



YMCA
Tayside



2024

ANNUAL REPORT

MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO JILL MCGRATH TOGETHER, WE CONTINUE TO INSPIRE HOPE AND TRANSFORM LIVES.

2024 has been a transformative year for YMCA Tayside as we continued to empower young people and strengthen our community. We proudly celebrated the completion of the Y Centre and were privileged to welcome The Princess Royal for the official opening and to unveil the plaque. A landmark moment in our journey. We were truly blessed on so many occasions throughout the development and were given strength, patience and perseverance to carry on in the midst of some challenging times. It's been an enormous learning curve for me personally and I look forward to returning to my regular CEO role as we look to the future.

The Y Centre stands as a hub of opportunity and inclusion in the centre of Perth, offering state-of-the-art facilities and creating a welcoming space for young people to grow, connect, and thrive. We are proud that young people have been at the centre of the design, giving the space a unique vibe and a place they can call their own. Also, generating an unrestricted income stream for the charity through renting out some unique spaces to a wide variety of groups and individuals. We have included some before and after photos for you to enjoy.

We finished the year in style at Blair Atholl Castle, as the chosen charity for The Aberfeldy Highland Ball. We were keen to enable some of our young leaders to experience such an event and were delighted that a business sponsored a table to make this a reality. One of our youth workers was given the opportunity to share the impact YMCA Tayside had in turning his life around, with many guests commenting on how powerful it was to hear first-hand the benefit their fundraising effort will have for many young people, with a focus on supporting those moving into our flats throughout 2025. Through this new chapter, we continue to be forever grateful to our supporters, staff and volunteers, whose unwavering dedication has made this vision a reality. Together, we will continue to inspire hope and transform lives.

Through our open days, I look forward to seeing some of you and giving you a tour of our magnificent Y Centre, look for the dates throughout 2025 on our website. If you are unable to attend our open days and would like to visit, please contact me direct to arrange a suitable alternative. God Bless.



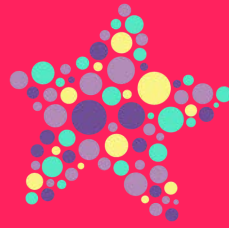


Awards and Recognition

NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR LIFE CHANGING WORK



YMCA
Scotland



PERTSHIRE
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
STAR AWARDS

ANNUAL AWARDS
2024



WINNER
COMMITMENT TO THE
COMMUNITY AWARD 2024



WINNER - KATIE ARCHIBALD
JOHN D. KNOX YOUTH
ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



WINNER
YMCA SCOTLAND
SUSTAINABLE PLANET AWARD



Engagement & Impact

12,357
YOUTH CONTACTS

OVER
650 YOUTH
WORK
SESSIONS

625 MEANINGFUL
ENGAGEMENT



Just World

Youth Voice; Ukraine Project Work; Supported Accommodation; Health & Wellbeing Project; Youth and Democracy Project

80% ACHIEVED
THEIR
GOALS

18 UKRAINIANS
ATTENDED
DROP INS



Sustainable Planet

Eco Ambassadors Project; New Electric Minibus; The Y Centre; Recycling; Reusing Original Church Wood.

3 MAIN
PROJECT
GOALS ACHIEVED

14 SESSIONS
ATTENDED
IN 3 MONTHS





Meaningful Work

Employability Support; Homework Club; Y Innovate; Finance Course; Schools Work; Volunteering; Students; Skills Academies



83 INDIVIDUALS
ENGAGED IN
MEANINGFUL WORK

17 YOUNG PEOPLE ON AVERAGE
ATTEND Y INNOVATE
DIGITAL DROP INS



Community Wellbeing

Universal Youth Work; Church and Community Partnerships; Health & Wellbeing Project; Life Skills Sessions; One to One Support

