

## Ground-breaking International partnership will bring cycling to thousands of children in rural South Africa

An innovative partnership has been developed between organisations from the UK and South Africa to establish a specialist cycle hub to enable thousands of children in rural South Africa to learn how to ride and maintain bicycles.

Since 2016, the University of Leeds and the Bambisanani Partnership have devised and delivered a *Cycling to Success* programme based at Mnyakanya High School in Nkandla, KwaZulu-Natal (KZN). This programme has led to almost 200 young people learning how to ride bikes safely and to also maintain and fix bikes out in the community. This programme has also operated a bike rental scheme to allow learners who live great distances from school to ride to and from school. The project has gained widespread acclaim, including praise from World Champion professional cyclist, Lizzie Deignan MBE who has given her own kit to support it.



The ambition has always been to expand and grow the programme to further schools in the area to broaden the reach and numbers of children gaining these valuable life skills. Over the last two years, the University of Leeds and the Bambisanani Partnership have been working with the highly respected cycling NGO, KZN Cycling, to identify opportunities for collaboration and to expand the project across a great number of schools and across the calendar year.

acting as a talent identification programme for KZN-Cycling performance pathway. This new partnership provides an exciting opportunity to empower the young people of Nkandla, as well as providing a blueprint for future programmes and projects.



The Bambisanani Cycling to Success programme introduced in the remote Nkandla region has had an enormous impact. This is an area where children can routinely walk two hours to and from school each day. The bikes have been subsequently been used for transportation, recreation, informal sport and even by the local football team for fitness training. Other remote rural communities also approached the Partnership to see if they could be involved but until now this has not been possible. The collaboration with KZN Cycling dramatically increases capacity to bring cycling, with all its transformative benefits, to other communities.

In this last week, the Bambisanani Partnership and KZN Cycling have signed a three-year agreement worth over £50,000 to establish a cycling hub in the Nkandla region of South Africa. This new hub will have a local community member as a member of staff to deliver schools cycling programmes, as well as community clinics and organise races and events across the area. The new hub will enable 5,000 young people per year to become cyclists and mechanics, as well as



Lizzie Deignan MBE. Photo courtesy of JoJo Harper. © All Rights reserved.

The commitment and enthusiasm for this project is clearly evident from those involved:

**“ We are all excited to develop this new partnership. A cycling hub like this, run by the community, for the community is development at its best. We have already seen the significant impact our cycling projects have had in Nkandla; this expansion is great news and I am sure will make a long-term impact on those who benefit from it.”**  
**Andrew Lockwood, University of Leeds and Bambisanani Partnership Trustee**

“ We’ve always believed that we have a good programme in place across all eleven districts in the province, and every year we have tens of thousands of youngsters that get included in the various elements, but the new agreement that has been put in place with the Bambisanani Partnership not only endorses the hard work being done by all, but more significantly, allows for longer term strategic planning linked to elements that are going to positively impact on the lives of the people of the Nkandla region. For people in the deep rural areas of KZN, bikes and the linked opportunities that bikes have are life changing. If there were more organisations like the Bambisanani Partnership that got behind development programmes like this, whether here or elsewhere in the world, there would be more smiles on more faces every day”.

**Alec Lenferna, Chief Executive Officer of KZN Cycling**



“ I am absolutely delighted to have signed this agreement to work in partnership with KZN Cycling. Our own cycling programmes in the deep rural areas have been a resounding success and it is a wonderful opportunity to be now collaborating with KZN Cycling to bring cycling to thousands more young people. Significantly, this work will also involve the KZN Department of Education and the KZN Department of Sport and Recreation who we have worked closely with for many years. Massive thanks must go to Andy and Alec for working tirelessly to create this pioneering programme.”

**David Geldart, CEO and Founder of the Bambisanani Partnership**

For more information about The Bambisanani Partnership visit

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With final preparations now underway the first children will be participating in the programme by early June of this year.

