



**THE SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT OF MOUNTAIN
BIKING IN SCOTLAND**

A NATIONAL STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Contents

Contents	1
Executive Summary	2
Introduction	3
Our Vision	8
Key Objectives	9
The Present Position	11
Issues and Opportunities	13
Guiding Principles	14
Making it Happen	17
A Framework for Action	21



Executive Summary

Scotland already has a great story to tell, as it is recognised as one of the best destinations in the world for mountain biking and the increasing numbers of visitors is testament to that.

This Strategic Framework has been produced by the public and voluntary agencies with an interest in mountain biking in Scotland to ensure that the country continues to take full advantage of the growth in the activity of mountain biking.

The agencies involved directly are the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, Cycling Scotland, the Cyclists Touring Club, EventScotland, Forestry Commission Scotland, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, International Mountain Biking Association UK, Scottish Cycling, Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Natural Heritage, **sportscotland** and VisitScotland. Additionally, the development of the Framework has involved extensive consultation across all those involved in the activity, as participants, in relevant businesses and those with an interest in seeing the activity flourish.

Mountain biking contributes a vast amount to Scotland in terms of increased numbers of visitors, improving health through increased participation, promoting Scotland's image overseas through the staging of world class events and finally, by allowing Scots to achieve the highest standards in international competition.

Scotland already has a great story to tell, as it is recognised as one of the best destinations in the world for mountain biking and the increasing numbers of visitors is testament to that.

This framework aims to build on that success and its targets are:

- To increase mountain biking visitor numbers by a further 50% over the next 5 years
- To increase domestic participation in mountain biking by 25% over the same period
- To assist Scots to win at least 5 medals in World or Commonwealth competitions

To achieve this, the Framework will create the Scottish Mountain Bike Development Consortium (SMBDC) to act as an overarching coordinating body to enable close working partnerships between and among the agencies involved. Those agencies with the ability to fund developments directly, plan to enable Scottish Cycling to facilitate the work of the SMBDC.

In addition to the SMBDC, the Framework intends to encourage the creation of local mountain bike development Clusters throughout Scotland to promote and assist local development. These Clusters will involve the local authorities, local representatives of the national agencies, clubs and local businesses.

All the activities proposed within the Framework will be carried out in as sustainable a fashion as possible.

Finally, the Framework proposes careful monitoring and evaluation to ensure that the impact is clearly assessed and that the implementation of the Framework is as effective as possible.

Introduction

...there are extensive opportunities for mountain biking throughout Scotland...

Over the past 20 years, mountain biking has become established as a major sport and recreational pursuit in Scotland and the country has proved that it is a truly world-class venue for the activity. Scotland's status was recognised by the International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA) which, in 2005 and 2006, declared Scotland as a 'Global Superstar'.

Scotland's unique position as a mountain bike destination comes from its outstanding natural environment and its overall availability of constructed and natural routes, coupled with some of the most progressive outdoor access legislation in the world.

Major trail facilities in Scotland are producing significant economic benefit for the communities within which they are based, for example, the 7stanes network in the South of Scotland has generated £9m for the local economy in the South of Scotland and attracts some 400,000 visitors per year.

sportscotland's participation data (2005-2007) suggests that there are some 123,000 mountain bikers over the age of 16 and a further 15,000 15 and under. While these data give no indication of the types of use people make of their mountain bike or the extent of their participation, they do show that the domestic market is of significance.

The UK Tourism Survey shows that trips in Scotland involving mountain biking are 134,000, with an estimated spend of £39 million.

In addition to the purpose-built trail centres, there are extensive opportunities for mountain biking throughout Scotland on the network of natural and informal paths and tracks that already exist.

Mountain biking is a great way to have fun exploring the outdoors for people of all ages and abilities, as well as providing a means for healthy exercise close to home. There is an estimated total of 84,000km of paths and tracks in Scotland (Scottish Paths Record 2002) with 20,000km reported as being signposted or waymarked. (Scottish Government, 2008). A further 42,000km of minor roads contribute to the access of the off-road facilities, both formal and informal.

Scotland has shown, through the organisation of both the UCI Mountain Bike World Cup and the UCI Mountain Bike & Trials World Championships,

¹ UKTS 3 year average figures 2006 – 2008



There is an unprecedented opportunity for mountain biking to offer a unique experience of fun and challenge to everyone in Scotland.

that it is well placed to deliver world-class events and Scottish riders are succeeding at the highest levels of international competition. These events attract vast crowds of approximately 20,000 and world-wide TV audiences. Scotland is also producing young cyclists who can win medals in world competitions and there are 3 Scots in the 2008 British Cycling Olympic Development Programme.

Around 11.8 million people in the UK own a mountain bike and it is estimated that 1.3 million use them regularly to ride off-road. Scotland is certainly a top destination for mountain biking. With the expanding levels of access to a vast resource for mountain biking, the potential for this to be turned into further economic and sporting success, while also contributing to the health and physical activity levels of the nation, is immense. There is an unprecedented opportunity for mountain biking to offer a unique experience of fun and challenge to everyone in Scotland.

Against this background of progress and success, a group of key national agencies has come together to plan how best to sustain and grow mountain biking in Scotland in a way which provides optimum and quantifiable returns in terms of the health of the nation, economic and tourism development and also in terms of sporting participation and success. This has been seen by the agencies as a unique opportunity to build on a fantastic Scottish success story.

This **Strategic Framework** will promote partnership working amongst key stakeholders at both national and local levels and provide a real focus for coordinated future development. The aim is to encourage better coordination and cooperation and also to support innovative solutions which keep Scotland at the forefront of development.

The initial key partner agencies supporting and developing this initiative were:

- EventScotland
- Forestry Commission Scotland
- Highlands and Islands Enterprise
- Scottish Cycling
- Scottish Enterprise
- Scottish Natural Heritage
- **sportscotland**
- VisitScotland

Following consultation on the draft framework, four further organisations were invited to join the partners to support the implementation of the Framework. The following have now agreed to be involved:

- A representative from The Highland Council, acting as local government advisor
- Cycling Scotland
- Cyclists Touring Club
- International Mountain Biking Association UK



... a unique opportunity to shape the future ... for cycling on a mountain bike for people of all ages and abilities.

Engaging Stakeholders

The range of stakeholders in the private, public and voluntary sectors with an interest in mountain biking is extensive and this was borne out by a huge attendance at a national consultative conference held in Perth on 29 January 2008 as part of the work to develop this Framework. Over 200 delegates from all sectors attended and made a very active contribution to the identification of the key issues addressed in this Framework.

