

Reframing Mtb.

Event Report 2025



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EVENT SUMMARY

Workshop

Wifi: MShed Free Wifi

1. What is mountain biking doing well to diversify and expand participation?
2. What is stopping progress?
3. What can we do more to make mountain biking culture appealing to more people?

Event Summary

The third ever Reframing Mountain Biking happened on 7th and 8th March 2025 in **Bristol**, building on the previous two events held in Sheffield in 2022 and 2024.

In 2025, Reframing Mountain Biking included **over 90 delegates from across the mountain biking sector**: media, brands, trail groups, non-profits, land managers, passionate individuals, and community leaders.

Ride Bristol played an integral part in the organisation of the event.

A woman is mountain biking on a dirt trail in a forest. She is wearing a white POC helmet, glasses, a purple long-sleeved shirt, a black vest, and bright orange pants. She is leaning forward on her black mountain bike. In the background, another person wearing a yellow helmet is visible. The scene is set in a wooded area with many trees and a large tree trunk in the foreground. The text "WHO WAS THERE?" is overlaid in white, bold, handwritten-style font on the left side of the image.

WHO WAS
THERE?

Who was there?

Reframing Mountain Biking 2025 welcomed delegates representing over 75 mountain biking organisations.



2025 Themes

In 2025, we focused our Friday speakers and workshops around three key themes:

- 1. CREATING MOUNTAIN BIKE ENVIRONMENTS THAT APPEAL TO MORE PEOPLE**
- 2. TOWARDS A STRONGER MOUNTAIN BIKE SECTOR**
- 3. PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE MOUNTAIN BIKING**

A group of mountain bikers are gathered in a wooded area. In the foreground, a person wearing a blue helmet and dark clothing is seated on a blue mountain bike. The bike's frame has the word "JULIANNA" written on it. Behind them, several other bikers are visible, some standing and others on their bikes, all wearing helmets and outdoor gear. The background consists of tall, thin trees with bare branches, suggesting a cool or early spring setting. The overall scene is slightly blurred, emphasizing the text overlaid on the image.

1.

CREATING MOUNTAIN BIKE ENVIRONMENTS THAT APPEAL TO MORE PEOPLE

Creating mountain bike environments that appeal to more people **SUMMARY**

Mountain biking is diversifying, and there increasingly there are examples of great practice: projects and communities designed to open mountain biking up to marginalised communities.

But there's still work to be done; mountain biking and other action sports continue to reflect entrenched gender and other inequalities.

For example, research from SHIFT Active Media found that 21% of women feel they don't fit in with the riding community – only 6% of men said this.

Creating mountain bike environments that appeal to more people

SPEAKERS



Bex Baraona & Chloe Taylor:

Learnings from Creating an Inclusive Environment at Gowaan Fest



Aneela McKenna, Mòr Diversity:

Pathways to Participation: Strategies for Inclusive Mountain Biking



Lindsey Hollands, Limitless, British Cycling:

Evolving and Expanding the Ethos of Limitless (into off-road environments)

Creating mountain bike environments that appeal to more people **WORKSHOP** **INSIGHTS**

Inclusivity Begins with Design

Trails, spaces, and events must be intentionally designed to feel welcoming to underrepresented groups, e.g. women, beginners, disabled riders, older adults, etc.

Representation Drives Participation

Seeing people “like me” in MTB media, marketing, leadership, and group rides significantly impacts whether someone feels they belong in the space.

First Impressions Matter

Signage, website tone, event promotion, and the presence of welcoming people at venues all shape how inclusive and accessible a MTB space feels.

Women+ and Beginners Value Supportive Environments

Many riders expressed the value of women-only or beginner-friendly spaces where performance pressure is lower

Creating mountain bike environments that appeal to more people

WORKSHOP INSIGHTS

and social connection is stronger.

Need for Visible Diversity

There's a strong desire to see more ethnic, gender, and age diversity in MTB storytelling, staffing, ambassadors, and sponsored riders.

Barriers Are Often Cultural, Not Just Physical

Practices like gatekeeping jargon, overemphasis on risk, or competitive hierarchies can subtly exclude newcomers and diverse riders.

