

## The Reiver Raid – Developing a Bikepacking Route in partnership with local tourism businesses

### The Project

As a direct result of the MBTAG (Midlothian and Borders Tourism Action Group) event on 21 February at Abbotsford, Teyl de Bordes from Whitmuir Farm and Markus Stitz got in discussions how to make the region more attractive for cyclists. Markus is an experienced adventurer, marketer and founder of Bikepacking Scotland, who is now specialising in developing bikepacking routes as destination marketing tools for regions that have potential to attract the growing number of cyclists that seek off-road adventures.

After a short visit to the region and a few conversations with Teyl, Markus spent a week in a cottage at Whitmuir Farm to discover the opportunities the valley has to offer, simply by riding as much trails as possible in one week. This resulted in a few shorter loops that can be ridden by themselves, which were uploaded as GPX files on GPSIES. In a second step Markus combined the various loops into a 175km bikepacking route, which can be used by adventure cyclists as an itinerary for a two or more day visit to the region.

### The Impact

Since published The Reiver Raid has attracted over 1000 views on the GPSIES website and been downloaded over 50 times in less than three weeks. It is also the most popular page on the [www.bikepackingscotland.com](http://www.bikepackingscotland.com) website.

The social media content shared during the development and after finishing the route has resulted in a significant rise in the reach of the #alewatervalley hashtag, which within the last month was closely associated with the hastags listed in the word cloud below.

#### TOP HASHTAGS



### The Future

The Ale Water Valley Group, represented by Teyl de Bordes and Andrew Grant, are working in co-operation with Markus Stitz to set up an event on 22/23 July to attract ca. 100 bikepackers to the Ale Water Valley to ride the route. The event will be family friendly, encouraging participants to get to know the region and returning for a longer visit in the future. To promote the route and the event, a short film produced during the stay, will be released on 11 May on the Bikepacking Scotland YouTube channel, and will be pitched to adventure film festivals afterwards.

#### Links

[www.bikepackingscotland.com/reiverraid](http://www.bikepackingscotland.com/reiverraid)

[www.alewatervalley.co.uk](http://www.alewatervalley.co.uk)

<http://www.gpsies.com/mapFolder.do?id=83234>