment was made for any of the light ups. Duncan Gillies, owner of DGLX donated all his time and equipment to support the ANGUSalve light ups.

*"It's been an honour to have organised the light up of buildings throughout Angus to help celebrate the Clap for Carers event on Thursdays. It's been a positive beacon of hope for the Angus community,"*

Audrey Hood,  
ANGUSalve Theatre Manager  
on lighting up Glamis Castle

*"How lovely,"*

Kirsty via Facebook on the light up of J.M Barrie's Peter Pan statue for Clap for Carers

*"I am delighted to see this very visual reminder of what our parents, grandparents and great grandparents would have witnessed throughout the war years. It is heartbreaking events had to be cancelled as it's important to remember the sacrifices that were made."*

The Provost of Angus,  
Cllr Ronnie Proctor



Hamilton Kerr Photography.

# Governance & 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 will 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. A number of Board Development sessions are also scheduled every year.

Directors convened virtually to attend 15 Coronavirus Briefings in addition to the Board, Trading Company and Finance & Audit Sub Committee meetings scheduled in 2020/21. It was a priority to create a mechanism to facilitate Board

governance and oversight of the strategic decisions that needed to be made regularly in response to this particularly challenging period of unprecedented uncertainty for the charity, colleagues, customers and the local community. These Briefings ensured Directors were able to make critical decisions in a timely manner to support the charity during both lockdown and recovery phases.

## 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 Chairperson 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.

At the Board Development Day in November 2019 the Board used the Good Governance Checkup to reflect on its governance. From this self-assessment, areas of strength were highlighted along with areas for improvement. An action plan was developed to support continuous improvement and strengthen the effectiveness of our governance. The annual review was not undertaken in 2020, due to complexities in the wider operating environment at that time as a result of the pandemic and is scheduled to recommence in 2021.

Board of Directors:

**Mr Kenneth Fraser**  
Independent Director (Chairperson)

**Mr Alan Rae**  
Independent Director (Vice Chair)

**Cllr William Duff**  
Council Director

**Mr Thomas Ferry**  
Independent Director

**Cllr Lynne Devine**  
Council Director

**Mr Mark Gilmartin**  
Independent Director

**Cllr Ronnie Proctor**  
Council Director

**Mr Kenneth Christie**  
Independent Director

**Cllr David Lumgair**  
Council Director

# Financial review of the year

The Trust's operational surplus (before actuarial adjustments) for the period ending 31 March 2021 was £988,458.

The Company has made annual contributions to the Recreation Renewal & Repair (R&R) Fund for equipment at the end of each financial year since it started trading to ensure resources are available for future investment across its culture, sport, and leisure facilities. In addition, to ensure the Company can replace legacy IT equipment in the future, the Renewal & Repair (R&R) for IT was established in 2018.

