

**DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF A PLANNING APPLICATION
FOR THE CHANGE OF USE OF A BARN TO CAFÉ AND VISITOR CENTRE AT
STEPHEN PARK, DALE HEAD, SLAIDBURN, BB7 4TS**

INTRODUCTION

Stephen Park is run by the charitable organisation To Inspire which provides holidays and team building opportunities primary to disadvantaged children and young people from the Hyndburn Area. There is a long history of this type of facility at Stephen Park which is evident from the planning history of the site. The buildings at Stephen Park were originally built as a farmstead in about 1700. After the forestation of the land around the farm in the twentieth century a new use for the building as a field studies and outdoor activities centre was introduced. Following this the centre was run by Knowlsey CVS who carried out major refurbishments in 2000.

SITE DESCRIPTION

Stephen Park comprises three buildings within a group set around a court yard area. The former farmhouse and the barn to the west are grade II listed buildings. The listed descriptions state that the buildings were added to the list in 1983. The farmhouse has a date stone of 1700 and the detached barn a date stone of 1736. Whilst the former barns and stables attached to the farmhouse, the coach house to the south of the farmhouse and the stone walls around the group are not specifically mentioned in the list description, they are likely to be covered by the 'listing' because they are attached to or are curtilage buildings to the listed buildings.

Vehicular access to the site is along a private road which runs through Gisburn Forest. This road is about 1km in length and has a few passing places along it. At the present time the site receives limited visitor traffic. This is comprised of staff working and living on site and children visiting for holidays.

Stephen Park is within Gisburn Forest. The Forestry Commission has recently created several off-road cycling routes through the Forest. These routes can also be used by walkers and there are multiple public footpaths through the forest. To the west of Gisburn Forest is Stocks Reservoir which is popular with anglers and bird watchers.

There are three car parks which serve visitors to the Forest. Cocklet Hill Car Park and picnic area which is where the cycle trails begin is to the south of Stephen Park.

SITE HISTORY

In 1968 Stephen Park comprised three buildings. The farmhouse with a barn attached on the western side and a stable and second barn attached on the eastern side of the farmhouse. To the south of the farmhouse was a coach house with an attached barn and to the west of the farmhouse another detached barn with shippon and stores. It is this barn which is the subject of this application. The layout of the site in 1968 is shown on the drawing in appendix 1 taken from the Council's records. This plan also shows the position of some of the boundary walls around the site.

Major refurbishment works were carried out to the buildings at Stephen Park at the turn of the century. The barn the subject of this application was adapted for use as a computer suite on the ground floor with toilets staircase and lift to the first floor which provided a lecture room. The outshut on the western side of the barn which is single storey was converted to a staff room and also contained a fire escape stair from the lecture room. The fire escape stair is fully enclosed and leads directly outside. There is no doorway connection between the staff flat in the outshut and the computer suite in the main barn.

In 2011 planning permission was granted for a scheme by the Forestry Commission to create a 'visitor hub' on the land to the south west of and adjoining Stephen Park. This scheme will provide a new day visitor car park for 100 vehicles, improvements to the existing access track at the junction with the road and to provide passing places along the track, the construction of an all ability trail, cycle trails to link to the existing network the construction of cycle training trails, a feature view point, use of land as recreation space and the siting of temporary trailer toilets.

The drawings submitted with this application show a clear intention to include the barn at Stephen Park into the scheme by providing a new all ability 2.5m wide track to link

the barn to the 'hub'. The drawing suggests that the barn is to be used as a café and the trees along the perimeter wall to be thinned. This is indicative as the barn is not within the application site. Condition 2 of planning permission makes it clear that the permission does not include this café. However the infrastructure required creating a link to a café in the barn from the 'hub' is approved. The plans also show a new road to the south east of Stephen Park to avoid traffic having to pass through the yard area of Stephen Park.

The planning site history of the site is as follows:

BO 1180 Change of use from farmhouse to field studies centre 1.3.67.

BO1363 Use of house and part of buildings as outdoor activities centre 25.6.68.

BO 1453 Alterations to Stephen Park 26.11.69.

3/1997/0355 LBC 3/1997/0354 PP Internal alterations and essential alterations 4.9.97

3/1999/0504 LBC 3/1999/0503 PP Refurbishment of Stephen Park Buildings main house, barn A, barn B, coach house and oasthouse into full board accommodation facility for community volunteer groups in Knowsley Area 5.10.99.

3/2002/0303 LBC 3/2002/0306 Erection of satellite dish on rear gable of barn 11.6.2002.

3/2003/0961 Install a rear access door in the study of the coach house to replace a window 5.12.2003

3/2004/0163 Installation of a children's adventure trail play are on a designated piece of land adjacent to staff flat 7.4.2004

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

These listed building consent and planning permission applications seek permission to change the use of the barn to a café and information hub with associated staff room and bathroom. The change of use requires minimal alterations to the barn as all visitor facilities such as toilets and disabled access already exist within the building. The only alteration required is a new internal doorway from what was the main barn into what was the outshut.

In order to link the café to the visitor hub proposed by the Forestry Commission it is proposed to create a gateway in the stone wall which surrounds the paddock on the west side of the building. This will provide a link to the all ability trail proposed by the commission. It is proposed that part of the paddock on the west side of the café would be used as an outdoor eating area. No physical alterations are proposed for this except for the provision of movable picnic benches. A cycle stand is proposed is also proposed in the paddock. It consists of vertical posts with one continuous half round rail on which to hang bicycles by the seat.

ASSESSMENT

The policies of the Development Plan are informed by Central Government advice set out in Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) and Planning Policy Statements (PPS). The Development Plan currently includes those policies that have been saved from the Ribble Valley District Wide Local Plan.

Those policies which are relevant to this proposal are:

G1 which details a number of development control criteria;

G5 which identifies the nature of development for which planning permission will be granted in situations outside defined settlement boundaries;

ENV1 which protects the character of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;

ENV19 which seeks to protect the setting of listed buildings,

ENV 20 which seeks to ensure that alterations to listed buildings are sympathetic to their character and appearance.

EMP 9 States planning permission will be granted for employment-generating uses in barns.

RT1 States proposals to extend the range of tourism and visitor facilities in the Borough will be approved.

RT3 States planning permission will be granted for tourism related uses in rural buildings.

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T7 which requires adequate car parking and service space to be provided for new developments.

Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment and Planning and Policy Statement 7: Development in Rural Areas are also relevant.

