

ALICE PARK TRUST SUB-COMMITTEE – 16 SEPTEMBER 2021
PUBLIC QUESTIONS/STATEMENT FROM PAUL HOOPER

I understand from the June issue of “Local Look” that the Alice Park skatepark is now open.

Whilst the skatepark has opened some seven months later than the COVID-adjusted date published in the October/November 2020 issue of Focus, with no doubt increased costs to reflect this, the project has yet to be fully delivered.

Significant products are still awaited:

1. Making good the damage caused to the grassed area by plant accessing the skatepark site through Alice Park.
2. The noise attenuation promised in the project deliverables: landscaping and screen planting.

When are these products to be delivered?

With the absence of the key project deliverable of noise attenuation work, it appears that the Alice Park Sub-Committee/BANES Council has knowingly and deliberately introduced unmitigated noise pollution to Alice Park and the surrounding community! This is either through negligence or an all-consuming desire to open the skatepark at any cost. What are you going to do about it? Close the skatepark to stop the pollution? Compensate the users of Alice Park and the local community? If nothing is done, this is clear evidence that the current administration actively supports and encourages noise pollution.

For an administration that is so focused on reducing/eliminating pollution is this not a rather embarrassing and illegal position to find themselves in?

The willingness to destroy the iconic boating pond/sandpit to provide sufficient room for fencing to rectify the unnecessary design change to the skatepark is hugely disappointing. How can this be justified? Remember, the user survey conducted by the Alice Park Cafe identified the skatepark as the lowest user priority for Alice Park!

Given that the design change led to rectification work i.e., fencing, new paths, and alterations to the boating pond/sandpit; I trust these additional costs have been met by the party responsible for the design change decision and not by the taxpayer? I also hope that the yet to be delivered landscaping and screen planting were fully considered when planning the rectification work?

Parking in the Alice Park vicinity has been an issue for several years and has yet to be addressed. It could be extrapolated from the original skatepark survey commissioned by Cllr Appleyard that some 85% of skatepark users would be driven to the facility. Given the recent change in scope to allow adults to use what was always campaigned as a children’s play facility, this can only increase the number of vehicles commuting to Alice Park and parking in Alice Park and the surrounding area. Clearly, congestion and excessive parking on the Gloucester Road and the

arterial roads introduces risk and danger to pedestrians. When you consulted with the key stakeholders including: neighbours and residents of Alice Park; highways and the police; to discuss the potential increase in traffic and parking associated with the change in project scope, were they happy with this situation? What provision have you put in place for additional off-road parking?

Around half an acre of the dedicated children's play area (under 14s) remains, the other half an acre being lost to the skatepark, how do you plan to honour the Alice Park Conveyance dated [19/5/37](#) which stated that at least 4 acres of the hereditaments shall always be reserved exclusively for children up to 14 years of age?

Response

Thank you for your continual interest in Alice Park Mr Hooper, and in particular the skatepark facility.

The skatepark is now open and being well used, observations indicate the majority of users are around the mid teenage range with a few older users. There is not a mechanism or a desire for the sub-committee to look to change that cohort.

There are a couple of small snagging issues being tended to prior to the sign off of the project by the council, one being the track mark across the grass to the location.

All actions have come within the designated budget.

The sub-committee is not aware of any increase in the noise levels and if you can provide evidence and data to indicate this is the case the committee will look at this. There will be accepted technical standards for which you can measure this data against and will only be validated data responded to. If there is a noise issue evidence should be gathered and a complaint made to BANES' Environmental Services who will investigate and take appropriate action should a statutory nuisance be found. There is no intention to do any more in this area unless a proven issue comes to light.

Following additional safety advice, the fencing separating the sandpit and skatepark was modified. The sub-committee has received no negative feedback from sandpit users over and above the two received prior to any changes when the full detail was unknown.

The sub-committee has and will continue to encourage those attending the park to arrive by means other than a motorised vehicle, and as the sub-committee's remit does not extend outside the park area we do encourage the right parking behaviours but this ultimately sits with the council highways department and your concerns should be placed with them.

All areas of the park are open to young children, with the recognition that the tennis courts should have adult supervision, and as the take up of family membership is high this indicates a growing younger involvement.

It's sensed this now exhausts the range of responses we can provide and will now look at the matter being closed