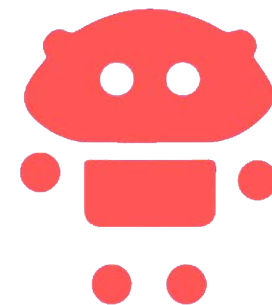
300 YOUNG PEOPLE
ATTENDED OUR YOUTH
CLUBS IN 2024

45 ATTEND
OUR
ON AVERAGE DROP INS
TWICE PER WEEK

24 ATTENDED
OUR
YOUNG PEOPLE WINTER RETREAT



Meaningful Work



BARISTA ACADEMY NEW OPPORTUNITIES WITH THE YMCA

Stewart began his YMCA journey after being referred by Skills Development Scotland. Aspiring to become an aircraft engineer and to enrol at Perth College UHI, Stewart sought opportunities to build skills after leaving school. A YMCA youth worker, also a Perth College UHI student, supported Stewart's transition into college, forming a strong connection through shared experiences.

Stewart joined the Barista Academy and weekly drop-in sessions, gaining barista training and practical skills that enhanced his job prospects. Initially overwhelmed with the amount of activity, he later grew comfortable with guidance from his YMCA youth worker, who helped him manage healthy stress environments. Beyond formal employability spaces, Stewart engaged in various activities like flower arranging for the Aberfeldy Highland Ball, attending the YMCA Scotland awards dinner, and representing YMCA Tayside at the official Y Centre's opening with HRH Princess Royal.

*I can't believe
all I have
achieved in 6
months*

These experiences reflect the YMCA's person-centred approach, offering long-term, consistent support to ensure resilience and confidence. Without Stewart's own willingness to step out of his comfort zone he shares that he wouldn't have been able to better connect with his community, develop life skills, and prepare for his future. Now pursuing a Level 4 Employability Skills qualification Stewart continues to grow, supported by a YMCA community committed to helping him achieve his goals.





Meaningful Work

Y INNOVATE DEVELOPING SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE

Lucy was first introduced to the YMCA through our Church Partnership work at Kinnoull, when she was in P7. She took part in our holiday programme with her older brother, using our drawing tablets to create digital art.

Fast forward to our new building and the flourishing Y Innovate project Lucy is now old enough to engage with our tech sessions and has really taken to this opportunity. Our Tech Drop Ins regularly see 17 or more young people, enthusiastically create fun and useful products with everything from a laser cutter, a 3D printer and the drawing tablets.

Lucy comes along almost every week and displays a real aptitude for art and design, particularly the 3D printing pens and drawing tablets. It's been great to watch Lucy grow up in this space, becoming more confident in herself and her skills.

We recently selected Lucy to be part of the small group who would meet HRH Princess Royal, partly due to the length of time she's been coming along, but more so because she has been committed and engaged over the last few years.

*I feel as if
YMCA has
helped make me
who I am today*



Sustainable Planet



ECO-AMBASSADORS BECOMING MORE SUSTAINABLY AWARE

Fraser first began his involvement with YMCA Tayside when he was in primary school, attending one of our local church and community partnerships, as he got older he began to join more of our projects, one of them being our weekly drop-ins, where he then became the chair of the committee. Over time Fraser began to join more and more of our groups and in this past year he has become one of our new Eco-Ambassadors.

During Fraser's time being involved with the Eco-Ambassadors he has developed a desire to help reduce waste in his local community. With the knowledge he has gained through attending the weekly sessions he was able to learn new skills and develop his own personal goals to help improve the environments he is a part of.

Through the Eco-Ambassadors weekly groups Fraser and his peers have developed knowledge about the different ways they can help to reduce waste, their own carbon footprint and how to pass on the information they have gained to inspire other young people to do the same.

“
*I like the group
because we have
fun but we also
get work done*
”





Sustainable Planet

ELECTRIC MINIBUS CLOSING IN ON NET ZERO

Through the Y Centre development and YMCA activities, YMCA Tayside is working towards becoming Net Zero. One area that will make a big impact towards achieving Net Zero is successfully securing the funding to purchase a fully electric 15 seat minibus. The purchase of the minibus has allowed YMCA Tayside to support Perth and Kinross Council Services for young people.

