

INVERKEITHING HIGHLAND GAMES TO HOST MAJOR CYCLING CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Scottish Highland Games Association has confirmed that Inverkeithing Highland Games will host the 2018 Scottish Cycling Championships for the 800 metres Youth's event, plus the 4800 metres and 6400 metres Senior events on Saturday 4th August.

This is viewed as a major coup for Inverkeithing where the full 400 metres, red blaize track is considered to be one of the favourite venues for track cyclists. Most Highland Games are held on grass surfaces which, although traditional, do not allow cyclists to build up the speed which makes these events more competitive and creates a real spectacle for the watching crowds..

Local councillor, Alice McGarry mentions, in her quarterly briefing, that upgrading work to the track is expected to take place this year as soon as temperatures rise and before the Highland Games in August. This welcome development will guarantee its status as a full, all weather track, immune from the vagaries of the Scottish weather.

SHGA secretary, Ian Grieve, said " He looks forward to the additional Youth and Adult Cycle Championships at Inverkeithing Highland Games on the 4th August this year. This will supplement the existing handicap events and hopes that it will be well supported. A good turnout of cyclists will make for an exciting afternoon of cycling on a very fast, and only red blaize, track on the Highland Games circuit".

Inverkeithing Highland Games first appeared in the local Burgh records of 1652 and it is said that Cromwell's forces used the 12th century tower of St peter's church as a landmark on their way to the battle of Inverkeithing one year earlier in 1651. This same tower still looks down on the Highland Games beside Inverkeithing Bay on the north shores of the Forth.

Craig Hardie, of Hardie Bikes in Cairneyhill and past championship winner, was delighted with the increasing focus on cycle track events stating that "It is great that more cycling events are being added to Inverkeithing Highland Games, which always produces exciting racing for spectators every year. It was always great to race there as it was a home game for me , being from dalgety Bay".

Also the Past Rotary Club President, and 2018 Games Chieftain, Cath Chorley said that " Inverkeithing Highland Games is a popular date in many people's calendars and having new cycle championship races is a very exciting development which adds to the richness and diversity of all the events on the day".

Frank Coyle Inverkeithing Highland Games March 2018

Photographs by Sharon Beveridge