INVOLVEMENT

The applicants sought pre-application advice from the Council receiving a written response in April 2011. See appendix 2. This confirmed that in principle of the development at the site for a café/shop/information centre is likely to be supported by the Council's Officers. It notes that the doorway in the south west elevation of the outshut was retained in its historic position when this part of the barn was rebuilt. The plans approved by the Council under application BO 1453 reveal that a historic opening in the internal wall opposite the south west elevation door was blocked in modern times. The applicant was advised to consider these opportunities and constraints to modification of the historic fabric in the proposal design.

EVALUATION

The charity To Inspire proposes to provide a café at the site to increase the income of the Charity by providing refreshment facilities for existing visitors to the area. They can run and manage the café along side the existing activities at the site using existing staff. The majority of children using the centre visit during the week and so the centre is less busy at the weekends. It is anticipated that the majority of visitors to the café will be at weekends. We have suggested opening times of 10am to 5pm daily. However this may be less during the winter when visitor numbers fall. As it is not anticipated that the amount of staffing will increase significantly in order to run the café, car parking for staff will be within the yard area of the centre as it is at present. The amount and type of deliveries to the site will remain the same as the orders of food can be placed and delivered at the same time as the orders and deliveries presently received for catering at the centre.

Visitors to the café will be those people already visiting Gisburn Forest on foot or by cycle using existing footpath and tracks. The vehicle access track to the site is private and there is no public access to the site for vehicles. The intention is that this will remain the same as the centre is keen to keep vehicles away from Stephen Park for safety reasons in order to protect the primary use of the site as centre for outdoor holidays for disadvantaged children. For this reason the applicants do not wish to provide a car park for visitors or to encourage car borne visitors to the site. The applicant has carried out a survey of visitors to the area and prepared a management plan which supports this approach. See appendix 3. There are no other refreshment facilities presently within Gisburn Forest. The proposal will extend the range of tourism facilities within this area which already has significant visitor numbers.

Existing bike trails and footpaths pass close to Stephen Park. Pedestrian and cycle access to the proposed café will be along existing routes. See appendix 4. It is envisaged that cyclists will leave the bikes within the paddock on the western side of the barn and gain access to the building via the existing entrance doors. The existing door within the south east side of the outshut would give direct access from the outdoor seating area to the café via the information area.

The ground floor area of the barn is on two levels the main floor area is separated from the toilets area by steps. The same changes in levels are reflected within the existing staff flat within the outshut. Access to the outdoor seating area is impractical from the main barn without a new internal door between the main barn and the outshut because of the changes in levels and the distance from the external doors to the outdoor seating area. The introduction of a new internal door will enable staff to supervise the café and the information area as one unit. With the internal door in place, the main café area and the information hub together with the outdoor seating area would all be on the same level without steps. Without this new link the former staff flat remains cut off from the main barn and would act as a barrier between the café within the main barn and the potential to use the paddock as an outdoor seating

area. With the introduction of the new internal link the majority of the ground floor of the building can be used for the visiting public.

We have followed the advice of the Council's Conservation Officer and positioned the new internal door to take advantage of the possibility of re-opening an original opening that records indicate was in this position. The position of the new internal door is opposite the existing exterior door.

The preceding evaluation of the development is given in the event that the proposal by the Forestry Commission does not go ahead. The applicants wish to proceed with the development whether or not the Forestry Commission implements its scheme. Assuming that the Forestry Commission's plans will go ahead we have incorporated proposals to link the proposed café with the new forest hub through a new gateway in the boundary wall of the paddock. This had been designed to be able to accommodate all abilities since the provision of the car park and the all ability track will allow people with mobility scooters or wheelchairs to access the café. The gateway has been designed to accommodate the all ability track which is to be 2.5 m wide.

The establishment of the Forest Hub is likely to provide greater visitor numbers to the café than if that development did not go ahead. As the hub provides a large car park at its centre we consider that additional parking at Stephen Park is not necessary and is undesirable.

As the café serving the forest hub the focus of activity would be to the south west of the building. In addition it would be desirable to offer separation of activities on the site so that 'public' areas are separate from the children's activity centre. It is anticipated that the main entrance to the café would be from the paddock on the south west side with a secondary access point from the southern gable of the barn to the toilet area. The doorway within the former wagon entrance is less likely to be used. The building already has access for the disabled inside with a lift to all floors. The provision of the new internal doorway within the building would enable a level access to be created

from the forest hub through the outdoor seating area within the paddock right through to the café for all visitors.

The proposal in providing facilities to support tourism and employment by re-using an existing rural building meets the requirements of policies G5, EMP9, RT1 and RT3 of the Local Plan and the requirements of PPS7. The proposal protects the character of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in that the proposed physical alterations are small and in keeping with the environment, in line with policy ENV1. The scheme proposes minimal alterations to the listed building. The creation of an outdoor seating area would not involve permanent alterations to the setting of the listed building fulfilling the requirements of policies ENV19 and ENV20 of the Local Plan and the requirements of PPS5. The proposal also meets the general requirements of Local plan policies G1 and T7

DESIGN

The new internal doorway measures 2100mm by 900mm and is to be installed in the position of a previous opening in this position. The door is to be manufactured to match the other doors within the building. The notes on the drawing produced in 1968 state 'make good 4ft square opening in stone wall'. It is clear that an opening previously existed in this part of the building in the 1960's and it is appropriate to reinstate the opening as a doorway.

The proposed new opening in the boundary wall is to be created using existing materials with the introduction of new stone gate posts. No gates are proposed.

ACCESS

Staff at the proposed café will use the existing parking facilities at Stephen Park. Visitors to the café will be on foot or by cycle and only cycling parking facilities will be provided on site. A new car parking for 100 vehicles is proposed by the Forestry

Commission on the adjoining land as the creation of a 'Forest Hub'. It is anticipated that visitors to the Forest Hub will park in that car park and walk to the café.

APPENDICES

1. 1968 Survey of premises as existing.
2. Pre-application advice letter from A Dowd 8th April 2011
3. Marketing Strategy for Stephen Park Café
4. Details of Bike trails

Judith Douglas

Janet Dixon Town Planners Ltd.

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November 2011



COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

COLLEGE OF BUILDING
MANCHESTER

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Dear Mr Cook

RE: PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE AND MEETING
STEPHEN PARK, DALE HEAD SLAIDBURN

I write further to our site meeting of the 9 February 2011 concerning proposed work to and use of the Grade II listed barn to the west of Stephen Park (also Grade II listed). I would apologise for the delay in my response (I am still awaiting the response of some consultees and will forward any additional comments on their receipt).

