

Nottingham City Council working with Catch 22 at Southglade Skate Park, Bestwood

Southglade Park is a recreation hub for the Top Valley and Bestwood areas of Nottingham. It has two swimming pools, a sports hall, a gym and a sports park containing a high-quality floodlit pitch. The leisure centre and park run classes for people of all ages and abilities.



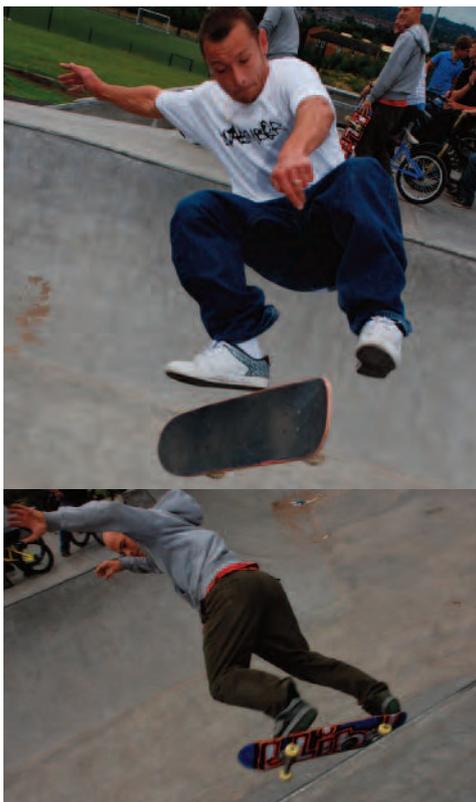
Get Your Skates On

Despite the existing facilities at Southglade, young people in the area reported that they felt there was little for them to do and that they were bored. By talking directly to young people about how facilities could be improved, a new skate park emerged as the most popular choice.

Nottingham City Council's local area committees provided the funding for a new skate park which was designed by local young people with the help of skate professionals. It provides facilities for skate boarders from beginners to advanced level and includes a bowl, flat back, ledge, rail, tear drop spine, ramps, driveway/pyramid and quarter pipes. It also appeals to other wheeled sports such as roller bladers and BMX riders.

Catch22 provides staff and runs frequent, regular sessions at Southglade to ensure young people have a safe environment to play in. The organisation is a national charity that works with young people who find themselves in difficult situations.

“We were asked to take a look at the area and do a feasibility study with the Neighbourhood Management team,” says Denton Williams of Catch 22.



“One of the big problems was that there was very little for young people to do so they got bored and started doing things that got them into trouble.

“It was very important to talk to the young people around here – the solution had to be something that they really wanted and not something imposed from above. What they really wanted was a Skate Park and that’s exactly what has been built.

“It’s been a great success, we had kids sneaking on here before it was even finished and now we get them coming from all over the city and even from as far as Lincoln.

“We’ve had very positive feedback from the young people here and from the police and other groups working in the area. It’s something we need to keep up so now we’ve opened a dialogue with the young people here we’re finding out from them what we can do next to make it an even better place.

“It can get a bit windy and dusty here so we’re hoping to build a sheltered area. The kids have asked for other activities like breakdancing and graffiti art so we’re trying to sort that out – we’ve heard lots of views and they’ve got ownership, it’s about what they want.

“This is a good space, we’ve created a safe environment because the kids know that we’ll be here regularly and they can come and play – it’s good for their confidence, they learn new tricks from each other, make friends and feel they have a place that’s theirs.

“Too often kids are promised things that don’t happen but this time it has and it’s what they wanted. That’s been really important in encouraging them to believe we can do it elsewhere – now we’re planning to try and do something similar in another park in the city.”

“It’s banging,,” Skaterboy.



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