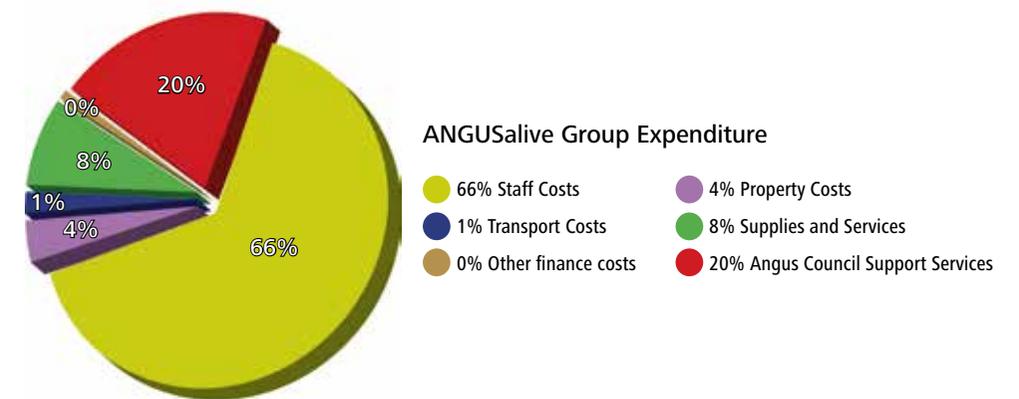
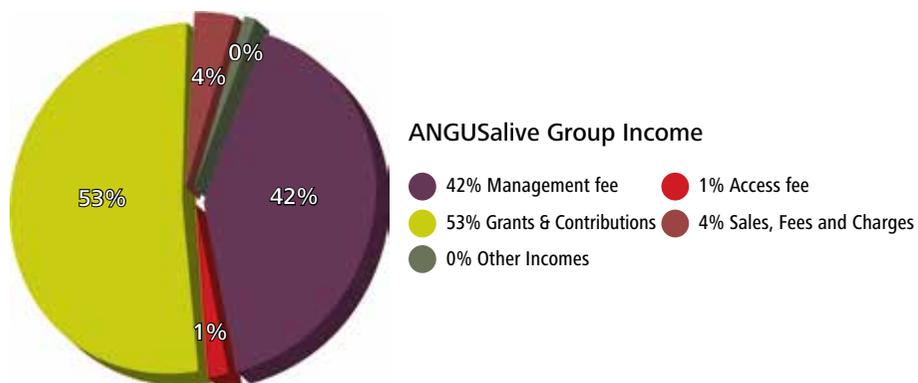
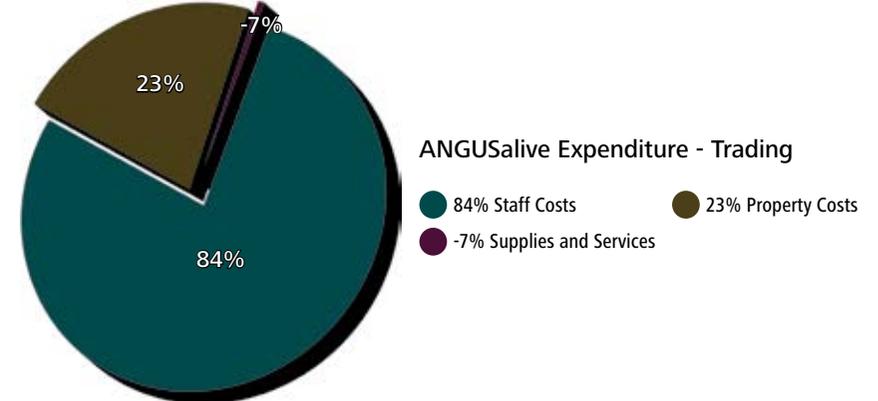
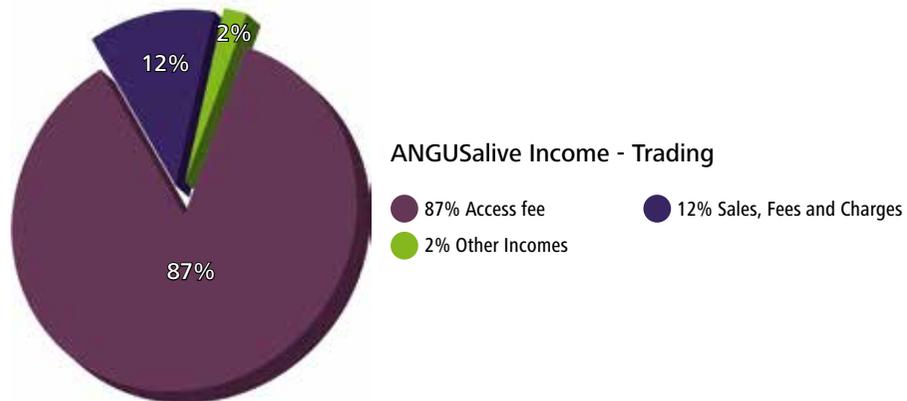
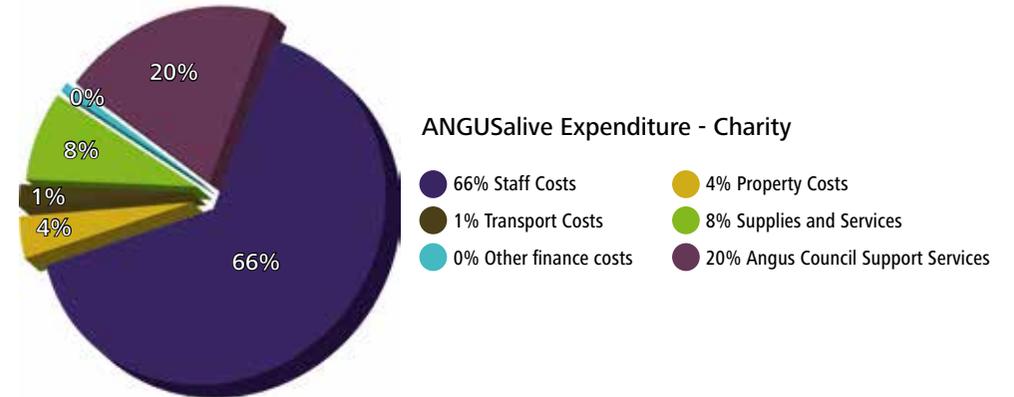
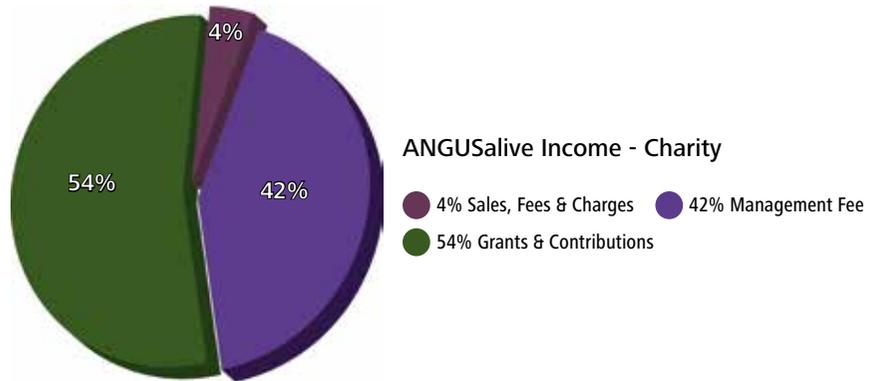
The ability to perform regular equipment refresh and replacement is essential as this programme of work contributes to the maintenance of the Company's customer base and facility usage through the provision of a high-quality customer experience. Specific provision has also been made for investment in technology refresh since it is integral to the successful operation of the Company.

