

Forestry Commission News Release No. 10236

Exciting new facilities get the go ahead at Whinlatter Forest Park

The Forestry Commission has welcomed the decision to give the go ahead to a new mountain bike trail and a Go Ape high wire forest adventure course at Whinlatter near Keswick.

Planners at the Lake District National Park Authority gave the £500,000 project the all clear at a meeting on Tuesday 4th December.

Graeme Prest, Forest Management Director for the Forestry Commission, said:

"We're delighted that these new facilities will now be developed at Whinlatter.

"Thousands of people who visit the Forest go mountain biking but up to now there has been no purpose built bike trail. This new trail will therefore be a great opportunity for mountain bikers to develop their skills or simply go out and have fun.

"Go Ape has been a huge hit at Grizedale Forest and we're confident it will also be very popular with visitors to Whinlatter."

The 19 kilometre bike trail will be the longest purpose built trail in the Lake District and will involve building 15 kilometres of new single track trail.

The trail will be built by Hugh Clixby who has previously constructed trails for the Forestry Commission at Dalby in North Yorkshire and Cannock Forest in the West Midlands. It will be sponsored by Altura, who make clothing for cyclists.

Bike hire facilities will be provided by Cyclewise from Penrith, who also offer

mountain bike training.

The North Face Trail, which opened at Grizedale Forest in 2006, has been a very big success story.

The Go Ape high wire forest adventure courses include rope bridges, tarzan swings and zip slides up to 40 feet up in the trees. Customers are fitted with a climbing harness, given instructions, and then trek from tree to tree high above the forest floor.

The new facilities are expected to open in summer 2008 and will lead to the creation of 10 new jobs as well safeguarding 12 existing jobs.

The North West Regional Development Agency will be helping to fund the construction of the mountain bike trail and redevelopment of the car park at the Visitor Centre.

Whinlatter Forest Park is England's only true mountain forest. Rising to 790 metres above sea level it offers spectacular views of the Lake District and into Scotland.

More information about Whinlatter Forest Park can be found at www.forestry.gov.uk/northwestengland.

NOTES TO EDITORS:

1. IMAGES. Images attached of Whinlatter Forest, the North Face Mountain Bike Trail at Grizedale and a Go Ape course. Higher resolution versions are available by calling 015394-42436.
2. The Forestry Commission is the largest provider of countryside recreation in Britain, with responsibility for more than one million hectares (2.4 million acres) of forest, woodlands and open countryside. The North West England Forest District covers the Lake District in Cumbria, the Forest of Bowland in Lancashire, Merseyside, Greater

Manchester and Cheshire. The forests are managed for conservation, wildlife, landscape and recreation as well as providing a valuable source of timber.

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