

Project Brief

Document Overview

This project brief outlines the proposal to establish an Urban Sports social hub based around the former Boys Brigade hall at Balfour Street. This document includes the objectives, scope and desired outcomes of the project and what the proposed solution might look like.

Project Background

Engaging in urban sports, such as BMX, skateboarding, trials riding and mountain biking, has emerged as a powerful avenue for enhancing mental health. Beyond the physical benefits, these activities contribute significantly to mental well-being by providing a holistic approach to self-care.

Urban sports like BMX riding offer an exhilarating combination of physical activity, skills development, and a sense of freedom. The adrenaline rush and the need for a focus during BMX riding stimulate the release of endorphins, promoting a natural mood boost. The challenging nature of these sports encourages individuals to set and achieve personal goals, fostering a sense of accomplishment and self-efficacy, vital elements in maintaining positive mental health.

Gyms, with their diverse range of workouts, also play a pivotal role in mental well-being. Regular exercise, a cornerstone of gym routines, has been linked to reduced symptoms of anxiety and depression. The repetitive and rhythmic nature of exercise can have a calming effect, reducing stress levels. Additionally, the gym environment often serves as a social hub, offering opportunities for social interaction and support, crucial elements in combating feelings of isolation and loneliness.

Both urban sports and gym activities provide an outlet for stress relief. The intense focus required in executing BMX tricks or weightlifting sessions allow individuals to temporarily detach from daily stressors. The demands of daily life can be therapeutic, allowing individuals to recharge and return to their responsibilities with a renewed sense of energy and resilience.

Moreover, these activities foster a sense of community. Urban sports and gym culture often bring people together, creating a supportive social network. Whether it's sharing tips on a challenging bike manoeuvre or encouraging fellow gym-goers during a workout, the sense of camaraderie can combat feelings of isolation and build a positive support system.

Importantly, the regular physical activity associated with urban sports and gym workouts contributes to improved sleep patterns. Quality sleep is closely linked to mental health, and the positive impact of exercise on sleep quality can lead to enhanced cognitive function, emotional well-being, and stress resilience.

There has been a remarkable surge in mountain biking participation in Scotland, reflecting a growing enthusiasm for outdoor adventure. The diverse landscapes, including iconic trails like the 7stanes, attract both locals and international riders. The sports popularity has been bolstered by significant investments in trail infrastructure and hosting of prestigious events. Mountain biking offers not only physical exercise but also a thrilling experience in Scotland's stunning natural settings. This surge in participation not only promotes active lifestyles but

also boosts local economies, as communities around biking hotspots benefit from increased tourism and a vibrant outdoor culture

Project Objectives / Outcomes

The main objective of the project is to create an Urban Sports centre and gym within Port Glasgow. Producing a much needed leisure facility within Port Glasgow which will be both engaging for the local residents, and also a centre to attract and retain visitors to Port Glasgow.

Port Glasgow has lost many community built centres, facilities & youth clubs over the years. Virtually all facilities within port Glasgow catering to young people are controlled and organised via Inverclyde Council run facilities or uniformed clubs.

Most leisure activities within Port Glasgow are also pre-arranged and planned. There are very few facilities that allow young people to just drop in and spark spontaneous connections.

The Yard will create a space which caters for an otherwise neglected leisure sector within Port Glasgow. Centred around BMX, mountain biking, trials riding, scooter riders and skateboarders the Yard will develop riders skills while building an urban sports community within Port Glasgow.

The Yard will be created to deliver the following outcomes and opportunities:

- Create a drop in centre for urban sports in Inverclyde.
- Provide bike and equipment hire
- Provide maintenance and repair services
- Become an incubator for urban sports, events, training and competitions.
- Become the headquarters of Clyde Trail Association developing mountain biking in the West of Scotland to attract active tourism.
- Become one of 3 linked projects in the Port Glasgow 2025 framework to develop Port Glasgow as a gateway to urban sports and mountain biking.
- Provide incubator workshops to encourage entrepreneurship around urban sports and active tourism

The Yard is a foundational project of Port Glasgow 2025's ambition for Port Glasgow to become a regional centre for retail, leisure & hospitality based around active tourism and sustainability.