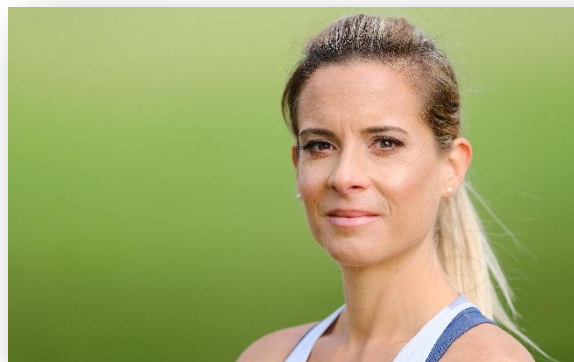


Hello Eastern Region Clubs!

My name is Di Farrell-Thomas and I have recently joined British Cycling as the Sport Developer for the Eastern region.

First and foremost, I would like to say a huge thank you to the incredible volunteers and officials who give their time and energy to support cycling across the region. Your tireless work in delivering events, club rides and a wide range of cycling opportunities is truly appreciated. Thank you also for your patience during the recent gap in Sport Developer support.



I have heard nothing but positive things about the passion, commitment and drive of clubs and volunteers in the Eastern region. There is a clear appetite to continue growing cycling while maintaining high-quality, positive experiences for all involved, and I am very much here to support you in achieving that.

The East has always been my home and, while I would not describe myself as a top cyclist, I have been a club member for many years and have competed in races, initially to develop my skills for triathlon and duathlon GB age-group competitions. Professionally, I bring nearly 20 years' experience in sports development, having worked across regional and national roles with organisations including Badminton England, England Hockey, British Horseracing and British Rowing, with a strong focus on development and inclusion.

I genuinely hope that my arrival brings fresh energy and acts as a positive catalyst for cycling development across the region. Please do feel free to get in touch for support, guidance, opportunities to collaborate, or to provide feedback. I am really looking forward to meeting more of the cycling community in the near future.

Please share this newsletter with your wider clubmates and please do feedback any comments or requests for advice / information.

Support the British Cycling Eastern Board

Each British Cycling region has its own Board and governance structure, playing a vital role in supporting and developing cycling at a local level. These regional boards help deliver activities and events, influence national priorities and provide guidance and support to members across their communities. Strong governance ensures cycling continues to grow and thrive throughout Great Britain.



The Eastern Board is always delighted to welcome new members from all disciplines and backgrounds. They are a proactive, enthusiastic team that values fresh ideas and new perspectives. The Board meets regularly, both online and in person at a set location to discuss, plan and shape the future of cycling across our region from events to supporting volunteers, they cover everything.

If you'd like to be involved and help make a positive difference to cycling in the Eastern region, they'd love to hear from you. Please contact the Regional Chair at chair@bceastern.co.uk or contact Di for an informal discussion.

Additional Support Appointments

Richard Wickenden has taken on the role of Regional Competition Administrator for Eastern. He also works as a Cycle Sport Risk Assessor for British Cycling; he covers most of the South of the UK including the Eastern region. Richard brings an extensive and well-rounded background to the role. He has accumulated significant experience across a wide range of cycling disciplines, both in competitive and administrative contexts, giving him a strong practical understanding of event operations, safety requirements, and the wider needs of organisers and officials. Prior to his involvement with British Cycling, Richard served with the Police, where he developed a robust foundation in risk management, procedural compliance, and incident assessment. Please do continue to submit these types of enquiries via the British Cycling Dashboard or by contact Rich directly: Richardwickenden@britishcycling.org.uk



British Cycling, in partnership with East Suffolk District Council, are delighted to be welcoming **Evin Woolstenholmes** as a Community Coach, and **Karle Howard** as the Community Developer for the East Suffolk area.

Both bring a strong passion for cycling and community development and are keen to speak to clubs in that area about local opportunities. Once they are in post, they will reach out to catchment clubs.

Key Updates

Club Affiliation

2026 club affiliations are still being processed and if you haven't already done so you are encouraged to re-affiliate using the link below.