Youth Engagement is Key

Participants highlighted the importance of early exposure, family-friendly infrastructure, and accessible coaching to grow a more diverse future generation of riders.

Training the Gatekeepers

Coaches, ride leaders, event organisers, and shop staff benefit

Creating mountain bike environments that appeal to more people **WORKSHOP INSIGHTS**

from training in inclusivity, unconscious bias, and how to foster belonging in their communities.

Partnerships and Co-Creation Work Best

Efforts to be inclusive should involve co-design with the communities being invited in, not just outreach after the fact.

Celebrate Small Wins and Local Champions

Building more welcoming MTB environments often starts with individuals and small groups—these champions deserve recognition and support to scale their impact.

2. TOWARDS A STRONGER MOUNTAIN BIKING SECTOR



Towards a stronger mountain biking sector

SUMMARY

What is the most pressing issue facing mountain biking right now?

When we asked this question to delegates 41% gave an answer related to the trails; **without good trails to ride the sector won't flourish.**

In the current economic climate money is tight for the bike industry, councils, and other landowners. Consequently, **Trail Associations are doing a lot heavy lifting,** engaging the community, and utilising a lot of volunteer power!

Towards a stronger mountain biking sector

SPEAKERS



Andy Davies, Dean Trail Volunteers:

Engaging with a Broad Cross Section of Partners so That All Riders Can Enjoy the Trails



Dom Ferris, Trash Free Trails:

Here for the Trails. A Philosophy for Equitable Collaboration Within the Mountain Bike Sector



Kate Thoday, Forestry England:

Working in Partnership for Positive Outcomes

Towards a stronger mountain biking sector

WORKSHOP INSIGHTS

Community-Led Strength

There is strong belief in the power of grassroots and local MTB communities to drive change, advocacy, and inclusive growth in the sport.

Need for Sector Coordination

Participants expressed a desire for more joined-up thinking across organisations—especially between trail associations, landowners, governing bodies, and brands.

Sustainable Funding Models

Many contributors raised the challenge of securing consistent funding for trail maintenance, advocacy work, and community programming.

Trail Access & Stewardship

Access to trails—both maintaining it and expanding it—is a top concern, with calls for more responsible stewardship and sustainable practices.

Towards a stronger mountain biking sector

WORKSHOP INSIGHTS

Representation and Inclusion

There's a clear push to improve gender, age, ethnic, and ability representation in MTB—both in marketing and in leadership roles across the sector.

Skills & Capacity Building

Training, mentoring, and knowledge-sharing are seen as essential to grow leadership within the MTB community, especially among underrepresented groups.

Visibility of MTB's Social Value

MTB is widely seen as offering mental health, community connection, and environmental engagement—but these benefits are often undervalued in wider policy and public discourse.

Communications & Storytelling

Effective communication—about values, success stories, and shared challenges—is seen as key to building public support and policy influence.

Towards a stronger mountain biking sector

WORKSHOP INSIGHTS

Brand Responsibility

Brands are expected to play a more active role in sustainability, equity, and community investment—not just product marketing.

Call for a Sector-Wide Vision

Many comments called for a shared long-term strategy that unites the MTB sector with common goals, shared language, and coordinated efforts.

3.

PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE MOUNTAIN BIKING

Promoting sustainable mountain biking

SUMMARY

How can mountain biking adopt more sustainable practices? Discussions highlighted the need for optimism and action; empowering riders to make sustainable choices, supporting circular economy practices, and addressing climate impacts on trails.

Participants stressed that **brands and events should lead by example in reducing their environmental footprint**, with many supporting the creation of sector-wide sustainability guidelines to drive collective progress.

Crucially, education should inspire positive action rather than guilt.

Promoting sustainable mountain biking

SPEAKERS



Benjamin Billet,
European Network of
Outdoor Sports:

The Benefits of Outdoor
Sports for Society and
Nature: Perspectives
from Europe



Harry Brook,
Patagonia:

Embedding Responsibility



Manon Carpenter,
Reframing MTB:

Encouraging Positive
Action on the Trails

Promoting sustainable mountain biking

WORKSHOP INSIGHTS

Strong Interest in Sustainability

Participants widely agree that sustainability is essential, not just environmentally but also socially and economically across the MTB ecosystem.