Writing in Mountain Bike Rider magazine, Kenny Wilson of IMBA-UK said of the event, "Throughout, the energy generated in the room was amazing.... What came over loud and clear was that passion was afforded a unique opportunity to shape the future".

The partners have all agreed that a critical aspect of this Framework must be harnessing and supporting that huge enthusiasm and energy to make the most of the opportunities available. It is vital therefore that the dialogue started at the Perth conference is continued in future.

Additionally, detailed discussions have taken place with the individual partner agencies and these agencies have worked together to establish the Framework. This work has been supported by Genesis Strategic Management Consultants.

A consultation draft of the Framework was made widely available during the summer of 2008 and some 885 formal responses were received. Of these responses, 67% indicated that they thought nothing had been omitted from the draft Framework. However, the responses (which will be commented on in more detail below) also stressed that continuing engagement of all the relevant organisations and individuals would be essential to the effective implementation of the Framework. This has been addressed by the expansion of the number of partner agencies involved, plans to hold a national conference on a regular basis and proposals to include rider and business representation on the Scottish Mountain Bike Development Consortium (SMBDC) which will be the body charged with the responsibility for implementing the Framework.

What is Mountain Biking?

We have debated whether it is possible to define the scope of the activity and have found that difficult to do beyond stating that it is concerned primarily with recreational participation and cycle sport which involves the use of a mountain bike in an off-road setting. Clearly, the Framework is concerned with dedicated and constructed trails for all levels of abilities from black runs for the experts to green runs for novices, families and young riders, but it is also concerned with natural trails and informal access to the outdoors for cycling on a mountain bike for people of all ages and abilities. It is concerned with the sporting aspects of the activity and especially seeking to have Scots succeed at world level, but it is also concerned with encouraging wider participation in more recreational mountain biking. It is concerned with attracting tourists to enjoy the spectacular scenery of Scotland, but it is also concerned with mountain bike facility development and opportunities closer to where people live.



Mountain biking is a lifestyle activity which has captured the imagination of many and is central to Scotland's rich and diverse adventure sports culture.

In short therefore, we have taken the view that the Framework should consider the widest possible range of off-road settings for the recreational and sporting use of the mountain bike. Mountain biking is a lifestyle activity which has captured the imagination of many and is central to Scotland's rich and diverse adventure sports culture.

The only areas we believe to be outwith the scope are the use of the mountain bike for utility purposes such as commuting to work or school. Nonetheless, there could still be opportunities for integration, especially where off-road functional routes double as recreational routes or can help those heading to other locations to go mountain biking to get there more sustainably.

It is important to note that the Scottish Government, in partnership with the cycling bodies and other organisations, set out in 2008 to develop a **Cycling Action Plan for Scotland (CAPS)** with the objective of increasing participation in all forms of cycling. Extensive consultation has taken place on the approach to be taken within CAPS and it will be published shortly. The Framework is designed to contribute to the objectives of CAPS in the specific area of mountain biking.

The Structure of the Framework



Our Vision

Our vision is for Scotland to be a world leader in all aspects of mountain biking.

Our vision is for Scotland to be a world leader in all aspects of mountain biking including:

- Sporting performances achieved
- Levels of participation
- Numbers of visitors attracted
- Major events staged
- The quality of facilities and opportunities provided.



Key Objectives

All of the partners recognise that they have both a legal and moral duty to ensure that they actively promote opportunities to participate for men and women, for people of all ethnic origins and for people with a disability.

The Framework will provide a clarity of vision for the activity in Scotland, which, in turn, will encourage a professional approach coupled with commitment and cohesive action amongst a wider range of stakeholders. To do this, the Framework aims to provide clear directions built on a set of guiding principles indicating how each objective can be delivered in a coordinated, equitable and sustainable fashion.

The Scottish Government aims to focus Government and public services on creating a more successful country with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish through increasing sustainable economic growth with the following five strategic objectives:

- Wealthier and Fairer
- Healthier
- Safer and Stronger
- Smarter
- Greener

Equity

All of the partners recognise that they have both a legal and moral duty to ensure that they actively promote opportunities to participate for men and women, for people of all ethnic origins and for people with a disability. Effective consultation and monitoring will be central to ensuring that this is achieved.

Sustainability

In relation to all the objectives, the partners recognise the critical importance of the sustainability of any actions taken. For example, any plans for new trail provision will need to demonstrate that they will not cause significant environmental impact in sensitive areas and that they can be maintained in the longer term. Sustainability, in environmental, social and economic terms are underpinning features of the Framework. It is also crucial that mountain biking facilities and activity are compatible with other land uses such as agriculture and forestry, with species/habitat, with local communities and also with other recreational pursuits.

In the context of these over-arching objectives for Scotland, the partner agencies are committed to promoting mountain biking in Scotland as an enjoyable activity and ensuring that mountain biking makes its optimum contribution to the key objectives of this Framework which are:

- Increased participation leading to improved health and well being
- tourism and economic development
- sporting development and success



The present position

Consultation with stakeholders and a review of various international perspectives has confirmed the strength of the Scottish position in the mountain biking world.

The outstanding attractiveness of Scotland's great outdoors as a venue for recreation and adventure sports.

The Positives To Build On

The present provision for mountain biking in Scotland has a number of very positive factors. These include:

- A worldwide and growing reputation
- World-class facilities
- Trail provision for all abilities
- International, national and local events of the highest calibre
- Access legislation which facilitates general responsible access to the outdoors
- A huge range of natural and informal paths
- The development of Core Path Networks
- Sporting success by Scots, providing good role models
- A positive culture and great enthusiasm for developing the activity at every level
- Public sector and commercial investment
- Good examples of coordinated inter-agency working
- Experience, knowledge and expertise
- The outstanding attractiveness of Scotland's great outdoors as a venue for recreation and adventure sports.

Issues to Address

A range of issues were identified by stakeholders at the Perth event as requiring attention, if Scotland's success is to be maintained and built on for the future. These included:

- The affordability of sustaining trail provision
- The lack of revenue streams for those making the main capital investments
- Concerns about liability and an increasing number of accidents and the resulting potential for litigation
- Inadequate cooperation amongst the key providers
- Poor communications with enthusiasts
- Gaps in the geographical distribution of trail centres and other trail provision
- Lack of joined-up developments
- Limited buy-in by local businesses
- Limited promotion and marketing at certain levels
- Issues with the image of mountain biking as an extreme, macho activity
- The need to avoid environmental damage associated with sensitive sites and poor planning, design and management of trails
- Poor integration with land managers and land management

Scotland's success is to be maintained and built on for the future.

- Barriers to entry including the accessibility of local and especially urban provision and the costs of transport and bikes
- A perceived lack of coordination at both national and local level, coupled with a perceived lack of ambition to realise the true potential of the activity
- Inclusivity of the activity in relation to women, families, children and lower income groups
- A lack of overall professionalism.

