

Edinburgh All-Ability Bike Centre to close

The Edinburgh All-Ability Bike Centre (ABC) is stopping its services at the end of the month due to a lack of sustainable funding,

The centre was situated most recently at Saughton Park, and previously operated at Bangholm Outdoor Centre in Trinity.

It has offered the freedom and enjoyment of cycling to anyone with disabilities which would have otherwise prevented them getting on a bike. With side by side tandems and trikes galore the organisation was able to give everyone the chance to try cycling in the fresh air. And now it is coming to an end.

Cycling UK has [announced the closure on their website](#) claiming that lack of funding is the principal issue. We understand it takes tens of thousands of pounds to run the facility each year.

A spokesperson from Cycling UK told The Edinburgh Reporter: "Cycling UK in Scotland is very sad to announce that the Edinburgh ABC will be closing its doors on 31 May 2021. Despite many applications, we have been unable to secure enough funding to allow the project to continue in a

sustainable way, and so we have made the very difficult decision to close down the project.

“Until now, the Edinburgh ABC has principally been funded from grants, trusts and donations. In the last year, this section of the funding landscape has been under tremendous pressure. Many sources of funding have closed, or have changed their profile to offer much-needed Covid-response grants. Like many others, we have tried to adapt what we do, but in the end, it isn’t possible to carry on what we do without long-term funding.

“We know that the ABC has made a real and lasting impression on all those who have used the service and understand that this news will be a great loss to many of our participants.

“The delivery team, volunteers, and Cycling UK in Scotland team are all extremely proud of what we have achieved since the project launched in 2015. It isn’t an exaggeration to say that we have changed lives by making cycling and walking more accessible to people who thought that it wasn’t an activity for them.

“We are in discussions with partners regarding the ABC’s cycles and whether another organisation can run activities using them. We will update our social media as soon as we have any further information.”

Claire Edwards, mum of Joe who used the service, said: “ABC provided a safe and fun environment for my son to learn how to ride a bike. It was great for his physical and mental well-being. Without supported activities such as those offered by ABC, young disabled people are excluded from opportunities that help them learn and develop. Disabled young people have been severely impacted by the pandemic closures, and the loss of ABC is a real kick in the teeth as things open up for everyone else.”

It certainly looks a lot of fun for those who have been able

to use the centre and it is a great shame that Cycling UK are unable to provide the service, and continue to employ the staff who work there. Is there anyone out there who can perhaps step in?



Cycling UK Scotland – All Ability Bikes Networking Event – Sun 16 September 2018 – Edinburgh, Scotland © photographer – Andy Catlin www.andycatlin.com