



Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Chalfont Activity Park Project?

The Chalfont Activity Park Project is a group of local residents who would like to see investment in free-to-use sporting facilities in Chalfont St Peter. Our objective is to collaborate with our community and local authorities to raise funds and locate a site for a modern "wheeled sports" scooters. If there is enough interest and funding, we'd like to see it include other features and become something for our whole community, where families and young people can gather and enjoy a wide range of activities. We particularly want to provide a facility that will encourage participation in sports from people who would not normally take part in organised team games who presently have no outlet for physical exercise in our community.

What is an activity park?

An activity park is a community resource, a place where people can come together to enjoy a range of outdoor family activities. You can think of them as the evolution of the playground. They will incorporate different activities particularly for wheeled sports, but also with facilities for slacklining and table tennis.

What are wheeled sports and what is slacklining?

Wheeled sports include skateboarding, scooters, inline and roller skates and bicycles, primarily BMX but mountain bikes as well. [Slacklining](#) is a sport that involves balancing along a length of webbing stretched between two anchors whilst performing tricks and stunts.

What is a skatepark?

A [skatepark](#) is a space dedicated to wheeled sports that will include ramps and other features that people can skate or ride. A good skate park will have features that are suitable for riders of all abilities, from the beginners to advanced riders and skaters. Ours will be built from concrete which is the industry standard to reduce noise and increase longevity.

How big is the activity park going to be?

Given the local population a 'medium size' park was felt to be appropriate. This would be approximately 550-600m².

Where will the park be?

The location of the park has yet to be decided. As detailed in the proposal there are only two sites in Chalfont St Peter that have potential, the Cheena Meadow and the Mill Meadow. We hope that after an appropriate consultation the Parish council will work with us and use the findings of our survey to decide on the best location for the park. There is no ideal site, both locations have pros and cons.

Do skateparks attract anti-social behaviour?

There is already anti-social behaviour in our village. We all see it everyday in the form of litter and graffiti. We believe that a well-designed activity park would improve community life by giving young people, in particular, an activity they enjoy and inspiring them to be proud of their community.

We believe much of it is caused by boredom – teenagers have little to do in the village if they are not involved in organised team sports. Even if they are, once the Saturday morning football or hockey

match is done, they can find themselves with nowhere to go and nothing specific to do. Boredom can take hold, and this is when problems with anti-social behaviour can begin.

A modern activity park with plenty of space around for onlookers will give this age group a destination to meet their friends and a healthy focus in an exciting physical leisure activity. It will help to build a sense of community and instil pride and respect for the area among local young people that will benefit everyone.

“Skate Park. Not got rose tinted specs on here, but we really have not had any issues at all and the facility is very well used. Yes there is a bit of litter, but we really keep on top of that with daily open spaces checks and picks. I am of the firm view that litter breeds litter and if you keep on top of the problem the area stays generally tidy.

I have got a bit of a view that the users of the skate park have a code about how to behave, I have been there when there are 20-30 users, beginners and experienced riders seem to get on fine.

Through consultation the youth asked for a skate park, we delivered, and they are using it, not much else I can add. Pretty good gender mix usually 60m/40f spilt where there was some concern in the planning stage that this would be a boys domain, not so.

Honestly, no negatives but a pile of positives.” – Mr Tim Perkins, Abbots Langley Parish Council Clerk.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the provision of public skateparks can dramatically improve the sometimes antagonistic relationship between police forces and young people; far from places of lawlessness, skateparks are places where people work within codes of behaviour, and are spaces where sometimes aggressive energies are focused on positive sporting goals. It is important to realise that the public provision of sports facilities – from tennis courts to skateparks – is part of the responsibility of the local and central government. These places offer the chance to relax, to exercise, and allow young people a place to enjoy activities together; they are important places for the well-being of society.

“We haven’t had yet one call from a resident of Dawlish complaining about skateboarding [since the skatepark opening], this means the workload over any given weekend has been cut by 30%.”- Gary Cairns, Police Community Support Officer, Dawlish

“The skatepark is important to the local community because it gives the children somewhere to go, it gives them a focus – a hobby, if you will – which keeps them off the streets and out of trouble; it’s fantastic, really”- Steve Randall, Police Community Support Officer, Macclesfield.

Parks will be largely self-supervised, self-maintained, and self-policed. - Ocean Howell, Skatepark as Neo-liberal Playground, 2008, 490.

Bill Fowler (superintendent of Recreation and Human Services for the City of Huntington Beach – CA) describes the end result as a win/win situation in what was before thought to be a zero-sum game.

“Soon after the park was built, police were expending less time and resources chasing skateboarders. “They were working with the kids, and in turn, the kids were feeling less antagonized by the authority figures. The presence of skateboarders can deter vandalism, drug use, prostitution, and homeless encampments.” - Ocean Howell, Skatepark as Neo-liberal Playground, 2008, 485

“A marked drop of 34.9% in levels of youth disorder was recorded in Beat 6, where the skatepark is located, since 2002-2006. Anecdotal evidence suggests that there is a code of honour among those who attend the skatepark. This encourages youths to behave appropriately for fear of spoiling it for others.” - Strathclyde Police Report.