Feedback on the Consultative Draft

The feedback received in response to the consultative draft of the Framework confirmed this scope of the assessment of the positives and negatives of present provision and it identified the priority issues that needed to be tackled. The top three priorities identified by respondents were:

- Access generally and especially access to facilities around towns and cities which do not require car transport
- Trail management
- Engaging local communities in development

The key barriers to future development identified were:

- Car dependency because of the lack of cycle-friendly public transport
- The exclusion of lower-income groups because of both cost of bikes and the location of facilities
- A lack of information and awareness on what is available

As has been indicated in the introduction, the respondents were also concerned to ensure that the proposed SMBDC was fully representative of key interest groups and that riders and businesses should also have a means of continuing to be involved in the implementation of the Framework proposals. Action has already been taken to address this aspect.



Issues and Opportunities

The core issue at the heart of any effective national strategic framework has to be the promotion of more robust cooperation across the public, private and voluntary sectors.

The consultation with agencies and individuals involved in mountain biking at every level demonstrated a genuine and widespread enthusiasm for supporting the further development of the activity and realising the consequential economic, sporting and health benefits.

The present picture, while it has many positive aspects, can best be described as fragmented. The core issue at the heart of any effective national strategic framework has to be the promotion of more robust cooperation across the public, private and voluntary sectors. This means that there needs to be clear strategic leadership focused on delivering tangible outcomes which are seen to be of relevance to the key public sector partners and to the participants. This will help the partners to justify continued investment over, at least, the initial 3 year lifespan of the Framework, but also to engage with the wider group of stakeholders who have an interest in seeing the activity grow further.

In addition to the need for overall coordination, the major issues and opportunities to emerge from the consultation included:

- The requirement to promote more effective **collaborative working** amongst partners at every level
- The opportunities presented by **Scotland's Access Legislation** and the development of the **Core Paths Networks**
- The need for better **communication** amongst all the stakeholders involved
- The identification of gaps in **provision** of mountain bike facilities and opportunities locally and regionally to develop sustainable approaches to filling these gaps
- Removal of some of the barriers to entry into the activity through **more local and improved standards of physical and affordable access**
- Use of **inclusive imagery and information** which clearly demonstrates that mountain biking is an activity accessible for all
- Growth in the **knowledge base** through more effective market research and evaluation
- The development of clear **adopted standards** for trails and trail construction
- Building on existing success by more extensive **marketing** of what Scotland has to offer both internally and externally
- The creation of clear **pathway structures** for participation in mountain biking from entry level to the achievement of sporting success .

Guiding Principles

We recognise that there are challenges for mountain biking to address in terms of equality ... mainstreaming equitable practice in development and delivery is a core guiding principle of the Framework.

This Framework presents an implementation plan which aims to tackle all of the issues and opportunities identified above in a manner which is:

- coordinated
- equitable
- economically sustainable
- environmentally sustainable

In terms of **coordinated planning and delivery**, there will need to be much more effective communication and partnership working than has been the case in the past. This will require the full engagement of all stakeholders with all stakeholders – landowners and managers, local authorities, participants, businesses and the public agencies. With fuller engagement should come better collaboration leading to the collective identification and sharing of good practice.

All public bodies, including the partners supporting this Framework, have legal responsibilities for promoting equality of opportunity in service delivery, provision of facilities and in setting operational frameworks. This **General Equality Duty** with which public bodies must comply applies to gender, race and disability and specifically requires positive action to encourage wider participation by people with a disability in public life. When the **Single Equality Act** came into effect, it extended the equality duty to all six strands of equity – race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion/belief – as well as providing incentives for the private sector to improve their performance on equality. We recognise that there are challenges for mountain biking to address in terms of equality and mainstreaming equitable practice in development and delivery is a core guiding principle of the Framework.

In terms of **economic sustainability**, there needs to be a clear understanding of what the opportunities are and where the economic benefits will best be realised. The recently published report on the impact of the 7stanes initiative shows that around £9m is the annual benefit to the economy in the south of Scotland. However, most of this benefit does not accrue directly to the public agencies which have supported, managed or maintained the infrastructural investment, namely Forestry Commission Scotland, **sportscotland**, local authorities and the enterprise agencies. While the latter can justify their investment on the back of such economic development, it is more difficult for other agencies like Forestry Commission Scotland, which has no statutory obligations to support development and reconcile the competing demands for the forest resources they manage. Private landowners find themselves in a similar position with securing a return on any investments.

In terms of **environmental sustainability**, the partners fully recognise, support and promote their responsibilities for encouraging development and access in a way which is consistent with protecting the natural heritage resource and compliant with The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004, the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 and the Scottish Outdoor





Access Code. The future development of purpose-built facilities needs to be planned within the context of natural heritage designations and environmental impact assessment. The wider promotion of these sites and routes in the wider countryside must be accompanied by messages about responsible use.

... promotion of sites and routes in the wider countryside must be accompanied by messages about responsible use.

The partners recognise that a number of their proposals could have a potential environmental impact but the Framework has tried to anticipate these impacts and to link them directly to relevant mitigating factors. For example:

- Increased participation could lead to increased car use so local access and improved public transport are proposed
- Development of new facilities could have an environmental impact so codes of practice will be developed and better agency coordination established at a local level
- Increased informal access could lead to localised impacts and the existing Scottish Outdoor Access Code will be further promoted along with a code for rider behaviour



Making it happen

... the contribution of local authorities is to be optimised in leading the implementation at a local level.

Leadership

The partners gave particular attention to how this initiative might be led and considered, for example, whether a new freestanding organisation might be created to give real impetus to the activity. Equally, they considered whether any of them might take the lead role. The conclusions from these discussions indicated that there should not be a new freestanding body because that would only add another layer of complexity to the governance and support of cycling within Scotland.

It was agreed that, ideally, the Strategic Framework should be driven forward by a group established within cycling but that the group should facilitate the active participation by all the key partners. On further reflection, and recognising that Scottish Cycling's position as a membership body concerned with a wider range of disciplines other than mountain biking, it was agreed to reconstitute the existing Steering Group for the development of the Strategic Framework into the **Scottish Mountain Bike Development Consortium (SMBDC)**. It was recognised also that Scottish Cycling, as the governing body, had the central role to play in servicing the consortium. The main role of the SMBDC will be to provide overarching co-ordination and leadership for the sector, to enable all the partner agencies to make their most effective contributions. It will not replace the important roles played individually by the partners.

Before addressing the detailed actions proposed within this Strategic Framework, it is important to consider two major and over arching questions:

- How do we propose this ongoing and any new work should be led?
- How can the required capital and revenue investment be achieved?

