



# MAKING A DIFFERENCE

PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT  
2015-2018





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FOREWORD BY

## LEE COUSINS, CHAIR

In December 2009, the Developing Mountain Biking in Scotland (DMBinS) project was launched with three key objectives: to increase participation in mountain biking, to achieve sporting success, and to increase tourism and economic growth.



The DMBinS team approached that task in an innovative way, bringing together partners from many different areas including land managers, the environment, business and sport. It encouraged each partner to think outside its own particular area of focus, and to consider the wider opportunities for all. The project has pursued an ambitious and wide-ranging strategy that was written in 2010. We last reported on our progress in 2014.

When you read this report I hope you will be impressed, as I am, by how much the DMBinS project has achieved since then. Ultimately, this was all possible because Scotland's mountain biking community is so deeply committed to our activity. Riders, agencies, industry – all of them were keen to volunteer their time, ideas and experience to improve mountain biking for themselves and others. I think the reason for this is simply that mountain biking gives us great fulfilment and enjoyment, and we want to share that experience with others.

None of the work reported here would have been possible without the exceptional contribution of two groups of people. First, Graeme and his staff. Together they have worked tirelessly to deliver the strategy and to make a very real difference to mountain biking in Scotland, for everyone who cycles off-road.

Just as importantly, our partners. By that we mean our formal partners, other public sector bodies that we have collaborated with on specific projects, and the many clubs, businesses, coaches and other individuals from all areas of mountain biking that have contributed in so many ways. Their inspiration, commitment, persistence and shared vision has, time and again, resulted in successful initiatives which delivered what they aimed to, and beyond.

Perhaps this report will inspire you to get involved in some way: to volunteer, to get involved in a project, to try mountain biking for the first time, or to contribute to the industry around it. While this report is focused on past achievements, the picture it paints is also one of a sustainable future for Scottish mountain biking, and we would love for you to be a part of it.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lee Cousins". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underlining the name.

INTRODUCTION BY

## GRAEME MCLEAN, PROJECT MANAGER

I have always been very aware of the investment that the DMBinS project has attracted, and determined to make sure that we used that investment to the best possible effect.



Scottish taxpayers have invested financially in us through public agency funding; our partners and many others involved in mountain biking have invested their time, imagination, skills and energy. We have worked hard to give all of these groups and individuals a great return on those investments, and I hope that, after reading this report on our progress, you will agree that we have been successful in that aim.

When we refreshed the strategy in 2016 we built on the themes of our 2010 plan, and identified six broad 'action areas' in which to focus our efforts: Facilities, Events, Participation, Sport Development, Attracting Visitors and Business Development. In the next section we report our progress in these areas since 2016. We then tell you about eight projects over the last four years, across the six action areas, which show what we do and how we do it. Our work in the last four years aimed to be aligned with government interests, and these are illustrated for each of the projects.

Our main role is to oversee the delivery of the strategy; we recognise that it is neither efficient nor effective for DMBinS to try to take ownership of every element in the action plan. Our responsibility is to focus on strategic projects and, by working with and through others, to help energise, support and advise so that these projects can be delivered

effectively and sustainably. These are the key actions that Scottish mountain biking needs to be delivered – and they are being delivered.

Throughout this document, you'll find three themes cropping up time and again as we describe our work and achievements. They are:

**Collaboration** – bringing together people from areas that don't always intersect as often as they could. **Big-picture thinking** – each of our partners sees the value of looking outside their own particular area of focus and identifying wider benefits for everyone. **Commitment** – people's enthusiasm for mountain biking, and their willingness to contribute to its sustainable future.

Although DMBinS's core staff was, and is, very small, we have been able to reach out and connect with the great potential of many other people in and around the Scottish mountain biking community. Through collaboration, big-picture thinking and commitment we have made excellent progress in achieving our key objectives.



# FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

## Progress Report

In our 2016 strategy refresh document we set out a Framework for Action that listed a large number of specific tasks relating to each of six key action areas. Here we report on our progress in each of those tasks.

