

Feltwell Skate Park – Officially Opened Saturday 2nd June 2018!

So, after a good two year's fundraising, we finally achieved our dream of having a skate park in the village and as it has been inundated since it opened back on Monday 21st May, we can safely say that Feltwell really did need a skate park!

Starting with roughly £2200 in the bank which was raised by The Proper Feltwell Lot, set up by Berni McGeeney, we invited the village children to a meeting at Feltwell Social Club to discuss what they would like to see on our playing field. A skate park was top of the list so the next thing was to contact skate park building companies to come and view the site and provide us with a quotation so we knew what our target amount was to be.

Canvas Spaces came with glowing references and advised that for £75,000, we could build a substantially sized skate park, made of concrete to minimise noise level and maintenance costs, and with enough bumps, ramps etc for skaters, scooter riders and BMXers to have fun on.

We asked the Parish Council for their permission to build on the playing field and when this was granted we contacted the Borough Council and applied for a Lawful Development Certificate which was awarded.

We met with Adam Garford, Sports Development Manager at Alive Leisure (formerly Lynnsport) in King's Lynn, as having built 'The Shed' (a massive indoor skate park on their premises), he had the knowledge of which funding companies to apply to. He was a huge help in those early days and we would like to thank him for his invaluable guidance.

Thanks to Adam's advice with the application forms and a brilliant business plan written by Angie, we were successful in securing grants from Sport England (£35,000), the Geoffrey Watling Charity (£7,000) and the Shelroy Trust (£4,000). We applied to Carriers for Causes (which is funded through the money raised from the 5p bag charge in One Stop stores in England, Wales and Scotland) and were awarded a further £800.

We still had a long way to go so we held a Fun Day in the Social Club, a Sponsored Walk which was really successful, raising approx. £1500, and a Race Night in The Chequers. We applied to local businesses and British Sugar, Center Parcs, Warren Energy and R K & J Jones all gave generously so we would like to extend a really big "Thank You" to all of those companies.

We put numerous Raffle Boards in the Wellington, Amy's Diner, the Chequers and the Social Club and we thank those establishments for running these for us and everyone who bought a £1.00 square which in turn donated towards our cause. We also raised about £300 via our Crowdfunding Facebook page so thanks also to everyone who donated on here.

Still needing a few more pounds, a donation was pledged by the Parish Council and another substantial sum of £15,000 was kindly awarded by the Sir Edmund de Moundeford Trust. We must profusely thank the Parish Councillors and the Sir Edmund de Moundeford Trustees for their support because without it, our project would not have happened at all.

In the end, we raised £73,400 and after exhausting all avenues, we consulted Canvas Spaces who said that if we supplied the official ROSPA sign and made good the surrounding area of the skate park then they would be able to work to this figure.

Work was due to begin in January but due to awful weather conditions, Canvas Spaces were so far behind, it was delayed by many weeks. However, to our absolute delight, Canvas Spaces took ownership of the site w/c 26th March 2018. At this point, we would like to extend our sincere thanks to Edmund and Andrew Lambert, Jane and Barry Batten, and George Bane for taking down the car park fence in order for the contractors to get on site. We had scheduled in a company to do this work but after being let down at the last minute, these kind people all stepped in to achieve this immense task which involved breaking up concrete and removing very awkward fittings. A special 'thank you' must go to John and Jane Baker for supplying much needed tea and biscuits to these volunteers; it was a really nice thought. The fence has since been put back up and this too proved to be a nightmare task and our thanks go to Jack Peckham, Barry Batten, John Leamon and a really kind Dad who happened to be at the skate park at the time, for giving up their time to do this for us. We must also thank Jane and Barry Batten for paying the costly sum for this.

Finally, after only a few weeks of really hard work by the guys at Canvas Spaces, led by the colourful and very friendly Darren, the Site Foreman (those who have met him will know what we mean), who worked all hours including weekends and Bank Holidays, and in very hot weather most of the time, our much longed for skate park was up. We could hardly (and still cannot really) believe it. It couldn't be opened without an official ROSPA Sign which informs users of the do's and don't's, and covers all necessary health and safety aspects, and of course we needed to find a sponsor for this. Thankfully, Matt Martin of MWM (Anglia) Ltd offered to do this and our sign was up.

The next thing was to make good the surrounding area. We contacted Harrowden Turf who offered to donate 4 pallets of turf. We can't thank them enough for this, it really finished off the skate park and we are thrilled with the end result. Many local people gave up their free time to help lay it and we must thank Stuart Ramsey, John Bane, Jane and Barry Batten, Sue Curtis, Hazel Williams, Sarah Wilkins, George and Harry Bane, John Stickley, Paul Garland and Jane and John Baker for this, we were amazed by your kindness. It does take an awful lot of watering but once again, Jane and Barry Batten have been brilliant and have been watering it daily in the hope that it takes and grows.

So, to celebrate our skate park, we felt an official Open Day was in order. This took place on Saturday 2nd June and we are delighted to say it was a resounding success. After a very damp morning, and several calls to people asking if they were still coming, the sun got out and the day was attended by many people. Elizabeth Truss MP opened our skate park and local support and community spirit was in abundance. The Junior Football Team did bacon rolls and refreshments, D J Jay Disco & Entertainment (from Lamberts Close) provided a bouncy castle and free balloon modelling and kindly donated 15% of their profit, Devilish Donuts (from Wilton Road) couldn't attend but generously donated 60 delicious donuts for us to sell and make a profit from, Lucy Wheatley provided the face-painting and Marie Tennant had a Boxercise stand (all these guys are on Facebook and we can't thank them or recommend them highly enough, they were absolutely brilliant). Thank you also to all those Mums who donated cakes and to Leisa Bebee for sparing time to sell them.

Finally, a big thank you to anyone who has donated or contributed in some way towards our skate park. We have been overwhelmed by your support, kindness and generosity, and also by the huge amount of children (and some adults) who are using it. Community spirit is alive and kicking in Feltwell and we thank you all from the bottom of our hearts for making our project a success.

Jo Martin, Miranda Bane and Angie Russell