The SMBDC would, at least initially, continue to be an informal grouping constituted by a memorandum of understanding amongst the key partners. There would be the ability to develop it into a more formal organisation at a later stage if required. Following feedback on the consultative draft, it was agreed to expand the membership to include, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, Cycling Scotland, the Cyclists Touring Club and the International Mountain Biking Association UK.

It was agreed also to add representatives for the business community and riders, initially on a co-opted basis but thereafter by election at the biennial National Mountain Bike Conference.

The partners have recognised in particular the multi-faceted role local authorities can play in supporting the activity. Not only do they have key responsibilities for roads and transportation, countryside access and especially for the Core Paths Plan, but they also have interests in expanding participation through their sports development functions and in expanding tourist numbers through their involvement in economic development functions. All this means that critical links need to be made between this strategic framework and Community Planning Partnerships and Single Outcome Agreements if the contribution of local authorities is to be optimised in leading the implementation at a local level.



... a new approach in the form of **Development Clusters for Mountain Biking** where priorities would be established by local consortia.

Investment

The partners have recognised that there will need to be core funding provided to establish the SMBDC and to support the appointment of staff within Scottish Cycling to service this initiative. The mechanisms for providing funding, the extent to which partners will be able to provide that support and the objectives for providing the funding will vary from agency to agency. Nonetheless, it has been agreed that developing a core support plan will be an integral part of the initial implementation stages of the Framework.

The majority of the capital funding provided to date for purpose-built facility development has been opportunistic and reactive. Whether on public or private land, the investment has largely derived from the public purse in various guises. Partners with the ability to invest in facility development and those who have already committed major sums are under pressure from all quarters to support further new projects. This strategic framework proposes a new approach in the form of **Development Clusters for Mountain Biking** where priorities would be established by local consortia. The **Framework for Action** which follows describes these Development Clusters in more detail. The Development Clusters are designed to provide local focus and cooperation and would be supported by the more general promotion of wider access networks providing opportunities for mountain biking. It is not the intention that Development Clusters would preclude other developments that boost growth and equity across other parts of Scotland.

Partners like Forestry Commission Scotland are under strong external pressure to continue to invest in the development of new facilities and, as has been explained above, the majority of the economic benefit is returned to the private sector. The scope for the Commission, in common with other land managers, to raise revenue directly from mountain biking is severely limited because of the limitations on charging for access. However, there is some scope for the landowners and managers to charge for ancillary aspects like car parking and to seek to raise revenue from an increasing number of leases to commercial operators for support facilities like cafes, bike shops and perhaps even dedicated bike parks in the future. It is extremely unlikely that land managers will ever generate surplus revenue



... accessibility and inclusiveness are a core part of any standards developed ...informed by existing good practice in mountain biking and other facility development, and consultation with advisory partners and groups.

from mountain biking but they should be able, through improved recovery from charges and levies, to raise a significant contribution to fund ongoing maintenance of dedicated trails at the major purpose built centres.

Car park charges at some Forestry Commission sites in England are already between £5 and £8 per day. There is a growing recognition amongst the mountain bike community that they need to make a financial contribution if quality trail centres are to be maintained. However, such entry charges can be a barrier to lower income groups and the SMBDC should consider alternative models to understand the cost implications for different groups and how prohibitive charging can be overcome or offset. The feedback on the consultative draft raised the aspect of lower income groups as a significant concern.

Forestry Commission Scotland has confirmed that it will continue to manage and maintain existing facilities on the national forest estate. It will also continue to offer open access for mountain bikers in line with the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. It is unlikely that the Commission will be able to invest further in technical and specialist trails in future. However, the Commission will continue to invest in supporting infrastructure, business development and multi-user trails.

The Commission has indicated that developers on the national forest estate will need to meet specific standards in terms of planning, design, construction and management (including the provision of insurance to cover liabilities). They will also need to demonstrate clearly that there is sufficient evidence to show that the business and hence the facilities will be sustained and/or decommissioned if they become unsustainable over time.

A key issue for the SMBDC is to ensure that accessibility and inclusiveness are a core part of any standards developed, and that they are informed by existing good practice in mountain biking and other facility development, and consultation with advisory partners and groups.

It is anticipated that the restructured enterprise agencies may still be able to invest in mountain biking where there is a clear tourism and economic development rationale. Equally, **sportscotland** may be able to assist where facilities are being developed which fit within the parameters of the Scottish Cycling Facilities Strategy and meet **sportscotland**'s other assessment criteria .

To date, local authorities have provided only limited investment into site-based purpose-built facilities and programmes but it is hoped that this Framework will encourage more interest in mountain biking and also greater use of the activity within programmes like the Active Schools Programme.

Local authorities are playing a crucial role in the development and implementation of Outdoor Access Strategies and Core Paths Plans, which will provide for mountain biking. There is the potential for local authorities to attract funding for the development of access infrastructure and for information to promote use by mountain bikers from the local area or further afield.





A framework for action

This section of the strategic framework seeks to identify a series of clear areas for action that will deliver the objectives and address both the priorities of the partners and the interests of local participants and visitors alike. Leadership of the delivery of the actions will be vested in the SMBDC as described previously.

The basic idea of the Development Cluster concept is to identify fairly broad geographical areas with the greatest potential to safeguard and improve existing provision ... to identify development opportunities to deliver the future needs of mountain biking and realise the optimum economic returns in terms of visitor numbers.

PROVISION

As already explained, there is considerable pressure from local enthusiasts, businesses and other organisations to expand greatly the level of trail provision for mountain biking in Scotland. While the enthusiasm which this represents is certainly welcome, *ad hoc* development will not enhance Scotland's position in mountain biking and might well result in the limited resources available for investment being spread too thinly. Nonetheless, there is an important role for local enthusiasts and businesses to work alongside local authorities and the statutory agencies. Effective coordination at a local level is a core action within this Framework.

National and Regional Facilities

Scottish Cycling has been developing a national Facilities Strategy to deliver the needs of all disciplines within the sport of cycling and the mountain biking part of that strategy is seen as an integral part of this Framework. The Scottish Cycling Facilities Strategy identifies Glentress and Nevis Range as existing national venues within Scotland and proposes the establishment of two further national trail centres, one in west central Scotland and one in the Grampian area.


The Perth Conference also suggested that the provision of long distance and iconic mountain bike routes should be investigated.

The Facilities strategy proposes the recognition of further existing trail centres as being of regional significance. It is proposed that both of these levels of provision be developed within the concept of the Development Clusters.