The outline information which you have submitted would suggest that planning permission is required for the change of use of the barn from ancillary staff accommodation/IT suite used in conjunction with Stephen Park Leisure and Training Complex to a café/shop/information centre to be used by the general public. However, I would be happy to confirm this observation on receipt of further information.

Relevant statute includes Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 which states that the determination of planning applications must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Section 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 state that when considering listed building consent applications for works to a listed building or planning applications for development affecting a listed building or its setting, special regard shall be given to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural interest which it possesses.

Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (March 2010) Policy HE9 1 states: "there should be a presumption in favour of the conservation of designated heritage assets and the more significant the designated heritage asset, the greater the presumption in favour of its conservation should be. Once lost, heritage assets cannot be replaced and their loss has a cultural, environmental, economic and social impact. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. Loss affecting any designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification."

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/pps5>

PPS5 Policy HE10 1 refers to the setting of designated heritage assets and states: "when considering applications for development that affect the setting of heritage assets, local planning authorities should treat favourably applications that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the assets. When considering applications that do not do this, local

planning authorities should weigh any such harm against the wider benefits of the application. The greater the negative impact on the significance of the heritage asset, the greater the benefits that would be needed to justify approval"

PPS5 Policy HE7 1 states that "in decision making local planning authorities should seek to identify and assess the particular significance of any element of the historic environment that may be affected by the relevant proposal"

PPS5 Policy HE9 4 advises local planning authorities in respect of applications having a harmful impact upon the significance of a designated heritage asset and states:

"Where a proposal has a harmful impact on the significance of a designated heritage asset which is less than substantial harm, in all cases local planning authorities should:

- (i) weigh the public benefit of the proposal (eg that it helps to secure the optimum viable use of the heritage asset in the interests of its long term conservation) against the harm; and
- (ii) recognise that the greater the harm to the significance of the heritage asset the greater the justification will be needed for any loss."

PPS5 is accompanied by the Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide. This discusses alterations to historic buildings at paragraph 178ff and the consideration of developments affecting the setting of historic buildings at paragraph 113ff.

<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/pps-practice-guide/pps5practiceguide.pdf>

Paragraph 179, Addition and Alteration, of the HEPPG refers to historic fabric and significance

"the fabric will always be an important part of the asset's significance. Retention of as much historic fabric as possible is therefore a fundamental part of any good alteration or conversion, together with the use of appropriate materials and methods of repair. It is not appropriate to sacrifice old work simply to accommodate the new"

Paragraph 189, Addition and Alteration, of the HEPPG discusses the impact of new services on a heritage asset

"new services, both internal and external can have a considerable, and often cumulative, effect on the appearance of a building and can affect significance"

Paragraph 54-57 of the HEPPG reiterate PPS5 HE7 1 and the importance of understanding the significance of a heritage asset before works are proposed

"being able to properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting is very important to an applicant in order to conceive of and design a successful development and to the local planning authority in order to make decisions in line with the objectives of the PPS and the development plan (paragraph 54)"

"understanding the extent of the fabric that holds that interest is also important because this can, amongst other things, lead to a better understanding of how adaptable the asset may be (paragraph 56)"

Planning Policy Guidance Note19 'Outdoor Advertisement Control' paragraph 9 states that adverts can be controlled in the interests of 'amenity' Paragraph 11 states that in assessing amenity regard should be had to *'the appearance of the building or on visual amenity in the immediate neighbourhood cumulative effect the relevant considerations for this purpose are the local characteristics of the neighbourhood, including scenic, historic, architectural or cultural features, which contribute to the distinctive character of the locality.'* Paragraph 12 states *'Where there is a group of buildings the presence of 'listed' buildings or a designated conservation area... will be relevant considerations. For instance, a large, brightly illuminated sign colour..'*

Policy G1 of the Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan (adopted June 1998) is a general development control policy. It includes a requirement for development to be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature (a), to make adequate arrangements for car parking (c), to provide safe access which is suitable to accommodate the scale and type of traffic likely to be generated (d), to provide suitable arrangements for servicing and public utilities (f) and states that particular emphasis will be placed upon visual appearance and the relationship to surroundings (e)

Policy ENV19 of the RVDLP states that:

"Development proposals on sites within the setting of buildings listed as being of special architectural or historic interest which cause visual harm to the setting of the building will be resisted. In assessing the harm caused by any proposal the following factors will be taken into account:

- (i) the desirability of preserving the setting of the building
- (ii) the effect of the proposed development on the character of the listed building
- (ii) any effect on the economic viability of the listed buildings
- (iv) the contribution which the listed building makes to the townscape or countryside
- (v) the extent to which the proposed works would bring substantial benefits to the community including economic benefits and enhancement of the environment "

Policy ENV20 of the RVDLP states that " proposals for the alteration or repair of listed buildings should be sympathetic to their character and appearance. The most important features of any listed building will be preserved"

Policy ENV1 of the RVDLP states 'The landscape and character of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be protected, conserved and enhanced. In addition development will also need to contribute to the conservation of the natural beauty of the area. The environmental effects of proposals will be a major consideration and the design, materials, scale, massing and landscaping of development will be important factors in deciding planning applications (see Policy G1). The protection, conservation and enhancement of the natural environment will be the most important considerations in the assessment of any development proposal. Regard will also be had to the economic and social well-being of the area'

Policy ENV1 is considered with the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan (April 2009 – March 2014). Objective 11.2 seeks to 'Support

Local Enterprise' Objective 12.1 seeks to 'Develop Resources to Guide Appropriate Planning and Development' (a 'design guide' to include best practice on building diversification and an AONB-wide 'signage strategy' are currently being developed)

Policy RT1 of the RVDLP states that development proposals which extend the range of tourism and visitor facilities will be approved subject to a number of criteria being met including: 'the proposal must be physically well related to an existing main settlement or village or to an existing group of buildings'; it should not 'undermine the character, quality or visual amenities of the plan area by virtue of its scale, siting, materials or design'; and within the AONB it should not 'introduce built development into an area largely devoid of structures '

Policy RT3 (The conversion of Buildings for Tourism Related Uses) of the RVDLP states that permission will be granted for tourism related uses in rural buildings subject to all of a number of criteria being met (eg the design of the conversion should be of a high standard.')

