

STRATEGY FOR SCOTTISH MOUNTAIN BIKING 2023-2025



CONTENTS

3	MINISTERIAL FOREWORD	
4	INTRODUCTION	
6	THE BACKGROUND	
11	DELIVERING AGAINST SCOTTISH AND UK GOVERNMENT POLICY	
13	HOW WE WILL DELIVER THIS REFRESH OF THE STRATEGY	
15	CREATING A SUSTAINABLE SYSTEM OF SUPPORT	
18–23	TRAILS – 2023–2025	
18	INTRODUCTION	
19	STRATEGIC TRAIL PROJECTS	
19	CONNECT COMMUNITIES THROUGH PATHS & TRAILS	
19	TRAILS ASSOCIATIONS	
20	MULTI-DISCIPLINE VENUES	
20	DIRTT PROJECT – SKILLS AGENDA	
20	GRAVEL & OFF-ROAD ADVENTURE TOURING	
21	IMPACT OF STORMS	
21	E-BIKE RESEARCH	
21	CONTINUING MTB ACCESS RIGHTS, WIDER ADVENTURE & PROMOTING RESPONSIBILITIES	
21	DATA AND EVIDENCE OF IMPACT	
23	TAKING ACTION	
24–29	DESTINATIONS 2023–2025	
24	INTRODUCTION	
25	CRITERIA FOR PREMIER, PRIORITY & EMERGING	
25	MAJOR EVENTS – SECURING EVENTS & PREPARING DESTINATIONS	
26	GROWTH MARKETS – E-BIKES, GRAVEL/ADVENTURE, FAMILIES, ENDURO, BIKE PARK/UPLIFT	
26	FESTIVALS AND NATIONAL, REGIONAL & LOCAL EVENTS	
27	IMPROVING THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY	
27	BUILDING OUR CAPABILITIES – MARKETING	
27	ADVENTURE TOURISM	
29	TAKING ACTION	
30–31	INNOVATION 2023–2025	
30	PROGRESS THE INNOVATION CENTRE	
31	CREATING A UK & EUROPEAN WIDE NETWORK	
31	INNOVATION ACROSS THE THEMES	
31	RESHORING & REMANUFACTURING	
31	TAKING ACTION	
32–35	HEALTH & INCLUSION 2023–2025	
32	INTRODUCTION	
33	GENDER	
33	TRAIL THERAPY	
33	CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE	
33	SIMD AREAS – URBAN MTB PROGRAMMES	
33	UNDERREPRESENTED COMMUNITIES	
35	TAKING ACTION	
36–41	SPORT 2023–2025	
36	INTRODUCTION	
37	CLUBS	
37	EVENTS	
38	PLACES TO RIDE	
38	GROWING THE SPORT THROUGH HEALTH & INCLUSION	
39	PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY	
39	PEOPLE	
41	TAKING ACTION	
43	SUMMARY	

MINISTERIAL FOREWORD



RICHARD LOCHHEAD MSP
MINISTER FOR SMALL BUSINESS, TOURISM,
INNOVATION AND TRADE

As the Minister with responsibility for tourism and innovation I know the value a strong mountain biking sector will bring to our national economy. It will attract mountain bikers from across the world and encourage our entrepreneurs to develop new innovative products.

Since the first national strategy for Scottish mountain biking was launched 13 years ago, it has closely aligned with the Scottish Governments priorities. This one is no different. The Strategy embraces the objectives in our national Tourism Strategy Outlook 2030: from passionate People to thriving places, diverse businesses to some very memorable experiences.

The development of the world's first Innovation Centre for mountain biking, here in Scotland, will help bring our long-established heritage for innovation and our world renowned academic system to the attention of global mountain biking and cycling brands. This will provide fantastic opportunities for inward investment and job creation.

And what a golden opportunity that will give our young people. Developing a skilled workforce in the

biking industry gives us the chance to put in place the educational and training opportunities needed to attract the brightest and most enthusiastic talent. The skills they will learn will be transferable to so many other sectors too – a real win win for Scotland.

The centre will also provide businesses, from across the nation, the opportunity to develop new products and prototypes. With the added advantage of being able to test them straight away on the world class trails on the Innovation Centres doorstep.

It's not just about the trails and the mechanics of bikes. Mountain biking is first and foremost about having fun with family and friends. The physical health benefits of getting out and about on a bike and filling your lungs with some great Scottish fresh air are obvious.

It is brilliant to see the strategy also pushes a "cycling for all" goal. It is important that everyone, regardless of their background, gets the opportunity to be involved.

The ambition to create a pool of leaders and role models within disabled and ethnic minority communities to encourage greater participation is also an especially important step in achieving this goal.

With the 2023 UCI Cycling World Championships taking place across Scotland, the eyes of the cycling world are upon us. The strategy is a fantastic vehicle to showcase the strides we have made over the last 10 years. It demonstrates that an innovative approach with a clear vision can help Scotland be recognised as the leader in European mountain biking.

I welcome this strategy – it covers so much of what we are looking to achieve in the wellbeing economy. A Wellbeing economy is designed to serve people and the planet. Mountain biking certainly does that. It is at the crossroads of health, sport, innovation, sustainability, and communities.

Perhaps it's best to end with a quote from the Belgian cyclist Eddy Merckx "ride as much or as little, or as long or as short as you feel...but ride".

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the refresh of the Strategy for Scottish Mountain Biking, 2023–2025.

Mountain biking can do so much for Scotland's economy, our physical and mental health, and gives us an opportunity to shine on the world stage.

There has been significant progress in delivering the seven-year (2019–2025) strategy. On behalf of the MTB Consortium, Developing Mountain Biking in Scotland (DMBinS) have provided a 'Progress Report' on the first four years of the strategy's implementation.

There have been many projects completed delivering a large impact for riders across the country and many projects have been supported and will be delivered soon, including 2023 UCI Cycling World Championships, strategic trail projects, and the MTB Innovation Centre and Bike Park.

The members of the Scottish Mountain Bike Consortium (the MTB Consortium) have made fantastic progress towards delivering the current 'Strategy for Scottish Mountain Biking, 2019–2025', in just three years. The Consortium have decided to update the strategy to ensure it builds on the good work already undertaken and it remains ambitious in what can be delivered in a vastly different political, social, and economic landscape in 2023. Although this refresh will have a lifespan of three additional years (2023, 2024 and 2025) it is expected that given its forward thinking and vision that its impact will be well beyond this point.

This refresh will provide strategic direction to the Scottish Government, cycling bodies, national agencies and organisations, tourism businesses, product designers and manufacturers, and the mountain bike community, to ensure that the proposed investments are maximised, new opportunities are explored and taken, and there is a clear direction and understanding of the impact of mountain biking in Scotland.

There is no doubt that the next few years will present the sector, and the mountain bike community, with many challenges to overcome, including the cost of living crisis, likely public spending restrictions, the climate emergency

and our collective responsibility to reduce carbon emissions and work towards net zero.

This refresh of the strategy will continue to aim to deliver against three objectives:

- ✓ **TO INCREASE PARTICIPATION IN MOUNTAIN BIKING**
- ✓ **TO ACHIEVE SPORTING SUCCESS**
- ✓ **TO INCREASE THE ECONOMIC IMPACT THROUGH TOURISM AND PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT**

The strategy outlines the thinking and key areas required to deliver these objectives in a sustainable way, taking account of potential negative impacts such as environmental concerns, interactions with other users and landowner liability.