Development Clusters

The 7stanes initiative has highlighted the value of adopting a structured approach towards the development and promotion of a series of trail centres which can provide critical mass within a region or locality. 7stanes serves as an example of a development cluster.

The basic idea of the Development Cluster concept is to identify fairly broad geographical areas with the greatest potential to safeguard and improve existing provision and, if appropriate, to identify development opportunities to deliver the future needs of mountain biking and realise the optimum economic returns in terms of visitor numbers. The concept is based on cluster theory used in economic development which aims to create critical mass by bringing together as many partners as possible within a defined area to create the maximum impact.

A photograph of two mountain bikers riding on a rocky trail. The lead biker is wearing a red t-shirt, black shorts, a blue helmet, and a backpack. The second biker is wearing a white t-shirt, black shorts, and a black helmet. They are riding on a grey, rocky path that winds through a green, hilly landscape with trees in the background under a cloudy sky.

CASE STUDY: 7stanes

The 7stanes project was initiated in 2001 and the vision for phase 2 of the project has been to:

“ Maintain and develop the South of Scotland as a world-class mountain biking destination; supporting tourism and rural business development and bringing health, wealth and enjoyment into the natural environment”.

The Project utilises 7 Forestry Commission Scotland sites across the South of Scotland and has been funded by agencies and organisations across Dumfries & Galloway and Scottish Borders.

The phase 2 evaluation of the 7stanes project carried out by EKOS and the Tourism Resources Company found that the key impacts across the 2 phases of the project can be summarised as follows:

- Just under 400,000 visitors per year
- A large non-local market at 80%
- Increasing quality ratings for the trails
- Net additional impacts of £9.29m in the South of Scotland

In addition, there has been increased local tourism business involvement, through the 7stanes business development pack, the creation of 2 mountain bike business networks and a commercial business web portal.

Each Development Cluster would be led by a local consortium including the local authorities, Forestry Commission Scotland, other statutory agencies, local landowners, local businesses and local participants and clubs. To promote consultation on disability access within the Cluster area there should be representation from the local Access Panel of the Scottish Disability Equality Forum (SDEF).

To promote consultation on disability access within the Cluster area there should be representation from the local Access Panel of the Scottish Disability Equality Forum (SDEF).

The consortium would be responsible for creating a Development Plan for their area to build on current provision. This Framework does not seek to specify all the aspects of a Development Cluster because they will only work effectively if they reflect and support local initiative and commitment. The following list of features are suggested for guidance:

- A Cluster development plan identifying key local actions and sources of funding and support, in line with the implementation plan for the Framework
- An assessment of the potential for local provision and widening of participation
- Identified networks of routes suitable for off-road cycling which require minimum management and are, or could be, way-marked and can be promoted
- Cycle-friendly connections which link the purpose-built and promoted facilities and the wider access network
- Coordinated marketing including the preparation of specific materials including maps to promote the Cluster, in line with SMBDC guidance
- Arrangements in place to enable businesses to work together to enhance the commercial returns from the activity in the area
- Responsibility for ensuring that new developments are sustainable and established to appropriate standards, in line with SMBDC guidance
- Local competitions, events, training and club development

Initially, it is proposed that there be five Development Clusters established and that these should cover:

- South of Scotland
- West Central Scotland
- Perthshire/Angus/Fife
- The Highlands
- The North East and Deeside

It is important to note that it is not intended that each of these Development Clusters should be identical and that it is not envisaged that they will be established simultaneously. Their nature will be determined by local interest and the range of local stakeholders, the geography and especially the scope of the landscape to absorb activity in a sustainable fashion.

It will be useful too for the Clusters to be linked into the network of Scottish Cycling's Regional Development Coaches.

Respondents to the consultative draft questioned the scope of the

individual Clusters. While the SMBDC will take the initiative to enable the development of the Clusters and provide initial support, it is recognised that each Cluster is geographically diverse and the number of development plans and the membership format will vary between Clusters. The Clusters will feedback into the SMBDC through the project manager.

Local authorities are using cycling as an activity within their Active Schools Programme and this Framework seeks to encourage local authorities to look more closely at how they could enhance the accessibility of the activity.

Accessibility

Considerable concern has been expressed in the initial consultation exercise and in the comments on the consultative draft about the need for this Framework to address the issues of social inclusion and barriers to accessing mountain biking in its widest sense. Barriers can take many forms, not just physical, and they will be specific to individuals and/or groups of people. There is a danger of making assumptions about what constitutes a barrier and how important various barriers are in a particular context in the absence of evidence and consultation. Because of cultural and social diversity, people's needs differ, and in order to provide equality of access, an unequal distribution of effort and resources is often necessary. This is a fundamental principle of equity; that people are treated according to their needs, which does not mean that everybody is treated the same. This needs-based approach is particularly relevant to accessibility. The Development Clusters approach should encourage a more focussed assessment of access issues and the opportunity to draw on local knowledge and resources in improving access.

There are many good practice examples of enhancing accessibility and increasing participation, as illustrated by the Bannerman High School and Cumbernauld case studies which follow.

Local authorities are using cycling as an activity within their Active Schools Programme and this Framework seeks to encourage local authorities to look more closely at how they could enhance the accessibility of the activity.

Local authorities should consider the construction and signposting of paths designed with mountain bikers in mind. In appropriate locations, they should consider holding supplies of bikes and appropriate safety equipment, to encourage schools to use the facilities. Public transport providers should be encouraged to make provision for bikes between the main urban areas and purpose-built trail centres.

Much of this type of activity is currently planned within the context of local authorities' Outdoor Access Strategies and Core Paths Plans. Local Access Forums also have a role to play in advising on the development of provision specifically for mountain bikers, and there needs to be coordination between authorities' access, health and education teams.





BANNERMAN FESTIVAL OF CYCLING

CASE STUDY: Bannerman High School Glasgow

The School Bicycle Loan Scheme was initially introduced by Glasgow City Council's Land Services at St. Mungo's Academy in 2005. The scheme was one of a number of projects launched during European Mobility Week 2005. This had a central focus on promoting sustainable trips to workplaces and schools, and encouraging alternative transport including cycling.

In partnership with Strathclyde Police, Glasgow City Council planned to pilot the bicycle loan scheme in one school and St Mungo's Academy was chosen as the first school.

With the success of the loan scheme in St Mungo's, a decision was taken to extend the project to other schools in March 2006. Bannerman High School, with a school roll of 1353 was one of the 4 other schools selected and 21 bikes were issued to 17 boys and 4 girls. Police Officer, Craig Borthwick, supported by staff from the school, has evolved the scheme into a school club. Craig has a qualification in Trail Cycle Leadership and is currently undergoing the UK Level 2 Coaching Certificate in Cycling.