The minibus provision has been invaluable in enabling us to support young people and has increased their attendance and engagement in various outdoor activities across Tayside.

Young people including those in the Eco-Ambassadors group have been enthused by the drive to reach Net Zero. They have learnt about the impact the minibus will have in reaching our sustainability goal of becoming Net Zero.



“

*Silent
vroom
vroom*

”

Y Centre Opening

YMCA TAYSIDE CELEBRATE THE OFFICIAL ROYAL OPENING OF Y CENTRE

YMCA Tayside were delighted to welcome HRH Princess Royal to open the magnificent new Y Centre in Perth. Its official opening marked a momentous occasion for the staff, young people, volunteers, partners and funders and was such a celebration for all in attendance.

HRH Princess Royal began by taking a tour of the 'Drop In' space that was created to give a safe space for young people to socialise with each other several times a week and connect with youth workers. Here she spoke to young people that were part of our Time Capsule project, the youth cooking group and the young people that were a part of the Design Academy that helped create the Drop In space alongside professional interior designers.

She then visited The Well and Y Innovate, spaces that have been created to encourage young people to develop skills in retail, hospitality and STEM. Here she had the opportunity to discuss this work with the young people who have benefitted from the spaces and work.

HRH Princess Royal also visited the flats that are a part of the centre to act as transitional/emergency housing for young people. In the final part of the tour she met with key funders and trustees of YMCA Tayside in the Gannochy Room which acts as an events space in the new centre.

To end this wonderful occasion, HRH Princess Royal unveiled a plaque to officially open the centre.



Royal Visit



“It was an absolute privilege to welcome HRH Princess Royal to celebrate the official opening of YMCA Tayside’s magnificent Y Centre, which will serve the community for generations to come. I was thrilled to host and observe The Princess take time with every individual, showing such an interest in every aspect of the development and how the young people benefit from the work within.”

JILL MCGRATH CEO



Community Wellbeing



CHURCH AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS OVERCOMING CHALLENGES AT THE WINTER RETREAT



Holly, a member of the young leader's team at our Craigie and Moncreiffe Church community partnership, has faced challenges with their mental health.

Recently, our church and community partners met up for a weekend away. This allowed the young people to take part in a variety of activities and other outdoor pursuits. Despite Holly's anxiety about being away from home and taking part in the activities they accepted the invitation to the winter retreat. During the retreat Holly showed remarkable courage and determination, actively participating in all activities such as skiing, crate climbing and indoor climbing.

While Holly struggled during the night they managed to get through with the support and encouragement of their peers. After the weekend Holly expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to attend the retreat. They had a fantastic time bonding with friends and youth workers, developing new skills and confidence through the various activities.

The impact of this retreat continues to resonate with Holly. They frequently talk about the experience, reflecting on what they learnt and the enjoyment they found in overcoming their challenges. This positive experience has become a cherished memory, highlighting the importance of community support and the value of stepping out of one's comfort zone.

“This was one of the best trips I've been on, if not the best”



Community Wellbeing

LIFE SKILLS A RECIPE FOR CONFIDENCE AND GROWTH

Steven, with little prior cooking experience, joined our Life Skills sessions focused on cooking, which greatly improved his abilities and confidence. Previously, his kitchen skills were limited, and past experiences left him doubting himself. However, through the YMCA, his outlook transformed.

As he tackled more complex recipes, Steven's confidence grew. A standout moment was preparing mac and cheese for a YMCA drop-in event attended by over 50 young people. This accomplishment proved to Steven that cooking wasn't as intimidating as he thought, especially with a supportive team. Positive feedback from peers and youth workers boosted his self-belief, inspiring him to recreate the dish at home, choosing to cook from scratch rather than rely on unhealthy pre-packaged meals.