Isn't there already a skatepark in the village?

No. The small metal half pipe by the Mill Meadow Hill playground area is not a skatepark. It has none of the features of a modern skatepark and is rarely if ever used by wheeled sports enthusiasts as it is simply not fit for purpose.

Isn't Skateboarding/BMX Dangerous?

Skateboarding has a reputation as being more dangerous than more established team sports, although the emerging statistical data shows that this myth is just that. It should also be recognised that a great many people are not getting nearly enough exercise, and that skateparks are places that teach people from a young age that exercise is not only necessary for good health, but a good thing in itself. The public provision of free-to-use sporting areas is part of a council's responsibility to promote the good health and general well being of its citizens. Skateparks are good for public health!

"Perhaps the most damaging prejudice is the notion that skateboarding is an unsafe sport. When compared to other recreational activities, skateboarding has a smaller percentage of reported injuries per participant (.49%) than other activities, including soccer (.93%), baseball (2.25%) and basketball (1.49%)."

- Worth W. Everett MD, Skatepark Injuries and the influence of Skatepark design, The Journal of Emergency Medicine, 6

"If present trends continue it is estimated that half of the UK's children could be obese by 2020."

- Economic and Social Research Centre, 2006, www.esrc.ac.uk

"According to the Consumer Products Safety Commission, skateboarding has a smaller percentage of reported injuries per participant than soccer, baseball, basketball...Granted, many skateboarding accidents are simply not reported – but this speaks well of skateboarders, who apparently feel that safety is their responsibility, as are injuries when they happen."

- Thompson, A good Thrashing, Landscape Architecture magazine, 1998, p81.

"Children and young people should achieve a total of at least 60 minutes of at least moderate physical activity each day."

- Issy Hamilton, Children's Play Council, Play and Health Fact sheet (2006.)

"Potential safety advantages of a skatepark are numerous: good lighting, regularly maintained skating surfaces, routine structural inspection and upkeep, enclosed (or semi-enclosed) areas that effectively eliminate external factors such as cars, buses, sidewalk cracks, street pot-holes, and pedestrian traffic."

- Worth W. Everett MD, Skatepark Injuries and the influence of Skatepark design, The Journal of Emergency Medicine, 7.

How much noise do skateparks generate?

Skateparks, especially concrete ones, emit less sound than most other park activities. Several skatepark sound studies have been conducted. The most notable was done by Portland, Oregon's Parks and Recreation Department and found that their 10,000-square-foot skatepark emitted less constant noise than light automobile traffic.

Unlike wood or metal, skating on high quality smooth concrete produces little noise, which is one of the reasons why this material is preferred. Other skate noise comes from 'popping' the board and landing during tricks as well as the typical ambient sound of young people at play.

The Skate Park Association of the USA (SPAUSA) have tested the noise of different skateparks made using different materials - the results are that concrete is quieter than all other wooden and metal ramps.

According to SPAUSA - "Studies show that a skatepark has no more noise than the ambient surrounding noises that exist in other parks and is not nearly as noisy as a baseball park." Measurements were taken from a concrete in-ground park:

Test park Santa Monica Skatepark approx 18,000 sq feet with 50 participants at the time of measuring.*

Location	dB Low Reading	dB High Reading
Ambient Noise	64	72
30 Feet From Entrance	65	70
Entrance	66	74
Inside Park	63	76
At the Bowl	64	78

Decibel Comparison Chart	
Whisper Quiet Library	30dB
Normal Conversation	60 - 70dB
Normal Piano Practise	60 - 70dB
Skatepark Ambience 30 ft	63 - 78dB
Telephone	80dB
City Traffic Inside Car	85dB
Chainsaw	100dB
Loud Rock Concert	115dB

To put this in perspective the following table shows the decibel levels of other sounds:

**please note, this is a much larger park, for comparison ours will be approx. 6500 sq feet*

Who will be responsible for its maintenance?

After the project has been built it will become the responsibility of the Parish Council in the same way as other public play or sports facilities.

How much will it cost and where are you getting funding?

We are working from a total budget of £200,000. Please download the proposal from [our website](#) for a detailed breakdown of funding sources.

Don't we have more important things to worry about right now?

Chalfont St Peter needs investment. We are one of the largest villages in England by population (13,000) and if you include adjoining villages our area is home to over 20,000 people with 40% being aged 12-44 yrs (Census Data). There are no free to use facilities **at all** in this area. Other local authority areas enjoy much better amenities. We need to encourage more participation in sports

and recreation to encourage people to lead healthier lifestyles or we risk a public health crisis in the future. Our village is becoming larger every year as more housing is developed in the area. Lack of investment in facilities for residents will lead to increased social problems.

Does the Parish Council support the objectives?

We hope the Parish Council would support any properly planned and funded initiative where it can demonstrated that it has the support of the majority of residents. In order for this project to be successful we need engagement from local residents. [Please fill out the survey on our website!](#)