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**New event will celebrate Chichester Skatepark**

An event to celebrate the thrilling sports of skateboarding, scooting and BMX biking and encourage people of all ages to get involved will take place at Chichester skatepark this month.

The **‘Skate, Scoot & Bike’** event has been organised by Chichester District Council and will run from 11am until 4pm on **Sunday 15 September** at the skatepark and car park located behind Westgate Leisure Centre in Chichester. People are encouraged to walk and use two wheels to travel to the event.

The event will include exciting displays by experts including local rollerblader Jamie Stenner who runs the ESP skate shop in Chichester. There will be lots of opportunities to have a go at various disciplines including all types of bikes, scooters and skateboards.

In addition, there will be a live music stage in the car park with young local musicians plus the Hip Hop collective Word of Mouth, where people will have the opportunity to take part in open mic cyphers!

Supporting the day will be a variety of stands including Vintro Clothing; Bonesmend; Chichester Fun Bike Rides; West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service; and bike marking by the police. Local youth support groups will be on hand to talk about their services including the Young People’s Shop; Chichester Community Development Trust (CCDT) and The Bike Project, plus fun games with the Chichester Rotary Club.

“We recognise that this is vital facility for young people in the area and over the summer we have been actively investing in different activities,” explains Councillor Harsha Desai, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Communications, Licensing and Events. “This event is about celebrating the skatepark and inspiring people about what it can offer our community in terms of getting active, as well as showcasing some of our local riders’ amazing skills.

“We want to encourage more people to use this excellent facility - which was built and funded by the district council - and show the wide age range of people that are involved in these sports.

“There’s a varied age range of people involved in these activities. There are many people who might be inspired or tempted to have a go but might not feel confident enough, so this event is designed to give people a little bit of tuition in a safe environment and to give them the opportunity to watch some of the area’s best.

“These activities are great for keeping fit and good mental health and we hope that this event brings them to a wider audience in the district, especially after the Olympic and Paralympic Games when people may be feeling more inspired.”

Over the summer school holidays Chichester District Council was also involved in enabling a series of skateboarding workshops to take place on Friday mornings at the skatepark. These were led by South Coast Skate Club and funded through the multi-agency Joint Action Group. These proved to be very popular and gave confidence to both new and existing users to do more on wheels.

In the run-up to ‘Scoot, Skate & Bike’, the council also teamed up with the city’s Creative Beatz and Jam Café. They have enlisted street artist Ben Cavanagh who has been working with groups of young people from the area to decorate and re-paint the skate facility ready for the event. To complement this, there will also be an interactive art workshop in the car park area to encourage creativity and inspire young artists, and will also include face painting, hair braiding and crafts.

“We hope that this event will be the springboard for future events at the skatepark,” adds Cllr Desai. “As part of our events strategy we are looking at being inclusive of as many different groups of people and interests as possible, and forging connections with as many different community groups as possible, and this a great example of how we are doing that and involving some of our younger residents.”

**ENDS**

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