

# High Lodge, Thetford Forest

## Cycling Strategy 2014/15

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## Vision for 2020

Our goal is to provide an appropriate range of high quality, all year round cycle based facilities, encouraging skills progression from first pedal through to high-end sports events, working within allocated budgets. We will invest in and develop facilities that target a wide customer base and support the local economy by creating business and volunteering opportunities. Our customers will see High Lodge as a premier destination for cycling in East Anglia, with a service delivered by dedicated, motivated and valued staff and stakeholders.

## Overarching principles:

1. **Organisational standards:** We aim to maintain standards through compliance with national, district and local policies including the EEFD RPA and HL strategies, meeting the requirements set out in Operational Guidance Booklet (OGB) 37.
2. **Sustainable Forest Management:** Cycling facilities will aim to work in harmony with the ecological, archaeological, operational and heritage interests within the forest. Where possible we will work with the forest cycle, adopting an evolving process which will see trails come and go. This will reduce conflict with forest operations, keeping the trails fresh and exciting and create a more sustainable trails network.
3. **Topography & special features:** We will work with the landscape making best use of the surface, shape and features available. Where appropriate features will be named making them more identifiable, and enhancing the character of what can be perceived as a relatively featureless forest.
4. **Partnership working:** Management, maintenance and development of facilities will be shared amongst business partners and stakeholders through Cycle Development Team meetings (CDTM), working to meet our objectives. This group will be directly involved in decision making.
5. **Inclusivity:** Our aim is to provide 'something for everyone' catering from 'tiny tots to hot shots', encouraging a more diverse customer base as well as providing facilities and services for those with restricted access to the wider forest.
6. **Facilitating & enabling:** Our aim is to provide straightforward opportunities for partners and stakeholders to develop ideas and businesses that fit with our brand values and complement the existing provision.

### Our Premier cycling destination will include:

1. **A Green graded trail (New trail):** A flat, wide, smooth surfaced trail suitable for beginners, tagalongs, trailers and child seats. This family friendly trail will include interpretation boards and wet weather/eating space provision.
2. **A Blue graded trail (Beater trail):** A trail consisting of mostly fast flowing single track winding between the trees and may include small obstacles such as root and rock.
3. **A red graded trail (Lime Burner trail):** A trail consisting of mostly single track encompassing technical features such as northshore, rock gardens, steps, berms and large rocks
4. **Black graded pits:** These will provide extra technically challenging features acting as "destinations" for people to visit.
5. **Wild trails:** These will work in harmony with the operational requirements of the forest. They will be mapped and open for public use to encourage further exploration opportunities, but will remain unmarked.
6. **Pump track:** A technical learning facility for beginners through to expert mountain bikers, to include a closed loop of rolling technical features and tightly bermed corners.
7. **Skills/training area:** Located at the start of the trails this facility will consist of small sections of single track and red graded features. It will provide a 'taster' of what to expect on different trail gradings and enable customers to choose trails most suited to their ability. It will also serve well as an area for skills tuition.
8. **Cycle Hire and retail:** Through business partner working a commercial and professional service will be provided to High Lodge customers offering retail, high quality bike hire to all ages and abilities and excellent customer service.
9. **Tuition:** We will facilitate on site coaching opportunities to include guided tours, bike maintenance courses, introductory through to advanced skills courses and individual/group courses.
10. **Events:** We will facilitate a range of high quality events that are appropriate, sustainable and well managed. These will aim to be both fun and competitive and encourage a diverse range of participants. They will make a financial contribution.
11. **Cycling services:** We will provide a bike wash, changing rooms and showers to meet customer expectations and enhance their experience.

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## How the journey will look

Year	projects
2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop 'Green trail' project</li><li>• Develop 'Lime Burner' Project</li><li>• Create pump track</li><li>• Develop policy for the management of wild trails including mapping of trails within the BCP block.</li></ul>
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Plan closure of Poacher trail (maintain and improve link to BCP)</li><li>• Create features on the Lime Burner trail</li></ul>
2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Create green trail</li><li>• Close Poacher trail</li><li>• Re-grade Beater trail from red to blue</li></ul>
2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop 'skills/training area' project</li></ul>
2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop 'showers' project</li><li>• Create 'skills/training' area</li></ul>
2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Build showers</li><li>• Develop plans for tuition and coaching</li><li>• Procure and introduce tuition and coaching services</li></ul>
2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop strategy and plans for events programme</li><li>• Introduce events programme</li></ul>

## Monitoring and Evaluation

We will undertake monitoring and evaluation, in order to ensure that the service we provide meets the needs of our customers.