All members of the MTB Consortium have analysed their own actions required to contribute to the delivery the strategy and DMBinS have collected feedback from businesses and the community.

The strategy captures the work required for mountain biking to deliver for the people of Scotland. It describes a way to ensure that strategic support for mountain biking can continue in the longer term, reducing the significant risk of over-reliance on continuing public sector investment.

Throughout the strategy, we outline some of the many measurable benefits that mountain biking can deliver. And let's not forget an intangible one that's just as important: simply having fun and making people feel happier.

We hope that you, whatever your role in Scottish mountain biking, can identify an area, or areas, where you can make a difference and help our fantastic activity reach its potential in Scotland.

WE TRUST YOU CAN BE PART OF IT.



MEMBERS OF THE MTB CONSORTIUM ARE:				
				
				
				

THE BACKGROUND

Mountain biking in Scotland has seen success but there remains a lot that can still be achieved.

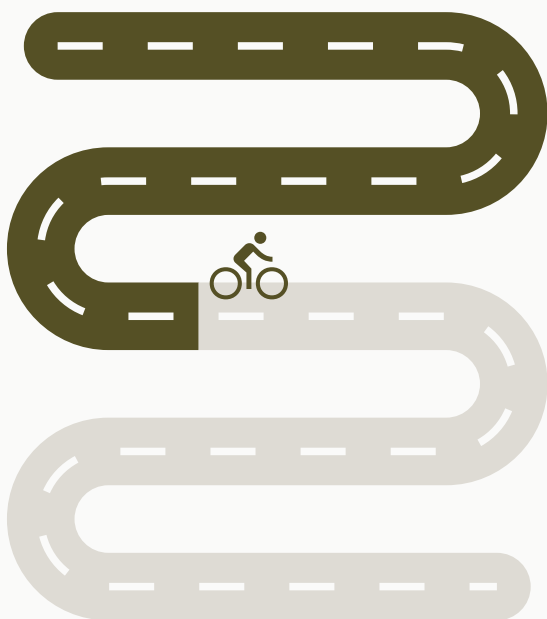
The global landscape is vastly different from 2018, when the 2019–2025 strategy for Scottish mountain biking was drafted and consulted, these changes have offered challenges but also huge opportunities for mountain biking to deliver more for the people of Scotland.

The impact and legacy of the pandemic has largely been positive on participation in cycling and mountain biking, and the bike industry. Cycling and walking emerged as the two main activities in which people all over Scotland, the UK and globally could participate to benefit their physical and mental health. This led to a 'bike boom' with high demand for bikes, parts, and accessories. This increase in demand for bikes was at a time when the global supply chain was greatly impacted due to COVID shutdowns and logistical challenges. Statistics from the Bicycle Association of Great Britain show, despite these supply chain issues, that in 2020, the UK cycling retail market reached £2.31bn with, on average, a bike sold

every 10 seconds, with 3.1m bikes sold and 40% of those were mountain bikes.

Participation in mountain biking has increased, with counters in the Tweed Valley showing an increase of 26% from 2019 to 2020 (outwith lockdowns). This follows a similar pattern to leisure cycling routes, with Cycling Scotland's National Monitoring Framework data showing a 47% increase in cycling journeys compared to the previous year.

This increase in cycling participation, and a general trend towards authentic and individualised experiences, is likely to see the continued trend for mountain biking, and wider adventure, holidays continue. Indeed, the global adventure tourism *market size was valued at \$282.1 billion US Dollars (USD) in 2021* and is projected to expand at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 15.2% from 2022 to 2030. If growth continues as expected, revenue from the adventure tourism is forecasted to be worth \$1.009 trillion USD by 2030.



**CYCLING SCOTLAND'S
NATIONAL MONITORING
FRAMEWORK DATA
SHOWS A 47%
INCREASE IN CYCLING
JOURNEYS COMPARED
TO THE PREVIOUS YEAR.**



ADVENTURE TOURISM
IS FORECASTED TO
BE WORTH \$1.009
TRILLION USD BY 2030.

It is not only in tourism that there is expected growth. The overall *cycling market is globally estimated to be worth \$64 billion USD in 2022* and is projected to expand at a CAGR of 9.7% from 2022 to 2030. If growth continues as expected, revenue from the cycling market will be forecasted to be worth \$135 billion USD by 2030. It has been identified that the mountain bike segment of the market is expected to 'grow significantly over the forecast period as consumers, particularly millennials, continue to opt for off road cycling as a form of leisure and adventure. Furthermore, the number of women, children, and young people entering the sport is increasing steadily and is likely to influence the segment growth across the globe. The establishment of new mountain bike trails and attractions, coupled with the growing media coverage of events, is expected to fuel the segment growth.'

In the UK, the Bicycle Association of GB, reports that the UK bicycle industry has seen challenges in 2022 as sales of bikes face a correction following the turbulence of the last two years. Total UK mechanical bike volumes fell to below pre-COVID. The industry experiencing variation with some sectors over supplied with stock and others sectors still struggling to source supply, high end mountain bike components are an example of the latter. There are exceptions, with the new off road gravel bike sector rising by 59% since 2019 and e-MTBs holding market share and showing growth in the rental sector. This is a trend likely to continue as riders become increasingly familiar with e-MTBs and gravel bikes drawing in both road and mountain bike riders to new experiences.

Scotland is working towards being in a stronger position to support the bike industry transformation towards digital production and reshoring from the far east. Our ability to capitalise on these growth opportunities, is largely due to the support of the Mountain Bike Centre of Scotland (MTBCOS), an innovation project hosted by Edinburgh Napier University (ENU). ENU are founding members of Cycling Industries Europe and are developing strong relationships with the Bicycle Association of GB.

Over the last decade, through the support of MTBCOS, the number of product development companies across Scotland is already growing.



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The 2019–2025 strategy for Scottish mountain biking has already secured circa £200m of investment. As detailed in the *2019–2022 Progress Report*, this investment is beginning to be implemented and if delivered as proposed within this refresh, the likely impact will be to increase the Gross Value Added (GVA) to the Scottish economy by 100% from 2015 to 2025, with the GVA contributing £200m on an annual basis from 2025.

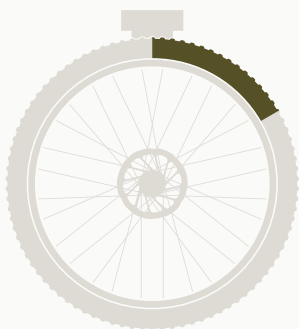
Mountain biking also can do much for the nation's physical and mental health, particularly by broadening participation and thus reducing some of Scotland's health inequalities. The Scottish Government's physical activity strategy, '*A More Active Scotland: Scotland's Physical Activity Delivery Plan*', highlights the work of DMBinS, and a range of delivery partners, in helping to create the infrastructure that provides everyone in Scotland with more opportunities to be active.

The increase in participation during the pandemic, can be built upon with the infrastructure being delivered through strategic projects, including the Glentress Masterplan and Tarland Trails Two, the Cycling Facilities Fund which will provide more opportunities for mountain biking and wider cycling through pump tracks, urban trails, and community trails. Scotland is now able to boast over 100 purpose-built locations for mountain biking. The stewardship of the existing trail network has strongly benefitted from the dramatic growth in Trails Associations across Scotland with the community playing

an increasingly active role in working with landowners to maintain and inspect our trail network.