### FACILITIES

- ✓ Park & 'Enduro'/XC trail networks

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- ✓ Trail centre developments in key tourism locations

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- ☀ Purpose-built MTB trails in Aberdeen, Stirling, Edinburgh and Inverness

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- ☀ Local trail developments

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- ✓ Take Care of Your Trails running annually

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- ✓ Expansion of 'natural' trail maps

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- ✓ Develop and improve facilities to host international events

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- ⋯ Expand the network of volunteer Bike Patrols

### EVENTS

- ✓ UCI DH World Cup every year in Fort William

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- ✓ International level Enduro event hosted in Scotland annually

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- ✓ European Championships 2018 to include MTB

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- ✓ An inspiring cross country event per year

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- ✓ Promote and support the governance of national series events

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- ☀ Each cluster area to have an annual mountain biking festival

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- ✓ Host international MTB conferences in 2016 & 2018

### PARTICIPATION

- ☀ Establish a national MTB recreation scheme

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- ⋯ National MTB day supported by local events

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- ✓ A strategy and pathway to introduce and keep girls and women in cycling

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- ⋯ Establish an MTB Scotland brand

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- ✓ Further promotion of Go MTB scheme and Leadership awards

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- ✓ Series of taster sessions at key events

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- ✓ Pilot national MTB 'Healthy Options/ Green Prescription'

MORE THAN **60%**  
OF TASKS COMPLETE



Complete



In progress



Not yet begun

### SPORT DEVELOPMENT

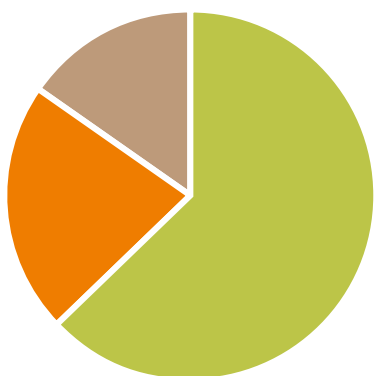
- ✓ A robust event pathway and co-ordinated calendar for children and young people
- ✓ Continue to grow the number of qualified coaches
- ✓ Regional coaching camps in each Scottish Cycling region
- ✓ Additional support for clubs to grow their membership
- ✓ Expansion of Borders College BASE Downhill course
- ✓ Increase the number and quality of events

### ATTRACTING VISITORS

- ✶ Establish an MTB Scotland marketing strategy
- ✶ Co-ordinated national and international marketing campaigns
- ✓ Host a comprehensive web-based guide to all trails in Scotland
- ✓ Promotion of tour operators and guides to discover Scotland's best singletrack
- ✓ Scottish MTB profile at key events
- ✶ Market new Scottish 'Velo Hotels' to domestic and international audiences

### BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

- ✓ Develop Scotland as a global centre for MTB innovation and service excellence
- ✓ Continue to support innovative products and services
- ✶ Refresh the existing Tourism Intelligence Scotland guide
- ✶ Create two levels of MTB workshop
- ✶ Encourage the industry to develop a network of Velo Hotels
- ✓ Continue to develop knowledge exchange between businesses and academia
- ✶ Evolve the good practice guidance for tour operators, guides, coaches and skills instructors
- ✓ Encourage international companies to launch, test and develop bikes and bike accessories in Scotland
- ✶ Secure greater industry leadership and commitment to developing the Scottish MTB sector
- ✶ Roll out an annual Scottish MTB Business Barometer Survey
- ✶ Ensure greater industry appreciation of the importance of up-to-date market intelligence
- ✓ With Scottish Development International and VisitScotland, ensure a Scottish MTB presence at Eurobike beyond 2015



**29 TASKS COMPLETE**  
**10 TASKS IN PROGRESS**  
**7 TASKS NOT YET BEGUN**

# FACILITIES

## Trails to the Towns

As this report shows, there are many ways to increase participation in mountain biking, but the most fundamental is to provide good quality trails that people can access easily.

Most people in Scotland live in or near towns and cities, yet these areas often had relatively poor facilities for mountain biking, particularly compared to the network of world-class trails in tourist locations across the Scottish countryside. This was a key element of the first national strategy for mountain biking in Scotland. In 2009, there were virtually no pipeline projects to realise this goal.

**We are proud that since 2010 over 46 new mountain biking facilities of various kinds across Scotland have been delivered. 29 of these have launched since 2015.**

Key to this success was our ability to use the knowledge gained by Forestry Commission Scotland in developing mountain bike projects; thanks to their willingness to share their wide experience, we were able to gather this knowledge and spread it to new and enthusiastic community groups, Local Authorities and businesses to help them develop their own fantastic facilities.