These experiences have had a lasting impact. Steven now cooks weekly for our drop-ins, showcasing his growing independence. Recently, he selected the YMCA for his UHI social sciences placement, aligning with his goal to become a youth worker.

Inspired by those who helped him build confidence, Steven is determined to support others in similar ways.

We are proud of Steven's journey and are excited to see him flourish. His commitment continues to enrich our weekly drop-ins, a service we hope to expand.



*I enjoy
cooking now*

Just World

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL



During summer, we led an overnight camping trip where seven Ukrainian young people paddled down a two-mile stretch of Loch Tay before setting up camp at Lurglomond. During the paddle, the girls began to sing, and the staff were amazed at the change in their demeanour.

The group set up tents and were shown how to light an open fire, but it quickly became apparent that the young people were highly knowledgeable and skilled at tending fires safely. This led to conversations about their life experiences and childhoods in Ukraine.

The following morning, one young person saw glowing embers among the ash of the fire and crafted a fan from a foil tray to rekindle the fire and cook breakfast. Our instructors were impressed, noting a significant difference in skill and craftsmanship between similar Scottish groups and the Ukrainian young people.

Camping at the Loch was an unforgettable experience

Around the fire at night, the group discussed what 'home' looked like, with many having grown up in rural settings. There were open reflections on the complexities around the concept of 'home'

and thoughts on returning to Ukraine. Staff reflected that this trip had been a standout element of the year, as the young people seemed more relaxed in this environment. They laughed, joked, and engaged with workers better than in other settings.



Just World

ELEVATE MEN'S WELLBEING PROJECT


Omar's Story: A Journey of Resilience

Omar arrived in Dundee as an asylum seeker. Despite the challenges he has faced, Omar became a valued member of the Men's Wellbeing Programme at YMCA Tayside. The Men's Wellbeing Programme was designed to support men facing isolation and mental health challenges by providing a safe space to connect, share experiences and grow together. Activities ranged from group discussions to outdoor adventures, all aimed at building trust, confidence, and a sense of community.

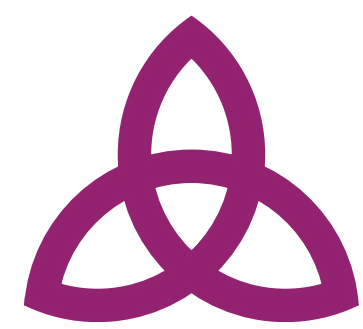
From the outset, Omar's contribution went beyond simply taking part. He helped to organise the other participants, often stepping in to translate so that everyone could feel included. He even offered up his place on an outdoor activity day so someone else could have the opportunity to go.

When Omar asked for a reference to support his Home Office interview, we were delighted to assist. His dedication to the programme and to those around him spoke volumes about his character. A few weeks ago, Omar shared the incredible news that he had been granted five years' residency status. In his message, he thanked us for the support we have provided along the way.

Omar's story is a powerful reminder of how vital our work is in supporting individuals to rebuild their lives. It highlights the importance of kindness, community, and creating opportunities for people to thrive despite the challenges they face.



“this has helped improved everyone's mental health and it has encouraged us to try and get fit.”



Faith Based Work

EXPLORING FAITH THROUGH OUR CHURCH PARTNERSHIPS

MAGNITUDE WORSHIP

We took Craigie connect youth committee along to a Magnitude worship night in Perth, they had never been to something like this before but were engaged and chatted with other young people. After this night it sparked conversation about how people worship.