There has been a shift in mountain biking promotion in recent years, with increasing awareness of the responsibility of mountain bikers using the outdoors, including interaction with other users, and the environmental impact on trails and paths. There has also been an increase in the promotion of mountain biking involving under-represented groups including women and girls, young people, ethnic minorities, and disabled riders. In the context of the climate emergency, it should be recognised that encouraging more people to get into mountain biking may result in more cycling as a form of active travel, contributing to modal shift away from cars for short journeys and thus a reduction in carbon emissions.

IN 2020, THE UK CYCLING RETAIL MARKET
REACHED £2.31BN



ON AVERAGE, IN 2020,
A BIKE WAS SOLD
EVERY 10 SECONDS.



OF THE 3.1M BIKES
SOLD IN 2020, 40%
WERE MOUNTAIN BIKES.



VISION

Scotland to be recognised as the leader of European mountain biking, through sustainable trail development and management, participation and sport development, and innovative product development and tourism.

MISSION BY 2025

Sustain 2.8 million annual visits to the Scottish outdoors on a mountain bike (Increase of 115% from 2015).*

Multiple world champions or world series winners in every mountain bike discipline.

Sustain mountain biking's annual total economic Gross Value Added (GVA) contribution at £225m until 2025 (Overall increase of 114% from 2015 data).*



* Data collection in 2021 which is improved from 2015 through a mixture of trail counters and online trail usage statistics. The figures detailed have been calculated using data from VisitScotland, UK Bicycle Association, and Conebi.

📷 Pete Scullion and DMBinS

DELIVERING AGAINST SCOTTISH AND UK GOVERNMENT POLICY

Mountain biking delivers across multiple national and regional strategies both within Scotland and across the UK.

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET) [↗](#)

NSET sets out the priorities for Scotland's economy as well as the actions needed to maximise the opportunities of the next decade to achieve our vision of a wellbeing economy.

Scotland Outlook 2030 – Responsible Tourism for a Sustainable Future [↗](#)

Scotland's future tourism strategy has the ambition to be the world leader in 21st century tourism. This strategy is reflective of the changing world we live in, our new mindset and approach to how we live and work and represents the beginning of a bold new approach putting our communities, our people, our visitors, our businesses and our environment at the heart of everything we do.

Active Scotland Delivery Plan [↗](#)

The Active Scotland Delivery Plan sets out actions that Scottish Government and partners are undertaking, working together to encourage and support people in Scotland to be more active, more often.

Climate Change Plan [↗](#)

Plan which sets out a transitioning to a net zero emissions Scotland for the benefit of our environment, our people, and our prosperity. We also need to adapt and build resilience to the impacts of climate change alongside our actions to reduce emissions.

South of Scotland Cycling Partnership Strategy [↗](#)

The first ever cycling partnership strategy for the South of Scotland will aim to ensure the region becomes Scotland's leading cycling destination.

The strategy aims to embed cycling in people's lives in the south, and ensure it becomes the most popular choice for shorter, everyday journeys by 2032.

UK GOVERNMENT

Levelling Up [↗](#)

Levelling up is a moral, social and economic programme for the whole of government. The Levelling Up White Paper sets out how we will spread opportunity more equally across the UK.

City Region & Growth Deals [↗](#)

City Region and Growth Deals invest in projects that drive regional economic growth and create jobs.

They are agreements between the UK Government, Scottish Government and local partners. This approach brings all levels of government together to make long-term investments that are tailored to the needs and strengths of the region.

UK Research & Innovation Strategy 2022–2027 – Transforming Tomorrow Together [↗](#)

The strategy sets out long-term, high-level priorities for how we will deliver our vision for an outstanding research and innovation system in the UK that provides everyone with the opportunity to contribute and to benefit, enriching lives locally, nationally and globally.

It also highlights UKRI's key role in delivering the government's ambitions for the UK as a global leader in research and innovation.

Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener [↗](#)

This strategy sets out policies and proposals for decarbonising all sectors of the UK economy to meet our net zero target by 2050.

Health benefits from recreation, natural capital, UK: 2022 [↗](#)

Further development of the UK recreation natural capital ecosystem service accounts, including specific methods used to estimate the health benefits gained from nature-based recreational activities.

Contributing to 10 of the Scottish Government's National Performance Outcomes

BUSINESS

- Growing Scottish tourism by making Scotland the mountain biking capital of Europe.
- Helping companies to develop bike products.
- Developing the rural economy and promoting inclusive growth.
- Increasing internationalisation through exporting and inbound tourism.
- Encouraging inward investment.

RESEARCH & INNOVATION

- Better engagement between mountain biking businesses and academia.
- Continuing growth of excellence programmes.
- More pathways for students with a mountain biking background to progress from further education into higher education.
- Further developing the Mountain Bike Centre of Scotland as a centre for innovation and excellence.
- Developing the fast-growing e-bikes sector, including its supply chain.

EMPLOYMENT

- Supporting sustainable economic growth by providing job opportunities in the MTB sector and its broader supply chain.

HEALTHIER LIVES

- Greater participation means more physical activity.
- Creating a world class network of leaders, coaches and instructors.

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILIES

- Improving people's perception of their neighbourhoods.
- More volunteering opportunities encourages connections between generations.

SUSTAINABLE PLACES

- Increasing use of bikes for active travel.
- Sustainable development of MTB facilities.
- Regional clusters used to spread good practice and identify joint working initiatives to improve local environments.

COMMUNITIES

- Increased number of mountain biking clubs and informal groups, contributing towards healthier and stronger communities.
- Regional clusters provide a focus for local communities to work together.

ENVIRONMENT

- More people accessing the outdoors responsibly.
- Sustainably built and managed trails.
- More opportunities to volunteer in trail repair and maintenance, which helps to sustain trail networks.

NATIONAL IDENTITY

- Pride in Scotland's status as a world-class nation for mountain biking.
- Opportunities for Scots to succeed on the world stage.

INEQUALITIES

- Reducing health inequalities by increasing participation in mountain biking, particularly in areas of deprivation.

HOW WE WILL DELIVER THIS REFRESH OF THE STRATEGY

The significant progress made over the last 3 years (see *2019–2022 Progress Report*) has been greatly helped by the members of the MTB Consortium bringing people and investment together. Working collaboratively through a well thought-out cross-sectoral strategy provides the best possible chance of delivering sustainable benefits for everyone.

This has not been achieved overnight. The members of the MTB Consortium have been working together since 2007 and, after a period of steady progress, we are seeing Scotland's largest ever investment in mountain biking.

The delivery of this strategy will be reliant on the key roles of two distinct groupings.

1. The engagement, funding, support and delivery of bodies involved in the MTB Consortium. These include Scottish Government; Forestry and Land Scotland, alongside Scottish Land and Estates; NatureScot; Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and South of Scotland Enterprise; VisitScotland and EventScotland; sportscotland; Scottish Cycling and the other national cycling bodies; Edinburgh Napier University and other associated universities and colleges.
2. The knowledge, passion, effort, and inspiration of the mountain bike community, private enterprise, bike brands, Destination Management Organisations, national parks, and a range of direct and supply chain businesses.

