



STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL
CULTURE, SPORT AND TOURISM

SKATE PARKS



INFORMATION PACK

SDC GUIDE TO SKATE PARK APPLICATIONS/PROJECTS 2003

Skating is a developing sport in the district of Stroud and is now widely recognised by many local authorities in relation to their youth strategy; there is an established demand for well planned/designed facilities that meet the needs of both the local community user groups and Stroud District/Town/Parish Councils' recommendations and management issues.

In order to provide the best possible skate park facility in the right place and for the right people, there are a number of key issues to consider and adopt; Each area and community will have its own set of requirements and ideas of how to go forward and research suggests that ownership and involvement of the predominant user group (young people) is vital from the onset. Broad consultation is an absolute essential factor for success – evaluation of positioning of the park, surveys of the locality, impact to all residents and access issues must be carried out in order to produce the most suitable option and consensus.

Stroud District Council Culture, Sport and Tourism section has created this generic guide to offer information/assistance to communities for their skate projects from initial application to final result.

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GETTING STARTED

At present (2003) there are no national guidelines/strategy for skate park projects in the UK and no governing body for skate boarding. There is however, a European standard being developed in France that is to be finalised in the next 5 years.

Most skate parks are created via groups working with local authorities offering local guidance and links to a variety of agencies.

Who to involve ?

This is just a 'starter for ten' list of who you would involve in your project – you will know of other local contacts. Basically, the more organisations supporting the project, the more likely it will be to succeed:

Young People
District Council
Parish/Town Council
Local Playing Field Association, Sport and Recreation clubs using land
Schools – primary/secondary
Local youth clubs/groups and County Council youth workers
Out of school childcare club/holiday clubs
Local businesses (potential sponsors)
Manufacturers
Local skate development/community organisations
Neighbourhood community projects

For ease of application, access to funding and steering the project, create a project steering group involving the local community and park users and give it a name eg: (your locality) skate park association or something more catchy

The group will need a constitution in order to bank funds and sustain the park - see appendix 1 for guide on creating constitution

Development Action Plan

In order to plan the project you will need a plan of action – it could be in the form of a timetable detailing on site activity to construction to completion or a table with headings such as:- who, what, how, why and when. It may be useful to use the headings from the contents page.

The plan needs to be created, understood and owned by the newly formed group and remain flexible to the project eg: adding new agencies to the group, changing deadlines. The plan should also link to local authority longer term objectives (this sounds worse than it is and can be added at later date if necessary).

For advice on creation of action plans contact:
Regeneration Through Sports Manager – Jane Bullows on 01453 754322
Head of Culture, Sport and Tourism - Karen Toole on 01453 754339

Where To Place it ?

When considering setting up a skate park initial land issues should be considered:

- finding an appropriate piece of land
- which agency owns the land (ensure they are linked to steering group)
- sorting legalities of planning permission, leasing the land, purchasing it
- access to site – emergency vehicles, cars, other users, proximity of trees (due to danger in wet)
- bylaws
- proximity of residents to area

For help and advice, the following organisations/people may be useful:

Planning permission (Stroud District Council)
Development Control Manager Ian Gobey – 01453 754208

Land Ownership
Estates Surveyor Jill Fallows – 01453 754431

Head Of Culture, Sport and Tourism
Karen Toole 01453 754339

Charitable status and Constitution
Charity Commission for England and Wales
20 Kings Parade
Queens Dock
Liverpool
L3 4DQ

www.charity-commission.gov.uk
tel: 0870 333 0123
fax: 0151 703 1555
minicom: 0870 333 0125

ESTABLISHING THE NEED

Each group has its own requirements and it is vital to prepare these from the onset. Issues such as how big the park needs to be, where it will be best situated, who is going to use it and how its use may develop and increase over time.

