

## Pinkston Watersports Centre - Operational Overview



Pinkston Watersports (PWS) is an urban waterports centre, sited at the end of the Edinburgh-Glasgow canal, 1 mile from Glasgow City Centre, 2 mins off the M8 Jn 15 + 16.

It has a clean water basin (old canal dock), secure storage for clubs and organisations, changing and meeting rooms, a water treatment plant; and Scotland's 1st Artificial WhiteWater Course (AWWC). It is sited on an island in the canal terminus; with good security.

Pinkston has started the transformation of an area of urban blight, bringing colour and activity to the area, and attracting other ancillary and associated activity. It is the seed for Scottish Canal's vision of a Sports Hub in Port Dundas. Other sports nearby include wakeboarding and a large indoor skateboard park is under development.

It lies on the edge of North Glasgow, and one of the centres missions is to deliver social outcomes for this area, especially for disadvantaged youth. Already delivered are good benefits from the community paddling scheme, with taster sessions and skills progression; as well as diversionary activity for a Maryhill Police scheme. To date, 20 community coaches have been trained, especially from local youth clubs, and they have started regular community sessions. The main bottleneck in community work in the past year was staff time to co-ordinate activity. A member of one of the local housing associations, NG Homes, is on the charity's Board and is funding part of a new development post to ease this bottleneck. Other links include Glasgow Kelvin College and Rosemount Development Trust.

At Pinkston, a 'pitch' cost is £30 for 2 hours, including changing and showers, for 16 clients. With your own coach, and using Pinkston's community equipment, costs are comparable to hire for a 5-a side football pitch. This makes outdoor watersports accessible to the local population.

The venue has Commonwealth Games Legacy status, the only substantial sports site in North Glasgow to gain this (most Commonwealth Games sports sites are in East Glasgow).

The Artificial White Water Course (AWWC) was built in a groundbreaking modular construction, and features 3 pumps lifting 7 tonnes of water per second in total. New flexibility is built in with a second, high standard / difficulty 'short course'. This evolution in AWWC development, with cheaper pumping costs, is the 'Glasgow Design' and is now being marketed around the world.

Since the site opened in May '14, it has become operational and financially viable with a good safety record. Pinkston uses a business model of training the user organisations to use the site themselves, which keeps staff numbers and overheads low. Pinkston only provides a little of the activity itself, mainly for the local community paddling. Interestingly, the season last year extended well into November and early December.

There were approximately 20k participants in 2015 and in 2016 numbers exceeded 25k.

The user organisations and clubs are trained through the 'ESO' (External Site Operator) pathway, which is monitored in practice by Pinkston staff, and feedback offered when appropriate. 19 clubs and organisations have become resident on site, see complete list at end.

It is Scotland's Swift Water rescue centre, used by all emergency services (Coastguard, Mountain Rescue, RNLi but especially the Fire & Rescue Service).

As well as a lot of paddlesports, activities and events on site include regular open water swim sessions on the clean water 140 x 28 m basin; triathlons, canoe polo competitions, community days; commercial team building and recently a tranche of filming of 'Whisky Galore'.

The Scottish Canoe Slalom and development squads (1/3 of the British team are Scots) train several hours a week; and a UK Division 1 ranking event is held on site, along with a number of lower ranking division events.

Current staff are: FT General / Development Manager, FT Centre Manager, PT Administrator, and freelance staff, some on short term contracts.

The site and buildings are owned by Scottish Canals. Glasgow Watersports (GWS) Ltd is leasing the site and is the sole operator and operated as Pinkston Waterports Centre. Glasgow Watersports Ltd is a charitable Limited Company, consisting of 9 volunteer directors, many with a paddling, or other watersports backgrounds. GWS continue to improve its governance arrangements, with input from Jobs + Business Glasgow.

Pinkston has numerous income streams, and is not currently dependent on grants. Pinkston has secured funding for 2 years from the Robertson Trust for business planning for social outcomes.

Looking forward, the aim of the Board is to expand activity through marketing and business planning, and to significantly expand the community engagement and provide social outcomes through paddlesport. The involvement of the local community is vital and the new development manager will be expected to continue liaison and networking with local groups and organisations to develop the business and events and get the community 'on the water'.

### **Main Income Streams:**

1) Container Rental  
(£1,000 per 20', £2,000 per 40' container per year).

Resident Organisations

Clubs:

- Glasgow Kayak Club
- Monklands Kayak Club
- SiMY Youth work Organisation
- Glasgow Caledonian University Canoe Club
- Pinkston Panthers Club (Competition)
- Canoe Polo

Organisations:

- Glasgow Kelvin College
- Social Work Outdoor Resource Centre
- Glenmore Lodge Centre of Excellence

Safety:

- Scottish Fire and Rescue
- RNLI

- RLSS

Youth:

- Education Dept
- Scouts (Clyde regional base)
- St Aloysius School,

Other:

- Freewheel (Disability Bike Charity)
- Wakeboard (Glasgow Wakeboard Park)
- Duke of Edinburgh (equipment).
- Rafting company

2) Facility Hire

75 organisations are trained the hire the facilities through over 460 individuals trained External Site Operators.

Flat Water areas are £30 per two hour slots.

Whitewater course is £65 to £75 per hour.

Classrooms are also available to hire separately.

**INCOME**

**2015 £130k**

**2016 circa £200k**

***Main categories (2016):***

Containers	£45k
Fire and Rescue Training-	£24k
Other Water activity	
and classroom hire from other users	£131k

Note – water hire is approximately whitewater 50% and flatwater hire 50%

## EXPENDITURE

2015 £120k

2016 circa £160k

Major items:

Staff costs including overheads /training	£52,000
Freelance staff	£13,000
Electricity	£32,000
Water Treatment	£4,500

### Awards:

The Living Waterways Award 2015 – Leisure and Tourism

People Make Glasgow awards 2016 – Legacy Award

The Herald Society Awards 2016 – Commonwealth 2014 Legacy Award.

A. Laird V3 16/12/2016

Centre Design and operating model by:



[www.epduk.com](http://www.epduk.com)

Whitewater by:



[www.rapidwatercourses.com](http://www.rapidwatercourses.com)

and



[www.rapidblocs.com](http://www.rapidblocs.com)