We then contributed in various ways. We worked with a growing network of community groups, Local Authorities and national agencies. We animated, encouraged and provided advice and support to most of these groups to help them develop their proposals and then work through the stages of developing their projects. We brought people together – both riders and professionals – through our regional MTB clusters. These are local groups

which aim to improve communication and project delivery. The ones in the Central and Tayside & Fife areas were particularly active in ensuring that this experience was shared as widely as possible.

Local groups developed a variety of trail proposals for different facilities. In most cases these resulted in a submission to the Active Places 2014 Legacy Fund; in a further example of our partnership approach and our ability to influence decision-makers, the Scottish Government asked us to report on the strength of those proposals. This resulted in mountain biking projects receiving around 10% of the Fund – approximately £1m of funding. This has resulted in £3.8m-worth of trails being developed since then close to our communities.

In our largest city, Glasgow, the Cuningar Loop is now attracting families to a new pump tracks and skills area, and Cathkin Braes is gaining a global reputation. Edinburgh has the fantastic new SKELF bike park, Dundee the Templeton Tangle, and Inverness a really accessible pump track. Towns have also benefited: for example Wishaw has a new pump track, Greenrigg a new skills area, Larbert High a pump track and skills area, and Bonnyrigg new trails and a pump track.

These facilities have formed the basis of a world-class sport development system in Scotland. And we continue to support the organisations behind the new facilities through promotion, national trail maintenance sessions and sharing good practice. We have also worked to highlight the fantastic holiday opportunities which Scotland has to offer to new mountain bikers, thereby boosting the growth of the Scottish economy through tourism.

**THE COUNCIL AREAS THAT BENEFITED FROM THE PROJECT:**

Aberdeenshire

South Ayrshire

Borders

Dundee City

Edinburgh City

Falkirk

Highland

Inverclyde

North Lanarkshire

South Lanarkshire

West Lothian

Midlothian

Moray

Perth & Kinross

Stirling



# £3.8M-WORTH

OF TRAILS HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED  
CLOSE TO OUR COMMUNITIES



HEALTH



SPORT



TOURISM

## FACILITIES

# Guidance on unauthorised trails

We often find areas in which our partners' interests overlap. Sometimes, however, they conflict, and here too we can play an important role. An example is the creation of 'unauthorised trails'.

Trails are the key that unlocks mountain biking's many benefits, and of course they are what makes it so enjoyable for so many. The vast majority of riders use trails responsibly. Some riders, who often have a good local knowledge of forests and land management, have built trails without the landowner's permission. Others riders have approached land managers but have received a negative response or have considered that leasing the land or arranging a community buy-out would be overly bureaucratic, time-consuming or too great a management burden.

From the land manager's perspective, while responsible use is welcomed, unauthorised trails can present a range of concerns: disruption, damage, liability concerns, and breach of planning legislation. They can also be dangerous for all users, including those not on bikes.

Scottish Land & Estates and Forestry Commission Scotland brought this to the attention of the Scottish National Access Forum (NAF). A sub-group was then created by NAF in May 2017, and together we produced a detailed guidance document to help everyone involved in trail management to work together. The guidance looked at the situation from all sides and aimed to balance everyone's needs equally.

The document included the relevant sections of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code, and listed other sources of advice and guidance that should be used in conjunction with the code.

We also incorporated new management models to illustrate how riders and landowners/managers can work together to manage the trails without necessarily undergoing a change in the land management, such as by riders volunteering for the landowners/managers or by riders forming trails associations.

**To aid this process, the guidance included a flowchart that shows land managers and riders what their choices are at each stage of trail development, and set out clearly and frankly the benefits and challenges that come with each option.**

The guidance provided an understanding and explanation of the legal issues around liability, and how risk assessments and inspections can help to mitigate these. It also covers the process of planning and building low-impact trails.

The document concluded with four case studies, and draws useful learning points from each.