Consultation

This is the most important area of all when starting a project and the broader the consultation the better. It is advisable to consider long-term need, other user groups and whether the park can cater for all ages. The following is a list of groups involved in previous consultation (if you have others please add):-

- Young people – skaters (boys and girls) all age groups (not just those that you see in town centre)
- Young people - non skaters (schools, youth clubs, leisure centres)
- The residents – those who live near the facility/local community
- The local police
- Community safety wardens
- Local Youth services
- Stroud District Council Youth Council
- Stroud District Council (Culture, Sport and Tourism section)

You may wish to employ an independent consultancy agency to do this for you, who will deliver a report on the findings and provide a test event (this will cost usually in the region of £700-£1000)

Test Event

As part of the consultation process it is useful to run a test event or workshop at a facility near by to 'test' the response and ask important questions prior to making valued judgements. Past events have been held in leisure centre/school sports halls/tennis courts or youth and community centres using mobile equipment. The important issue is safety and it is advisable to check that the facility is covered for public liability insurance, the equipment is safety tested by ROSPA and that young people under 18 yrs old have signed parental permission to take part plus medical details in case of accident. In addition, although research proves that wearing of these will be dependent on the style of the moment, you may want to provide helmets and elbow/knee protectors for the duration of the event.

Interestingly, research states that injury does not necessarily relate to larger ramps, at many parks it is due to the use of smaller equipment and initial layout of the park (Maidenhead Skatepark 2002). American statistics from 2000 state that over 50% of skate park users are below 12 years of age and that total age range for user groups is 8-35 yrs (Tribe Enterprises 2002).

During the event, it may be useful to provide a questionnaire for all groups that attend. Below is an example of the sorts of questions you may want to ask:-

SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE (this can be adapted for adults/non users)

Name, age range, gender

Which part of town are you from? (do not need whole address here)

Will you be using the park to skate or spectate (this will enable you to consider whether to apply for a youth shelter to be placed by the park as part of the project)

Have you used a skate park before – which one ?

Are you a novice or experienced skater – how long have you been skating ?

Would you like to be involved in the project and represent young people on a steering group or help maintain the park ?

What type of equipment would you like to see ?

What type of design layout would you like to see – does your design cater for all ages and abilities ?

Do you think there should be a charge to use the park ?

Do you think the park should have opening and closing hours ?

Do you think the park should be floodlight ?

Do you think there should be split sessions for novice and expert users ?

What kind of rules should be on the sign for park users to have as a code of conduct ? No smoking/drinking/drugs

Noise levels-use of foul language

Opening hours ?

Theft - where to leave bags/valuables, provision of lockers ?

Safety-number of users on ramps at any one time

Nearest telephone/emergency contacts/hospital

How will the park be best monitored ?– CCTV/noise level reduction/security

What are your main worries about having a skate park in your area ?

Potential Users

User groups can be a whole host of people and it is important to take on board that not all users will be young people or skaters – there may be spectators, parents picking people up, showcase events using adult boarders, BMX riders and inline skaters and other sports clubs using the field nearby.

In order to reach all potential users for the event it is wise to use a variety of methods targeting in local community/village halls, schools (primary/secondary), youth and leisure centres, local authorities networks, the internet – even encourage young people to text their friends over their mobile phones:-

- Fliers
- posters
- letters
- presentation in schools assembly
- local council meetings (youth and adult)
- local free-ads paper

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Legislatively, as mentioned earlier, skate parks do not have a national body to offer guidelines for working. However, all parks must ensure that liability issues are covered for both the users and those managing the facility.

Legislation

The following legislation is applicable and open to skate parks:

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulation 1999

British/European standards for skate parks (still in development(2003)) – are manufacturers working towards these

In terms of insurance liability, Local Authority (parish/town/district) or private site owner is responsible for ensuring safety of the surface of the park and the manufacturer is responsible for the safety design manufacture/warranty of the equipment. It is recommended that parks have annual inspections by the local authority/private owner for the surfaces and the Royal Society For The Prevention Of Accidents (ROSPA) for the equipment (there is minimal fee for ROSPA checks that should be written into project costings)

It is useful to note that in order for the park to operate as safely as possible within the law, inspections by ROSPA are linked to British Minimum Operating Standard PS35 which is the only link to other operating standards at present.

Good practice guidelines are produced by the following and we would strongly advise that you obtain them:

ROSPA – 01480 411384

NPFA (National Playing Fields Association) – 0207 8335390 (publications dept)

Advice and Info. on inspection

Ian Soule – 01453 754405

In addition, Zurich Insurance Company currently offers guidelines on insurance of skate parks to Local Authorities.