With venues and facilities forced to close due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a strategic decision was taken to not transfer any funds to the R&R Fund in 2019/20 in order to retain the maximum available level of general reserves to assist in addressing the challenges and pressures of operating in the COVID-19 environment. However, through prudent financial management, the Company was in a position to deposit approximately double the average annual contribution in 2020/21 meaning the balance of the R&R Fund was restored. The balance in the R&R Funds as at 31 March 2021 is £1,520,291.

General unrestricted funds carried forward amount to £1,904,813. This reflects the continued financial stewardship of the Directors and Senior Management 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 01 December 2015. Through regular contributions to the Company's reserves since establishment the Company's future resilience has been strengthened.

Once the actuarially adjusted pension costs are taken into account, the Trust's overall financial position reflects net income of £294,457.

	2020/21 ANGUSalive Charity £'000	2020/21 ANGUSalive Trading £'000	2020/21 ANGUSalive Group £'000
Management Fee	3,804	0	3,804
Access Fee	0	97	97
Grants & Contributions*	4,833	0	4,833
Sales, Fees and Charges	321	13	334
Other Incomes	0	2	2
<b>Total Income*</b>	<b>8,958</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>9,070</b>
Staff Costs	5,292	76	5,368
Property Costs	307	21	328
Transport Costs	58	0	58
Supplies & Services	667	-6	661
Other finance costs	29	0	29
Angus Council Support Services	1,637	0	1,637
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>7,990</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>8,081</b>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) prior to actuarial adjustments*</b>	<b>968</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>989</b>
Actuarial adjustments	694	0	694
<b>Net surplus/(Deficit)*</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>295</b>
* ANGUSalive Group position is different to combined ANGUSalive Charity and ANGUSalive Trading position due to the treatment of Gift Aid on consolidation			





## Karen Dick

### Creative Scotland

We know that art and creativity improve our communities, support regeneration, provide vital hubs and bring people together. This has never been more important than over the last year, with the cultural sector, like others, being challenged and changed by the continuing impact of Covid-19, and the measures necessary to contain the virus. Working in partnership in local areas with key partners like ANGUSalive, has been vital in helping us understand and address the needs of the cultural sector in regions across Scotland.

The Angus Place Partnership, hosted by Hospitalfield in partnership with ANGUSalive, Angus Council, Creative Scotland and community partners like Arbroath 2020, began in 2017. Focussing on raising the visibility of the vibrant cultural offer in Angus, the March 2020 lockdown led to rescheduling of various plans, including many of the celebrations for Arbroath 2020. However, local and national partners were committed to the development and delivery of a cultural strategy for Angus, and to ensure that there was a plan in place to help support the culture and heritage sector to rebuild and renew. The Angus Cultural Strategy, developed throughout 2020/21, demonstrates our shared priorities and commitment to working together, locally and nationally, to support local cultural ambitions.

Creative Scotland wants more people, from across all parts of society, to have opportunities to participate in a range of artistic and creative activities, to understand and appreciate their value and to be able to work in the arts, screen and creative industries. This is one reason we launched Our Creative Voice in

September 2021. Local partnerships play a key part in making this happen. It has been great having ANGUSalive continue as a partner in Creative Scotland's Visual Artist and Craft Makers Awards (VACMA) scheme. VACMA offers small grants to visual artists and craft makers for their creative development at all stages of their career. These small awards can make a big difference for artists and makers, and have wider benefits of talent retention and increased public engagement with arts and crafts.

The impact of Covid-19 on venues and cultural spaces has been significant. Creative Scotland delivered funding to three of ANGUSalive's venues through the Performing Arts Venue Relief Fund, part of the Scottish Government's Covid-19 Emergency Funding package. Over £110,000 was provided to The Webster (Arbroath), Reid Hall (Forfar) and Montrose Town Hall, to remove the threat of insolvency and avoid redundancies, and provide employment and commissioning opportunities for artists and creative practitioners. This investment recognised the importance of local venues to communities, for tourism and economic development and as part of the cultural infrastructure of Scotland.

Looking to the future, we look forward to joining The Angus Culture and Heritage Consortium, led by ANGUSalive, to support the delivery of the Angus Cultural Strategy and help to drive a sustainable recovery for the cultural sector in Angus. Despite the challenging and difficult circumstances of the last year, our partnership with ANGUSalive has been strengthened and we are in a better position to support communities and the local cultural sector to raise their creative voice.





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