The historic buildings survey undertaken as part of listed building consent application 3/1999/0504/P states that:

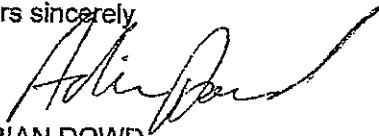
"2.2.8 The outshut constructed to the rear of the 'Old Barn' exhibits a recent rebuild, with an internal skin of concrete breeze blocks. The outshut was rebuilt upon the same plan as the original building, with the addition of 3 windows to the south west elevation (pers. com Mr P Tilbury). The doorway and windows (68, 66 and 67 respectively) were reinstated during the rebuild"

I note from the planning history that the Borough Council does not appear to have a record of this rebuild. I also note that only the doorway in the south west elevation of the outshut has retained its historic form in the rebuild. The planning history (application B01453; granted 26 November 1969) also reveals that a historic opening in the internal wall opposite the south west elevation door was blocked in modern times. Therefore, I would suggest that these opportunities and constraints to modification of the historic fabric be considered in your proposal design.

In my opinion, based on the outline information submitted (which does not include a heritage statement/assessment) and in the absence of a response from all relevant consultees, the principle of site development for café/shop/information centre is likely to be supported by officers.

However, these are my opinions as an officer of the Borough Council which will not prejudice any recommendation to or decision of the Borough Council.

Yours sincerely,



ADRIAN DOWD
PRINCIPAL PLANNING OFFICER (DESIGN AND CONSERVATION)

Mr S Cook
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Marketing Strategy for Stephen Park Café

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Timothy Cook

May 2011

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Terms of Reference

Name: Timothy Cook

Project Title: Strategic Marketing Report

Organisation: To Inspire

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Overview of the Project

Originally the charity was a children's holiday home based at Chaigley, outside of Clitheroe, specifically for the children of Hyndburn. Due to the Foot and Mouth outbreak in early part of the decade, the centre had to be closed resulting in the charity being forced to sell it. From this the trustees spent a number of years funding school trips and other activities whilst continuously looking out for a new centre.

The charity found a new centre in Gisburn known as Stephen Park. The centre will provide weeklong holidays and teambuilding opportunities for disadvantaged children and young people. However, the centre comes with an extra building which the trustees intend to use for additional fundraising with initial ideas being a café.

The nature of the project is to compose a strategic marketing plan for the café as well as look at a number of other fundraising projects, such as social enterprises and to provide the best analysis for the implementation and marketing.

Scope

We will be looking at the project as a consultant, providing analysis on a strategic level. We will look at variety of potential ideas which could be implemented after a full report is composed.

We will conduct market research as well as hold meetings with various groups and organisations to continually feedback our ideas.

We will not go into great depth about PR or advertising, but will offer good constructive advice about when to use it.

We will also help to increase To Inspire online identity by implementing an online marketing strategy.

Objectives for the Project

Our main objectives will be to

- Look at the different ways of marketing the Café and centre. This will include looking at PR and advertising and more specialised areas such as

the partnerships the charity currently has and how they can use this to a greater extent.

- Look at the way social media can benefit the charity and to provide a digital media strategy
- Look at other business ventures such as social enterprises, working in partnership with the Business Development Officer
- Provide a full marketing strategy for the charity

Legal and Professional Issues

Legal

The lease for the building is not yet signed, thus any information regarding the business proposals must be kept confidential until it has been handed over to the charity. We expect this to be done by early January 2011 at the latest. Therefore we must abide by the charities confidentiality policy.

Professional

We have conducted strategic reports before for various groups and consulted for a café based in Preston, Lancashire. However, these were acting as traditional businesses. The charity sector has a set of different rules and obligations that we must have explained to us.

Resources

We will need only a small area to work with as well as transport to the centre in Gisburn.

Reporting

We intend to report to the charity at least every month, but preferably keeping in contact through telephone meetings every week on a Friday. We will also meet at some weekends should the need arise. The report will be handed to the charity on before 4pm on May 6th.

Signed and agreed:

	<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
Supervisor			
Student	Timothy Cook		17/01/2011
Organisation	Stephen Cook		17/01/2011

Executive Summary

Throughout this report we found a number of things that led us to create 5 objectives that could easily be utilised to maximise the overall effectiveness of the café.

1. Start advertising the café on billboards in a 10 mile radius explaining the opening date, as well as the location. As well as this begin advertising in local Tourist Information Bureaus such as Clitheroe, Skipton and Preston. The adverts could be printed on flyers and posters giving detailed information about the opening.
2. Begin to put together a press pack containing pictures, logos, menus and invitations to an opening and send this out to newspapers and magazines all across the UK. This should be sent out straight away so editors can delegate reporters to start pieces straight away.
3. Implement an online strategy by including a website and Twitter account. This should also be done straight away and can be used in conjunction with Google Analytics and search optimisation tools so the café is at number one. Ideas should also be made in regards to mobile app applications, such as bird-watching apps or audio guides that can be downloaded from the internet.
4. Production costs could be kept low by making the sandwiches and cakes on the same day. Value can also be added by using locally sourced organic ingredients. As ABC1 groups may have more a disposable income than other groups, products should still be sold at a medium price so potential customers do not become hesitant.
5. Utilising the conference/IT suite as the hub for the forest has tremendous benefits for the café. It means more people will visit the café who may not wish to visit. Schoolchildren who may not be able to attend for a full week could be one of the first groups to benefit from this as the school could arrange to utilise the hub to conduct lessons in the forest, especially when learning about the natural environment.

Part 1: Situational Analysis

The Problem

To Inspire have asked for a marketing strategy for their forthcoming café. The centre has only recently been purchased and has many opportunities for various activities such as archer and canoeing. At the present time no marketing is done for the forest, or the centre, and the barn in which the café is proposed to be built has a conference/IT suite upstairs which could be utilised for Forest Hub.

The primary aim is to research the current users of the forest, what their habits are and what their needs may be. The secondary aim is to understand how to market to them effectively and with which kind of communication method. Finally, I will also look at the trends and problems that are currently happening within the UK, such as the recent surge in UK holidays.

Company Analysis

To Inspire is a children's charity based in the North-West of England. It was originally set up in 1928 operating under The Chaigley Trust, named after Chaigley Manor which was the previous centre. The manor provided holidays for disadvantaged children of Hyndburn, as well as providing holidays for children from Chernobyl, Kosovo and Romania.

In 2001 the centre was forced to close due to the foot and mouth epidemic that shook rural England. This meant the trustees had no alternative other than to sell the property and keep the profit in a trust fund for future activities. During this time hundreds of children were able to attend days out to Camelot, Alton Towers as well as sponsoring two 18 year old girls to travel to India to teach children.

During 2010, the charity bought a caravan at Martin Mere Caravan Park which acts as a free holiday home for disadvantaged families within Hyndburn. So far it has provided weekly holidays for a number of families and has proved to be a popular investment.

