

Enterprising group to get £38,000 park Determination pays off for skate fans

By David Horne
Witney Reporter

DETERMINED and enterprising teenagers are looking forward to their own village skatepark.

They are fully involved in a scheme, called SK8, to provide the £38,000 facility on the village sports ground at Bampton.

On Thursday they joined parish councillors and other adults to celebrate the official launch of the project, taking along their skateboards to demonstrate their skills at the village's primary school playground.

The teenagers have already helped bring in £30,000 towards the target, by drafting letters for grants and organising fundraising events.

It all started when two village youths, 17-year-old Guy Wiseman and Dominic McKee, 19, went to their parish council after getting fed up of being told off by residents for skateboarding on roads and pavements.

Mr McKee, of Beam Pad-dock, said: "It's not just skateboarders, but roller-bladers and BMX bikers.

"There's probably about 40 of us in the village and we have been chucked out of a few places for noise.

"All the children, though, are really behind the skatepark.

"It's well away from the rest of the village and, though it's taken a while to get it going, we are looking forward to it opening."

Parish councillor Alan Dunbar said: "When the boys first presented their case to Bampton Parish Council



SKATE SCHEME: Back, from left, Todd Bebb, Michael Bird, Lee Jackson, Dale Murray, front, Emily Murray and Camilla Day

Picture: George Reszeter

over a year ago, we thought it was just a fad and that skateboarding wouldn't be popular for too long.

Favourite

"But we realised it's a growing sport and a favourite among the youngsters here.

"We noticed so many local children hanging around in

the middle of the village with their skateboards, but nowhere to go.

"So we decided to help the children turn this into reality."

If everything goes to plan, the new skatepark complete with ramps, should be ready for action by October this year.

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Bampton Skatepark

Press Release

Bampton kids take matters into own hands to get skatepark

If you want something done, do it yourself. That was the conclusion drawn by two Bampton lads when they got fed up of being told off by local village residents for skateboarding on the footpaths and roads. They wanted a local skateboarding park. So they decided to go get one.

Guy Wiseman, 17, and Dominic McKee, 19, approached their local parish council and presented their case for having a new skatepark at Bampton Recreation Ground. Their persistent enthusiasm for the project so impressed the adults in the local Bampton community that it led to the formation of the SK8 (skate) Park Committee. Less than six months later, they've raised over £30,000 towards their dream skatepark.

The remarkable thing about the Bampton SK8 Park Committee, fondly known as SK8 for short, is its members and their enthusiasm. The youngest committee member is just 11 years old - Camilla Day - who attends the local Bampton Primary School. She sits on her school's council and is charged with the responsibility of representing younger skateboarders and reporting back to her fellow pupils on the progress of SK8.

Some seven children aged between 11 and 14 regularly attend the SK8 meetings to input their ideas and contribute actively to the meetings, including Dale Murray, 13, Lee Jackson, 13, and Todd Bebb, 14. They arrive on their skateboards at Bampton Market Square and come into the meeting clutching a bag of chips in one hand and minutes of the last meeting in the other.

More follows/...

Bampton Parish Councillor Alan Dunbar, local Police Constable Steve Patrick, Bampton Primary School Deputy Headteacher Janet Newman, and parents Gloria Murray and Teresa Bird, are all keen adult members of SK8 and have helped drive the project forward.

"When the two boys first presented their case to Bampton Parish Council over a year ago, we thought it was just a fad and that skateboarding wouldn't be popular for long," says Alan Dunbar.

"But we realised it's a growing sport and a favourite amongst the youngsters here. Grove, Wantage, Oxford and Lechlade all have their own skateparks and we noticed so many local children hanging around in the middle of the village with their skateboards but nowhere to go. So we decided to help the kids turn this into reality.

"Because there is so much money involved for SK8 - we need to raise about £38,000 - we're doing the whole thing properly with minuted meetings and proper committee decisions. The children are fully involved and participate in all the meetings. They each have a responsibility and keep other children in Bampton informed of progress.

"It's really important that we involve the kids at every stage. We feel that if they have helped raised the money to get the park, they'll look after it. It'll be their skatepark and they can be justifiably proud of it. The kids have been incredibly active and enthusiastic about the project."

The location

The eleven councillors of Bampton Parish Council are Trustees of the Bampton Recreation Ground Charity, and oversee the Trust funds which have paid for the 16-acre multi-sport park in Buckland Road.

The £450,000 public park has tennis courts, four football pitches, and a cricket pitch - and a new £261,000 sports pavilion, which was funded by a lottery grant. It also has a woodland park and meadow area, with 10,000 newly planted trees, to offer something for non-sporty people - mums and dads who want to come out for a walk with their families, walk the dog, or fly model aeroplanes. The Grounds even include a Trimtrail fitness circuit, and have won a prize for their design.

