

Racecourse staff under starter's orders for charity cycle ride

Staff at Musselburgh Racecourse are saddling up – for a 500 mile charity bike challenge.

The racing five are taking part in the Cycle for Smart Works sponsored cycle and hope to raise a minimum of £500 in the run up to International Women's Day on 8 March.

Charity Smart Works supports unemployed women to help find work by providing smart interview clothes and boosting their confidence before meeting prospective employers.

Since 2013 Smart Works has helped more than 20,000 women, 62% of who went on to secure a new job. The charity says that in the last year 43% of clients had been unemployed for more than one year, 25% had been rejected for more than 50 jobs, while 14% had lost out in more than 100 job applications.

The racecourse colleagues – Elizabeth Allan, Hollie Bannatyne, Philip Duncan, Beth Lyle and Sarah Montgomery – will cycle a collective 500 miles in the first week of March.

Some will cycle to and from work, others will use their bike in their free time, and in the office they will all be able to hop on and off a stationary bike, supplied by Bannatyne Health Club at Newcraighall.



Musselburgh Racecourse staff saddling up, left to right: Sarah Montgomery, Philip Duncan, Hollie Bannatyne, Beth Lyle and Elizabeth Allan.

The charity said: “Over the last five years, Smart Works cyclists have pedaled a grand total of 500,000 miles and raised over £500,000 for charity. We have helped over 20,000 women across the UK, but we know there are more women who need our support. Together we will help unemployed women with the clothes, coaching and confidence they need to get the job and transform their lives.”

Musselburgh Racecourse marketing manager, Aisling Johnston, said: “We are getting on our bikes to help this worthwhile initiative which is supporting women trying to get back on the employment ladder.

“Going for an interview is one of the most daunting times many of us face and Smart Works is helping thousands of women overcome their fears and boosting their confidence. Our collective 500 miles in the saddle is a great way of marking International Women’s Day and will make a small contribution

to support the charity's wider ambitions."