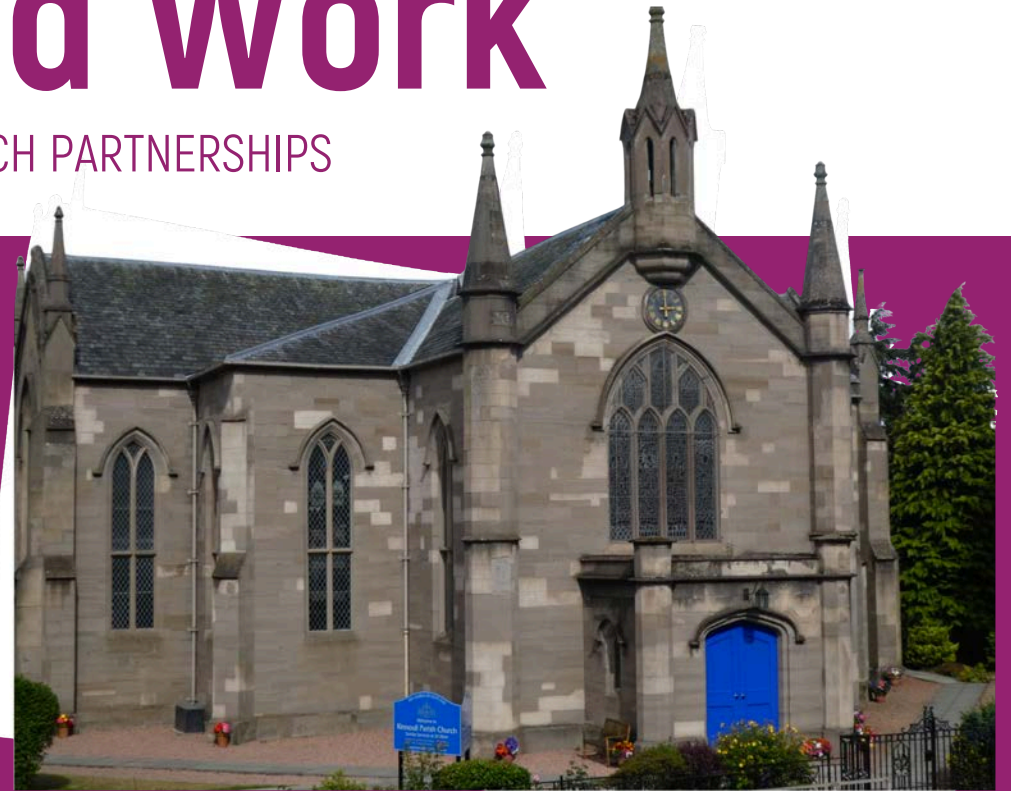
YOUTH UNIFY

Youth Unify was an amazing experience as it brought together YMCAs from around the world, as it helped impact my faith and I felt closer to God. I took part in different workshops and activities, including morning prayers.

There were between 45-55 young people that attended the week long camp, which was held in Bratislava, Slovakia. Everyone engaged really well and participated in a variety of activities.

FAITH IN ACTION

Throughout the year we have seen spiritual growth in young people across the work we do. From devotions before sessions, to questions about the church, to heartfelt conversations in one to one settings. We have had young people engage with faith really openly, honestly, and with curiosity. Through this we have had young people go to church, start praying, attend (and enjoy!) worship nights, and clearly value the time spent with staff chatting about faith and Christianity. It's a testament to how powerful the teachings of the Gospel can be.