In early 2009 the charity was made aware of a centre based in Stephen Park, in the heart of Gisburn Forest. The centre was Lottery funded with facilities such as a redeveloped conference centre and lifts for disabled access. As well as this, the surrounding forest, maintained by the Forestry Commission, had recently been redeveloped and included new mountain biking routes, rambling paths, a sustainable reed bed for wastewater and other outdoor activities. The charity decided to put in an offer of a partnership with the owners, Knowsley CVS. This process took almost 2 years, with the lease being signed at Christmas 2010 and the keys being handed over in March 2011.

The charity is now regenerating the centre in a number of ways, with the main aim of opening a café. As well as this they aim to implement new cycle paths, a bigger car park as well as areas for archery, climbing and den building. To Inspire also have hopes of making the grade 2 listed building more sustainable with the use of solar photovoltaics and ground source heat pumps, as well as the aforementioned reed bed waste system.

Trends

The centre will benefit from a number of trends within the UK. Cycling, healthy living and holidays within the UK have become extremely popular over the last few years. Thanks to the influence of major cities, cycling has now become a common activity for families and individuals and has led to a rise in cycling holidays within the UK. This is of major benefit to the charity as the centre is based in Lancashire's largest forest with plenty of cycle routes.

The total market worth of cycling holidays is reported to be almost £170 million, with £93 million in the domestic market alone (Mintel, 2009). The ABC1 cyclists make up more than a fifth of the population and have extremely positive attitudes towards cycling, and therefore will talk about new cycle routes they may have found etc. It is also interesting to note that Mintel reports that over a third of consumers of cycling holidays are in full time education. This helps to reinforce the trend that younger people are becoming more interested in cycling, keeping fit and having fun.

The café will also benefit from a rise in holidays within the UK over the next two years, with the addition of several public bank holidays as well as more people who are taking holidays more within the UK. The obvious benefit of this is that if more people are utilising the forest, they are more likely to utilise the café, although it may be useful to host an event of some kind such as a music concert, which could be marketed and advertised to specific groups to maximise turnout. It is also shown that an estimated 26% of women appreciate green issues when participating and choosing a holiday (Mintel, 2009), whereas men are less likely to be concerned.

Finally, the issue of organic and sustainable foods is still a major trend within the UK, although it is starting level out. The market is estimated to be worth around £1.4 billion and there has been several high profile campaigns by celebrity chefs in recent years such as the Fish Fight and Chicken Out! campaigns, organised by Hugh Fearnley-Wittingstall. In 2010, Mintel reported that whilst there may be a downturn in organic food, there are almost 25% more consumers who now buy organic when compared to 2009. Mintel also states that AB's are more likely to buy organic and is likely to increase by almost 10% within the next five years. The main issue consumers have with organic food is the price and is something that could be addressed with the café.

Competitors

Due to the centre being located in the middle of Gisburn Forest there are very few competitors for the café. The nearest competition is in the near town of Slaidburn, which is almost 10 miles away. Therefore it would be unreasonable to include it as competition, particularly as the target market of the café is more likely to be younger and more active than tourists in Slaidburn.

However, the real threat will come from customers buying and bringing their own food and drinks from various shops and supermarkets. Not only does this pose a financial threat, but also an environmental threat as customers may not dispose of refuse in a sustainable manner particularly as the charity is dedicated to enhancing sustainable measures and efficiency.

Another competitor is the holiday home park Centre Parks. Whilst these vary drastically from Stephen Park the company profit on the concept of having an activity holiday, whereas To Inspire only cater for pre-booked schools and groups and day activities. However, Centre Parks offers a number of on-site facilities such as bike rental and entertainment which is something that Stephen Park could provide at a low cost to help bring in more customers, particularly families who may only have travelled to the park in order to walk around. This is discussed further in Part 2: Customer Analysis.

Macro Environment

The UK is currently benefitting from a surge in holidays, with most people claiming it is because of the recession and wishing not to overspend. According to Mintel (2010), overseas holidays fell by almost 15% in 2009, as well as the rise of holidays within the UK, which was around 5.5%. The overall market for activity holidays are predicted to increase to 10.9% of all holidays by 2014.

Almost 4 in 10 UK adults also believe they participating in activities which will lead to a healthier lifestyle, with cycling and running being extremely popular. Whilst only 5% are actually reaching Government targets, it has a positive outcome as ABC1 males are now engaging themselves in running, cycling and canoeing to name a few (Mintel, 2010). With a high amount of wealth this means they may be more willing to spend money within the shop. The group of AB's are predicted to grow from 2009-2014.

Appendix 1 refers to Mintel's analysis of consumers who holiday and shows the segmentation of those who are drawn to activity holidays and those who aren't. A staggering 43% of holidaymakers consider themselves active and continuously seek out adventurous activities to bond. Also, Mintel reports that the total share of the adventure holiday market is expected to be about 93million pounds, which is extremely comforting for push cyclists.

Another interesting finding is that the world's population is getting older (

SWOT Analysis

Strengths • The barn would only need a little bit of work to convert it into a café • Conference/IT room above could potentially be redeveloped • Excellent contacts with potential users such as cyclists, walkers and groups e.g. Brownies and Girl Guides • Existing staff or new staff could easily be trained to carry out tasks	Weaknesses • Grade 2 listed building may cause problems for redevelopment, although a lift and other modern items have been installed already • Transport to and from the centre and for trips may be costly • May not get the required profits within one year, especially if the marketing does not work.
Opportunities • Planned improvements will increase the potential for new customers • Future opportunities will have a massive beneficial impact such as a Proms in the Park style events etc. • Will raise the profile of To Inspire • Can be rented out for private functions or for schools to conduct forest studies. • Can make a positive impact on environmental issues and nature conservation.	Threats • Major risk linked with the charity- may be called a waste of money if it fails • Bad press with under previous name although issues were out of the trustees control e.g. foot and mouth. • Too ambitious?

Part 2: Customer Analysis**Target Markets**

There are two main activities which the general public participate in when at Stephen Park. The first is cycling, as the forest is renowned for its fantastic cycle tracks and downhill mountain bike routes, whereas the second is walking.

Push Cyclist:

There are various types who utilise the forest from amateurs to semi-professionals, with various amounts of disposable income and wants. From my market research I found three types of cyclists; road cyclists, mountain bikers and families.

