

Read the newspaper report.

Fight for BMX track continues

Local residents and kids come to blows again over the proposed BMX track for Wilmington Park.

There were heated moments between the elderly residents of Wilmington Park nursing home and local teenagers this afternoon as the two groups collided over Wilmington Council's proposal to build a BMX track for the youth of the community.

'It seems the council has forgotten about our needs and only thinks about the kids in our community!' Mr Jeeves explained. 'I can't even catch a bus to town any more because of council cutbacks in the local transport system, and here it is spending our taxpayers' money willy-nilly on people who don't even pay taxes!'

'Quite frankly, I've had enough! The council proposes to locate this BMX park right behind my unit. The noise of kids riding their bikes on the track at all hours of the day and night will be unbearable!' cited Mrs Ardor. 'At my age, I shouldn't have to put up with it!'

Not all the elderly residents of Wilmington Park nursing home feel this strongly—in fact, some strongly support the proposal.

'I actually think it is about time the council gave the youth somewhere they can go and blow off steam. Maybe they will be less destructive if they have a place of their own. It will also encourage the kids to get some exercise!' stated Mr

Rush. 'Kids need to get out into the fresh air and exercise.'

The teenagers feel strongly about the BMX project and have been involved in the planning and layout of the track.

'I don't know why the oldies are so aggro about it, we are going to have set rules and no-one is allowed on the track after 6 pm in winter and 7.30 pm in summer—so we won't be riding our bikes at all hours of the day and night', said Misha Brown.

The kids of Wilmington Park community are planning a series of busy bee weekends to clear the area before construction begins.

'We felt it was important to help save the council money, that way the council can spend the money on other things too', stated Josh. 'We really want to make the BMX track our own and intend to look after it!'

The local youth of Wilmington Park petitioned the council over five years ago with a proposal for a BMX track. The council has only just come to the party in recent months.

'It was a matter of calculating the costs and ensuring its viability. We thought it would be a good idea to provide a place where they could

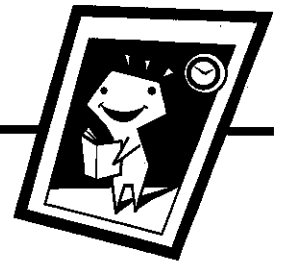


go and have fun and, most importantly, get some exercise and fresh air. We are really proud of this project and have invested a great deal of time and effort into working with the kids to develop a BMX track that will be of benefit to the youth of Wilmington Park for many years to come', stated Mrs Robinson, local member for Wilmington Park.

The parents of the local youth are behind the park one hundred per cent and congratulate the local council for working so closely with their children to get the project off the ground.

'I am Josh's dad and I am so proud of him. He has worked cooperatively with other kids to pursue this idea and to get the council to agree. We plan to support the kids in any way we can and intend to be there for the busy bees to show them how proud we are of them', stated Mr William. ■

Article by *Dee Sharp*,
Kids issues



Try it out

Use the strategies you learnt and practised in *Letter to the editor* to work out facts and opinions.

Ask yourself:

- Can the statement be checked and proved to be correct? If it can, it is a fact.
- Is it what someone thinks is true and can't be proved? If so, it is an opinion.
- Always check all the possible answers before making a decision.

Which states an opinion?

- (a) The teenagers have been involved in planning the track.
- (b) The council has made cutbacks to the local transport system.
- (c) Maybe they will be less destructive if they have a place of their own.
- (d) Wilmington Park is behind Mrs Ardros unit.

The best answer is .

Read the sentence from the text and write two short sentences, one with a fact and one with an opinion.

'I am Josh's dad and I am so proud of him.'

Fact: _____

Opinion: _____

- (a) Write one fact from the report.

- (b) What is your opinion about the proposed BMX track?

Think!
 Facts can be checked, opinions can't.
 Which sentence tells what someone thinks?

3. Which statement is not an opinion?

- (a) At my age, I shouldn't have to put up with it!
- (b) The kids of Wilmington Park community are planning a series of busy bee weekends.
- (c) We are really proud of this project.
- (d) They are spending our taxpayers' money willy-nilly on people who don't even pay taxes!

The best answer is .

5. The local youth of Wilmington Park petitioned the council over five years ago with a proposal for a BMX track.

- (a) Is the information in this sentence ...
 a fact or an opinion?

- (b) Explain your answer.