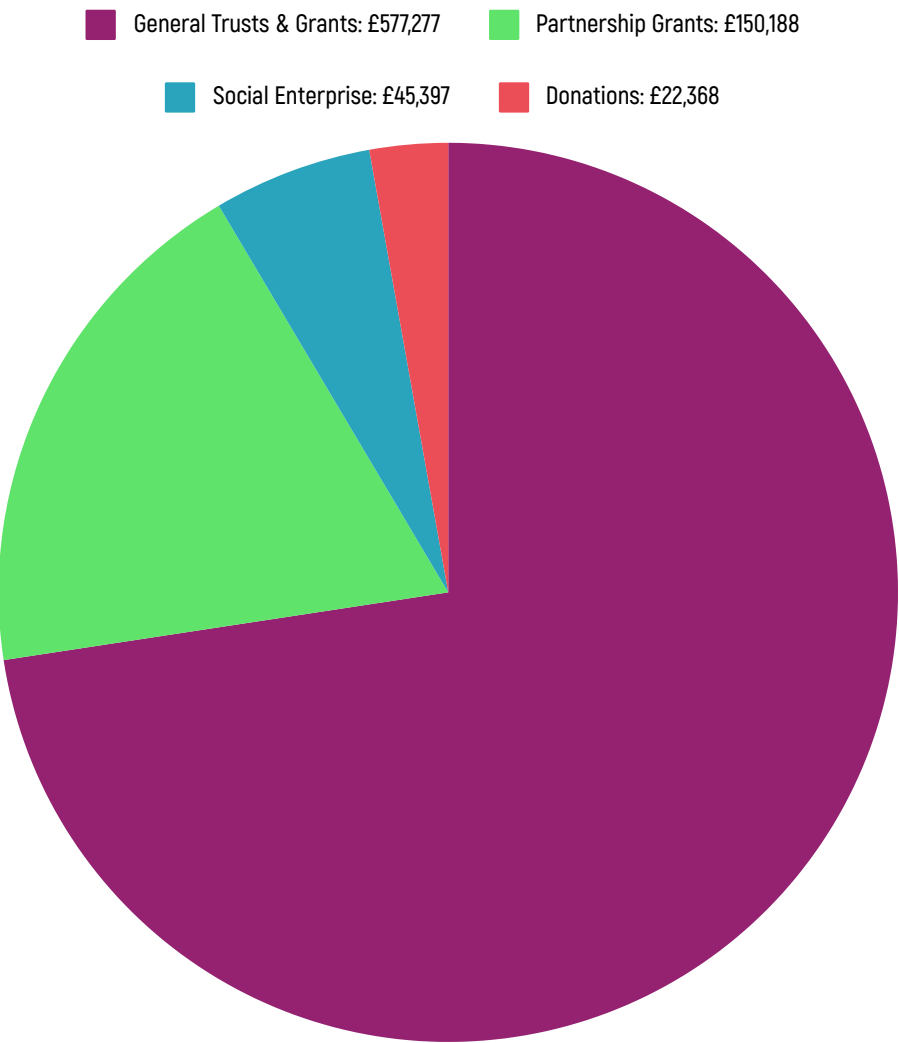
CONVERSATIONS OF FAITH

Conversations of Faith has been going regularly for some time now. We have covered topics from certainty in faith, through to why people sing to God, via the book of Nehemiah. While still a small group the young people who come along are enthusiastic and often ask really thought provoking questions. There's no other session we run where the young people message so much on the occasions it's not running.

