

Wiltshire Council

Chippenham Area Board

10 September 2013

Item 8 – Chippenham Skate Park Task Group Report

Richard Taylor on behalf of Chippenham Residents (Skatepark Petition)

Question 5

To all members of the Area Board

Dear Sirs,

We are asking why you are not considering this large group of objectors to Monkton Park as a skatepark site.

You will be aware that as residents of Monkton Park, we collected 1123 signatures in a petition requesting that the skatepark be sited in an alternative position to Monkton Park.

There have been many reasons given not to put the skatepark in this lovely conservation area, and most were included on the petition.

This petition was done on a face to face basis with local residents, mainly living on Monkton Park and St Mary Street area. Although addresses were not included, a quick look at the Register of Electors will show that this is the case. Other residents of the town requested to be included in the petition, also some who visited the Folk Festival every year. Incidentally, many of those from the Folk Festival were appalled that the park they enjoyed each year was being considered for the skatepark. However, **the majority of signatories were from Chippenham, and felt very strongly about this.**

This petition seems to have been largely brushed under the carpet and **deemed unimportant.** Surely in a democratic society every effort should be made to seriously consider other sites because of the number of objections. Bristol Road is an ideal site, and the reasons given by the Task Group as it not being acceptable, seem to be the very ones that our petitioners are raising not to use Monkton Park – using footpaths, skating down banks, noise, complaints from dog walkers and nearby residents etc.

.Please, when you vote, do not be persuaded by some who feel they have the power to sway your vote, but honestly make your very own decision. Please base your decision on the genuine concerns of so many local people who really believe we will be losing so much by completely changing the character of this lovely park. One of Chippenham's most precious assets close to the town for everyone to enjoy.

Wiltshire Council slogan is “Where Everybody Matters”, but apparently this does not include the 1123 signatories of the petition.

Response

The objections to the Monkton Park site are being considered.

Members of the public have had the opportunity to comment on the Skatepark Project at every Area Board meeting since the launch of the project in November 2010. Members of the public have taken the opportunity to comment and voice their objections at Area Board meetings on: 9th January 2012, 9th July 2012, 3rd September 2012, 5th November 2012, 7th January 2013, 4th March 2013, and 1st July 2013.

In September and October 2012, a survey was carried out both on line and via newsletter delivered to every household in Chippenham.

See Skatepark Report 1.4.12

A visit to other Skateparks was arranged for members of the public with objections on 13th February 2013, 3 individuals from 2 households took up this offer.

See Skatepark Report 2.1.7

Officers of Wiltshire Council have met with members of the public to hear objections on 3rd October 2012, 10th April 2013 and 25th July 2013.

An additional noise assessment was carried out at number 40 Sadlers Mead at the request of the resident to address his concerns.

A second independent noise consultant was engaged to provide reassurance to concerned residents.

3 public meetings have been held, 26th November 2012, 10th July 2013 and 24th July 2013. 10th July was dedicated specifically to the gather the concerns and comments of local residents adjacent to the site.

See Skatepark Report 1.4.12, 1.4.12.6.3 specifically lists concerns and objections

Comments and concerns collected at the public meetings in July were circulated to Front Line Services for consideration and responses included in the Skatepark report.

See Skatepark Report 2.1 - 2.6 inc. and 3.1. – 3. Inc.6, 3.8 and 3.9

1st July 2013 petition received at Chippenham Area Board meeting.

See Skatepark Report 3.3

E-mails and letters received throughout the project are being taken into consideration.

Wiltshire Council has a duty to consider the views and comments of the whole community.