

# **SKELF Communication & Consultation:**

A brief summary of the steps taken to inform & consult local residents & the wider local community about the SKELF project over the period 2012 – 2016.

## **2012:**

### **The SKELF 'Launch Day' - November 2012:**

This initial, fairly basic, public information/consultation event was held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Nov 2012 at the Craggs Sports Centre.

At the event:

- Information was exhibited about:
  - The current nature of the site
  - Our very rough initial ideas for bike trails in the woods
- The proposals were discussed with those attending
- Feedback was sought on the initial proposals via printed questionnaires

This event was put together on a shoestring but publicised via:

- Posters & leaflets in:
  - The Craggs Centre
  - Southside Community Centre
  - Nearby University buildings
  - Local shops/pubs
  - Lamp-posts, walls etc in Dumbiedykes & St Leonard's
- Online:
  - A newsletter to our mailing list
- Television & Radio:
  - STV aired a short piece about the project, and urged people to attend the event (<http://news.stv.tv/east-central/196591-community-group-reveals-plans-to-bring-mountain-biking-to-city-centre/>)

Although lightly attended, a good mix of local residents, neighbourhood kids, Council officers, Councillors, and cyclists dropped in. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

## **2013:**

### **Southside Association Presentation – January 2013:**

BBG presented the outline proposals to Southside Association at their January 2013 meeting, followed by a robust Q&A session. The proposals were well received, and the SA has since been a firm supporter of the project.

### **The SKELF 'Open Day & BBQ' - June 2013:**

A more ambitious information/consultation/fun day event was organised with CEC ActiveCity funding and held on the 15<sup>th</sup> June 2013 at the Craggs Sports Centre.

At the event:

- Free bike related activities were organised for local kids (tandem MTBs rides, a pedal powered sound system etc)

- Free bike repair was provided by The Bike Station
- A free barbecue was provided
- Information was exhibited about:
  - The history of the site & its current state etc
  - Our very still very rough initial ideas for bike trails in the woods & a pump track
- BBG members discussed the proposals with those attending
- Feedback was again sought on the proposals via printed questionnaires

The event was publicised via:

- Posters & leaflets in:
  - The Craggs Centre
  - Southside Community Centre
  - Nearby University buildings
  - Local shops/pubs
  - Lamp-posts, walls etc in Dumbiedykes & St Leonard's
- Online:
  - The (recently created) BBG website
  - A newsletter to our mailing list
  - The Edinburgh Festival of Cycling Website
  - Twitter

The events was well attended by a mixture of local residents, neighbourhood kids, a school bike club, Council members, and cyclists. Again, feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

## 2014:

### **CEC Site Lease Survey - February 2014:**

CEC officers hand delivered letters to the 300 households in Dumbiedykes & Carnegie Court living closest to the site seeking objections or comments whether or not the land should be declared 'surplus to operational requirements' and made available for lease to the bike group.

Contact details for the BBG and a URL for the SKELF website (where outline plans were prominently displayed) were provided for those seeking more information.

Ten responses were received, with five opposing the project in principle (1.7% of those surveyed) and five broadly in favour but with (legitimate) concerns about safety, noise, maintenance etc.

Given the lack of objections, CEC officers were happy to recommend a lease for the site be prepared.

All concerns raised were passed to BBG and on to our designers, resulting in specific improvements being made to the proposals.

### **Edinburgh Evening News Article - March 2014:**

Following an approach by BBG, the Edinburgh Evening News ran an article on the group & proposals on Friday 07 March 2014 (<http://www.edinburghnews.scotsman.com/news/mountain-bike-jump-track-bid-near-holyrood-park-1-3332371>).

### **CE Online Survey – March 2014:**

This in-depth online survey was carried out by local development consultants Community Enterprise on BBG's behalf, and received a total of 301 respondents:

- 77% do not currently make use of the woods as they are now
- 96% agreed that a bike park would be a beneficial asset to the community.
- 80% agreed that the park would deter anti-social behaviour
- Nearly half of respondents have expressed a strong interest in volunteering or being kept up to date with the project.

## **COMAS 'Play Corridor' Survey - June 2014:**

In June 2014 COMAS was commissioned by Canongate Youth to look at public support for increased outdoor play provision in the Dumbiedykes area as part of the 'Dumbiedykes to St Leonards Play Corridor' initiative (of which the SKELF is an integral part).