### OTHER PROJECTS IN THE FACILITIES ACTION AREA:

Take Care of Your Trails went pan-European

Glentress Masterplan took shape and is ready for delivery

Worked with IMBA Europe on the future funding of a European wide trail standards programme

Supported set up of Trails Associations in Tweed Valley and Aberdeenshire

Ran an initiative with Robert Gordon University to highlight the gap in facilities in Aberdeenshire. From this initiative North East Trail Centre Organisation (NETCO) was formed

Continued to support NETCO and other developments through DMBinS Aberdeenshire co-ordinator

Launched a new project management guidance on developing purpose built trails in partnership with sportscotland and Forestry Commission



HEALTH



ENVIRONMENT



BUSINESS



TOURISM



RURAL AFFAIRS

**TRAILS ARE THE KEY  
THAT UNLOCKS MOUNTAIN  
BIKING'S MANY BENEFITS,  
AND OF COURSE THEY ARE WHAT MAKES  
IT SO ENJOYABLE FOR SO MANY**

## EVENTS

# Scottish Mountain Bike Conference 2016 – Innovation Edition

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Every thriving industry needs opportunities for the people involved in it to get together and make connections, share their ideas, learn from others, discuss the issues they face, experience new insights and perspectives, acknowledge their successes and raise their profile.



**277 DELEGATES**

**12 COUNTRIES**

**BEST CONFERENCE AT THE 2017 SCOTTISH EVENT AWARDS**





HEALTH



SPORT



ENVIRONMENT



BUSINESS



TOURISM



RURAL AFFAIRS



Image by: Ross Bell

In 2010 we created the Scottish Mountain Bike Conference, to give people in our sector an opportunity to do all of those things.

Taking place every two years, the conference has gone from strength to strength since launch. In 2016, with our partners VisitScotland, Highland Council, Cairngorms National Park Authority, Mountain Bike Centre of Scotland, Scottish Cycling and Cairngorms Business Partnership, we welcomed 277 delegates from 12 countries to mingle with and learn from some of the world’s leading figures in mountain biking. (This was an increase on 2014, when we attracted 230 delegates.)

Held at the Macdonald Highland Resort, Aviemore, the three-day conference focused on the theme of innovation: in product development, tourism, sporting success, building participation, and more.

We heard from influential Scots such as Fergus Ewing MSP, Cabinet Secretary for the Rural Economy and Connectivity; Craig Burn, Chief Executive of Scottish Cycling; and VisitScotland’s Scott Armstrong.

Speakers from further afield also shared their success stories. Adrian Greiner of Bike Plan Switzerland explained how their advanced project planning systems help to develop mountain biking destinations in their country. And Mark Torsius from IMBA Europe highlighted a range of initiatives and innovations from across Europe that are helping to increase participation in the sport.

We also heard from mountain bike legends, including Gary Fisher, one of the inventors of the modern mountain bike, and three-time World Enduro Champion Tracy Moseley.

**The response from delegates was extremely satisfying: 89% ranked the event at 4 or 5 out of 5, while the other 11% gave it a 3.**

And the event received even wider recognition when it won Best Conference at the 2017 Scottish Event Awards.

The event’s most important legacy of all, however, is the new connections that have been formed between people, and the new perspectives that delegates took away with them. These will be powering the progress of mountain biking for many years to come.

**OTHER PROJECTS IN THE EVENTS ACTION AREA:**

Supported enduro event organisers

Evidence base which supported international events to be retained or attracted to Scotland

Gave feedback to EventScotland on mountain bike events which should be supported through the ‘National Funding Programme’ stream

Through clusters, supported increasing the number of events in each area

Supported Scottish Cycling to compile an effective events calendar through their off-road commission

## PARTICIPATION

# New Scottish Cycling Level 1 MTB Centre for Dundee

A lifelong love of a sport or activity often starts with a chance event. Being in the right place at the right time, having access to the right facilities and – perhaps most important of all – connecting with the right person to encourage and guide you as you take your first steps.

That's why a central part of the Scottish mountain biking strategy framework was to increase participation in mountain biking through a network of volunteers, mentors and leaders. Dundee's new mountain biking centre is a great example of how this was developed.

In 2017, working with Scottish Cycling in a funding partnership that included sportscotland and HSBC UK/British Cycling, and also working with local delivery partners (Angus Cycle Hub, Dundee City Council, Active Schools Dundee, Ancrum Outdoor Centre and Dundee Family Support Team) we created a new mountain biking Level 1 centre in Camperdown Park, Dundee. This is close to the Templeton Tangle mountain bike trail, one of the Trails to the Towns.

Volunteers were trained in MTB leadership; Angus Cycle Hub ran sessions that introduced young people to cycle sport in a safe and fun way; and bike mechanic courses were set up to further develop the volunteers. Through the HSBC UK British Cycling Go Ride programme we also were able to resource the centre with new bikes and help upgrade the bike storage facilities.

