

## Bike Trail Consultation

### 1. Background



This project began when a few boys got together to have some fun on their bikes in the wood. They created a short trail, a small jump and a few skids....

They got chased off and told by the Town Clerk that this was not what the park was meant for....

Then the Clerk thought... That is not a bad idea. It's a great use of an unused outdoor community space. What if we got the kids to dream up what would really excite and occupy them....

So then we needed a plan and funding to make it happen and so we got a few grown ups involved too.... But in a supportive way.

Hopefully that is not the end to this story!

### 2. Proposal

To build a rough Bike Trail through part of the park next to the rugby pitch, using the natural contours of the land and tree cover. The trail would involve:

- An area approximately 200 paces long and 20 to 30 paces wide.
- It would use mainly the natural spacing of the trees in a single track with a return loop at the end.
- There is a need to thin out the woods anyway and we could take the opportunity to do this at the same time as laying out the track.
- It would require a gravel and sand surface or friction and drainage purposes.
- There would be maintenance required to the surface and trimming back of the trees.
- A large jump using the natural contours would be included as well as a small man made jump to enhance the fun and challenge.
- A sign of rules would be installed with safety warnings and emergency instructions. CCTV would cover the start point.
- A chalk board of age group timings would be put up to encourage competitive time trialling.
- A launch competition and annual competition would be established as part of the local active scene.
- A Facebook page would be encouraged to record tricks, jumps, competitions and age group time trials.
- A volunteer group would be set up for maintenance and governance and to help gain funding for said maintenance.

**Every stage will be led by young users to make sure it meets their dreams**

### **3. Other considerations**

#### 3.1 Health and safety

Health and safety will clearly be a consideration. We will take professional advice on this and research what other trails do and what rules they undertake to minimise risks.

We will consult our insurers to ensure what we can and cannot cover. Signage which covers safety rules will be installed before launch.

#### 3.2 Noise

As this is an area that is in a park and largely through a wooded area, it is not expected to be a noise issue. The only houses in proximity next to the park will be consulted with.

#### 3.3 Permissions for use

The Clerk has already enquired with the relevant body covering the park and they have confirmed this would be a permissible use and indeed praised the idea.

#### 3.4 Usage by age group

There is not likely to be an age restriction on usage. However the course will be targeted at the "Green level" for juniors and beginners. They can then go on to more challenging and bespoke adventures elsewhere.

### **4. Costing**

Most of the tree felling can be re-charged to Shropshire council as part of the maintenance agreement. Cost contribution estimate: £?

Initial tree trimming using a mainly natural gaps route will be done by council staff with volunteer support. Labour cost contribution estimate £?

Some stump removal will be required and needs to be costed. £?

The track trail surface will need to be a gravel and sand mix laid and compressed by ground works people who know what they are doing. We will make an appeal for labour support from local companies. Cost of sand and gravel £?

Technical advice will be taken from a specialist design consultant to ensure that we construct a safe and workable track. This will be a cost. £?

Signage will need to be constructed and a chalk board or similar made available for posting trail times.

## 5. Funding

Grant funding will be sought for part of the money.

Local sponsorship will be sought with a local appeal for a lead and support sponsor.

Council project budget and or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) / Neighbourhood fund money will be considered to fund the rest of the cost.

## 6. Rationale

- This idea has emerged from the young people of the community and supported by their parents
- Any healthy outdoor activity that provides a distraction for young people helps their wellbeing and contributes to the community.
- Having a range of activities in close proximity helps friends and family to enjoy the outside together. The proximity to the sports pitches, skate park and potentially the Outdoor Gym and Dog Exercise areas aids this aim.
- If young people are actively enjoying themselves they are distracted from other less savoury activities.
- Bike trailing is a year round activity that can be enjoyed most of the year round. The track development inspection was done in below zero temperatures and light snow. The area is not overly prone to flooding because of the gradient, tree density and free draining.
- Using our green and open spaces efficiently and cost effectively is a duty that the Council should embrace and is fully endorsed by the parks and open spaces authorities.
- This is one of the projects in our Town Council 3-year plan and supports the town vision and mission.

## 7. Next Steps

NB the proposed timescale may seem excessively long, however we will not be able to fell trees we need to for reasons of wildlife and bird conservation until the end of September.

1. Get feedback on the proposal from stakeholder groups (March/April) :
  - Young people and parents of young people
  - Local residents and Councillors
2. If positive, develop design and costs (May/June)
3. Identify funding sources and labour / volunteer resources (June/July)
4. Produce final designs, costs and proposal for approval by Council. Apply for external funding. (August/September)
5. Commit to Build (October)
6. Launch opening (November)

PLEASE RESPOND TO THE TOWN CLERK – [matthew.sheehan@cleobury.org.uk](mailto:matthew.sheehan@cleobury.org.uk)