Signage

Another way of ensuring good work practice and a code of conduct is to have clear signs at the facility. It is important to involve the young people in the design of the sign in order for them to have ownership of the rules.

A good sign will be permanently attached to the facility, eye catching and can cost between £100 to £500 to manufacture.

Areas that should be included on the sign are as follows:

- No smoking/drinking/drugs
- Noise levels-use of foul language
- Opening hours ?
- Theft – where to leave bags/valuables, provision of lockers ?
- Safety-number of users on ramps at any one time
- Nearest telephone/emergency contacts/hospital
- Logos of skate park owners/partners

Child Protection

It is advisable for everyone involved in the project to be aware of child protection and good work practice issues in the community and indeed the UK. Stroud DC has designed a generic good practice guide to Child Protection for Sports Development and Leisure Facilities 2003 and we recommend that you become familiar with this document.

For Advice/Access to the Guide Info:

Regeneration Through Sports Manager - Jane Bullows on 01453 754322

For General Advice and Registration Issues Concerning Organised Sessional Use For Under- 8's:

Gloucestershire Social Services Customer Service Office – 01452 426868

PARK DESIGN

There are a number of good quality skate park manufacturers (see appendix 2 for a couple of examples) and it will be down to the project group to decide which is the best one to go for. It is advisable to shop around for equipment quotes and consider local companies where possible (this may boost sponsorship options).

Design specifications

Research suggests that young people would ideally like high quality combinations of ramps, half pipes etc, with long run ups, near to a fast food outlets and floodlight 24 hours. In practice this is not possible in most cases and a compromise is reached to suit the community and user groups.

As far as design specification, the most important issue is consideration of who will be using the park and whether the equipment can cater for all; Ensure that future park users are involved in design development and send your specification to at least 3-5 companies to compare prices and level of service provided.

The following is a tick list for consideration when creating your design:-

- ROSPA and NPFA safety guidelines
- Area of site – surrounding trees/fences and run off room
- Construction materials:
 - Style and size of ramps:
 - Wooden** - best – (Skatelite manufactures a product that combines metal base with wooden surface - low maintenance)
 - Metal** - good for outdoor parks although fixings can be a problem
 - Precaste bowls** -very expensive to build/run (£250,000 to construct one in Perth)
 - Only 2 manufacturers in the UK that make them
 - No current (2003) UK company that would be able to install it
- Surface area – 2 types:
 - power floated concrete (preferred but more expensive)
 - high grade tarmac (cheaper to maintain)
- Design to cater for: BMX, inline skaters and skate boarders ?
 - Beginners to experts
 - Age groups specific or 5-90 yrs
- Any surrounding landscaping
- Fencing and gates
- Drainage
- Acceptable noise levels
- Vandal - proofing

Young peoples' designs

It is important that you encourage all young people to create a design and that they receive clear guidance and advice during the creation phase. Workshops are a very effective mode to enable local authority input and advice prior to manufacturer selection.

Ramp Manufacturers

It is important that you check whether the manufacturer is working towards British/European Standards 2002 as this will affect obtaining insurance cover.

The following Association of Play Industries (API) members also manufacture and install skateparks:-

Record Playground Equipment Ltd
North Yorkshire
Phillip Day on 01757 703620

Wicksteed Leisure Ltd
Northamptonshire
Phil Holden on 01536 517028

Rhino Ramps Playground Services
Berkshire
Chris Dodd on 01488 683797

Parkdale Play and Leisure
North Yorkshire
Richard Pratchett on 01756 700123

Playdale Playgrounds LTD
Cumbria
John Croasdale on 01539 531561

Useful Websites/publications

Here are some informative websites to assist design and development of your project:

www.getoffthecouch.co.uk

the 'urban' link gives useful hints and tips on getting started in the urban sport of skateboarding

TRIBE Enterprises Ltd – 0845 1300 777

Leading advisors to local authorities and community groups on skate parks and wheeled sports

Sidewalk Skateboarding Magazine – WH Smith

Comparative Skate Parks

It is advisable to visit up to 5 other facilities to see how they work and test out the variety of surfaces/equipment. The nearest large facility to Stroud District is in Yate (concrete bowl construction). Appendix 3 also contains some layout proposal samples.