The centre is particularly focused on engaging with young people from areas of Dundee that are in the lowest quartile of the index of multiple deprivation.

All of this work delivers a huge range of benefits across many areas, including social and economic development as well as health. The centre also

supports the Our Natural Health Service initiative being led by Scottish Natural Heritage, which aims to maximise the potential of Scotland's outdoors as a health-promoting asset.

**Going forward, we are already looking at ways to build on the centre's success and help people derive maximum benefit from this valuable asset.**

In particular, we are planning to engage potential young leaders from local secondary schools and Dundee/Angus College, and provide them with training, mentoring and a British Cycling Level 1 Mountain Bike Leader governing body qualification. To help the new leaders gain experience and develop best practice, we will provide mountain bike-based after-school clubs and holiday programmes for children and young people, which will include led mountain bike rides.

This activity will also be aimed at children and young people who would most benefit from experiencing what spending time outdoors can bring, and developing their bike skills. For some of those taking part this will be the start of a journey that leads them to becoming a leader and mentor for the next generation of riders, or simply enjoying a healthier, more active life.

### OTHER PROJECTS IN THE PARTICIPATION ACTION AREA:

Galashiels Resource Centre and mental health group pilot with NHS Borders and Scottish Borders Council

Teenage Girls Bikepacking Pilot – led to roll-out through The Adventure Syndicate

Go Girls programme

Women on 2 Wheels project

'Do The Ride Thing' guidance on responsible mountain biking

Supported Scottish Cycling's mountain bike leaders bursary

Piloted a 'Mountain Bike Safety for Young People' training course in the Tweed Valley



ENVIRONMENT



SPORT



HEALTH

THE CENTRE IS PARTICULARLY FOCUSED ON ENGAGING WITH  
**YOUNG PEOPLE**

FROM AREAS OF DUNDEE THAT ARE IN THE LOWEST QUARTILE  
OF THE INDEX OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION

## SPORT DEVELOPMENT

# Big Tree Campervans youth race series in Tayside & Fife

One of the main reasons why our approach is so effective is that we are able to provide the initial impetus and direction for projects which then develop with little or no further input from ourselves.

Working with our Tayside & Fife cluster we supported the development of a number of new facilities in that region. We then wanted to encourage people, particularly clubs, to use the facilities to the full; one way to do that was to develop a series of youth race events.

We assembled a group of partners, including a sponsorship from a Perthshire-based campervan rental business, and in 2013 launched the Big Tree Campervans Tayside & Fife Youth Regional Mountain Biking Series. It initially consisted of five races held across the region, all carefully designed to give children aged between six and sixteen a first taste of mountain bike racing.

The series was an instant success, attracting more entrants every year.

**The knock-on effects have been what we had hoped for: more people have joined cycling clubs in the area; the mountain biking element of those clubs has increased; more people have trained as coaches and leaders; and the new facilities have been extensively used.**

And to crown that success, some of the young people that took part in the race series have gone on to compete in national-level races – and win them.

In 2015 and 2016, DMBinS took the lead role in organising and delivering the series, with fantastic support from the local clubs and volunteers. As the area built up its expertise and the clubs strengthened we were then able to gradually reduce our involvement. The series now operates with very little input from us. The clubs themselves now take the lead, working with the regional development officer. The number of participants has grown annually, and 2018 was the series' most successful year yet.

All of this just goes to show that when a good idea gets an initial push to get it up and running, it can quickly develop a momentum all of its own.

### OTHER PROJECTS IN THE SPORT DEVELOPMENT ACTION AREA:

Supported Scottish Cycling to develop an events calendar

Supported Scottish Cycling to help reduce waiting lists within clubs

Working with the Scottish Cycling events team, successfully negotiated the required amendments to the National Forest Events agreement with Forestry Commission Scotland

After running the under 8s, 10s & 12s events at Scottish Cross Country Series in 2014, we handed over to volunteers in 2015





THE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS HAS

# GROWN ANNUALLY,

AND 2018 WAS THE SERIES' MOST SUCCESSFUL YEAR YET



HEALTH



SPORT



BUSINESS

# ATTRACTING VISITORS

## Promoting Scotland at EuroBike

In 2015, 2016 and 2017 DMBinS, Scottish Development International and the Mountain Bike Centre of Scotland teamed up to take a stand at the EuroBike Show.