To make these groupings work as effectively as possible will be a key role of Developing Mountain Biking in Scotland (DMBinS) who will lead by energising, co-ordinating and providing support for delivery. Its wide-ranging connections help to bring people together to form new and effective partnerships. The passion and commitment of the DMBinS team will help drive new ideas forward.

The ethos of co-ordination and collaboration, along with core values of sustainability, responsibility, and knowledge sharing will help mountain biking develop at national, regional and local levels.



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📷 Pete Scullion



📷 Pete Scullion

CREATING A SUSTAINABLE SYSTEM OF SUPPORT

Over the last 10 years, mountain biking in Scotland has made great progress. It has shown that an innovative approach and a clear vision creates partnerships that help all concerned.

Central to this approach has been the work of the Developing Mountain Biking in Scotland (DMBinS) team. Situated and supported within Scottish Cycling, DMBinS has led the process of developing the MTB strategy from 2019–2025 and have been responsible for delivering many of the actions within it.

It has brought together the partners of the MTB Consortium three times a year to consolidate support, monitor members progress across the action plan of the MTB strategy, and developed relationships across multiple stakeholders to address any risks or challenges to delivering the strategy.

In 2019, Scottish Government took a significant step in the delivery of the strategy by providing core funding for DMBinS for three years, as long as there was a move towards it being self-funded at the end of the three-year funding programme. The Scottish Government took a sympathetic view when this wasn't achieved to sufficient extent, due to the work that DMBinS did during the Covid-19 pandemic to support the sector, providing advice to riders, facility providers, and businesses.

DMBinS has made steps towards sustainability, including commissioning research by Edinburgh Napier University with the mountain bike community into how they could support a sustainable financial model for DMBinS going forward, and what this model could be. The answer showed clearly that the two areas mountain bikers most wanted to see from a national representative body were: health related programmes and trail developments.

Working with members of the Scottish Cycling board, DMBinS helped set up the Scottish Cycling Foundation (OSCR NO. SC051130) and launched two new funds: Scottish MTB Health Fund and the Scottish Trail Fund. DMBinS now need the support of riders, the industry, and public sector to work together to grow the funds, deliver excellent projects, and support DMBinS's future sustainability.

By far the biggest risk for the successful implementation of this strategy, and the ongoing success of mountain biking in Scotland, is that DMBinS cannot maintain its core funding.

It should be in everyone's interest to work together to ensure that the core functions of DMBinS are sustained and that they can continue to support exciting and innovative health programmes, such as Trail Therapy, and can help grow and sustain the trail network across Scotland.



📷 Finlay Anderson and DMBinS

DEVELOPING MOUNTAIN BIKING IN SCOTLAND IS EVOLVING.

The position of Scottish Mountain Biking on the world stage is strong, but we know it can be stronger and it needs your help and support.



SCOTTISH MTB HEALTH FUND

We are really quite proud of our range of programmes that support more individuals to participate in this amazing pastime that is mountain biking.

And it is amazing! Amazing for all-round physical fitness, amazing for mental wellbeing, getting out into nature, the social and community side of it, the accessibility for folk of all ages and abilities from the super gnarly downhillers to the family riding tracks to have a picnic in the woods. It is truly phenomenal. When we remember how awesome mountain biking is, how it makes us feel, then we wouldn't want to deprive any individual access to this special pastime.



SCOTTISH MTB TRAIL FUND

Trails. Arguably, the most important element in an amazing mountain bike experience is what you are riding on. In Scotland, we have an amazing network of trails and paths (& world leading access rights for riding them) But we can do more.

We know we need to keep refreshing our network at all levels, improve paths that we are having an impact on, work with landowners and get more kids (of all ages) in towns and cities riding.





TRAILS – 2023–2025

INTRODUCTION

The opening paragraph of the 'Trails' theme in 'The Strategy for Scottish Mountain Biking, 2019–2025' still holds true. However, the sport has evolved over the last 3 years and whilst there has been significant progress, and opportunities captured, there remains a need to continue to invest in the trail network and supporting infrastructure for Scotland to reach its potential.

"The trail network is essential. Without it there can be no mountain biking. To be truly world-class, the trail network must be varied, well mapped, well maintained, easy to access, suitable for riders of all abilities, and located in strategic destinations which have greatest potential to meet our key objectives."



STRATEGIC TRAIL PROJECTS

- **7stanes Refresh**
- **Aberdeenshire integration with Adventure**
- **Dunoon MTB Project**
- **Highlands Masterplans**
- **Perthshire Independent Bike Parks**
- **Tweed Valley**

These projects have been identified as having the biggest potential return on investment towards the mission of this strategy.

Whilst it may be ambitious for all the projects to be delivered by 2025, it is important that the work continues to develop, and that negotiations with both private sector investors and funders are successful.

These projects would provide Scotland with a modern mountain bike infrastructure which will include cutting edge trail development combined with other supporting infrastructure including adequate parking, toilets, cafes, and other attractions to provide excellent experiences for a wide range of users. These projects will create sustainable economic growth, increased participation, and sports development.

It is vital that these projects, whilst maintaining their momentum, still engage with the mountain bike community and understand then build on the unique offering within each of their destinations.

CONNECT COMMUNITIES THROUGH PATHS & TRAILS

The fantastic world leading example from Bentonville, Arkansas, USA of combining recreational infrastructure (trails) with active travel routes (paths) to connect communities encourage adventure, play, travel, and whole family activity should be investigated by partners involved in mountain biking and active travel bodies such as Sustrans and Cycling Scotland. Joined up planning and community engagement will be key to this success.

This approach will help extend the benefits of the Cycling Facilities Fund (CCF) which is an £8m investment from Scottish Government, through sportscotland and Transport Scotland. It is on course to leverage circa £20m of cycling facilities across all disciplines of cycling and will cover most Local Authority areas in Scotland. The CFF is also helping the delivery of elements of strategic projects, such as Tarland Trails, Aberdeenshire and Highland Bike Plans.

With around 40 pump tracks and 30 mountain bike skills areas either built, or being profiled for investment, the fund will support grassroots mountain biking and create more clubs, local and regional races/events, and recreational cycling, particularly, targeting projects that will help connect communities across Scotland.



TRAILS ASSOCIATIONS

The progress in riders setting up Trails Associations has been a real strength in Scottish mountain biking with over 20 groups now working with landowners to maintain trails.

This strategy proposes that the next step and evolution of Trails Associations is for them to begin working with landowners/managers to jointly create sustainable and strategic trail plans. These plans may include locations for new build trails and will consider the future management and maintenance of currently unauthorised trails.

It is likely that this approach will need some compromise. There may be some trails that will be kept in the long term, however this is unlikely to mean a huge expansion in the trail network. It's more likely to be a considered refresh of trails, keeping the trail network updated, and complementing existing land management operations. For example, new trails could be planned for locations where existing trails may be lost to harvest operations, by agreement with the landowner/manager.

With a mature and responsible approach from both land managers/owners and Trails Associations, it will be the intention to remove unauthorised trail construction whilst allowing the MTB community to build appropriate trails with permission.

Over the next few years, this strategy advocates for the development of Trails Associations to continue and, with the support of DMBinS and Scottish Cycling, they should investigate funding opportunities from public sector and the bike industry to recruit staff and deliver projects that meet the skills agenda and support employability, particularly in young people, whilst improving and developing the trail network.