It's here that the new 26m x 10m open-air concrete skatepark will be located, between the car park and football pitch 'number one'.

More follows/...

"The Recreation Ground is a tremendous achievement for a small village; people can't believe it," says Alan Dunbar. "And when the children clamoured for a skatepark, I took on the job of helping to raise the money and getting the building organised."

The skatepark design

The new skatepark will be primarily designed for skateboarders, but may also be used by rollerbladers and BMX bikers. Plans are to open it by October 2002.

To find out what kind of skatepark design would be suitable, the children took a trip to the Oxford skatepark in Aristotle Lane, Jericho, explains Alan Dunbar:

"They simply loved it! They spent five hours there and came home not because they were bored but because they were just worn out from all the fun. So we're looking to a similar design. I have Guy Wiseman (16) as my expert advisor on design - he's a leading light on the subject and is involved in choosing what ramps, jumps and layout they kids want and consulting with them."

How the funds were raised

With the cost set at around £38,000, Alan Dunbar has had his work cut out for him. He has led the fundraising from large organisations, writing appeal letters to the local council departments, and other potential sources of funding.

Most of the money has come from grants, with most (£17,500) coming from West Oxfordshire District Council's Leisure Services Department. Additional funds have been given by Bampton Parish Council, Action Against Drugs, Oxfordshire Youth Services, Thames Valley Police, the Bampton Recreation Ground Trust, and the Bampton Welfare Trust.

Local pub in Bampton the Morris Clown generated £331 by having a large Misdemeanour Whiskey Bottle on the bar for ungamely behaviour, bad habits, or swearing in the pub.

The rest has come from local residents - one of whom is a lady who wishes to remain anonymous but generously donated £5,000 for the children's project.

The local village fundraising is being led by the children and their families. During a recent Mayday Street Fayre, the children raised £175 by running a 'Guess the Number of Sweets in the Jar' competition and a Tombola stall. They have designed and delivered flyers and posters to ask for funds.

More follows/...

A Family Disco in the village hall on **15th June** is expected to generate more money, and Police Constable Steve Patrick is organising a Sponsored Cycle Ride on Sunday **30th June** with Deputy Headteacher Janet Newman.

"It's been hard work, but the enthusiasm has been overwhelming for these children to get their skatepark," says Alan Dunbar. "At our last committee meeting, one of our young lads, Dale Murray, pulled a crumpled piece of paper from his pocket and said it was a cheque for £50 from his grandma. So we're very grateful to the community for supporting the children and giving them a very special place to go.

"But we've a little more yet to raise - so we'd like to invite local businesses, organisations and residents to help us find our last few thousand with donations for any amount."

To send donations for SK8 please contact Alan Dunbar on 01993 850207.

[ends]

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A SKATEBOARD PARK FOR BAMPTON'S YOUNG PEOPLE!

Could you help to make this brilliant idea possible?

The young people of Bampton, under the expert guidance of Mr. Alan Dunbar, and together with members of the Parish Council, our local Police Constable, Youth Club leader and parents, have already secured approximately 70% of the necessary funding. We need to raise another £10,000.

We urgently need: Interested people/parents/friends willing to help with ideas, and/or time, for fundraising.

Events already planned: Children's Disco, Sponsored Cycle Ride for adults and children (to be organised in June by P.C.Patrick.), a stall at the May Day Street Fair, Jubilee Day Art Sale

Do you have: any paintings/pictures/prints you no longer need? Please may we have them for our sale?

Do you have: experience of, or advice for organising a Promises Auction?

If you would be prepared to helping some way, please complete the form below and return to :

Janet Newman :81 New Road. 01993 850755 or

Theresa Bird: 5 New Road. 01993 851154 or

Gloria Murray Southby 01993851589

NAME:.....Tel. No.....

Please contact me, I would be willing to help by.....
.....

My ideas for fundraising are:.....

A Skate-park for Bampton



Over the last few months a small team of children, parents, councillors and the police have been working towards a skate facility in Bampton. Skateboarders, bikers, and roller skaters are represented over all ages in the team and a simple, affordable, quiet, and low maintenance design of a concrete park has been made.



The target price is about **£35,000**. This seems like an awful lot but we have got grants from different sources including the district council, to around **£25,000** to date. This leaves another **£10,000** to be raised. There are still many options to look at for this last amount but it has been clear from the outset that we will need to do some fund raising.

The team has planned some fund raising events including discos and auctions.

If you have any useful suggestions, or would like to help raise some money, or make a donation, please contact either of the following:



Mrs Newman	01993 850755
Guy Wiseman	01993 850568



We would appreciate any help in raising this last amount to provide Bampton with a worth while skate park, for all ages and abilities.

Thank you