[Club/Team Affiliation](#)

Coaching Education Courses

With the new coach education pathway now in place the calendar of available courses is being populated. New courses are added on a regular basis and all those currently available can be found [HERE](#) If you cannot find the course that you want to attend please let the education team know by filling in this [Expression of Interest Form](#)

The new **BURSARY** award may be available on application by following this [Bursary Link](#)

Trainee Commissaire courses.

Can you help sustain and grow cycling by becoming a commissaire, helping us ensure safe and fair competition?

We are planning a number of courses to cover all disciplines and would love to hear from you if you are keen to be involved. Please contact me by email or use the EoI form above.

The courses are **totally online, free, certified** and all learners receive expert tuition, you can find out more here: [Trainee Commissaire courses](#)

Accelerate - Sustainability Fund. If your club are keen to run an event or initiative that considers environmental sustainability; there are grants available to apply for before the 31st March. Find out more and apply [here](#).

Events

A lot of work is taking place behind the scenes to finalise the **2026 road and circuit race calendar**. This process ensures greater alignment across regions, supports better scheduling and ultimately delivers a stronger experience for riders and organisers. The full calendar of race events will be published shortly to complement the national dates. Current listing are also detailed on this British Cycling [page](#).

EASTERN REGIONAL NEWSLETTER January 2026

Club Development Opportunity - Clusters

Are you looking to join forces with other local clubs to support the next generation in reaching their full potential in the sport? Contact me (Di) for more information of how to get involved in the Cluster initiative. There are also specific opportunities in support of building inclusive programmes for women and girls and riders with disabilities.

PURPOSE OF CLUSTERS

A coach-led training session brings riders from multiple clubs together to build skills, fitness, and confidence, with an emphasis on fun and essential riding techniques. Collaborative coaching fills gaps when clubs lack specialist discipline coaches, while shared resources strengthen club networks and rider development.

Clusters support Road, Track, and MTB, providing information and guidance as a natural entry point toward the Talent Pathway serving as an accessible development bridge rather than a formal step.

BRITISH CYCLING SUPPORT PACKAGE

- **Facility hire help:** Regional boards can front initial hire fees, later reimbursed via entry fees; BC can subsidise additional costs for emerging clusters.
- **Volunteer expenses & rota systems:** Guidance and partial expense cover available.
- **Admin Assistance:** Support using EMS, populating Events – Go Ride calendar, and handling venue payments.
- **Networking:** BC can connect clubs/coaches, identify strengths & gaps, and build partnerships.
- **Venue identification:** Help locating suitable traffic-free venues and managing bookings.
- **'How-to' Guide:** Clear instructions for setting up and running clusters, covering safety, session planning, and communication.
- **Bursaries:** Access and signposting to bursaries and funding to qualify and upskill coaches.



ELIGIBILITY & REGISTRATION

- **Who can attend?** Riders aged 9–16, all abilities. Coaches may split riders into ability or age groups.
- **Club membership?** You must belong to a British Cycling registered club.

GENERAL INFO

- **How long does the session usually last?** Sessions are delivered at the discretion of the coaches, there is no minimum or maximum duration, but rider ability, fitness and age should be considered.
- **Which disciplines are clusters for?** Clusters support a range of cycling disciplines, including Road, Track and MTB. They help clubs collaborate, share resources, and develop coaching and participation within their chosen discipline.
- **My club doesn't have any MTB/Road/Track coaches, can my riders still access the clusters?** Yes. Riders from clubs without qualified coaches are welcome to join clusters.
- **Do the clusters cater for riders with disabilities?** Where possible the cluster coaches will make every effort to make the session accessible and inclusive. Please contact the coach before entering to discuss requirements.
- **When can riders attend cluster activities?** Sessions are usually held outside school hours, such as evenings or weekends, and run throughout the year. Exact times and seasonal schedules may vary by club and discipline.



Please do reach out to me for full information about the above initiatives or anything related. Here is a link to the [Talent Pathway mentioned](#).

Diana (Di) Farrell-Thomas. Sport Developer–Team Lead. (Eastern).
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