

## Graffiti and Public Arts Scheme

Upon receiving the suggestion that I should try and do something about the graffiti on the skatepark which is located in Myrtle Park, it was suggested that it might be a good idea to hire a graffiti artist to paint over it along with the help of some young people (hinting at Bingley Youth Cafe).

I was well informed about the graffiti subculture in my younger and I have seen many examples of graffiti walls/projects, seeing the pros and cons of each scheme. I believe that painting over it once is not a long term solution and the "not so positive" graffiti will be back in a matter of weeks/months.

Having done some research I came across details about 'Honley Open Gallery' which was set up around 5 years ago to tackle the graffiti problem in the village.

The scheme is an imitation of what's been done in Barcelona where young artists can fill in an online permit.

It is located at a cricket club where the back wall was previously covered in unappealing tags. Now the wall is being used as a graffiti/visual arts canvas where artists can fill in a permit and paint part of the wall (working in rotation, with the oldest artworks getting painted over first). All artworks are photographed and stored by a local youth group, making it possible to deal with anybody painting illegal graffiti accordingly.

Having a 'free for all' graffiti wall often leads to other nearby objects getting painted too. Under a controlled system where anybody who is painting is on file and can be traced if anything unwanted happens, this can be avoided. Judging from the success down the road in Kirklees, I would say this can be seen to work.

With the Honley Open Gallery in mind. I would like to propose adopting a similar scheme here in Bingley with the skatepark/and/or other walls which attract graffiti. I believe running such a scheme would be more cost effective than having the council pay for graffiti removal and can be seen to be more appealing than the state some walls/public assets are left in after the removal has taken place. There is also the added benefit of putting Bingley on the map for embracing the arts and giving young people sometime they feel belongs to them.

**Summary:** To allow artists to paint the skatepark in Myrtle Park under the condition they fill in a permit with full contact details and conditions highlighted.

### **Suggestions:**

- A policy could be adopted where the artists are required to wear a high visibility jacket to prevent unauthorized people painting it along with other things. Making it easy for police and community support officers to recognise.
- If there is a demand of sorts it could be agreed that we wait one month before allowed the next person to paint it. If something offensive/obscene appears on the skatepark, an artist could be invited to paint it earlier.
- I am happy to volunteer to help run this scheme, local youth groups with the interest of crime prevention could also take part in the running of the graffiti/arts project.

I have requested to speak to somebody at Bradford council about this. I will also attempt to speak to the people who run the Honley Open Gallery to get an idea of what costs may be involved.