Disconnect Between Values and Industry Action

While riders value sustainability, many feel that MTB brands and event organisers lag behind in taking visible, meaningful action.

Desire for Clearer Brand Accountability

Participants called for transparency from brands — around sourcing, lifecycle of products, carbon impact, and how they support trail conservation.

Rider-Led Responsibility

There is strong recognition that riders can make more sustainable choices, but they need support, education, and accessible alternatives (e.g. better repair options, less

Promoting sustainable mountain biking

WORKSHOP INSIGHTS

packaging).

Support for Circular Economy Models

Concepts like product repair, gear recycling, resale platforms (e.g., Vinted), and local swap events were raised as key ways to reduce MTB's footprint.

Environmental Impacts on Trails

Many voiced concerns about how climate change is impacting trail conditions, with more severe weather requiring better trail design and maintenance planning.

Inclusive Sustainability

Equity and inclusion were tied to sustainability — e.g., ensuring all communities can access bikes, participate in eco-friendly events, and benefit from trail access.

Sustainable Events are Possible

Event organisers are seen as having a major role to play — from transport options to waste reduction, participants want

Promoting sustainable mountain biking

WORKSHOP INSIGHTS

examples of good practice to be shared and scaled.

Education, Not Shame

Messaging around sustainability should be empowering, not judgmental — helping people make better choices without guilt or exclusion.

A Call for Sector-Wide Guidelines

Many want shared guidelines or frameworks for sustainability in MTB — co-created with riders, brands, landowners, and organisers — to unify efforts and raise standards.



WEEKEND ACTIVITIES

Weekend Activities

The weekend programme offered a mix of rides, workshops, and practical sessions focused on trails, community building, and inclusivity. Ride Bristol also took the opportunity to show off the great trails that Bristol has to offer.

On **Saturday**, activities included:

- Difficult Questions About Inclusivity Ride and Workshop by Project FIAS and Perform Unbound
- Ride Bristol Ashton Court Nova Trail Dig
- Trail training workshop with Campbell Coaching
- A workshop and ride on strengthening trail associations, co-hosted by Ride Bristol and the UK MTB Trail Alliance
- Bristol Shredders family “Trash Cat” ride and litter pick
- A Bristol Showcase Ride, sampling some of the area’s more challenging trails, finishing with drinks at The George pub

On **Sunday**, the programme moved to the Forest of Dean:

- FoD showcase ride led by Dean Trail Volunteers and Forestry England
- A workshop on adaptive bikes and trails, organised by UK MTB Trail Alliance
- A relaxed social ride, concluding the event exploring key trails around the Forest of Dean

**DIFFICULT QUESTIONS ABOUT
INCLUSIVITY RIDE AND
WORKSHOP BY PROJECT FIAS
AND PERFORM UNBOUND**



RIDE BRISTOL ASHTON COURT NOVA TRAIL DIG



TRAIL TRAINING WORKSHOP WITH CAMPBELL COACHING



BRISTOL SHREDDERS FAMILY RIDE AND LITTER PICK: TRASH CAT RIDE



BRISTOL SHOWCASE RIDE FOLLOWED BY DRINKS AT THE GEORGE PUB



A man with dark hair, a beard, and black-rimmed glasses is smiling at the camera. He is wearing a dark blue button-down shirt. He is holding a silver tray with several glasses of beer. The glasses have white labels with a cartoonish character. In the background, two other people are partially visible but out of focus.

SPONSORS AND THANK YOU

Sponsors and Thank Yous

Reframing MTB 2025 was made possible thanks to our partners. We are truly grateful for your belief in our cause and your investment in our shared vision.



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Reframing MTB 2025 happened thanks to the investment, energy, and support of our community. We're grateful to everyone who joined us this year in Bristol, and to all the volunteers whose efforts helped make the event a success.

Ride Bristol played a key role in this year's event, and we also want to thank **Pete Scullion** for capturing such fantastic images.

Could you be part of the team next time?



