

Dean Trail Volunteers 2024-25 Annual Report





Charitable Objectives & News

- The advancement of the amateur sport of Mountain Biking in the Forest of Dean for the public benefit by the assistance in the provision of facilities for participation in the sport of Mountain Biking at the Forest of Dean Cycle Centre
- To promote for the benefit of the public the conservation protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment within the Forest of Dean Cycle Centre
- Registered as a charity 4th July 2024.
- Won the KAVS in October 2024.



**The King's Award
for Voluntary Service**



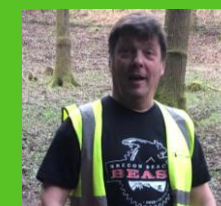
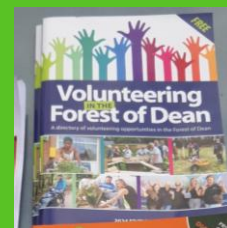
Trustees for the period 2024-25

- Andrew Davies - Dig Coordinator (Chair)
- Sara Packer - Secretary (and Deputy Chair)
- Ben Herycz – Treasurer
- Neil Wheeler - Health & Safety Officer
- Ian Officer - Non-Executive Trustee
- Alan Grist – Non-Executive Trustee
- Rebecca Prayoga - Marketing Officer
- Robert Yates - Fundraising Officer



Volunteering

- Total volunteer hours: 3,298 (78% increase from 1,853 hours in 2023)
- 219 active volunteers with 32 contributing over 60% of the totals hours
- Social events at BPW, Christmas Meal and various Social Rides
- Benja wins volunteer award





Trail Digging

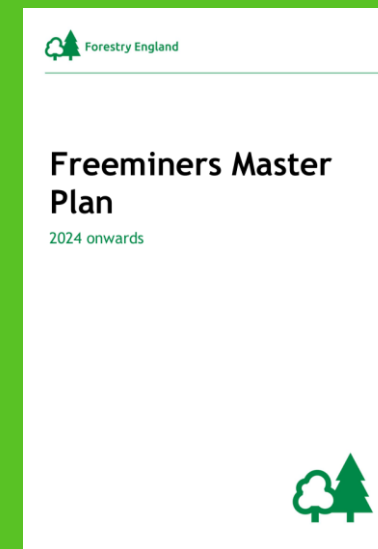
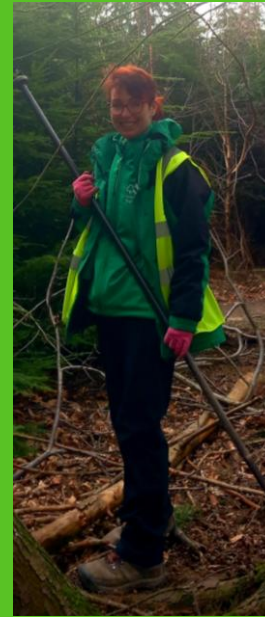
- Freeminers Focus
 - Red Skills Area Opened
 - Reworked Original Boneyard
 - Dizzy's Down
 - New Start
 - Velo's Machine Built Section
 - New top section
 - Adit TNT Revamped
- Next Period get Freeminers open and look at revamping some DH tracks
- FoD Night Riders collab. 281 hours of additional volunteering around Enduro Hill area
- More First Aiders trained up and nothing to report for Health and Safety





Forestry England

- Opening of Old Bob a Green accessible trail is great news for the Cycle Centre
- Collaboration on the 5 Year Master Plan for trails within the Cycle Centre
- Cycle Centre Stats (FY25-26)
 - Car Parking 134k
 - Launchpad 107k
 - Blue Skills 215k
 - Verderers 73k
 - Colliers 115k
 - Old Bob 20k (Oct-Mar)





Environment

- Regular Litter Picks and Dead-Hedging (new technique for marking boundaries) account for 120h of volunteer time
- This activity is highly suitable for corporate events especially when the organisation has environmental goals
- Replanting around trails becomes standard practice
- Rewilding funding secured from the Friends of the Cotswolds (£2,000)





Partner Digs

- 192 Corporate Social Responsibility hours, primarily with NVIDIA
- Digs and generous member benefits from close partner PedalABikeAway
- Further collaboration in 2025/26 and growing our CSR programme



“The trail network is the lifeblood of the cycle centre. It is the pull factor that brings people into ride the Forest of Dean. The work that Dean Trail Volunteers do is vital to creating a strong and vibrant riding community, which is why we try to support it through the member benefits and bringing our staff out on quarterly dig days!”

Gareth Sheppard Jones (PedalABikeAway)



Inclusive Activities

- John Kyrle High School we spent 300h volunteering with kids and teachers. Helped otherwise excluded kids find purpose in a natural environment
- Women's digs continued. Aim to make more permanent feature in 2025/26 improve on 45 hours this year
- Disabled bike access project supported by Barnwood Trust funding (£4,400) waiting to fund Adaptive Bike Project
- Ongoing support of Duke of Edinburgh popular on Saturday digs





Fund Raising

- Approx. 300h of volunteering at Table Sale and fund-raising events
- New larger container has transformed set-up time for monthly Table Sales
- £12,293 raised in total, aim to hit £19k in 25/26 and £25k in 26/27





Marketing and Communications

- Social Media
 - Followers: Facebook 2.7k, Instagram 4.2k
 - Email: 231 subscribers
 - Facebook Group: 81
 - YouTube, TikTok, LinkedIn no presence
- Objectives for next Financial Year:
 - Marketing Year Plan integrated comms across platforms and fund raising, supporting volunteer recruitment and volunteer retention
 - Adopt LinkedIn to target CSR Partners
 - Reinstate regular comms via Email Newsletters to all groups
 - New Integrate Website



IT and Data Protection

- Secured a substantial Non-Profit Grant from Microsoft for provision of the Teams platform. With 300 Business Basic licences to provide a secure replacement of the existing disparate systems. This will allow us to store the required membership data and attentional information required for reporting purposes in a fully compliant fashion.
- Began a limited pilot project on rollout of Teams which will become focus of FY25-26
- Develop a system on SharePoint for storing and reporting on Volunteer Hours data.
- While the current privacy policy was fit for purpose with the move to a membership charity this year this will need addressing in the next financial year period.



Finance (see also Finances Report)

- **Income for the Year: £31,636**
- **Restricted funds (£6,400):** Comprising:
 - £4,400 from Barnwood Trust for disabled bike projects
 - £2,000 from Friends of the Cotswolds for rewilding project
- **Major Donations** The charity received £15,000 from private donors for the Freeminers project during the year.
- **Expenditure for the Year: £19,408**



Objectives for FY2025-26

- New Website, Mar/Comms Calendar and Regular Email Updates
- Rollout Teams and GDPR Compliant Members Database
- New DTV Tracker for capturing Volunteer Hours
- Complete Freeminers Revamp
- Move to update DH Tracks
- Adoption of Enduro Hill trails
- Increase Number of Regular Women's Diggers and Dig Leads
- Built the Blow'n'Mow team and launch ahead of Autumn
- Recruit Membership Trustee, DPO Trustee and Secretary
- Build Volunteering and Donation based Partnerships with CSR Companies
- Produce a report on Paid Membership options for vote at 25/26 AGM
- Become VAT registered