MANAGEMENT

Management is required for a skate park to sustain itself and run effectively and it is strongly advised to put the management structure in place at the onset of the project. It is vital that the park is managed and maintained by the land owners that the site is to be placed on in the local community – in most cases this is the Parish or Town Council.

Who/how ?

There are a number of basic options in terms of how a park can be managed and run; fully managed, part managed or unmanaged. All of these options should be explored, although past experience would advocate that the facility should be supervised in some form. Flood lighting can be used as a form of control in terms of park open and closing time and fencing is effective for health and safety of both users and public around the park.

It is the responsibility of the Parish or Town Council or private owner to manage the facility and ensure good work practice. This involves installing the sign, locking up (if enclosed), installing and monitoring lockers, turning on/off lighting, maintaining the surface of the park and ensuring annual ROSPA/local authority (SDC) equipment safety checks, insurance cover, repairs due to wear and tear/vandalism, action plan to link with steering group on delegation of tasks.

Costs:

Building a skate park costs from approx £35,000 (for a small project) to £250,000 (for a major concrete bowl project). Most ramp manufacturers offer a free no-obligation design service including estimated supply and installation costs. You will need to obtain some designs and costings before applying for grants and set out a detailed breakdown of project budget and bank account holders.

There are two types of cost associated with park projects:

➤ Initial Capital

This is the financial requirement for all initial construction costs, including planning permission, fencing, flood lighting, surfacing, signage, youth shelter, initial ROSPA inspection checks, landscaping, access road build/renovation.

➤ Revenue (running of park):

This type of funding covers the running and maintenance of the park for the rest of its life ! Costs should consider the following areas, but are obviously subject to change depending on whether the facility is managed full-time:-

◆ **Ongoing Maintenance**

ROSPA guidelines suggest budgeting for the following amounts:

Steel 10-12% of capital cost per year

Timber 12-14% of capital cost per year

Concrete 5-10% of capital cost per year

Some companies may offer a comprehensive servicing/maintenance element as part of their contract.

◆ **Insurance**

Consider:

Public liability and hazardous activities insurance

Staff members'/coaches' personal insurance if organised sessions are to be incorporated in the park

◆ **Safety Inspections**

ROSPA - annual checks of all equipment

Parish/Town Council - annual safety checks of the signage, surfaces of the park, fencing and surrounding landscape

NB: the Town/Parish Council (or whoever else is managing the park) is then responsible for maintaining safe surfaces/fencing/signage)

◆ **Crime prevention measures**

Installation of CCTV

for advice on CCTV contact:

SDC Community Safety Officer

Phil Sullivan

01453 754280

Community monitoring

Utilise and involve links to Community Wardens, Youth Services outreach workers, community police liaison officers

NB: additional workers such as police personnel and youth services may require extra payment, which should be considered when budgeting for overall project

Security of site – consider using a caretaker to lock up if the site is enclosed and to turn lights on/off if floodlit

◆ **Staff training**

Consider:

Ongoing training for staff involved with site - Child Protection

Health and Safety

First Aid Courses

For advice on local courses contact:

SDC Regeneration Through Sport Manager - Jane Bullows 01453 754322

Meeting/Training room costs – room hire for steering group AGM/training

◆ **Safety Equipment For Skaters (optional)**

These could be stored in a fixed box on site:-

Helmets/pads

First Aid box to be held nearby

Junior Skate boards

Kit bags

◆ **Storage and Seating**

Lockers for skaters to store kit bags and valuables (optional but effective)

Seating for parents/spectators (optional and could use youth shelter)

Secure storage box on site for spare equipment/first aid

◆ **Publicity**

Fliers/adverts/poster creation and delivery

Website creation/registration (future option)

Press release

Local media

Skate magazines

◆ **Launch**

To raise awareness and support for the project from local media/people could use a number of the following:-

Demonstrations by professional wheeled sports organisations/individuals

Competitions

give aways

live music

Other appropriate local community groups

GRANTS and FUNDRAISING

There are a number of grant schemes available for community groups to access once they have established themselves as a constituted group (as mentioned earlier). Most grant schemes have restrictions and you will need ascertain which ones are applicable to your project eg: what type of groups can apply, which geographical area the project is based in and how much you need. Funders also set priorities for their grants, so it is well worth thinking about how your project meets their particular needs too.