MULTI-DISCIPLINE VENUES

Globally, at World Cup and World Championships level, the trend over the last few years has been towards multi-discipline venues and this looks to continue, if not increase, with the new direction outlined by UCI in their partnership with Warner Bros. Discovery, which joined forces with Enduro Sports Organisation Sports (ESO Sports).

This strategy can foresee that the festival atmosphere and camaraderie that is created through this type of event will be popular with riders and sponsors.

Our strategic projects should take cognisance of this potential change. Considering the needs of the destination, the local MTB community, delivering a fantastic recreational opportunity, and the availability of the land and topography, a multi-discipline approach should be incorporated, where possible, within trail development infrastructure plans.



DIRTT PROJECT – SKILLS AGENDA

The (Developing Intereuropean Resources for Trailbuilding Training) DIRTT Project has brought together partners from Scotland, DMBinS and Edinburgh Napier University, and across Europe to improve knowledge transfer within mountain biking trail building.

In Scotland, the content developed through the project has been used to develop a new 'DIRTT Volunteer Trail Dig Leader' course and is also being used in an innovative project by DMBinS and Highland Council where they are supporting a young person back into education through mountain biking trail building. Two students from Scotland have also begun the EQF Level 5 college course at Fagskolen i Viken in Norway.

The European partners have been successful in securing the next step in the journey of European wide accreditation for trail builders as part of DIRTT 2.0, and the vision is for an integrated network of educational institutions across Europe delivering trail courses.

Scotland should investigate all possible avenues to be part of the European partnership and should look to develop future courses at school, further and higher education, along with additional course(s) for volunteers following a needs analysis. This additional training will need to be supported through increased opportunities for people to develop their competencies through mentoring, knowledge sharing, and, possibly, apprenticeships with trail building companies and Trails Associations.

GRAVEL & OFF-ROAD ADVENTURE TOURING

With our extensive network of forest roads, drovers' roads, and a growing number of paths and tracks developed for windfarms, combined with our world leading access rights, there is huge potential for Scotland to embrace the growth of gravel bike riding.

There is, however, a need to communicate to riders that these routes are often a working environment and thus a requirement for responsible cycling.

In key locations and destinations there will be the need for gravel routes to be incorporated within sustainable trail plans, potentially identifying new linking sections, and relationships developed between local cycling communities and landowners/managers to support the management of these routes and communication with riders. Gravelfoyle is a leading example for this type of development.



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IMPACT OF STORMS

The storms of winter 2021/22 had a devastating impact on the forests, the trails, and the communities who rely on the economic impact from both recreation and harvesting.

With climate change it is very likely that more of these events will occur in the future. It is vital that the response to the storm damage in 2021/22 is considered and, subsequently, plans developed between landowners/managers and communities to help mitigate the impact of future storm damage and ensure all resources are utilised in a safe and productive manner.



E-BIKE RESEARCH

British Cycling contracted Edinburgh Napier University to undertake research titled 'The future directions and trends for off road e-MTB use and impact in Great Britain' including funding from Scotland sourced, with the help of DMBinS, from NatureScot and Scottish Forestry.

Some of the research findings published in January 2023 include:

- most e-MTB riders do not want to access fragile terrain, unauthorised trails, footpaths (in England)
- most e-MTB riders will ride further, faster, and ride more laps of the same trail. Landowners & managers believe they are seeing increased wear and tear as a direct result of e-MTB use
- knowledge of outdoor access codes and what to do in an emergency could be improved

A multi-agency response to the research should be developed and the main recommendations around participation, infrastructure and communications delivered.

The research didn't extend to the impact of e-bikes on upland paths. A pilot project should be developed to understand appropriate trail construction techniques that combine, and test, the robustness of a path to accommodate e-bikes, and regular bikes, and still maintain the authenticity of experience that riders want from upland/remote mountain paths.

CONTINUING MTB ACCESS RIGHTS, WIDER ADVENTURE & PROMOTING RESPONSIBILITIES

Scotland is blessed with world-leading outdoor access rights with its associated responsibilities, but there are still risks for mountain biking access in Scotland with debates on both Unauthorised Trails and e-bikes continuing at the National Access Forum (NAF). Cycling UK (Scotland) and, now, Scottish Cycling, through DMBinS staff, are full members of the NAF and will help mitigate any risks and provide a voice for the MTB community to national partners.

Mountain biking adventures already take place in, and will, increasingly extend into the wider countryside and upland paths. As these paths and tracks will be multi-use, it is important that mountain bikers are engaged in path crowd funding and other initiatives to help sustain the paths and maintain harmonious shared use into the future.

Although the content will be led by NatureScot, working with cycling organisations and its members of the NAF in the context of Scotland's Visitor Management Strategy, it is important that all members of the MTB Consortium, the media, riders, and the mountain bike community all play a part in promoting responsible mountain biking. As the numbers of mountain bikers, and walkers, grows across Scotland it is vital we mitigate any potential conflicts through effective education and all users taking a pride in responsible use of the outdoors.



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DATA AND EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

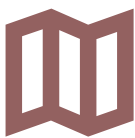
The refreshed strategy should prioritise evidencing the impact of trail projects, developing a greater understanding of the impact on health, communities, relationships with landowners/managers and other outdoor users, and sport development.





TAKING ACTION

- **Strategic projects:**
 - 7stanes Refresh
 - Aberdeenshire integration with Adventure
 - Dunoon MTB Project
 - Highlands Masterplans
 - Perthshire Independent Bike Parks
 - Tweed Valley
- **Sustainable trail plans incorporating parking, toilets, business engagement, and bike washing facilities developed for key destinations.**
- **Multi-discipline event infrastructure considered within sustainable trail plans.**
- **Connected Communities – path networks integrated with MTB trails, pump tracks, and MTB skills areas through community based organisations, Local Authorities, businesses and national organisations part funded by the Cycling Facilities Fund.**
- **Network of Trail Associations in key destinations driven by volunteers with staff supporting and based on local demand.**
- **Annual ‘Take Care of Your Trails’ campaign.**
- **Development of multi-user upland paths which consider the impact of increased usage of bikes, including e-bikes.**
- **E-bike/XC climbing trails as part of sustainable trails.**
- **Expansion of gravel and wider adventure routes mapped and promoted with adequate management and maintenance.**
- **Promotion of National Access Forum (NAF) Unauthorised MTB trails guidance.**
- **Storm contingency plan developed and implemented.**
- **Continuing engagement in the DIRT Project and develop further courses across the voluntary sector and across all education levels.**
- **Host an annual trail summit to engage trails associations and land managers/owners.**
- **National network of trail counters to be established.**
- **Effectively use the ‘Scottish Trail Fund’ to support groups, Trails Associations, and staff with DMBinS to deliver facility actions across Scotland.**



DESTINATIONS 2023–2025

INTRODUCTION

Mountain bike tourism was identified as most likely to have the greatest sustainable economic growth potential in the MTB sector. Achieving this requires destinations, and the businesses within them, to deliver a world class experience for visiting riders.

Much progress has been made, despite the challenges of the pandemic, the UCI 2023 Cycling

World Championships provides a fantastic opportunity for destinations who are prioritising mountain biking and cycling in Scotland. To take full advantage, not just in 2023 and after, destinations – and the agencies who support them – will need to continue to provide resources to businesses to get the basics right whilst developing memorable experiences at all visitor touch points.