Road cyclists these tend to be an older AB 1 group, primarily aged between 30-55. From my discussion with a road cyclist, they often wish to buy a coffee or a sports drink at the end of their journey and sometimes a cake or sandwich. However, he also disclosed that road cyclists don't bring much money out, as they have little to no room on their bike for such things. A concern from the café's point of view is how to get the road cyclists into the café when there is a mile of rough driveway. This is currently being addressed by the charity and the Forestry Commission, with an eventual outcome of making the driveway more accessible by using tarmac or concrete.

There are also many mountain bike enthusiasts who utilise the park. These also consist of many AB types, although are much younger due to the increased activity that runs in mountain biking. These will often have extremely expensive, custom built mountain bikes which they carry on a bike trailer, meaning they have more space to carry wallets and money. They will often be constantly trying to find new and exciting routes to test their endurance and skill, something which Stephen Park benefits from greatly. The group may also go off the pre-existing routes in order to challenge themselves. Often, they will buy food on site with only a small amount bringing their own food although they may bring their own drinks, as they will often utilise more fluids than road cyclists or families. When finished they may need more cool drinks and perhaps a good meal, but are more likely to visit a nearby pub where they can have a beer and a big, fulfilling meal.

Amateur families, however, tend to bring their bikes either on a bike rack fitted to a car or rent bikes on site, such as in the case of Centre Parks. This group will encompass all social types from wealthy families to low income families, and as such will be one of the main types of cyclists utilising the forest. Children also make up more cyclists, with over 41% of children aged 11-15 cycling at least once a week (Cycling Omnibus Survey, 2005). They will stick to pre-made routes and will take their time in order to enjoy the forest. If children are present they are likely to bring their own picnic or buy from a nearby shop and are more likely to buy a full meal rather than random items.

Walkers/Ramblers

Walkers are also a large user of the forest. The estimated total expenditure from ramblers within the UK is expected to be around £6.14 billion (Christie and Mathews, 2003), and is primarily made up of what Mintel (2008) call 'Third Agers', an aged group that is aged 50-65. In the report, Mintel found that almost 90% of the people interviewed participated in recreational activity until they were out of breath and that the main sport/activity they chose to pursue was rambling. They are more likely to be retired and have extra money to spend, as well as walking groups of more than 4. Through my own research they will share cars and drive up to the car park and consider that both the start and the end point, and will often visit a café to use toilets and buy sandwiches. They are more

environmentally aware and will often be interested in conservation and keeping the forest clean.

The report conducted by Mintel suggested that only 16% of 'Third Agers' had 1 hour to spend on activities in a week, with 14% spending 2 hours. It must be noted that these were the highest results from the report, although I found that groups of ramblers often walk for several hours on one day.

Market Research

The market research was conducted on a Friday during half term in February. It took place from 9.30 to 5.00pm. The day was chosen as it was a typical half term day, a time when a wide range of users are already in the forest.

As well as asking users to fill out a questionnaire which asked questions as to how old they were, where they travelled from and what products they would most require, I was tallying how many people were around the area. The results showed that on this particular day there were 94 people utilising the park, from walking to cycling as well as bird watching. Out of these we managed to get 51 questionnaires completed also, although the remaining questionnaires couldn't be completed for a number of reasons such as cycling and not wishing to stop.

We found that:

- Families ranged from young singles, to middle aged couples with small children, to grandparents with up to 3 generations.
- Children were as young as 0 and were as old as 15, although there were two 16-17 year olds, there was only one 18-26 year.
- 70% of people asked would have preferred to have some form of food establishment to buy cakes, sandwiches and coffee etc.
- Almost 60% brought their own food which consisted mainly of cyclists (65%) and walkers (28%)
- Families often only stayed in the forest for an average 1 hour and thirty minutes.

Critical Issues

In hindsight the market research should have been conducted over a greater period of time to reflect the diverse market the forest encounters, although time did not permit. We can clearly see there is a need for some form of food outlet and a café would be perfect. Brands such as Starbucks and Costa are slowly starting to lose the grip of the market as more people become aware that coffee can be sold at a reasonable price, with a similar sort of atmosphere (Mintel, 2011). A café could also profit from sustainable products and the addition of

home cooked food means ingredients or products are not wasted, as they can be prepared on the day.

Part 3: Marketing

Boston Group Matrix

(See Appendix 3)

The Boston Group Matrix is an extremely effective way of distinguishing business products, services or levels of business in an easy to read format. Appendix ___ shows the various sides of the charity and where they are in terms of how profitable they are. As charities work different to traditional business, the BGM can still apply, although profit is measured as surplus.

We can see the centre already has two 'Question Marks', as it is unsure how they will do at this moment in time. However, by investing the following suggestions we aim to have both the café and schools/groups activities into a 'Star' position.

The charity has a caravan at Martin Mere which has been underused due to the time it takes to market and organise. Whilst the caravan is free for one family to holiday in it for a week, it has not utilised to its full potential. Marketing at the café could drastically improve this, with calls for fundraising or even advertising weeks that the caravan is free. With good communication marketing, this could be moved from a 'Dog' into a 'Question Mark'.

Communication

PR

The first major task is to implement a public relations campaign alongside that of the centre and charity. The café should have a press pack to send out to journalists which consists of high quality photographs, logos, menus, press release as well as links to the website.

Throughout the 83 years the charity has benefitted from a close relationship with various local newspapers such as the Lancashire Evening Post, the Accrington Observer and the Lancashire Evening Telegraph. Whilst recently there was negative press due to various issues, the charity could still invite these newspapers along to an open night. The charity also has also had an excellent relationship with BBC Radio Lancashire, which helped raise donations to refurbish the previous centre. It would be beneficial to include this particular radio station as it addresses the entire county, particularly the key 50+ year olds who we have identified as a particular target market.

As well as this, the activities in the forest means they should also invite writers from specialist magazines such as Country Life and Cycling Plus, both with large

readerships. It would also be useful to contact Gisburn and Clitheroe Tourist Information Centres and ask to be included in any future

Food and drink could be provided in the café, where the night could be hosted upstairs in conference room. It would show the press there is more than just children's holidays and cycle ways Stephen Park, and could be included in their articles.

Advertising

The café should also utilise an effective advertising campaign. Whereas the centre will have a much larger advertising campaign, through magazines and radio etc, the café could easily be advertised by targeting users before they enter the forest or drive way.

The possibility to put signs advertising the café is also something that will need addressing. Ideally, the centre and the café should be advertised upto ten miles away from the centre, with a heavy emphasis on the café near the end of the drive and in the car park. However, it is difficult to predict if this could be implemented as the request to host signs is left upto the Forestry Commission. This means they may decline the request as it may intrude on the natural beauty of the area, although it would be an excellent and easy method to communicate with people who may not know the centre exists.