Options available:

National Lottery Funding: (may be subject to change with regionalisation of Sport England and dissemination of lottery funds via regional sports boards from April 2003)

- **Community Projects Capital Fund** to improve existing sports facilities and **build** new ones – this grant scheme may be applicable to skate park projects that involve the development of a skate club with coaching and progression opportunities clearly planned.
Call 0845 7649 649 for an application pack/pre application advice form
- **Awards For All** - small grants **revenue** fund (£500 to £5000) aimed at non profit making groups for **the running** of their community projects

*Check out Sport England website: www.sportengland.org under lottery fund for detailed information/links to other sites and application packs and/OR
Call 0845 7649 649 for an application pack/pre application advice form*

The Countryside Agency - your project may benefit by checking whether it is eligible for a countryside agency grant for leisure – to promote sustainable leisure activities in the countryside to meet changing leisure needs in a way which respects places and benefits local people

*Check out the Countryside Agency website: www.countryside.gov.uk for detailed information and local regional contacts/information and/OR
Call 0117 9739966 for advice and their booklet 'Grants and Payment Schemes'.*

Local Authority Grant Aid Programmes – throughout Stroud district many Town and Parish Councils have a small amount of grant funding for communities to apply to.

Stroud District Council have a core grants scheme that community groups can apply to once a year for 'one-off' facilitative amounts of money. It is advisable to have assessed and applied for all other funding prior to application due to limited amounts available and criteria that will be attached to each grant.

Application advice

For further verbal advice on lottery funding and grants contact:

SDC Regeneration Through Sports Manager	Jane Bullows	01453 754322
SDC Head of Culture, Sport, Tourism	Karen Toole	01453 754339

Gloucestershire County Council Youth Services weblinks www.gloscc.gov.uk

Sportengland website links www.sportengland.org

Public Support

Consider setting up fund-raising events with schools/community

Local business donations in kind

Sponsorship by local/national business (look at **Sportsmatch** initiative on Sportengland website in relation to match funding)

SUSTAINABILITY

Monitoring and Evaluation

It is important to continually evaluate any facility project in order to evidence and analyse development options and future sustainability. We recommend that the management group create a monitoring system (this can be in the form of a tabular register or tick system) that can register the following:-

- Number of users per year
- Age ranges
- Times of use
- Number of male/female users
- Number of male/female spectators
- Other issues relating to community

Weather Restrictions

With an outdoor site, there is an issue of seasonal use, as the facility is often under used during winter and rainy periods. This can be accounted for by the delivery of summer based programmes to cover the longer hours of day light use and installation of floodlights during the drier winter evenings

Future Programming Options

In order to maintain sustained use of the park, it is advisable to consider an organised programme of events:-

- Under-11's and under-21's skate workshops delivered by professionals, youth services and SDC
- skater mentoring scheme for older users to mentor youngsters
- summer playscheme programme links to local authority summer programmes
- park litter and vandalism management scheme run/delivered by the skate park users

Future Management Options

Management of the park needs to be flexible in order to respond and adapt quickly to national/local government changes. The following issues should be considered when creating a long-term plan for park management:-

- adding or expansion of seating areas
- encouraging new members of the park user group to assist in cleaning the site and ensuring no vandalism
- creation of a long term management committee (to be voted in annually at the AGM)
- action planning for 3-5 year period
- further funding options planning

Tell Us What You Think

This is the first 'edition' of our Skate Park Information Pack and we would like to develop it further as time evolves. Please let us know your views on the form below and email to:-

Jane.bullows@stroud.gov.uk

Or post to:

**Jane Bullows
Regeneration Through Sports Manager
SDC Council Offices
Ebley Mill
Stroud
GL5 4UB**

MANY THANKS

↓ please detach this part and send ↓

Skate Park Information Pack Feedback

Name: _____ Tel: _____
(optional) Email: _____

Organisation: _____

Address: _____

What we found useful: _____

Other Comments: _____

This document is intended purely as a guide for skate park applications and is the combination of material and expertise from a variety of sources across the country