CRITERIA FOR PREMIER, PRIORITY & EMERGING

The 2019–2025 MTB Strategy provided a hierarchy of destinations across Scotland. This has helped provide a focus for securing regional level destination support, create clear communication of Scotland's best destinations, and helped secure trail infrastructure development.

To support all Scottish mountain bike destinations this refresh proposes, to use the knowledge of DMBinS staff working, visiting, and riding the destinations, to develop a self-assessment tool which captures the making of a successful destination. All destinations across Scotland should self-reflect and analyse where they currently view their offer and co-develop, with DMBinS, a benchmarking of their current performance.

Whilst many destinations may consider they have plans in place, or in development, which will increase their overall score, this refresh intends that the benchmark to provide them both motivation to improve and strategic rationale for investment.

There is a risk of the criteria in the self assessment tool creating homogenous destinations where everyone strives to be the same without examining what makes their landscape, community, and/or place special. This strategy recommends destinations examine their offer in terms of its uniqueness and how they can create market differential through their unique characteristics.

MAJOR EVENTS – SECURING EVENTS & PREPARING DESTINATIONS

From 2023, Warner. Bros Discovery have been awarded a contract by the UCI to deliver a new vision for mountain biking globally. The new vision will include Discovery Sport Events joining forces with the Enduro Sports Organisation (ESO Sports) to deliver the organisation, media production and broadcast, promotion, and commercialisation of the UCI Mountain Bike World Cup.

From 2024, Scottish presence in the international UCI calendar is unknown due to the new direction for global events which is looking for two or more disciplines to be combined.

Scotland should prepare a bid to continue to host international level UCI events in one of its premier destinations.

All the premier destinations in Scotland have elements which could/should be improved from trail infrastructure including multi-discipline, level and quality of year-round accessible accommodation, transport links, and support to develop the scene and local businesses. The process of bidding should be used as a tool to inspire our destinations to improve the quality of their offer, with subsequent investment, to enable Scotland to be showcased on the global stage.

To mitigate the possible risk to UCI events, EventScotland, British/Scottish Cycling, VisitScotland, and the economic development agencies must also consider event strategies for alternative/additional events.



GROWTH MARKETS – E-BIKES, GRAVEL/ADVENTURE, FAMILIES, ENDURO, BIKE PARK/UPLIFT

The growth markets in mountain biking are still relevant from the previous strategy. These have only been strengthened because of the bike boom during the pandemic.

Connecting communities, businesses, and unique landscapes through sustainable and strategic trail, and path, plans aimed at these growth markets will be key for destinations to develop market differential and connect visiting mountain bikers with a local, exciting, and authentic experiences.

Destinations should explore the opportunities to promote responsible adventures on bike that are available in Scotland through our access legislation and the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. This should not be taken lightly as the potential for user conflict and damage to fragile terrain is possible, maybe even likely. The key will be to mitigate any potential negative impacts through positive promotion, education, route monitoring, and management, making links to the post-COVID national Visitor Management Strategy.

FESTIVALS AND NATIONAL, REGIONAL & LOCAL EVENTS

Festivals providing a mixture of social, sport, and community events have been an important part of the mountain bike scene in Scotland for decades. They play an important role delivering across all the themes of this strategy alongside their valuable contributions to local economies, support the local scene, and provide destinations with valuable exposure.

discipline events at national, regional, and local level. These may be new festivals or could be integrated into existing festivals in the future.

These events should consider their environmental impact and should investigate incentives and advice to help create net zero events in the future.

There will be opportunities through improved infrastructure, including trails, to host more multi-



IMPROVING THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY

Bike Friendly Accommodation

There have been improvements in key destinations, particularly where the DMBinS 'Secure Bike Storage Scheme' has been delivered.

There is a continual need for this type of scheme to be continued and extended to other key destinations. Also there should be consideration given into how businesses who are excelling in this market can be supported to further develop their offer.

The 'Scottish MTB Tourism' resource, including the business self-assessment tool should be further promoted and may be able to be used as a tool for businesses to self-certify, with occasional spot checks to ensure compliance, to demonstrate their excellence.



Transport

Steps have been taken to improve the bike friendly transport network across Scotland with initiatives such as the Highland Explorer Bike Train and Borders Buses X62 bike friendly buses.

These initiatives should be extended into key destinations to allow for a more sustainable offer for both domestic and international mountain biking visitors.

Once riders are within destinations they should have suitable infrastructure to be able to use their bike to access trails, other activities, and local businesses.

BUILDING OUR CAPABILITIES – MARKETING

2023 will see an increase in marketing profile and it is important that the mountain bike sector connects with the '2023 Cycling World Championships' brand and develops a symbiotic relationship between the event and the industry, for everyone to benefit from the increased profile.

It is also important that a legacy brand, or marketing strategy, is developed post-2023. Global eyes will remain on Scotland, and it is important that we can continue to inspire more visits to Scotland to mountain bike and cycle.

Marketing efforts should be focussed on key destinations showcasing our best places to ride, places which should have a sustainable trails plan to cope with the increase in riders, demonstrating the uniqueness of each destination, highlighting the local communities, and encouraging longer stays to minimise our environmental impact.

ADVENTURE TOURISM

The North East Adventure Tourism (NEAT) project, which was initiated through a DMBinS led mountain biking partnership project, and has moved into supporting wider adventure tourism, gives a blueprint for destinations across Scotland that see mountain biking as part of their adventure tourism offer.

All research indicates that mountain bikers, and their families and/or peer groups, will be looking for multi-activity holidays. The lessons learned and knowledge gained in mountain biking destination development could, and should, be used for wider adventure tourism.







TAKING ACTION

→ Events

- Host the UCI World Championships for all cycling disciplines, including MTB, in Scotland in 2023.
- UCI World Cup to be hosted every year in Scotland from 2024.
- Mountain biking festivals in all key destinations.
- Host international MTB conference biennially from 2024.

→ Developing destinations and businesses

- Work with key destinations, and businesses within them, to self-analyse and benchmark their current offer and develop plans to work with the community to improve their collective offer, supporting infrastructure (parking, toilets, bike wash, noticeboards), and the level of service for visiting mountain bikers.
- Promote and refresh the *Scottish MTB Tourism* microsite and utilise the resources within it to improve the level of service to visiting mountain bikers.
- Secure greater industry leadership and commitment to developing the Scottish MTB sector.
- Support businesses in key destinations to develop and promote packages aimed at growth markets.

→ Marketing and promotion

- Promotion of key mountain bike destinations and the people within them through Scotland hosting the UCI Cycling World Championships in 2023.
- Continue to deliver a digital marketing strategy in 2024 and 2025, highlighting Scotland's key destinations, the adventure offer through our access legislation, and our purpose built trail centre network and new bike parks.
- Mountain biking content to continue to be featured in relationship marketing, PR and social media as part of VisitScotland's national and international marketing campaigns.
- Raise Scottish MTB profile at key events (Europe, UK and Scotland).

→ Evaluation

- Conduct an evaluation of the economic impact of mountain biking in Scotland.



INNOVATION 2023–2025

PROGRESS THE INNOVATION CENTRE

The proposed Mountain Bike Innovation Centre in Innerleithen, Tweed Valley will be the biggest step change for the bike industry in Scotland for years.

