

Proposed Pump Track at Bullholme:

Background: This item appeared on the August BWPAC agenda and their report is attached, last November Cllr. Nike and the Clerk attended an onsite meeting at the current Mountain Bike Track called by Pendle and interested parties in relation to the creation of a pump track. The Clerk said that the original ethos behind the existing track was to provide a safe environment for younger riders to have an off road experience and geared to their limited abilities and that funding was found by the Parish Council to construct the existing track within the constraints of both Pendle's tendering process and the layout parameters which preserved all tree's within the site set out by Mr. A. Binns one of the then officer's at the Parks.

The track has not been maintained by Pendle but still showed visible signs of use, the representatives of the BMX fraternity who wished to see an adult pump track on that site ran down the existing site as not fit for purpose. The meeting broke up with the consensus that Pendle Borough Council would report back with any progress. The first response was the report presented at the Committee inferring that it would be the second phase of the Stephen Burke cycle facility.

Perspective: The Parish Council decided over a decade ago that provision of facilities for young people did not meet the ideals of Pendle's Play Strategy with Barrowford lagging way behind other areas of the borough in borough provision and a reluctance to fund new facilities within the parish. The Parish held a number of consultations with the young people of Barrowford and it was decided to create a Mountain Bike Track on a piece of former landfill which had laid derelict for over a quarter of a century.

Consultations on both design and the difficulty level were held at the Youth Club with Ground Works who eventually came up with a design which was both to the young people's liking and affordable. The track was constructed and in the first few years was well used with the site being periodically strimmed and litter picked by the parish handymen, unfortunately this had to cease when renovation work on Holmefield House started. Pendle did nothing to maintain the track over the next few years but still there was use particularly during the school holidays. This is still occurring as the Chairman Cllr. Oliver went to look at the site the day of the Area Committee meeting and observed five youngsters using the facility.

Future Aims and Implications of the Proposed Pump Track: Adult cyclists have seen the potential of developing a pump track on this site not for young people's use but for an adult use stating that it would be a second phase of the Steven Burke track which was not even in the thought process when the Mountain Bike Track was built. The implications as mentioned at the BWPAC meeting is that this will be the only pump track within 30 miles and so will be an attraction to a wider area but at the loss of a facility which is still used by some local children despite the lack of maintenance

The proposals are aimed at a much older age group than the existing track in a sport that is completion orientated which asks the question is it to be built to an accepted competition standard and if so this raises a series of questions:

1. Who will run the site?
2. What will be the access to local youngsters?
3. Will the facility be available free of charge?
4. Will there be adequate parking with 12 spaces as provisions for the Steven Burke Track are wholly inadequate particularly at weekends?
5. How many trees will be lost on the existing site as these are what the Parks determined would be the parameters for the construction of the existing track?
6. Who will maintain the facility in future years?
7. How will this be ensured?
8. What facilities will be created as compensation for the more junior riders who will lose a facility aimed at their age group?

Until all these questions are answered and a public consultation open to more than just pump track riders and members of cycling clubs is undertaken the Parish Council should be wary of giving tacit support for a facility which in reality have little or no benefit to the residents of Barrowford whilst generating the loss of a currently used facility and increasing traffic problems in and around Bullholme.