COMAS conducted a very thorough, face-to-face interview-based survey of 151 local residents (representing 24% of local households). The survey highlighted local people's disquiet about antisocial behaviour and lack of outdoor play facilities in the area:

- 82% of respondents were supportive of more play opportunities & facilities in the area
- 74% specifically supported developing play facilities in the woods next to the Craggs

## **Annual SKELF 'Open Day & BBQ' - June 2014:**

A yet more ambitious information/consultation/fun day event was organised again with CEC ActiveCity funding and held on the 12<sup>th</sup> June 2014 at the Craggs Sports Centre.

At the event:

- Free bike related activities were organised for local kids:
  - Tandem MTBs rides
  - A pedal powered sound system
  - A portable timber pump track and bmxs
- All abilities bikes to try out (from Beyond Boundaries/Laid Back Bikes)
- Free bike repair by The Bike Station
- A free barbecue
- Information was prominently exhibited on:
  - The history of the site & its current state etc
  - The now fairly detailed proposals (including details of the routes/lengths of the MTB trails, size and layout of the pump track, likely impact on trees etc
- Project members were on hand all day to discuss the proposals with those attending, answer any questions
- Feedback was again sought on the proposals via printed questionnaires

The event was publicised via:

- Posters & leaflets in:
  - The Craggs Centre
  - Southside Community Centre
  - The Braidwood Centre
  - Nearby University buildings
  - Many local shops/pubs
  - Lamp-posts, walls etc in Dumbiedykes & St Leonard's
- Online:
  - CEC's ActiveCity events website
  - The Edinburgh Festival of Cycling Website
  - BBG's own website
  - Social Media (Facebook, Twitter)
  - Newsletter to the mailing list

The events was again well attended by a mixture of local residents, neighbourhood kids, members of a school bike club, Council members, and cyclists. Again, feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

## **Presentation to Dumbiedykes Quality of Life Group - September 2014:**

BBG informally presented the proposals to the Dumbiedykes Quality of Life Group in 2014, with feedback being very positive.

## **BBC Scotland Article - October 2014:**

BBC Scotland ran a piece celebrating the project winning £76k core funding from the Scottish Government's Legacy 2014 Active Places Fund, 9<sup>th</sup> of October 2014 (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-edinburgh-east-fife-29550289>)

## **2015:**

### **Dumbiedykes Newsletter – Feb 2015:**

BBG were asked to provide a short piece on the SKELF proposals for the February issue of the Dumbiedykes Newsletter (circulation 800, distributed to every door in the estate by hand). A copy can be found here: <http://goo.gl/BXlf3h>

### **Planning Consultation – Feb 2015:**

As part of the formal Planning Application process, letters seeking feedback on the SKELF proposals were sent to 169 neighbouring households by CEC Planning officers under the standard legally mandated 'neighbour notification' system. We understand three objections were registered, with none of the objections held up as 'material' by the planners.

### **Dumbiedykes Information Afternoon – March 2015:**

BBG manned a stall & exhibited the latest proposals etc at this information/public engagement event organised by the SCNP and held in the Braidwood Centre on the 25<sup>th</sup> March 2015. Feedback was generally positive.

### **Annual SKELF 'Open Day & BBQ' - June 2015:**

More or less a repeat of the 2014 event, this was supported by CEC ActiveCity funding and held on the 20<sup>th</sup> June 2014 at the Craggs Sports Centre.

At the event:

- Free bike related activities were organised for local kids:
  - Tandem MTBs rides
  - A pedal powered sound system
  - A portable timber pump track and bmxs
- Free bike repair by The Bike Station
- A free barbecue
- Information was exhibited about:
  - The history of the site & its current state etc
  - Detailed proposals including details of the routes/lengths of the MTB trails, size and layout of the pump track, likely impact on trees etc
  - The funding situation
- Project members were on hand all day to discuss the proposals with those attending, answer any questions
- Feedback was again sought on the proposals via printed questionnaires

The event was publicised via:

- Posters & leaflets in:
  - The Craggs Centre
  - Southside Community Centre
  - The Braidwood Centre
  - Nearby University buildings
  - Many local shops/pubs
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