The ability to rapid prototype and test equipment in both a lab and trail setting, combine Scottish companies into a hotbed of global brands, and offer/be a place where academia meets industry, provides the sector with a fantastic opportunity.

This will help business innovation and sustainable growth, not only for local Borders-based businesses but also for existing Scottish based innovators and the global mountain bike industry.

In combination with the bike park, this innovative approach will help secure Scotland's global reputation and ensure both our tourism and industry/business support offer continues beyond the years of this strategic refresh.

The project is now being led by South of Scotland Enterprise in partnership with Edinburgh Napier University and is supported by Developing Mountain Biking in Scotland.



CREATING A UK & EUROPEAN WIDE NETWORK

Edinburgh Napier University is one of the founding members of Cycling Industries Europe (CIE). CIE is the voice of cycling business, actively promoting the sector in Europe and worldwide – it is important that ENU continue to be connected to the global cycling industry, creating connections that benefit the cycling industry in Scotland.

The MTB Innovation Centre will be part of an EU wide network of innovation support, which provides many opportunities for Scottish-based businesses and academia. As an industry that will be largely protected from changes within the macro and political landscape, it is important that the support is available for both academia and businesses to engage at European level.

The UK bike industry is also at an exciting phase, with the Bicycle Association of Great Britain developing plans for 'Bike Innovation Clusters' across the UK. Scotland should place itself as the main location for this industry development and be viewed as the best location in the UK for it, through a structured programme of support, with academia and our enterprise agencies working in collaboration.



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RESHORING & REMANUFACTURING

Scotland has long been an innovator in the bicycling industry, including the first pedal driven bicycle (Kirkpatrick Macmillan) and the first pneumatic tyre (Dunlop). With the movement of the cycling industry towards reshoring manufacturing from the Far East into Europe, and the need for a circular economy to help mitigate the environmental crisis, there will be opportunities for Scotland's industry to grow. It is important that our enterprise agencies work with academia and industry to realise these opportunities.



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INNOVATION ACROSS THE THEMES

Innovation is not only the reserve of product development. All of the themes in this strategy will be required to develop an innovative and evidence based approach to offering a better level of trail, tourism/ destination experience, improved health and inclusion offers, and growing and developing the sport.

All of the themes will benefit from the potential for knowledge sharing and should look to create links with academia to achieve this.

TAKING ACTION

- Create a world class centre for MTB innovation and service.
- Support businesses through a new brand, Bike Innovation Scotland, to develop knowledge exchange with Scottish universities to create innovative new products or services.
- Encourage international companies to launch, test and develop bikes and bike accessories in Scotland.
- Support innovative product and service developments from idea to an international marketplace.



HEALTH & INCLUSION 2023–2025

INTRODUCTION

Mountain biking can play a role in making Scotland healthier. By increasing participation, through targeted programmes, we can help make our amazing country a healthier and happier nation.

Bike sales reached unprecedented levels during the Covid-19 pandemic. Mountain bikes were the bestselling type of bike, according to statistics from the Bicycle Association of Great Britain, with over 40% of sales for off-road use. Research during the pandemic showed increased awareness and value of local

outdoor opportunities for physical activity and mental refreshment, with a 15% net increase in participation on ‘cycling on paths & tracks’ from 2019 to 2021.

This provides Scotland with a real opportunity, combined with our amazing natural environment, access rights and the profile of hosting the UCI Cycling World Championships in 2023, to sustainably grow levels of participation in mountain biking.



GENDER

There are strong indications that there are more women and girls cycling, and mountain biking, than ever before. However, there remains an inequality in participation and the potential remains to use mountain biking to increase their levels of activity.

This strategy recommends that we continue to progress the direction set in the 'Strategy for Scottish Mountain Biking, 2019–2025'. It is vital we continue to create female role models at all levels using, and developing,

programmes such as the successful Rider2Leader initiative from DMBinS; both the public and private sector should have women and girls featured within their marketing and promotion; and inspiring leaders, from business and within the female mountain bike community, should be encouraged, and supported, to develop events that create a sense of camaraderie and community which help engage more women in the sport.

TRAIL THERAPY

Trail Therapy has been an incredibly successful programme, delivered by DMBinS, in Dundee, Perth & Kinross, South Lanarkshire, and Scottish Borders as part of the growing recognition of the effectiveness of 'green health' on peoples physical and mental health.

The programme should continue to investigate funding opportunities to spread its benefits across Scotland and continue to work with all age groups, family groups, and community-led initiatives, along with NHS professionals, to ensure that people with varying degrees of mental ill-health have access to the programme. The programme should continue to mentor and train volunteers and mental health professionals to help its long term sustainability and grow its impact.

Trail Therapy should also pilot ways in which e-bikes can break down participation barriers and monitor their impact.

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

There remains a need to continue to encourage more children and young people into cycling and mountain biking. The 'Free Bikes for Kids' initiative provides an ideal opportunity to engage many children and young people in the sport, who would not otherwise be able to access it, due to financial constraints. The pilots run at mountain bike trails and pump tracks, including Scottish Cycling's Rock Up & Ride pilot, have proven to be very successful, with large numbers of children and young people participating and local clubs being involved in the delivery. This should be built upon and developed to create systems such as bike libraries where, as the bikes become too small for riders, they can be recycled to new riders.

Outdoor centres also provide many children and young people with their first experience of outdoor or adventure activities. It is vital that these important facilities remain open, and links are created between these experiences and facilities that are available at children and young people's local area. Continued development and delivery of a skills proficiency award, such as Go Mountain Bike, will support young people to progress and enjoy facilities.

SIMD AREAS – URBAN MTB PROGRAMMES

As the number of pump tracks and MTB skills areas continues to grow in urban areas of Scotland (see Trails), it is vital that we connect these facilities with programmes that allow those who would like to ride but have barriers to access them. This may include free bikes, coaching/activation taking place, and mentors at facilities to ensure helpful and positive environments are created.

Multiple stakeholders should come together to co-develop programmes with existing users to provide skills training, build confidence, particularly with young people to help them get formal coaching and leadership qualifications, and event delivery experience to create local scenes around these facilities.

UNDERREPRESENTED COMMUNITIES

By providing realistic and relatable role models from within underrepresented communities, there is an increased likelihood of inclusivity, and an additional benefit of engaging a richer and more diverse workforce.

This strategy proposes DMBinS should continue to generate a pool of relatable and accessible leader and tutor role models from within the disabled and ethnic minority communities and evidence the impact.

Currently in Scotland there are no qualified disabled mountain bike tutors or tutors from an ethnic minority. With so many other barriers that can impede access to mountain biking, the lack of visible role models is felt keenly.

The concept of 'seeing is believing' is extremely powerful and many studies across sectors demonstrate that exposure to someone you relate to greatly improves your perception of 'it's for me'.

Scotland is in a unique position to truly impact on the accessibility of mountain biking for the disabled and ethnic minority communities. But not only that, with a disabled and/or ethnic minority tutors and leaders, we increase acceptance of diversity, not only within the disabled/ethnic minority communities, but within the rest of the mountain bike community too.





