

NEWS

Plans unveiled for new mountain bike trail centre in the Pentlands

On the trail of a local cycling revolution

By KEVIN QUINN
kevin.quinn@jpimedia.co.uk
@AdvKevin

Two local businessmen are behind a new mountain bike trail centre that could revolutionise cycle participation in East Central Scotland.

The site for the Pentland Trail Centre is located within the boundary of the former Lothianburn Golf Course, sitting inside Pentland Hills Regional Park. The centre will offer an introduction to traffic-free cycling for kids and their families, as well as more challenging cross-country trails for Edinburgh and Midlothian's estimated 260,000 cyclists.

The site features 10.5km of high quality and fun mountain bike trails to suit all abilities.

Other outdoor activities to suit a wide range of ages and interests are being considered for the site. These include a high ropes course, a zipline and an alpine roller luge.

Developed from a 2014 feasibility study and subsequent public consultation, the Pentland Trail Centre is an initiative of Hillend Leisure Ltd, a new company established by Alastair McClung of Swanston Farms, the landowner of the Lothianburn site, and Stuart Wright - Advie Properties and



Alastair McClung (left) and Stuart Wright, pictured at the site of the proposed Pentland Trail Centre with local kids.

formerly responsible for Dobbies' development activities. Both are keen mountain bikers and qualified mountain bike leaders.

Alastair said: "Our passion is to introduce mountain biking to a much wider audience, on the perfect site, right next to the city. It's the ideal use of the old golf course site and is a perfect gateway to the rest of the Pentland Hills."

The outdoor trail centre, occupying more than 80 per cent of the site, will be supported by a commercial de-

velopment to include cafe facilities, changing facilities, relevant retail, office space and accommodation pods. It will be located in the valley to the rear of the Steading Inn and between the northern slopes of the Pentland Regional Park and the central ridge that runs from the old golf clubhouse up to the woods.

Alastair added: "By introducing a commercial element the project can move from a vision to reality."

Proposals for the Pentland Trail Centre will be present-

ed at an open public consultation next Tuesday (March 5) at Swanston Golf Clubhouse, between 2pm and 7pm.

The aims of the Pentland Trail Centre project have been supported by Scottish Cycling.

Graeme McLean, project manager for mountain biking at Scottish Cycling, said: "We look forward to being involved in the consultation process for the new Pentland Trail Centre development; and to understand further how it is going to increase participation in mountain biking."

EU

Report warns of local hard Brexit impact

A Scottish Government report warns that Midlothian Council will face economic shock and possible job losses from a no-deal Brexit.

The Chief Economic Advisor to Scotland reports that a no-deal Brexit has the potential to push the Scottish economy into recession, noting that between 15-19 per cent of the workforce in Midlothian would be exposed to economic damage.

In his report Gary Gillespie warns of rising unemployment and disruption to trade and investment in the aftermath of a no-deal Brexit, with national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) predicted to fall by up to seven per cent. He adds that if prolonged, the shock of Scotland's departure from the EU could lead to significant structural change in the economy.

Midlothian North MSP, Colin Beattie (SNP) said: "These new figures are yet another warning that a no-deal Brexit would be devastating for communities in Midlothian."

"A no-deal Brexit is not inevitable - but we know that Theresa May's deal is dead in the water, with even her own party refusing to accept it. The SNP has fought tooth and nail to seek an extension



Midlothian North MSP Colin Beattie (SNP)

to the Article 50 process, and find compromise to protect Scotland's interests.

"But Scotland is being ignored by Westminster and it's no wonder people have completely lost trust in the UK Government."

"As Tory and Labour politicians ignore Scotland's interests and stand in the way of us making decisions over our future, more and more people are drawn to the opportunities and hope for the future that independence offers."

"We need to stop the clock on Brexit, rule out No Deal, which would cause economic damage to Midlothian, and prevent the Tories dragging Scotland out of the EU against our will."

Are you a homeowner aged 55 or over?

Find out if you could release tax-free money from your home



GET YOUR FREE QUOTE

- ✓ Stay in the home you love
- ✓ Tax-free lump sum of money
- ✓ No monthly repayments required

Release the money locked up in your home with multi-award-winning equity release specialists Age Partnership. Speak to one of their advisors who will let you know if equity release is right for you, including the affect on inheritance tax or how your entitlement to means-tested benefits could be affected now or in the future.

Call for a quote on Freephone

0808 1450 167

Or visit www.equity.agepartnership.co.uk/newspaper

Age Partnership
The Over 50s Money Experts

Return the coupon below to get your FREE guide

Equity release may involve a home reversion plan or a lifetime mortgage, which is secured against your property. To understand the features and risks, ask for your personalised illustration.

Equity release requires paying off any existing mortgage. Any money released, plus accrued interest would be repaid upon death, or moving into long-term care.

NO STAMP NEEDED -
Post to: FREEPOST Age Partnership

Name:	
Address:	
	Postcode:
Email:	

We may contact you via telephone regarding your enquiry. By supplying your email, you confirm you are happy for us to contact you via email regarding relevant products and services.

Age Partnership Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. FCA registered number 425432. Company address: Age Partnership Limited, 2200 Century Way, Thorpe Park, Leeds, LS15 8ZB.