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## Objectives for 2014/15

### Overarching objectives (derived from the High Lodge Strategy)

- O1. Provide a safe environment for staff and visitors by ensuring compliance with statutory and best practice guidance (including OGBs, information notes and FISA guides). Use the resumption system to help facilitate this.
- O2. Maintain organisational standards of environmental compliance, meeting the requirements set out in ISO14001 and OGBs.
- O3. Work within allocated annual budgets.
- O4. Seek additional funding for specific projects.
- O5. Use CDTM to support stakeholders and the HL team in achieving agreed objectives.
- O6. Only develop new projects where they make a positive financial contribution, protect existing income or on the grounds of exceptional public benefit.
- O7. Where appropriate, involve stakeholders over major decisions, ensuring processes are transparent.
- O8. Annually review the cycling strategy and create a delivery plan.

### Developing our premier cycling destination

1. **Green graded trail (New trail):** Develop plans and seek funding for creation of a new trail.
2. **Blue graded trail (Beater trail):** Maintain trail in it's current condition, minimising the impact of harvesting operations. Treat as blue graded and do not develop any features of a red grade standard.
3. **Red graded trail (Lime Burner trail):** Maintain and develop plans to improve the existing trail and introduce red graded technical features.
4. **Black graded pits:** Agree which pits will be part of our offer and where necessary re-shape.
5. **Wild trails:** Develop a policy for the management of wild trails to include mapping of those within the Brandon Country Park block. This will exclude those which lie on leasehold land.
6. **Pump track:** Implement project for creation of facility.
7. **Skills/training area:** No objective
8. **Cycle hire & retail:** Maintain and support existing provision
9. **Tuition:** No objective

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10. **Events:** No objective
11. **Cycling services:** Increase customer awareness of bike wash facility

## What this means for the existing trails:

12. **Shepherd trail (Grade: Forest track):** Maintain the existing trail in its current condition and minimise the impact of harvesting operations on customers.
13. **Poacher Trail (Grade: Blue):** Maintain the existing trail in its current condition, with little to no further investment. Where there are highly sandy sections the preferable option will be to divert, however in some instances partial closures will be considered.
14. **Beater Trail (Grade: Red):** See blue grade trail description pg4, pt2.
15. **Lime Burner Trail (Grade: Red):** See red grade trail description pg4, pt3.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

16. Produce measurable targets in the form of KPI's and a delivery plan, reviewing on a quarterly basis.
17. Undertake an annual survey of customer opinion.
18. Monitor usage of trails via cycle counters.

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### Key Performance Indicators for 2014/15

#### Overarching

Reference	Description	Related Objectives
OA1	% of expired resumptions related to cycle provision will not exceed 10%	O1
OA2	Compliance with ISO14001 audits and / or meeting targets for corrective actions.	O2
OA3	Expenditure to meet agreed annual budget allocation	O3
OA4	Funding applications created for specified projects.	O4
OA5	Delivery plan agreed and reviewed through monthly CDTM and actions recorded. Regular updates on current trails works through CDTM.	O5,O7,O8
OA6	Accepted projects make a positive financial position, protect existing income or provide exceptional public benefit.	O6

#### Developing our premier cycling destination

Reference	Description	Related Objectives
PCD1	Designs and plans in place for the creation of a green graded trail	O4, O6, 1
PCD2	Beater trail maintained as a blue grade trail	2
PCD3	An approved OSA for developments on the Lime Burner trail to include general maintenance works and installation of technical trail features.	3
PCD4	Black graded pits assessed and re-shaped where appropriate	4



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PCD5	Wild trail policy in place. Wild trails in the Brandon Country Park block mapped excluding those on leasehold land	5
PCD6	Creation of a pump track and installation of cycle counter for this facility	6
PCD7	Improved visibility of Bike wash facility	11

### What this means for the existing trails

Reference	Description	Related Objectives
ET1	Diversions or partial closures on the poacher trail where particularly sandy areas exist	13
ET2	Trails maintained to at least their current condition and harvesting impacts minimised	12, 13, 14, 15

### Monitoring and Evaluation

Reference	Description	Related Objectives
ME1	Review agreed KPI's and delivery plan on a quarterly basis	16
ME2	Carry out an annual customer survey including analysis of results	17
ME3	Regular trail usage monitored through cycle counters and collected data shared with stakeholders through CDTM.	18

### Notes:

The selected KPI's provide an indication of performance against the Cycling Strategy Objectives. It should be noted that not all objectives have a direct KPI.