TAKING ACTION

- Programmes developed around urban trails including expansion of Free Bikes for Kids, and the Scottish Cycling programme, Rock Up & Ride.
- Targeted programmes aimed at increasing participation by women, young people and socially excluded groups.
- Diversify the tutors delivering leadership awards.
- Diversify the marketing and imagery associated with mountain biking.
- Mountain biking to be part of NHS Green Health referral programmes – particularly mental health programmes (eg Trail Therapy)
- Promotion of entry-level mountain biking trails and guides to get started.
- Promotion of responsible mountain biking for all and specific guidance when required on e-MTBs and gravel/adventure riding.

SPORT 2023–2025

INTRODUCTION

Scottish Cycling is the lead partner in creating and implementing this theme to grow and develop the sport of mountain biking. Indeed, its own strategy will be the main vehicle for this future progress.

Scottish Cycling outlines six priority areas that will assist in the delivery of its contribution to this mountain bike strategy. Although split into areas, it is clear there is plenty of overlap, with most areas reliant on at least one other to be truly successful.



CLUBS

Targeted support will be offered for affiliated MTB Clubs, supporting them to grow and develop their team of MTB Leaders and Coaches, reach new audiences (diversifying membership) and work with local partners to develop and animate cycling facilities.

Scottish Cycling will continue to test and learn through its Accelerate and Activate programme, embedding a part time staff member directly in a number of MTB Clubs, including the Galloway Hillbillies Bike Club in Dumfries and Galloway and Deeside Thistle Cycling Club in Aberdeenshire.



📷 Jerry Tatton

EVENTS

The launch of the *Scottish Cycling Domestic Events strategy* for 2023–2027 has set out some key priorities for mountain biking over the next few years.

Scottish Cycling will work with the Scottish National MTB Cross-Country and Scottish Downhill Association to deliver high quality series, providing opportunities for riders of all ages to progress towards National Championships.

They will also work to secure new resource to grow the number of grassroots racing opportunities for youths. This has been kickstarted in 2023 through the Ride the Worlds initiative, with regional qualifiers in Mini-DH, Dirt Crits and Pump Track racing across Scotland, and opportunities through a linked programme, Experience the Worlds, for first-timers to try out MTB racing.

Working with the community they will implement the actions of the Mini-DH review and ensure that there is a clear pathway to encourage participation and support rider progression at all levels.

Scottish Cycling is a home nation and part of British Cycling. Currently British Cycling doesn't sanction mountain biking/offroad disciplines such as gravel or enduro, so there are events which take place in Scotland which can't currently be insured by British Cycling. The importance of these disciplines for Scottish riders, and our key destinations is recognised. Scottish Cycling will explore different approaches to how to support and develop these disciplines, working with partners, riders and the community to make sure these disciplines continue to thrive.

PLACES TO RIDE

The £8 million Cycling Facilities Fund, created as a result of the 2023 UCI Cycling World Championships will continue to invest in new and existing facility developments across the country. Scottish Cycling will work with Clubs, Groups, Local Authorities and other partners to ensure that these facilities are animated and activated to demonstrate their impact and make the case for further investment.

A significant proportion of the £8 million has already been invested in MTB Trails, Skills Areas, Pump Tracks and associated infrastructure to create and improve many locations.



GROWING THE SPORT THROUGH HEALTH & INCLUSION

A 'Women and Girls' action plan will be developed and implemented, focusing on a range of interventions that can get more Women and Girls Mountain Biking, utilising programmes such as Breeze (free led rides for Women) and learning from other initiatives that have placed emphasis on the social side of cycling for women and girls.

Cost is a significant barrier for young people to access cycling including mountain biking. Scottish Cycling's innovative pilot, Rock Up & Ride, where local clubs deliver fun and engaging experiences for young people on mountain bike trails and pump tracks and provide a free bike afterwards should be grown and developed. The young people should also be supported in joining the club and entering the sport.



PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY

Working with MTB Clubs, Race Teams and British Cycling, the Performance team will look to develop an aligned and integrated Performance Development Pathway, this includes creating more localised opportunities, such as weekday evening MTB clusters through the Summer.

The opportunities offered through the programme will support progression of riders onto British Cycling World Class programme (including MTB XC) and professional teams (all MTB disciplines).

These areas are underpinned by four “golden threads” to maintain core values; inclusivity, long-term sustainability contributing to a greener society, safety for everyone and engagement with British Cycling members in Scotland and partners, including for mountain biking, the consortium members and DMBinS, which is part of Scottish Cycling.

More information on the Scottish Cycling strategy can be found here [*‘Developing a Nation of Cyclists, 2.0’*](#).



📷 Scotty Laughland

PEOPLE

Scottish Cycling will work in partnership with British Cycling to continue to promote and enhance the MTB Leadership Awards, supporting and empowering more individuals to inspire others to join them in the outdoors.

CPD opportunities will be created and rolled out to support volunteers working in MTB Clubs and those officiating and organising MTB events to continually develop and progress their learning. A new Coaching framework will also be rolled out, providing individuals with the opportunity to take a MTB focus from the start of their coaching journey.



📷 Miles Mallinson



TAKING ACTION

- Deliver the *Scottish Cycling Event Strategy* including the integration of enduro, gravel, and pump track racing into the governing body calendar to increase the number and quality of events which are part of a co-ordinated calendar.
- Use the 'Race the Worlds' race series' as a pilot to develop the event pathway, particularly, for children and young people to enter the sport.
- Additional support for clubs to grow their membership, particularly clubs attracting children and young people.
- Performance pathway agreed and established in every mountain bike discipline.
- Establish a new coaching and leadership structure to grow the number of qualified coaches and leaders delivering in MTB environments.
- Promote and support the governance of national series' SXC, SDA, Enduro and key endurance events (eg 10 Under the Ben, Relentless, Strathpuffer).



SUMMARY

Mountain biking in Scotland has made great progress. It has been shown that a clear vision and an innovative approach can create partnerships that benefit all concerned, and deliver practical projects that help people across Scotland.

Huge opportunities remain, however, and mountain biking has much more to give to Scotland. We will only enjoy these benefits if we continue to work together in the effective partnerships that DMBinS, Scottish Government, national agencies, cycling organisations, businesses, bike industry, and the mountain bike community have created, and nurtured, at every level.

That is why this document also sets out a vision for sustainably supporting the sector in the long term, developing a model that provides long-term and

effective investment from riders, businesses, bike industry, along with the public sector.

With the right strategy and the right structure, the nation can bring together different sectors to promote innovation, investment and economic growth. We can open up opportunities for more people to try off-road cycling, thereby improving their health and reducing their impact on the environment. We can make Scotland an internationally renowned centre of excellence in mountain biking, both for competitive sport and in business, innovation and skills.

We can ensure that more people responsibly enjoy Scotland's great outdoors, and that this natural asset is maintained and improved for future generations.

A photograph of three people riding trikes on a gravel path through a forest. The person in the foreground is a woman wearing a teal long-sleeved shirt, grey pants, a teal helmet, and sunglasses. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. The trike she is riding has a yellow frame. Behind her, slightly to the right, is another person wearing a blue and black jacket, a blue helmet, and sunglasses, also smiling. The trike they are riding has a green frame. In the background, a third person is visible, also on a trike. The path is made of gravel and is flanked by tall pine trees. In the distance, a mountain range is visible under a cloudy sky.

**IT IS AN INSPIRING VISION,
AND TOGETHER
WE CAN DELIVER IT**

