

Subject:	Skateboard coaching and skate park safety	
From:	Claire Wilding	
Date:	15/02/23	
For decision		
Summary of decisions or actions requested: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree to provide a skateboard coaching workshop subsidised by the Town Council, for which an ad hoc grant of up to £420 would be required • Agree to improve skate park safety and visibility by cutting back and thinning hedge and creating a second entrance/exit leading from the football area to the back of the skate park. • Note date of next Ticknell park clean up - 5 March 		
Financial implications: Up to £420 requested from next financial year ad hoc grant pot No costs at this stage for hedge cutting/thinning, if the Council agrees in principle to this work quotes will be sought.		
Communications: We would publicise the skateboarding workshops on social media and noticeboards. We should also publicise plans for cutting back the skate park hedges before the work is carried out.		

Use of the skate park seems to have dropped since covid and it would be nice to see this facility being better used. I'm proposing we fund a skateboarding workshop in April/May to encourage new users and also that we make some changes to the park to make it safer and to discourage anti-social behaviour.

Skateboard coaching

I've contacted a few coaches and companies and found a qualified coach (DBS checked and first aid qualified) who would be willing to run a skateboard workshop. I'm proposing we would have 3 sessions, each an hour-long, on one day in April or May, with up to 8 participants per session. As we're keen to provide more sports facilities for girls, we could offer one session to Charlbury guides. The other two sessions could be open to anyone aged 6 - 16, with the groups split by age or ability.

The cost I've been quoted is £17.50 per participant. I suggest we subsidise the cost and ask participants to pay £5. The maximum upfront cost would be $3 \times 8 \times 17.50 = £420$. We would make back $3 \times 8 \times 5 = £120$. If the event is successful I'd like to ringfence this income and use it in September as matched funding for a bid to the Beer Festival to run a second skateboard workshop. So I'm requesting an ad hoc grant of up to £420 from next year's budget. The final cost will depend on the number of people that sign up.

Skate park safety

When the skate park was built 20 years ago, trees and shrubs were planted around the edge presumably to provide visual screening. These have grown over time to enclose the majority of the park in a fairly dense thicket. This is now creating a few issues.

- It's recommended that play parks and public spaces should be visible from footpaths/ thoroughfares /nearby houses in order to create a feeling of safety and discourage anti-social behaviour. Most of the skate park is closed-off from view. This also creates a safety issue because if a lone skater had an accident, they wouldn't be visible to passers by.
- It's also recommended that activities should be visible to passers-by so that they are encouraged to use the facility. At present passers-by may not realise it is there, and children might be reluctant to enter the park if they cannot easily see who is already using it.
- It is recommended that public spaces should have more than one entrance/exit, so that people do not feel "trapped" in an enclosed area and can easily move away if they feel threatened by others. Our skate park only has one entrance/exit.

I suggest that we need to make the following changes to make the skate park more visible, accessible and safe (see also photos below):

- Widen the existing entrance to the skatepark by cutting back bushes and thorns on the south side of the entrance up to the first mature tree (1 - 2 metres in) this will make more of the park visible from the footpaths and distant houses on the western edge of the field.
- Thin the remaining hedge along the western edge of the skate park by removing blackthorn, brambles and small shrubs. This will make the park more visible from the field, but we will still retain screening and will not lose any mature trees.
- Cut a new entrance from the back of the skate park to the football area. This will create a more direct access from the play park, and it will mean a parent sitting on the football-area bench can have partial visibility of a child in the skate park while also watching other children on the play park or football pitch.

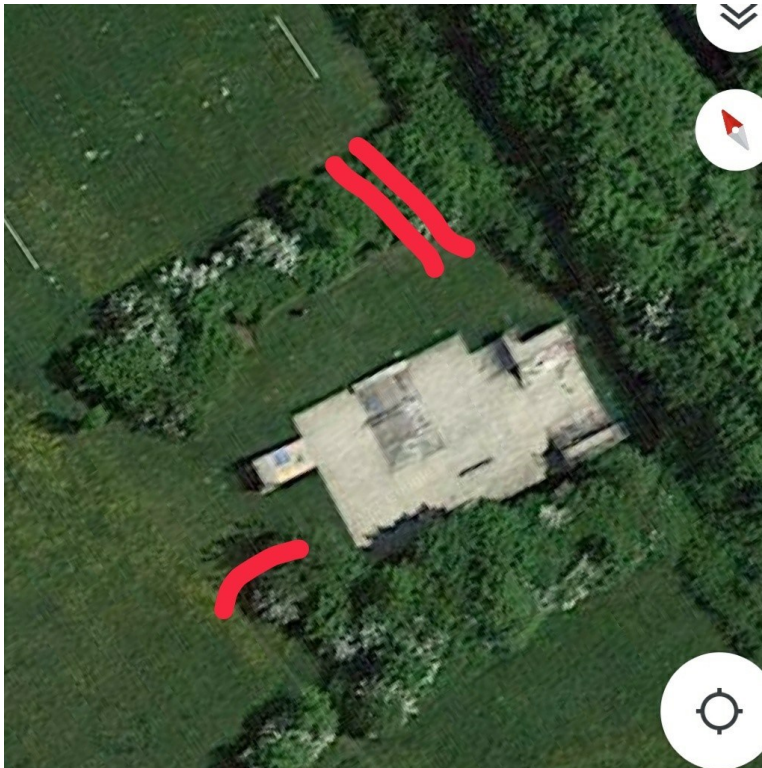
If the council agrees in principle, we can get some quotes to have this work done in the spring.

Ticknell park clear up

I plan to organise another vokunteer

Photos

Areas marked red show suggested new entrance and widening of existing entrance. NB this photo is about 5 years old, so bushes appear smaller than they are now.



Hedge between skatepark and field, to be cut back and thinned



Same hedge seen from the side, you can see it is thick.