Bannerman's Bike Club meets on a Thursday, and is used by a number of pupils with differing backgrounds and personal challenges. The Club has successfully engaged pupils who have had difficulty in otherwise doing so within the school or community. The Club has been supported by Keith Stocker, Regional Development Coach with Scottish Cycling who has delivered 2 blocks of coaching.

Going from strength to strength, the school has recently constructed an on-site mountain bike trail, the first school in Europe to have developed such a facility. The Club has gone on to represent the school in the 'Mountain Bike Challenge' at the 2008 Glasgow Youth Games, the first time cycling had been included in the Games.



CASE STUDY – Mountain Biking PE Project in Cumbernauld

Forestry Commission Scotland in partnership with Cycling Scotland, Scottish Wildlife Trust (SWT) and Abrohill High School have developed an innovative School Mountain Bike project in North Lanarkshire.

The aim is to encourage pupils to participate in mountain biking in a woodland setting as part of secondary school PE and after schools programme and to broaden the content of what is on offer to pupils in schools.

The project was piloted in 2007 and mainstreamed in 2008 and has been successful in offering mountain biking as part of core PE lessons, within a woodland environment. A progressive mountain biking program is now offered as an elective in physical education for pupils from S3 upward. There has been excellent uptake and enthusiasm from pupils as it was seen as one of the most exciting activities on offer. The pupils have improved their bike handling skills and confidence in different terrain and environments.

In particular the older girls within the school have seen this as an appealing physical activity option compared to the more traditional choices available. The project links into a new urban mountain bike trail and skills loop constructed on SWT land in Cumbernauld Glen as part of the Woodlands in and Around Town (WIAT) scheme. The urban mountain bike trail also provides an opportunity for the pupils to continue being active and develop their skills outwith school.

Bikes and relevant equipment were identified and purchased with funding from Forestry Commission Scotland, with a bike storage container and bespoke training for the PE teachers provided by Cycling Scotland.

...encourage a better understanding within the mountain biking community of the responsibilities and liabilities which come with the development of local trails.

Other Local Initiatives

In an activity like mountain biking, it is inevitable that local enthusiasts will come up with new ideas and proposals for developments on a regular basis. Indeed, groups of individual mountain bikers sometimes simply seek out and build their own routes and structures, often, but not exclusively, on the national forest estate, with or without permission of the local landowner or manager.

It is not the purpose of this Framework to curtail local initiative, but instead its purpose is to encourage a better understanding within the mountain biking community of the responsibilities and liabilities which come with the development of local trails and to foster a culture of collaborative working. Equally, it is important to share a better understanding of the responsibilities of both the landowner/manager and those who choose to undertake a DIY approach to meeting their aspirations.

There are limits on public funding for both capital and revenue support for such initiatives and the aim of the Development Clusters is to enable the public agencies to prioritise their investment in areas that will produce the best returns in terms of health, sporting and economic development.

This need not rule out developments in other areas but it may mean, as happens in other parts of the world, that the volunteers in these areas have to take a greater degree of responsibility for both the development and sustainability of the local facilities they wish to see develop.

The Framework recommends, therefore, the creation of a **Code of Practice** for the development of facilities by local enthusiasts together with the development and adoption of recognised standards for trails and structures, their planning, design, construction, maintenance and management.

It is also recommended that local enthusiasts constitute themselves as a proper group and become affiliated to the governing body. This will help them to access support, expertise and other benefits.



STANDARDS AND LIABILITY

Moving Forward Towards Professional Solutions

Issues of public liability have been identified as being of major concern ...

The Forestry Commission across Great Britain has, as part of a wider forest recreation review, recognised the need to develop proper standards for mountain bike facilities and their management on the national forest estate. Comprehensive advice and guidance is being developed for their managers and this material could have wider applicability and will be freely available to others with relevant interests. It is intended that the standards derived from this work will be implemented with support from a training package across the facilities managed by the Commission and also by others on the national forest estate.

Trail Gratings

As part of its review, a considerable amount of work has been done by the Forestry Commission to establish a trail grading system and this has been broadly accepted by all interested parties. However, concerns have been expressed about the extent and consistency of the application of the gradings. Also, the needs of people with a disability are still to be assessed and incorporated into the grading system.

The Framework recommends that once the grading system has been agreed, SMBDC is responsible for the promotion and encouragement of a consistent application of the gradings system across the country and for the formal recognition of nationally graded trails.

Trail Construction

There is a considerable amount of expertise in trail building in Scotland and this is likely to be an area for further business development. Forestry Commission GB is developing specifications and guidance for its own staff and activity on the national forest estate.

It has been suggested that an organisation like the SMBDC could take responsibility for the further development of trail construction standards and that agreed national trail construction standards would further enhance Scotland's image around the world. This could be further supported through the establishment of a trail designers and builders association, the development of proper training and the advent of an accreditation scheme.

Issues of public liability have been identified as being of major concern especially to landowners who have provided, and are responsible for the management of, purpose-built facilities. There are also liability issues connected with self-build trails and their responsible construction and management.

The lack of trail management and maintenance and the provision of misleading marketing material, signage or waymarking also have the

The Scottish Outdoor Access Code emphasises the need for people to take responsibility for their own actions.

potential to cause problems. This may especially be the case when there are multiple landowners or users involved.

The SMBDC recognises that addressing the legal implications of landowner liability is a fundamental area which will require further work. It is important to note however that the courts have generally accepted that (informal) sport and physical recreation and even children's play involves risks; indeed without a degree of risk, the value and challenge of these activities are reduced. The Scottish Outdoor Access Code emphasises the need for people to take responsibility for their own actions. The Code is clear that access rights do not alter the nature of the liability owed by a land manager.

One way of controlling the risk and enhancing the safety and enjoyment of mountain biking is for group activity to be facilitated by qualified mountain bike leaders. This is an approach favoured by Forestry Commission Scotland on its sites. Anyone operating under conditions of license is required to have such a qualification because mountain biking is a licensable activity (Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004).

The way ahead will include increasing awareness of the need for investment in standards, their consistent application and professionalism in all aspects of management, facilities, activities and events.



MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION

Building on Marketing Success

A balance needs to be struck between marketing to visitors to Scotland and the provision of information to participants and potential participants resident in Scotland.

A considerable amount of excellent work has been done on both a national and local basis to promote Scotland's mountain biking assets and we recommend that this should be continued and expanded, especially in the context of the proposed Development Clusters. A balance needs to be struck between marketing to visitors to Scotland and the provision of information to participants and potential participants resident in Scotland. The latter is seen as an area in need of further attention if the objectives of increasing participation of underrepresented groups and raising physical activity levels are to be realised.