Secondly, the Forestry Commission is deciding on whether to go ahead with a 'Hub' which would house information on Gisburn, Stephen Park and perhaps the centre itself. It may be a possibility to go in partnership with them and provide the existing conference/computer room which is located upstairs in the barn. This would mean that visitors who go into the information hub would also walk into the café and provide extra customers. Again, this would have to be finalised between senior management in both the charity and the Forestry Commission, although it would benefit both.

Social Media

The café should have a dedicated space on the centre website. It could contain images, listings, contact information and even media such as downloadable games for children. Alongside this, a Twitter account might also be useful. A recent report conducted by Digitalbuzzblog.com (2010) shows that 83% of Twitter users are aged 26+, with 27% of people aged between 35-44 years old. Facebook, however, only has 60% of users aged 26+ with just 18% aged 35-44 year olds. Twitter also has 3% more users who are over 55 than Facebook, therefore it seems more beneficial to utilise Twitter for the immediate future. Twitter can also have status updates 'programmed' that money using various programs and released as the day progresses, meaning the staff spend less time on the computer.

Another potential way of communicating with people is through apps. For example, an app may be developed which shows you all the routes in Stephen Park and have a time to beat depending on which type of sport you do. There

could even be an app to help you detect birds in the forest, with bird calls and pictures loaded.

Marketing Objectives

1. Start advertising the café on billboards in a 10 mile radius explaining the opening date, as well as the location. As well as this begin advertising in local Tourist Information Bureaus such as Clitheroe, Skipton and Preston. The adverts could be printed on flyers and posters giving detailed information about the opening
2. Begin to put together a press pack containing pictures, logos, menus and invitations to an opening and send this out to newspapers and magazines all across the UK. This should be sent out straight away so editors can delegate reporters to start pieces straight away.
3. Implement an online strategy by including a website and Twitter account. This should also be done straight away and can be used in conjunction with Google Analytics and search optimisation tools so the café is at number one. Ideas should also be made in regards to mobile app applications, such as bird-watching apps or audio guides that can be downloaded from the internet.
4. Production costs could be kept low by making the sandwiches and cakes on the same day. Value can also be added by using locally sourced organic ingredients. As ABC1 groups may have more a disposable income than other groups, products should still be sold at a medium price so potential customers do not become hesitant.
5. Utilising the conference/IT suite as the hub for the forest has tremendous benefits for the café. It means more people will visit the café who may not wish to visit. Schoolchildren who may not be able to attend for a full week could be one of the first groups to benefit from this as the school could arrange to utilise the hub to conduct lessons in the forest, especially when learning about the natural environment.

Controls and Measurement

Measurement will have to be judged on profit and return on investment. A full feasibility study will need to be done into how much it would cost to initially set up a small kitchen with seating. Originally a benchmark figure was set around £10,000 although prices are likely to have changed due to the recent VAT rise.

The centre itself intends to bring in £70,000 a year just from schools and groups, whereas it is predicted that the café could potentially bring in almost double that, if not more. A follow up questionnaire could be conducted once the centre has been open for a year in which it asks the age range, the customers favourite type of outdoor activity and how they heard of the café in order to make sure the café is advertising to the correct audience.

Conclusion

Whilst this report is primarily a marketing strategy into how to market the café effectively, it is also aimed to help the charity in deciding whether to go ahead with the business. As To Inspire operates within the charity sector, all profits made from sustainable enterprises and the charity itself must be put back into the charity.

Although there are a number of risks that could be linked with the charity, the café is an extremely effective use of the space and could help to fund hundreds of future activities, as well as help provide children with experiences they will keep with them for a lifetime.

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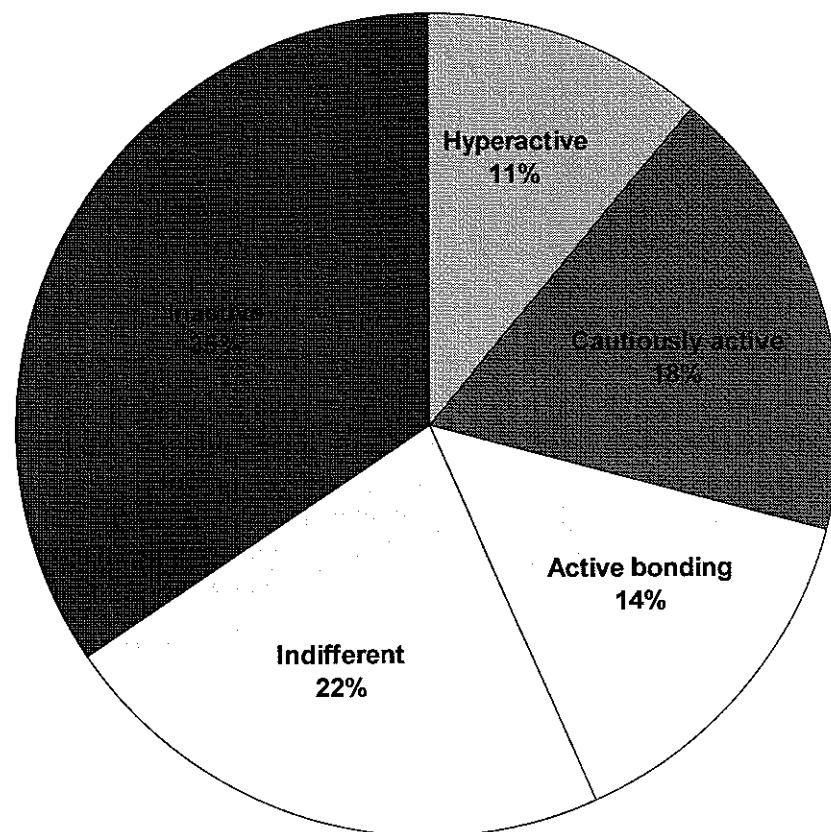
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Mintel, 2010, *Bicycles*

Appendices

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Appendices 1: Types of consumers on holiday



Appendix 2: Market Research

Age Group	18-26 1	27-35 5	36-44 13	45-54 12	55+ 19
Activity	Cycling 17	Leisurely walk 19	Bird Watching 3	Rambling 7	Other 5
Have you brought children with you today?	Yes 22	No 29			
Ages of Children (If Applicable)	0-5 4	6-10 7	10-15 9	16-17 2	
Have you brought your own food?	Yes 29	No 22			
Is there any need for a food establishment within the forest?	Yes 34	No 10	Unsure 7		
If yes, what type of food should it sell?	Sandwiches 20	Cakes 8	Hot food 6		
Would utilising organic ingredients help persuade you to buy?	Yes 23	No 26	Unsure 2		
Which would you prefer	Coffee/Tea 24	Cold drink 20	Alcoholic drink 7		

