

What's the Aberfeldy Cycle Hub all about?

It's a community cycle workshop - tools to fix bikes, receive servicing from experts, learn maintenance skills, purchase bikes & parts, hire bikes, and more.

We already have a prime location secured for reasonable rent in the centre of Aberfeldy. This will ensure lots of footfall and a convenient stopping point for any cyclist cycling into, or through, the town.

How will the Aberfeldy Cycle Hub work?

The CIC will set up and manage a community cycle hub – a dedicated space for people to work on their own bikes, receive servicing & advice from trained mechanics, learn bike skills, purchase bikes, cycling components and gear, hire bikes, and get information on where to cycle around Aberfeldy.

The space will be purpose-built for working on cycles, with secure storage of tools, parts, supplies, and hire bikes, safe e-bike battery charging equipment, and facilities for learning bike maintenance skills. A selection of tools and equipment will be maintained, as well as a stock of common parts and supplies to keep riders riding without the need to travel elsewhere for fixes. Old bikes will be accepted as donations, refurbished for use (or stripped for parts to be used later), and made available at affordable prices.

A proven need in the community

Aberfeldy is becoming a cycling destination, with cycling on the rise for both residents and tourists. But with no bike servicing in town, the best-laid cycle plans can quickly fall victim to minor bike issues.

To address this need, Brett De Woody has been offering cycle servicing out of his home for several months and has served a steady stream of residents and tourists in need of fixes and parts, but working from home has limitations.

Opening a cycle hub with a dedicated workshop space will allow us to expand our cycle service offering, and give room to expand other areas of the business, while reinvesting profits back into the business and local not-for-profit cycling initiatives.

Who will benefit from the Cycle Hub?

Cycling is on the rise in Aberfeldy and the region. Data from Strava Metro (which tracks riders using the Strava app) shows 2023 will be the most popular year for cycling in the area - with more people posting rides in Perthshire than any of the past 5 years.

Additionally, the Aberfeldy Infrastructure Report (Perth and Kinross Council, 2017) estimates that Aberfeldy is likely to grow by 300 homes and around 600 people, from an estimated population of 2292 residents to 2832 residents, by 2028. 100% of these residents and homes are within a 20-minute walk (or a shorter cycle) from the town square where the cycle hub is proposed.

Cycle tourism also creates a significant opportunity for our cycle hub to remain sustainable, while also increasing traffic to, and spending within our local economy. The National Cycle Network Route 7 runs just past Aberfeldy on the north side of the river Tay, and because Aberfeldy is one of the best serviced towns on the route for 15 miles in either direction, there is a high likelihood that cyclists using this route will stop in Aberfeldy for food, lodging, etc. The Paths for Everyone Report (Sustrans, 2018) states that the network was used (in 2017 alone) by 4.4 million people making a total of 377 million cycle trips and that “local businesses benefited by an estimated £2.5 billion from people using the Network for leisure and tourism... which benefited the UK economy by an estimated £1.3 billion through health, congestion and environmental benefits.”

Aberfeldy and the surrounding communities would clearly benefit from a more cycle-friendly community, especially one with a cycle hub centrally located in the busiest part of the town to service both residents and tourists.

A true community initiative

Since starting to offer bike servicing out of his home earlier this year, Brett has had a steady stream of business. From quick puncture repairs to complete bike overhauls, the past few months have demonstrated a demand for bike servicing.

- We have consulted with a number of community groups who use cycles in their businesses or community groups - like Wee Adventures and the Aberfeldy Cubs - and have supported them when their customers required cycle servicing.
- The Aberfeldy Healthiest Town initiative have given us their support for the cycle workshop initiative
- Upper Tay Transport Group are supportive of the idea

We plan to hold a community crowdfunding campaign once our initial funding and lease are secured which will encourage members of the community to join the cycle hub via

memberships which will provide them access to specialist tools, repair stations, discounts on parts, etc.

Benefiting the local economy

We believe a cycle workshop will contribute to the local economy in several ways.