EuroBike is the leading global event for the bike business. Part trade show, part thinktank, it is where business connections are made and deals are struck, new trends emerge and striking innovations are revealed.

**The 2017 event attracted 37,379 trade visitors from 96 countries.**

So for anyone who has a mountain bike product that they want to introduce, develop, promote and sell, EuroBike is the place to be. And with our partners, we were there to help.

We provided that help in many ways. The Scotland stand was a great base from which to promote our new and innovative products and to highlight Scotland's unique qualities as a destination for both tourism and business. We also attended networking events, helping Scottish businesses to connect with

others around the world for mutual benefit.

A number of Scottish businesses moved up to take their own stands, and our presence and active engagement helped them generate maximum buzz for their products. We believe that product helps promote place and place helps promote product, and we think that this was proven at these shows.

The show always includes a variety of lectures and exhibitions, and DMBinS Project Manager Graeme McLean has given very successful presentations, in 2015 and 2017, highlighting our past achievements and future goals.

We were also at EuroBike to learn. Every year we saw new emerging trends, ideas and perspectives, from both tourism and product development, that helped us to improve our efforts to develop mountain biking in Scotland for industry and riders alike.

### OTHER PROJECTS IN THE ATTRACTING VISITORS ACTION AREA:

Scottish Mountain Bike Trails – world's first interactive head-cam map of Scotland

Family trails information supplied to VisitScotland

Photoshoots in South of Scotland for VisitScotland

National TV & radio appearances from DMBinS staff

Presentations from DMBinS at international conferences in nine European countries

Highlighted and promoted success stories through the Scottish Mountain Bike Awards in 2016, 2017 & 2018

Increase in social media reach and newsletter distribution through DMBinS

Hosted promotional stands with partners at Fort William World Cup, Scottish Bike Show, Mountain Safety Scotland and Tweedlove

Media trip around the Scottish Mountain Bike Conference had a global reach with journalists coming from USA, Germany, England and Wales





# WE BELIEVE

THAT PRODUCT HELPS PROMOTE PLACE  
AND PLACE HELPS PROMOTE PRODUCT



SPORT



BUSINESS



TOURISM

# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

## Mountain Bike Centre of Scotland

The Mountain Bike Centre of Scotland (MTBCOS) has produced impressive results: year-on-year growth in the number of Scottish product development companies, and also increased sales by them.

It all started when DMBinS joined up with Edinburgh Napier University and Scottish Enterprise to put on an event that showed Scottish companies some of the many opportunities to create and develop products for the cycling industry.

This event was so successful that the three organisations formed a partnership to create the world's first mountain bike innovation centre. Investment was provided by Edinburgh Napier University and the Scottish Funding Council, with other support from Scottish Cycling, Borders College and the Forestry Commission Scotland. MTBCOS was opened in 2014.

MTBCOS is located in the Peel Tower at Glentress. There, Scottish mountain bike athletes, riders, businesses, academics, agencies and the local community come together to learn, develop, grow and help Scottish mountain biking be a world leader. This knowledge exchange between the higher education sector and the mountain bike industry has led to direct economic benefits for Scotland. MTBCOS has worked with Scottish companies and academics from a wide variety of sectors – food & drink, textiles, digital services, electronics, engineering and product design. Over 200 such companies have received support from MTBCOS between 2015 and 2018.

Many Scottish businesses are working with academia to develop innovative cycling products and services, and the centre also supports them in areas such as market research, business development plans, knowledge sharing, linking to economic development agencies, testing and product launches. The centre also hosted product focus days, MTB education and training courses and workshops for MTB companies, and invited international businesses to test and demo new products in Scotland.

**All of this effort produced tangible results, contributing to an increase in the turnover of supported companies amounting to £13.5m.**

Of even greater long-term benefit is that a community that fosters open innovation has been created. Public and private sector organisations, businesses and academia are all part of that community, and our plan is now to build on this success to develop other collaborative opportunities across Scotland and internationally. This should see the centre's impact increase exponentially in years to come.