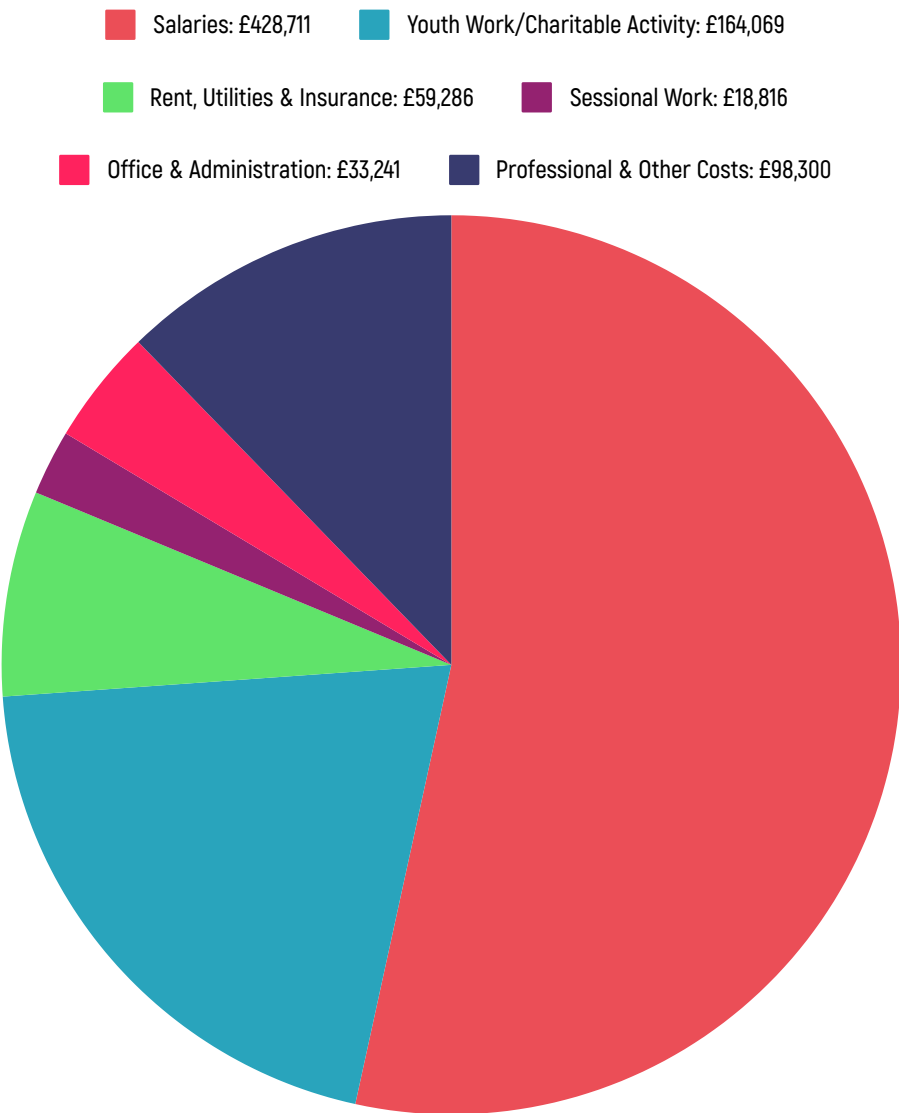
Financial Report

CONCISE FINANCIAL OVERVIEW OF YMCA TAYSIDE

Income: £795,230



Expenditure: £802,426





PERTH &
KINROSS
COUNCIL



The
Gannochy
Trust



The
ROBERTSON
Trust



Delivered by
THE NATIONAL LOTTERY
COMMUNITY FUND



THE
Basil Death
TRUST

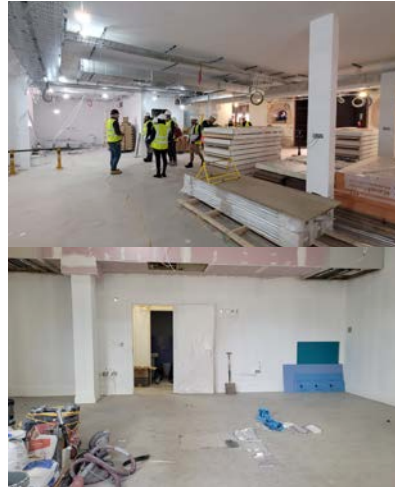
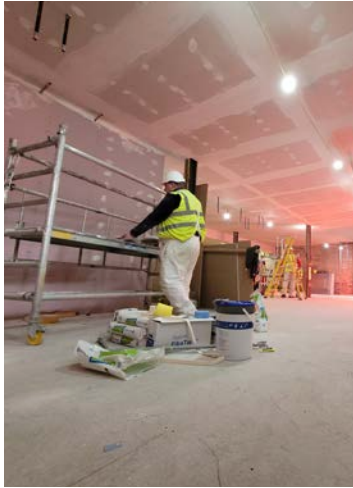


THANK
YOU!

without the generosity of our funders, we would
not be able to continue the work that we do, so
THANK YOU from us and everyone we work with!



PERTH &
KINROSS
COUNCIL





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