1. A cycle workshop helps cement Aberfeldy's position as a burgeoning cycle destination. From the amazing roads, to the gravel tracks of Griffin and Calliachar, and the downhill trails of Glassie - Aberfeldy is quickly becoming a cycling mecca. A cycle workshop will support and increase this tourist segment and will make Aberfeldy a destination for cyclists of all disciplines and abilities.
2. Cycle tourists spend money on accommodation, food, and other local attractions - and spend more money than average visitors according to a recent report.
3. We hope to employ local residents for skilled roles like bike maintenance.
4. As a Community Interest Company, profits from the workshop will be reinvested into the workshop or other local cycling initiatives like cycle path development, cycling events, subsidised bikes, and similar initiatives.
5. Reduced transportation costs - by encouraging more people to ride, and keeping them riding, personal transportation costs could be reduced. This leaves residents with more disposable income to spend in the local economy. Increasingly important as more people in Aberfeldy commute to Kenmore for work.
6. We also will be well-placed to help turn Aberfeldy into a more cycle-friendly community which will help retain and attract young people to our small rural community.

A sustainable financial model

Draft & Flow is set up as a Community Interest Company. Our organisation structure does not require membership, however, we plan to offer membership-based services (e.g. access to tools and bike repair stations, discounts on services/parts, etc.). These "members" will not have governance voting rights, but feedback and input from the community will be a driving influence in the decision-making at Draft & Flow.

The cycle workshop is being set up as a Community Interest Company as it will require ongoing revenue. We plan to drive revenue through:

1. Bike servicing - providing expert bike servicing at affordable rates.
2. Bike sales - a brick-and-mortar workshop allows us to stock bikes, and makes us eligible for the Cycle-to-Work Scheme so we can sell cycles.
3. Workshop memberships - annual memberships that give members access to the workshop so they can fix their own bikes.
4. Bike hire
5. Education - teaching courses for locals and tourists who would like to learn how to maintain and repair their bikes from home or while they are out on rides.

E-bikes will also be serviced - with equipment to diagnose and repair the on-board computer systems. The hub will also provide employment and work experience opportunities for those interested in the bike industry and bike maintenance.

We have identified premises on Aberfeldy's town square and the owner of the premises has offered a below-market value lease, with no deposit and rent holiday while we get started. We believe this central, highly-visible location is well-suited for serving both residents and tourists, and contributes to making Aberfeldy's town square a vibrant gathering place.

Our proposed budget

The next phase of Draft & Flow is to create a dedicated cycle workshop. A dedicated workshop will open up many new opportunities and revenue streams - accounts with more distributors (most distributors require a brick-and-mortar storefront), better prices on parts, Cycle-to-Work Scheme eligibility (which would allow us to sell bikes), parts and equipment stock storage (allowing faster servicing), and the ability to take on more cycle servicing.

We are seeking funding to outfit the workshop with tools and equipment to service bikes, work benches and tool boards, and to purchase common parts and gear (tubes, cables, etc), to allow for quick repairs. This equipment will allow us to start servicing bikes, give members access to tools, and hold bike maintenance courses relatively quickly - all revenue generating activities. The majority of the tools and equipment have multi-year lifespans, so these funds will have a long-lasting impact, and enable revenue generation for several years.

- Park Tool BMK-15 Master Tool Set (1) - £5,700
- Park Tool PK-5 Tool Kit (1) - £660
- Park Tool PRS-2.3-1 Workstand (2) - £1,060
- Park Tool PRS-3.3-1 Workstand - £385
- Park Tool 135 Repair Base Stand (2) - £460
- Park Tool 130 Repair Base Stand - £145
- Asecos K9 Ion Battery Charger Locker - £3,511
- Parts and Supply Stock - £2,000
- Workshop equipment - £5,000
- **Total: £18,921** (we are only claiming £8,000 from the Green Living Fund to cover part of these costs)

Note that we are not seeking funding for start-up costs like rent, insurance or salaries.

We already have accounts with many bike industry distributors and are able to purchase tools and bike parts at wholesale rates through these distributors. This includes the Park Tool items listed above, which we can purchase for 30-40%% below recommended retail prices.

We have a small core team of volunteers to lead the project, putting in time and effort. And already have several others interested in volunteering their time. We will be launching a membership campaign (for annual memberships, not governance 'members') to raise funds as well - offering annual memberships (price varies by tier) for self-service access to the workshop, and discounts on servicing and parts - which will also help fund the start-up costs. We are aiming to raise £6,000 from the initial membership drive.