### SOME OF THE CENTRE'S SUCCESSES BETWEEN ITS LAUNCH IN 2014 AND 2018:

Engaged with over 200 businesses

Facilitated 103 collaborative ventures

Delivered 55 innovation focused events

Recent products and inventions created are forecasted to have a worth of £16.2m

Investigated 49 academic support searches

Facilitated 29 student research projects

Facilitated 7 student placements with Scottish businesses

Facilitated 1 PhD Studentship

Increased international awareness of 46 businesses who are forecasted to increase export sales by £14.6m

Gave 16 public lectures and talks, to over 650 attendees



OVER 200 COMPANIES HAVE RECEIVED  
**SUPPORT**  
FROM MTBCOS BETWEEN 2015 AND 2018



HEALTH



SPORT



ENVIRONMENT



BUSINESS



TOURISM



RURAL AFFAIRS

## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

# Co-ordinating plans in the Tweed Valley

In 2014 a local councillor in the Tweed Valley area attended our Scottish Mountain Bike Conference. Inspired by what he saw and learned there, he approached DMBinS to explore ways of working together to extend the benefits of mountain biking out to his constituents.

In early 2015, a range of partners were brought together to assess the opportunities in the Tweed Valley area and examined how we could maximise their potential. Together we drew up an action plan, and it was immediately clear that delivering it would require a strong lead matched with adequate staff resources. DMBinS offered to take on that central role.

Working with Scottish Enterprise, we submitted an application for funding to support our first Regional Co-ordinator, who was appointed in 2017.

**The Tweed Valley Development Co-ordinator has been an important resource in supporting mountain bike initiatives and local businesses.**

He has supported existing businesses, and connected new ones, to help them all thrive in the area. From workshop events to product focus evenings, he has engaged with over 30 local businesses, and has also created marketing content for the destination and partners.

The Regional Co-ordinator has also given the mountain biking sector a strong voice in developments, and worked with local stakeholders. For example, he supported the Tweed Valley Trails Association

to train volunteers, and moved towards a Memorandum of Understanding with Forest Enterprise Scotland to take some of the burden of trail maintenance from it to the community.

Recently, the role has been crucial in bringing a range of partners together to develop a business case for transformational investment in the Borderlands Initiative, a growth deal for Scottish Borders, Dumfries & Galloway and the three English local authorities on the border. This potential investment would enable the successful delivery of many elements of the Tweed Valley MTB Action Plan: trail maintenance and Development, additional accommodation stock, enhanced facilities at Innerleithen, and encouraging businesses to relocate to the Tweed Valley through the creation of a mountain bike innovation centre integrated with a world-class bike park development. The Co-ordinator has hosted and recorded over 45 meetings between public, community and private partners, all of whom have an interest in the Borderlands Initiative project.

### OTHER PROJECTS IN THE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT ACTION AREA:

Tourism workshops led by Aberdeenshire MTB Co-ordinator

Presentations at wider tourism conferences across Scotland

Supported 28 new individual tourism businesses

Worked with VisitScotland to refresh the Cyclists Welcome Scheme

Fed into workshops on increasing bike carriages to key mountain bike destinations via public transport

With partners, developed an evidence base for the current economic impact of mountain biking in Scotland and a case for future investment in the sector



HEALTH



SPORT



ENVIRONMENT



BUSINESS



TOURISM



RURAL AFFAIRS

THE REGIONAL CO-ORDINATOR HAS SUPPORTED EXISTING  
BUSINESSES, AND CONNECTED NEW ONES, TO HELP THEM ALL

**THRIVE IN THE AREA**

## CONCLUSIONS

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Reporting on our progress to date, and detailing some of the successful projects that we have been involved in, clearly means looking backwards. So let us end this report by looking forwards, assessing what we can learn from all of this experience and indicating what it might mean for the future.

Our goals are ambitious but achievable. Scotland is blessed with many assets that other countries can only dream of: a superb landscape and natural heritage that draws visitors from all over the world; renowned international events; a great network of natural and purpose-built trails; unrivalled outdoor Access legislation; a worldwide and growing reputation as a great place to do business; a vibrant and innovative commercial sector; and much more. This is all fertile ground on which to grow the country's status as a true world-leader in mountain biking – a goal which remains at the top of our list of objectives for the future.



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It is clear that our partnership approach has worked. In many of the projects we have just described, we looked for opportunities to connect people who can work together to achieve shared goals.

We provided initial direction and energy to get things moving, and then, whenever possible, left those closest to the ground to decide how to shape the project in the long term. In this way we have been able to maximise our impact across a very wide range of activities, and we will continue to work on and develop this successful partnership model.

