

EAST WITTERING AND BRACKLESHAM PARISH COUNCIL

STATEMENT 10 FEBRUARY 2017

The Parish Council is very disappointed with the negative reaction to its decision that Downview Public Open Space is not a suitable location for a new skate park and also with the comments that the Council does nothing for the youth. It at no time said it didn't agree with the proposal of a skate park, simply that Downview was not the correct place.

At a Parish Council meeting in June 2016 the Skate Park Group presented its case to the full Council. At that meeting the group was told that Downview was not considered a suitable place and was asked to research another location which it agreed. The reasons Downview is not a suitable location for a skate ramp of such scale were mainly the restricted access and lack of parking. Also with very limited open space available in this area the Council would have to consider whether a further loss of open space in this dense residential area would be acceptable. The Council made suggestions to approach the new developers in the area so that a skate park of this size may get included within a new build. This way forward may also provide some funding from the developers.

Downview already has an existing thriving Youth Football Club. The Parish Council refurbished the football pavilion, had new heating and sanitation installed and decorated for them so they now have their own place. The decoration was carried out by volunteer Parish Councillors to save the Parish money.

The sides of the MUGA (Multi Use Games Area) at Bracklesham Park are being raised this year to prevent the balls going out which is tedious for the players.

This year the Parish Council built the teen shelter at Bracklesham Park following requests from local young people and in full consultation with them.

The Parish Council has been fighting for the continuation of the Youth Club despite West Sussex County Council countywide closure of youth clubs. As a result the Parish Council has obtained funding to provide a new youth and community centre with a sports hall at Downview which will be started, and could be finished, this year.

There is also a Bowls Club at Downview which has many fixtures and practices during its season.

The Parish Council is also supporting Park Run which is for all ages and will be starting every Saturday morning at Bracklesham Park and will be free to all.

There is no existing skate park at Downview but an under-used small skate ramp which takes up very little space.

With continued building on available open spaces around the Parish, the existing public open spaces within the built-up area become more precious. The Parish Council believes it is wrong, with the already existing Football Club, the Bowls Club and the new Youth Centre to develop Downview Public Open Space still further and bring in more people and traffic to this restricted residential area will not be of benefit to the neighbourhood.

With regard to the mention at the Council meeting of 'foreigners' signing the petition, it was referring to those who signed the petition from outside the UK. It was the skate park group who chose to interpret this another way which in turn stirred up people to make racist comments. As a result the Parish Council has now received abusive anonymous phone calls which it feels sure is not the intention of the skate park group but is a direct result of their social media input.