

15. **LINWOOD YOUTH WORKERS REPORT  
LINWOOD PARK SKATE RAMP**

<b>Officer responsible</b> Leisure Manager	<b>Author</b> Helen Gallagher, DDI 3722628
Corporate Plan Output: Information and Advice 8.4 text 12.	

The purpose of this report is to inform the Community Board on developments at the Linwood Skatepark.

Eric Smith, Youth Worker for the Linwood Union Church monitored the use of the skatepark for three weeks in November. This was a result from comments from the Police on increased violence in the area.

Eric Smith, Youth Worker reports as follows:

*“Helen Gallagher from the Christchurch City Council Service Centre Linwood office, asked me if I could monitor the skate ramp in Linwood park over a three week period following allegations and complaints of assaults at the skate ramp on young people.*

*Myself and another youth worker, whose wages was funded by the Council, spent the next three weeks between the hours of 7.00pm and 10.00pm monitoring the activities at the ramp. On the whole we found that there existed a sense of comradeship amongst the ‘skaties’ whose sole purpose for being at the park was their love of skate boarding.*

*The groups that did give us reasons for concern however, was, the ones who came to hang out with their mates. These young people tended to sit around near the ramp and chat and on more than one occasion I noticed they had alcohol with them, their average age being about 16. It is my belief that whether the skate ramp is there or not this latter group will always be there as the park seems to be the best place to hang out, away from parents eyes and after 7-8pm, away from the general publics eyes. As for the ramp itself, it has provided a safe place for enthusiasts to hone their skills without becoming a danger to themselves and the public by skating at the Malls or in the streets.*

*I personally am all for the existence of the skate ramp and its present location as I have found its positives far out-weigh its negatives. I think a sign should be posted prohibiting the use of bikes on the ramp as they are too big and cumbersome for the size of the ramp.*

*I feel that the monitoring of the ramp, should continue through the holiday period. I also strongly recommend that the Police do spot checks at the park at regular intervals because at the end of the day, those that do monitor the ramp do not have the power to confiscate alcohol or evict potential young trouble makers from the park.”*

**Officer’s Comment:**

Two youth workers will continue to monitor the Linwood Skatepark from 7pm – 10pm Thursday, Friday and Saturday until the end of January. A chain has also been put across the park from 10pm till 6.00am every day to discourage skaters from using the ramp at this time for their own safety. At the end of this time, their report will be considered along with information from the police. We are also watching developments at other skate sites as to what security measures should be put in place.

**Chairman’s**

**Recommendation:** For discussion.