Perhaps this last is the most important insight of all. The greatest strength of Scottish mountain biking lies in the people involved in it, in every way: developing products, providing investment, volunteering, coaching, running clubs, and engaging in all the other activity that makes up this energetic and growing sector.

**WE WILL CONTINUE TO WORK WITH THEM TO  
REALISE THE FULL POTENTIAL OF MOUNTAIN  
BIKING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR  
EVERYONE IN SCOTLAND.**

# OUR MTB CONSORTIUM PARTNERS

## DMBINS FUNDING PARTNERS



**Forest Enterprise Scotland** is an agency of the Forestry Commission and manages the National Forest Estate on behalf of Scottish Ministers. **Forestry Commission Scotland** is the Scottish Government's forestry advisor and regulator. Its aim is to increase the economic, environmental and social benefits of Scotland's woods and forests through implementation of the Scottish Forestry Strategy.



**Scottish Cycling** is the governing body for cycle sport in Scotland. It has a very wide remit which includes campaigning, coaching and running events for cyclists at every level and in different types of cycling from tracks to trails.



**Scottish Enterprise** is Scotland's main economic development agency and a non-departmental public body of the Scottish Government. It uses its economic experience, knowledge and connections to build on Scotland's many strengths, supporting businesses in a wide variety of ways.



**The Scottish Government** is the devolved government for Scotland and has a range of responsibilities that includes: the economy, education, health, justice, rural affairs, housing, environment, equal opportunities, consumer advocacy and advice, transport and taxation.



**Scottish Natural Heritage** is funded by the Scottish Government. Scotland's wildlife, habitats, landscapes and natural beauty are among its greatest assets. SNH works to promote caring for this natural heritage, enabling people to enjoy it, helping people to understand and appreciate it, and supporting those who manage it.



**sportscotland** is the lead agency for the development of sport in Scotland. It invests expertise, time and public money to develop a world-class sporting system at all levels. Working with partners, it joins up the people, places, partnerships and planning that make sport happen.

## ADDITIONAL MTB CONSORTIUM PARTNERS



**Cycling UK (Scotland)** is a not-for-profit body that is funded through membership and donations. It protects and promotes the rights of cyclists, campaigning both locally and nationally.

### Cycling Scotland

**Cycling Scotland** is a registered charity which receives funding from the Scottish Government. It aims to bring cycling into the mainstream as an attractive and practical lifestyle choice.



Based around three main campuses, **Edinburgh Napier University** has over 19,500 students, including those on-campus and those studying on transnational programmes abroad and online. In 2018 this included nearly 9,500 international and EU students, from more than 140 nations worldwide.



**EventScotland** is dedicated to leading Scotland's events industry and strengthening the nation's position as a world-class events destination. It works to generate, bid for, attract and sustain events which will drive tourism and boost Scotland's profile worldwide.



**Highlands and Islands Enterprise**  
Iomairt na Gàidhealtachd 's nan Eilean

**Highlands and Islands Enterprise** is the Scottish Government's economic and community development agency for the north and west of Scotland. Its purpose is to generate sustainable economic growth in every part of the Highlands and Islands.



**Mountain Bike Centre of Scotland** is a joint initiative headed by Edinburgh Napier University and Developing Mountain Biking in Scotland, with project partner Scottish Enterprise. It is funded by the Scottish Funding Council and Edinburgh Napier University. From market research to product development; knowledge transfer, testing and product launches, it helps Scottish businesses to capitalise on one of the country's fastest growing sports, and to bring Scottish mountain biking products and services to an international audience.



**Scottish Land & Estates** is the voice of landowners and rural businesses throughout Scotland. A membership-based organisation, it represents a wide range of rural businesses, including farmers, foresters, tourism operators, housing providers, leisure companies, and renewable energy providers.

### VISITSCOTLAND.COM

**VisitScotland's** core purpose is to maximise the economic benefit of tourism to Scotland. It markets Scotland to all parts of the world, gives information and inspiration to visitors and potential visitors, and provides quality assurance to visitors and quality advice to industry partners.



Scottish Cycling, Sir Chris Hoy Velodrome, Emirates Arena, 1000 London Road, Glasgow G40 3HY

T: 0141 554 6021 E: [info@dmbins.com](mailto:info@dmbins.com) W: [www.dmbins.com](http://www.dmbins.com)