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### Monitoring and Evaluation

#### KPI Review 1 (30<sup>th</sup> April 2014)

<b>KPI Ref</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>KPI Met / comments</b>
OA1	% of expired resumptions related to cycle provision will not exceed 10%.	GB	
OA5	Delivery plan agreed and reviewed through monthly CDTM and actions recorded. Regular updates on current trails works through CDTM.	ER/MM /PbH	
PCD2	Beater trail maintained as Blue grade trail.	ER/MM	
PCD6	Creation of a pump track and installation of cycle counter for this facility.	ER/MM	
PCD7	Improved visibility of Bike wash facility	ER	
ET1	Diversions or partial closures on the poacher trail where particularly sandy areas exist.	ER/PbH	
ET2	Trails maintained to at least their current condition and harvesting impacts minimised.	ER	
ME3	Regular trail usage monitored through cycle counters and collected data shared with stakeholders through CDTM.	ER	

#### KPI Review 2 (19<sup>th</sup> September 2014)

<b>KPI Ref</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>KPI Met / comments</b>
OA1	% of expired resumptions related to cycle provision will not exceed 10%.	GB	
OA3	Expenditure to meet agreed annual budget allocation.	ER	

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OA5	Delivery plan agreed and reviewed through monthly CDTM and actions recorded. Regular updates on current trails works through CDTM.	ER/MM /PbH	
PCD2	Beater trail maintained as Blue grade trail.	ER/MM	
PCD3	An approved OSA for developments on the Lime Burner trail to include general maintenance works and installation of technical trail features.	ER/MM	
ET2	Trails maintained to at least their current condition and harvesting impacts minimised.	ER	
ME3	Regular trail usage monitored through cycle counters and collected data shared with stakeholders through CDTM.	ER	

## KPI Review 3 (16<sup>th</sup> January 2015)

<b>KPI Ref</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>KPI Met / comments</b>
OA1	% of expired resumptions related to cycle provision will not exceed 10%.	GB	
OA5	Delivery plan agreed and reviewed through monthly CDTM and actions recorded. Regular updates on current trails works through CDTM.	ER/MM /PbH	
OA4	Funding applications created for specified projects.	ER/MM	
PCD1	Designs and plans in place for the creation of a green graded trail.	ER	
PCD2	Beater trail maintained as Blue grade trail.	ER/MM	
PCD4	Black graded pits assessed and re-shaped where appropriate.	ER	
PCD 5	Wild trail policy in place. Wild trails in the Brandon Country Park block mapped excluding those on leasehold land	ER	
ET2	Trails maintained to at least their current condition and harvesting impacts minimised.	ER	

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ME2	Undertake an annual survey of customers opinions.	ER	
ME3	Regular trail usage monitored through cycle counters and collected data shared with stakeholders through CDTM.	ER	

### KPI Review 4 (30<sup>th</sup> April 2015)

<b>KPI Ref</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>KPI Met / comments</b>
OA1	% of expired resumptions related to cycle provision will not exceed 10%.	GB	
OA3	Expenditure to meet agreed annual budget allocation.	ER	
OA5	Delivery plan agreed and reviewed through monthly CDTM and actions recorded. Regular updates on current trails works through CDTM.	ER/MM /PbH	
OA6	Accepted projects make a positive financial position, protect existing income or provide exceptional public benefit.	GB/ER	
PCD2	Beater trail maintained as Blue grade trail.	ER/MM	
ET1	Diversions or partial closures on the poacher trail where particularly sandy areas exist.	ER/PbH	
ET2	Trails maintained to at least their current condition and harvesting impacts minimised.	ER	
ME1	Review agreed KPI's and delivery plan on a quarterly basis.	ER	
ME3	Regular trail usage monitored through cycle counters and collected data shared with stakeholders through CDTM.	ER	

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## Key

<b>GB</b>	Glyn Bradbury (High Lodge Site Manager)
<b>ER</b>	Emma Rawlinson (Trails Recreation Ranger)
<b>MM</b>	Martin Monaghan (Timber Chairman)
<b>PaH</b>	Paul Hore (Thetford MTB Racing)
<b>PbH</b>	Paul Hill (Bike Art Manager)