No dig, no ride
Maintaining DIY designed bike trails

Liam Healy, EASST 2022
1. From ‘action’ to maintenance
[At Posh] there isn't a lot of creative input necessary, I’m like the Caretaker,
[...] in the grand scheme of things, it's probably like 70% caretaking and 30% riding.

Brian (Posh Woods, Pennsylvania, USA)
2. Spaces left over after planning
PLEASE BAG UPG GENERAL RUBBISH (SINGULAR FOOD) AND PUT IN CORRECT BINS!!
3. Neglected things vs secrets: Exclusion as maintenance practice
‘You didn't go down there unless you knew somebody, or you got the OK from somebody. So, there are a lot of stories about [locals] yelling, “get out of here”, “you got to dig!”’

Brian
‘when trails get ploughed, people's lives stop for a long time. Something died, [they] lost something that [they] invested so much into. People don't get that unless you have a spot ploughed. You have no idea what that feels like. [...] when people are so protective of trails and people coming in, it's because of that experience of loss.’

Carley (Multiple spots, Pennsylvania, USA)
Rules of order for Aarhus Dirt Jump Park

• Crawling or running around on the jumps is forbidden - it causes the ground to slip off the sides and significantly burdens the maintenance work.
• All tracks are unidirectional, i.e., you pull / cycle back to the start next to the tracks and do NOT drive back by the same road you have driven down.
• Helmet, gloves and knee pads are recommended.
• All types of motor vehicles are prohibited for use in the area.
• Take your rubbish with home animals and pewbrokers - rummage through the rubbish bins and leave a mess, so we no longer have rubbish bins in the park.
• The park is maintained by a small number of volunteer enthusiasts, so show respect and take care of the park.
• In the event of an accident, the park’s address is Paludan Møllevej 112, 9200 Aarhus N.
Commons are structured by relations of care rather than ownership. They emerge from entanglement with, rather than separation from, an often hostile environment. To create such different relationships, commons need adapted (technological) infrastructures, and they bring forth their specific institutional forms. This, it is important to stress, does not create ideal situations or replicable models, but practical tools, experiences and stories through which to think, because, ‘it matters what stories tell stories’.

(Sollfrank et al., 2021:22)
AUGUST 28TH | CATTY WOODS
AUGUST 29TH | POSH WOODS

4. Change of the guard:
Caring for emergent participation
There's this fear that there's going to be a disconnect that when this group of legendary trail builders are all done [...] who's going to come up and take over the trails?!
From the start we didn’t want to get picked up by the commune too much... But then, you know, if we do it like that, you don't get to grow, you don't get to get really good facilities.

Behroz (Holmen Dirt, Copenhagen, Denmark)
Maintenance not neutral(!)

Rules and governance dictated by the communities key to maintenance

Secrecy can be paramount to its maintenance.

Political structures shifting from local ‘elders’ to traditional forms of politics.
Thanks!