



Thame Skatepark Project Proposal

Prepared for: Thame Town Council

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SUMMARY

Objective

We are working on building and applying a second phase of the Thame Skatepark project which will form an organised constituted club with aims and objectives inline with the development of participation and growth of year round wheeled sports activities at the Thame Skate facility.

It has been identified and accepted by local users that the Town Council really got behind the build project and that a self sustaining non profit club which can offer activities and generate funding for future projects, upgrades, user education, holiday activities etc would be a fantastic opportunity for the town.

Coaching in Skate facilities is becoming a requirement. It would be unacceptable to expect an unskilled member of the public to arrive at a skate facility and expect to be able to use the ramps and ledges in a safe manner on day one.

Riding a BMX is possible to make your way around but would be high risk and Skateboarding is a slow development sport which usually takes years to master.

It is for these reasons that Skate Facilities see lots of footfall but very high drop-off rates after a couple of weeks.

Coaching is required to increase participation in the sports associated with the facility and to educate new users in how to use the value in a safe and considerate manner. This will also reduce the number of first aid callouts to the facility reducing strain on public services and offer first aiders with equipment on site for a number of hours in the week.

Current project

Throughout six weeks of the summer, The Sport for Streets Initiative, a local youth charity which focusses on sports development and coach education has been working in the Skatepark offering free to all Skateboard coaching, film making and competitions in the park.

Throughout this period we have trained up two local users to deliver skateboard coaching and have passed 26 beginners through our Skateboard Level 1 training.

This project was funded by SODC through a Sport England initiative and sadly has an end date.

To continue development of this club we will be looking to move sessions to Saturday mornings and putting a single member of staff on the sessions supported by local volunteers. Sessions will run out of our Youth Projects Vehicle which offers numerous activities for users including filming, video editing, music and shelter.

The Club

In addition to the benefits of building community capacity by up-skilling young people to teach Skate/BMX at the Thame Skate Club, trips, competitions, indoor sessions and outreach projects can also be funded and operated for users throughout the year.

All users are aware that the Skate facility in Thame is a seasonal activity due to the facility being unusable in wet weather which makes the Club instrumental in keeping active young people active and not dropping off during the winter months.

Funding development

The Sport for Streets Initiative has funding for a further two sessions at the facility in Thame in coming weeks but we do need to identify the route of development.

Arriving on site and running two coaching sessions would be great and frankly what we are paid to do although there is so much scope for offering further benefit to the community by building and developing the user base at the facility.

Through consultation with Skatepark users, we would be able to offer a weekly coaching session for beginners and more advanced users funded by pay to attend sessions or offering free sessions with club membership. Sessions would fall under The Sport for Streets Initiative public liability, risk assessments, safeguarding and H&S procedures when overseen by a member of staff. The aim is to use local coaches with a view of making a contribution for their time when the club has formed with a governing document, safeguarding policy and structured financial controls.

The facility is understood cannot host chargeable activities due to it being on public land and this is understood.

A voluntary donation of £5 per user would be suggested, however to ensure the educational sessions are totally inclusive for all users we are also seeking funding to subsidise and continue delivery.

Due to the nature of the way we work with sports, all are always welcome, we don't like to close facilities off to the public so this arrangement may not suit our project but understand this maybe the preferred route.

Phase 1 results

Over six sessions and a consultation session we have engaged 47+ young people of which 30 have participated in level 1 Skate coaching and a further 8 have completed level 2.

Along with volunteers from Thame Skate facility this summer we have built a three stage coaching program which is tapered to the Thame Skatepark features and setup.

Level 1:

- Skatepark Safety and etiquette
- Know your equipment
- Stance and how to use a Skateboard
- Pushing and balance
- Stopping
- Turning, tic tac and leaning
- Manuals

Level 2:

- Riding switch
- Pumping ramps
- Kick turns
- Riding off a kerb
- Dropping in on 4ft ramp

Project Stage 2

A ten week project to establish a constituted club among parents and older users is now required to encourage further participation and ongoing development of the sports and user base at the facility.

Educating leaders to a Community Sports Leader level 2 qualification and implementing sufficient safeguarding and liability policies.

Application to external sources for funding on behalf of the new club to cement delivery and outreach in 2017 and looking at shaping phase 3 of the development.