

# The impact of the trust model.

We often get asked what makes trusts different in delivering leisure and cultural services. Most of it has to do with trusts' purpose and ethos: they are all non-profit-distributing and are rooted in their local place focused on improving people's lives and wellbeing through leisure, sports, and cultural activity. But how do they do that exactly?

We believe the charitable purpose and community focus of trusts' work is reflected in the way they operate and the services they provide, which makes them valuable contributors to creating more inclusive places to live, work, and visit.

Trusts value providing quality leisure, sports and cultural activities for their communities while also supporting their local authorities in making their towns and cities attractive places to visit. Trusts manage and promote community assets, such as velodromes, waterparks, and town halls, and take care of parks and recreational areas like golf courses and nature reserves which attract locals and visitors alike. But trusts also organise their own events to put a spotlight on their region. Magna Vitae Trust for Leisure & Culture, for example, has been doing this for nine years on the east coast of Lincolnshire with their [SO Festival](#). The programme of this arts & culture festival combines community events with a showcase of international performers and artists. The SO Festival aims to bring art to more culturally isolated locations and to support the local economy by attracting both residents and visitors to the area.

Trusts' facilities and services are adapted to be accessible to everyone in their community. They respond to demographic and societal changes and participate in national (health and wellbeing) programmes, such as exercise referral and social prescribing. Trusts also support national priorities like reducing social exclusion, loneliness, and supporting people with long-term conditions. For example, in Bridgend County, Wales, the number of people living with dementia is anticipated to increase to over 3000 by 2030. This encouraged Halo Leisure to work together with local authorities through a partnership of adult social care, health trainers, carers and local community groups to create a safe and [friendly swimming environment](#) for people with dementia and their carers.

Our 110 member trusts collectively received over 407m visits in 2018, however the impact of their work extends far beyond their core services. Trusts make communities a more pleasant place to live and increase community cohesion. To illustrate, the [Northampton Street Sports Project](#) of the Northampton Leisure Trust in England delivers free sport sessions for youth aged 8-18 years. The programme has, over the past 11 years, increased its delivery from 3 to 12 areas in the Northampton Borough and expanded from delivering football sessions to include basketball, dodgeball and volunteer and coaching opportunities. The project, delivered in collaboration with health, sport, and community group partners, is recognised to increase young people's confidence and reduce anti-social behaviour.



**"Trusts' facilities and services are adapted to be accessible to everyone in their community"**

Trusts are important employers and contribute significantly to the skills development of their communities. Member trusts collectively employ over 89,000 people and are supported by over 14,500 volunteers. Trusts are, rightly so, proud to develop local people's skills and provide an attractive place to work right across the country. Kirklees Active Leisure in England, for example, is the largest employer of 18 – 25 year olds in their region. Other trusts also commit to advancing young people's careers, either through apprenticeships or through their own programmes. High Life Highland in Scotland has done just that with their [Leadership Programme](#). The Programme was born from a sports leadership project in a small

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town in Highland but is now embedded in nine places. It is open to all young people (12 to 25 years) and offers training opportunities, qualifications, and mentoring to support young people's leadership journey within their own community.

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We could talk for days about the impact of trusts on communities' wellbeing and development. But we should not forget that trusts do not work by themselves. They collaborate with a wide range of local partners to deliver their services across communities. They also reinvest every pound of profit generated back into their organisation to deliver services and programmes to even more people. We are therefore proud to promote our member trusts as valued partners and community anchors with demonstrable social value and impact.

## About us

**Community Leisure UK is the members' association that specialises in representing charities and social enterprises delivering public leisure and culture services across England, Scotland and Wales.**

**We:**

- provide a nationwide platform enabling members to meet peers and access strategic partners to find best practice solutions to common problems and recommendations to tackle future industry developments; and
- use the power of the collective membership to represent, reach, influence and promote the charitable trust model benefits at a national level, to inform policy and increase understanding of the trust model.

**Our Values**



[communityleisureuk.org](http://communityleisureuk.org)

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