The partners and a number of those consulted have commented that the level of market knowledge and research needs to be improved to underpin any further marketing activity, including the use of inclusive imagery and accessibility of information to a wider audience.

The highly-regarded **Scottish Mountain Biking Guide** published by VisitScotland in collaboration with Forestry Commission Scotland provides good information on dedicated trail centres and related facilities. However, the guide provides very limited promotion of the opportunities available to mountain bikers to access the wider countryside throughout Scotland. SMBDC should be involved in the production of future guides to widen the scope and accessibility of the content.

There may be the need in future to consider what should become the website and web forum of choice for the mountain bike community in Scotland.



CASE STUDY: Highlands and Moray Business Development Pack

There is a wide range of mountain bike trails and wilderness mountain biking available in the Highlands and Moray, including Forestry Commission Scotland sites plus Abriachan and Highland Wildcat at Golspie, and a growing number of events across the area (notably the successful World Cup stages and World Championships at Fort William).

Following on from the launch of a web portal which aimed to highlight the options available to visitors and in an effort to ensure local businesses could understand the opportunities within mountain biking, a tourism innovation day was held (organised by HIE, as part of the Forest Tourism Initiative), in which 38 private businesses participated.

Directly generated from this day was a guide to the non-waymarked trails around Fort William. In addition, a business development pack was launched, featuring case studies from the Highlands and the 7stanes area, along with development and marketing tips on maximising the mountain bike market.



Further work needs to be done to promote all aspects of mountain biking to a wider audience, especially women, young people and families.

Improving Communications

The enthusiasm and range of those involved in mountain biking was especially evident at the National Consultative Seminar in Perth that was a vital part of the development of this framework. Feedback from the conference suggests that the event was valued highly, especially as it allowed a dialogue between and among agencies and participants. It is proposed therefore that a Scottish National Mountain Bike Conference becomes a biennial event to capture and channel the energy and enthusiasm of the whole mountain bike community.

Image

Images of mountain biking, certainly in Scotland, tend to convey a sense of challenge and adventure within scenic and dramatic surroundings. While these images are being used to good effect in attracting local participants and visitors alike, there are other dimensions of the activity that alternative imagery can promote.

The current male dominance within the sport is being perpetuated by images of young males in extreme action poses, portraying mountain biking as an activity of extreme technical challenge and risk taking. Further work needs to be done to promote all aspects of mountain biking to a wider audience, especially women, young people and families. This will mean balancing the exposure of the extreme end of the sport with promoting the opportunities for fun and enjoyment to a wide diversity of participants. One way to promote the use of inclusive imagery is for partners to issue guidance to their marketing and media personnel and contacts. Influencing local and national press is important in this context to achieve a better balance in reporting, especially in the sports pages.

There is also the need to convey messages about taking responsibility for yourself, respecting the needs of others and caring for the environment - the three key messages of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.



SPORTS DEVELOPMENT

Competitive Performance

Scots are now winning medals in world level mountain biking competitions and, with the expansion and development of facilities and the structures Scottish Cycling is putting in place, further success is predicted.

What is required is a very clear performance-development plan for mountain biking to be developed by Scottish Cycling in conjunction with **sportscotland**. British Cycling has overall responsibility for international competition where Scots may be included in GB teams, the Commonwealth Games being the only international event where a Scottish team is represented. However, individuals with sufficient UCI points or juniors selected by GB can compete at UCI World Cup Level at both Cross Country and Downhill. Recent success has shown the strength of home grown talent and with Glasgow 2014 on the horizon a Scottish performance plan is essential if young Scots are to succeed at the highest level. This is illustrated by the case study which follows.

Sporting pathways are about creating opportunities for people to participate in sport at any level and whatever their personal motivation and goals.

Pathways

The concept of pathways in sports development is not limited purely to the achievement of sporting success. There needs to be effective pathways into the activity of mountain biking and for personal skills development which allow participants to discover and develop their own sporting experience. Sporting pathways are about creating opportunities for people to participate in sport at any level and whatever their personal motivation and goals are. Events, coaching and facilities will all contribute to this and Scottish Cycling will produce a development pathway as part of this Framework.

Coaching and Leadership

A vital component of sports development is ensuring that there are sufficient coaches and leaders within the sport to support the development of both participation and performance.

The Strategic Plan for Scottish Cycling contains a framework for the delivery of coach education mapped out to 2014.

The Scottish Mountain Bike Leaders Award has made a significant contribution to this area and the Framework recommends further support for the expansion of this scheme in order to exploit the potential of the award in Scotland, within the UK, and indeed to expand into Europe where it is highly regarded. Leadership provides another dimension to facilitating an experience of mountain biking which coaching alone will not match in terms of numbers and scope of activity.



CASE STUDY: Scottish Downhill Squad

In 2007 Scottish Cycling formed a partnership with the Winning Scotland Foundation to provide coaching, training and mechanical support to Ruaridh Cunningham and Chris Hutchens for each round of the UCI Downhill World Cup Series with the ultimate aim of securing a podium slot at the UCI Mountain Bike and Trials World Championship in Fort William (2007). Ruaridh subsequently went on to become the first British male to win a Gold Mountain Bike medal as Junior Downhill World Champion. Chris Hutchens was 9th. The potential of Scottish riders was further demonstrated by both Chris Hutchens and Ruaridh Cunningham having been promoted directly to the Elite category, an invitational category for riders of senior age, for the 2008 World Cup series.

To attempt to meet this potential, legacy funding from the Winning Scotland Foundation has supported the initial set-up of a Downhill Talent Team. The squad of six (5 male and 1 female) riders, all 16 years and under receive coaching, education and mentoring through a series of squad training camps and personal coaching. The squad has already made waves by filling every spot from first to fourth in their early outings.

In order to further develop the sport at governing body level, Scottish Cycling is taking a lead in pathway and junior development. The Scottish Cycling Talent Team is focused on providing a world class support framework that will produce a host of world class junior athletes within a four year timeframe.



National Training and Rider Development Centre

The Scottish National Outdoor Training Centre, Glenmore Lodge, is playing an increasing role in supporting the development of mountain bike activity and especially the training of leaders and mountain bike tutors. Scottish Cycling and the SMBDC should investigate the extent to which Glenmore Lodge can play a more significant role in the development of leaders and in supporting performance development.

There are a number of proficiency schemes in other sports like skiing which might well form the basis for a similar scheme in mountain biking.

Award Schemes

The possibility of the development of a national personal proficiency-based awards scheme for mountain biking was discussed in detail at the National Conference, particularly as there are a number of proficiency schemes in other sports like skiing which could inform a similar scheme in mountain biking. In conjunction with partners Scottish Cycling, CTC, SMBLA and Sustrans, Cycling Scotland has since developed GO MTB, a mountain biking proficiency scheme with 5 levels and 4 themes.