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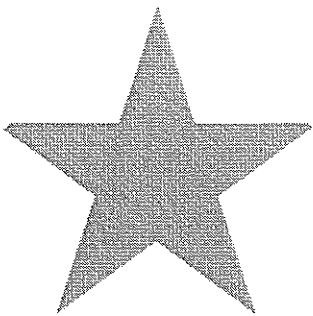
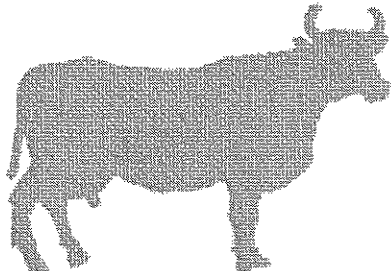
Would an information hub be useful?

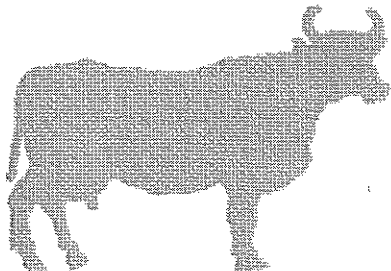
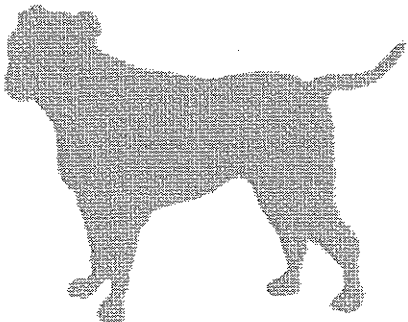
Yes	No	Unsure
32	7	12

Finally, how long have you used the forest for today?

Less than 30 minutes	1 hour	90 minutes	2 hours	3+ hours
10	9	19	9	4

Appendix 3: Boston Group Matrix

	Cafe ? Schools/Groups
	 Martin Mere Caravan

Cafe  Schools/Groups	Martin Mere ?
	

Gisburn

Fantastic Forest Biking

Welcome to Gisburn Forest, the best place for mountain biking in North Lancashire. Gisburn Forest Offers two fantastic new mountain bike trails. The "8" is an 18km red grade trail with the unique Hully Gully & Bottoms Beck is a free flowing blue graded mix of surfaces that will make your grin. Trails start from Cocklet Hill Car Park (SD 745550)

Your Safety

Mountain biking is a potentially hazardous activity carrying a significant risk. It should only be undertaken with a full understanding of all the inherent risks. The guidelines in this leaflet must always be used in conjunction with the exercise of your own experience, intuition and careful judgement. Remember routes may change owing to tree felling & other forest operations.

If you need this publication in large print or in another language please contact the diversity team.

Tel: 0131 314 6575

Email: diversity@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Gisburn Bike Trails have been Sponsored By: Sport England, United Utilities, Ribble Valley Borough Council, Ribble Valley Strategic Partnership, local riders, Lancashire County Council, Forest of Bowland AONB

? Trail grading information

Green: Easy

Suitable for: Beginners in good health with basic bike skills. Most types of bike. Trail: Relatively flat and wide.

Blue: Moderate

Suitable for: Riders in good health, basic off-road skills. Basic mountain bikes. Trail: Some single track, root & rock obstacles.

Red: Difficult

Suitable for: Proficient mountain bikers with good off-road riding skills & fitness. Good mountain bikes. Trail: Challenging climbs, tricky descents such as drop-offs & large rocks.

Black: Severe

Suitable for: Expert mountain bikers with high level of fitness. Quality off-road mountain bikes. Trail: Greater challenge & difficulty. Expect large & unavoidable features.

Forest road & similar

Suitable for: Cyclists in good health. Map reading useful. Routes not always marked. Most bikes. Trail: Gradients can vary. Surfaces may be uneven or potholed in places. Look out for vehicles & other users.

? Forest roads & bike parks

Black: Severe

Suitable for: Extreme level riders with expert technical skills & good fitness. Technical bike skills important. Jumping ability obligatory. Trail: Extreme levels of exposure & risk. Large features.

4. Cycle carefully and come back soon!



- On and off road:
Expect the unexpected – watch out for other visitors
For your own and others' safety always follow warning signs and any advice you are given
If a vehicle is loading timber stop and wait for the driver to let you pass safely.



- For your own safety:
Always wear the right safety clothing, at least a cycle helmet and gloves.
Only cycle within your abilities.
Only tackle jumps and other challenges if you are sure you can do them, have a look first
Train properly especially for difficult and technical routes.



- Don't rely on others:
Can you get home safely?
Carry the right equipment and know how to use it.

Forest Cycle Code

Gisburn

Fantastic Biking

Emergency!

Name & Grid Ref
 Cocklet Hill Car Park
 Grid Ref SD 745550
Nearest A&E Hospital
 Blackburn T. 01254 26355
Nearest Public Phone
 800m south of Cocklet Hill
 car park on B6478 and in
 centre of Tossie Village.
**If Rescue Services Are
 Required Phone 999**

Talk To Us

Forestry Commission
 North West England
 Grizedale, Hawkshead
 Ambleside, Cumbria
 LA22 0QJ
 T 01229 860373
forestry.gov.uk/gisburn

"The 8"

Red Grade
Difficult 18 km

Highlights include the vol-
 unteer built trail of
 Home Baked, gnarly rocks
 of Whelpstone
 Crag and the roller
 coaster ride down Hully
 Gully - as close as you
 can get to dancing on a
 bike. Follow the red ar-
 rows on the timber posts.
 Look out for any warning
 markers. Along
 this route are optional
 Black Grade lines and
 features. These are
 marked with a skull.

Bottoms Beck

Blue Grade - Moderate 9.5km

A short trail that is suitable for novices &
 younger riders. Down passed St James
 Chapel and over the causeway leads to a
 bumpy ride along Egberry Road. A mellow
 ride by Bottoms Beck follows an old railway
 line. Later, you can twist & turn through Park
 Wood, then finish with a grin on a sweeping
 descent. Follow the blue arrows on the timber
 posts. Look out for any warning markers.

- Key**
- "The 8"
 - Bottoms Beck
 - Black Grade
 - ☒ Phone Reception
 - Forest Roads