The World Championships alone generated £5.9m for the local economy.

EVENTS

In the area of major international mountain bike events, Scotland is truly world-class. The series of UCI Mountain Bike World Cup events since 2002 and the Mountain Bike and Trials World Championships in 2007 in Fort William have shown that Scotland has both the facilities and the expertise to organise the highest standard of competition. The World Cup has grown year on year generating in excess of £10m in economic impact in the Highlands since 2002. The World Championships alone generated £5.9m for the local economy.

Glasgow's hosting of the Commonwealth Games in 2014, which will feature mountain biking, will be a catalyst to further build this profile and interest along with participation and elite performance.

With Nevis Range, Leanachan Forest and Glentress having been selected to be in the London Olympics 2012 pre-training camp guide, there is scope to investigate the staging of other events such as a UCI Marathon and a range of European events. The staging of national, regional and local events, together with charitable events, is not without challenges, despite the economic impact which can result. Some venues used, especially in the downhill circuit, lack investment and are not properly configured or constructed. This, together with growth in demand for competition places, is putting organisers and the venues under pressure. A code of practice for events would be a useful consideration.

As part of this Framework, Scottish Cycling will, in cooperation with relevant partners and especially EventScotland, seek to produce a longer term events plan for mountain biking in Scotland. This will consolidate Scotland's position as a World Cup venue, identify further opportunities to bring major events to Scotland and encourage the creation of more local events throughout the country, a key suggestion from the Perth Conference.

² Source: EventScotland





CASE STUDY: Mountain Bike and Trials World Championships 2007

Fort William hosted the UCI World Mountain Bike and Trials Championships in September 2007; a culmination of five successful UCI Mountain Bike and Trials World Cups hosted in the area. EventScotland played a leading role in securing partner support and working with organisers Rare Management and partners – UK Sport, VisitScotland, sportscotland, Highland Council and HIE - to win the Championships for Scotland. Nissan was a key sponsor for the event, adding significant weight to marketing/PR opportunities and providing cars to the event organisers in addition to their cash. The Championships brought 746 riders from 47 nations to Scotland and thousands of visitors to the Highlands, generating an estimated £1.7M in economic impact and £5.9M net additional expenditure to Lochaber. The event attracted 33 hours of worldwide TV coverage showcasing Scotland's natural assets across 20 countries. Other key outcomes included investment in world class mountain bike tracks, £1.5M investment in a permanent 3km pathway from Fort William town to the tracks, strengthened relationship and reputation with UCI (the international cycling governing body) and British Cycling and increased interest in hosting events in other areas.

CASE STUDY: Glenmore Lodge Training Facility

The **sportscotland** mountain bike training facility at Glenmore Lodge, lies within a National Scenic Area, a Site of Special Scientific Interest, a Special Protection Area, a Special Area of Conservation and the Cairngorms National Park. Through good management, siting, design and construction of the facility and working closely with conservation interests, including the national park and Scottish Natural Heritage, an intensively-used recreational resource was successfully integrated within a heavily designated site. **sportscotland** has produced a best practice report on the development of the facility which highlights, amongst other messages, what has been done to ameliorate the impact of the training facility on the landscape and nature conservation interests of the site.



SUSTAINABILITY

... the issues of economic and environmental sustainability are critical components of this Framework.

As has been described earlier, the issues of economic and environmental sustainability are critical components of this Framework. Aspects of economic sustainability have been discussed previously in this document and the need for public sector support to realise the potential returns in terms of benefit to businesses and communities has been highlighted. These aspects will be run as core themes within the work of the SMBDC and partners in the implementation of this Framework.

In terms of environmental sustainability, the Framework suggests that more work is necessary to build on the excellent work being led by SNH to explain the rights and responsibilities implicit within access legislation and the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

Regarding trail development, the Framework emphasises that this should only take place when there has been a full environmental impact assessment. It is hoped that, in this respect, SNH will be willing to be active partners in the Development Clusters.



KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND EVALUATION

Commissioned research should include equity/ social impacts alongside environmental and economic sustainability,

The final area to be addressed in the Framework is the knowledge base and evaluation of the potential and significance of mountain biking to Scotland. There have been a number of studies of the impact of the activity in Scotland, not least the most recent economic impact study of the 7stanes Project. The partners believe, however, that there is only limited knowledge available on which to consider the feasibility of projects and it is proposed that the SMBDC take responsibility for commissioning relevant research to support the future sustainable development of the activity in Scotland in a way which secures the benefits identified for the country. Commissioned research should include equity / social impacts alongside environmental and economic sustainability, all three aspects benefiting from the identification of good practice from an evidence base.

An important part of this work will be the overall evaluation of the implementation of this Framework. This will require more detailed business planning by the SMBDC when it is formally established.



The partners of the Scottish Mountain Bike Development Consortium are:

Cycling Scotland

www.cyclingscotland.org



www.ctc.org.uk

EventScotland

www.eventscotland.org



**Forestry Commission
Scotland**

www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland



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

www.hie.co.uk



**INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN
BIKING ASSOCIATION UK**

www.imba.org.uk



www.scottishcycling.org.uk



Scottish Enterprise

www.scottish-enterprise.com



Scottish Natural Heritage
All of nature for all of Scotland

www.snh.org.uk

sportscotland

www.sportscotland.org.uk

A representative
from The Highland
Council, acting as
local government
advisor



www.visitscotland.com

Contact

SMBDC Project Manager
at Scottish Cycling
www.scottishcycling.org.uk
tel: 0131 317 9704

Published by – Forestry Commission Scotland on behalf of the
Scottish Mountain Bike Development Consortium – December 2009
ISBN – 978 0 85538 795 2
©Crown Copyright 2009

Photographs from:

Andy McCandlish Photography: Cover, P20 (© www.andymccandlish.com)

Cycling Scotland (Go MTB): P35

EventScotland: P36

Forestry Commission Picture Library: P1, P3, P5, P8, P10, P14, P15, P16, P24, P26, P27, P29, P30, P35, P39, P39, P40

Glasgow City Council: P25

Phunkt.com: P37 (© Keith Valentine)

Scottish Cycling: P12, P17, P32, P34 (© Steve Lindridge)

Scottish Natural Heritage Image Library: P6, P33, P40

Simon Harry, Abriachan Forest Trust: P31

VisitScotland/Scottish Viewpoint: P8, P12, P18, P19, P22, P27, P29, P31, P32, P36

Designed by – Gecko for Scottish Mountain Bike Development Consortium
FCMS116-JTPC-100-DEC09