

Evening News



NORWICH — 32p

It's a brand new look for Herbie . . . Back Page



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New £60,000 plan to build new skate parks for city's youngsters

SKATEBOARD CASH BOOST

by ORLA MOORE AND CAROLINE JENKINSON

CITY skateboarders are set to get a lift from a £60,000 investment in three new sites across Norwich.

The city council is looking at pumping tens of thousands of pounds into a project to create skate parks in the north, south and the heart of the city.

Sites already identified as possible locations for the north Norwich park are Pointer's Field or land on the Fiddlewood estate, while in the south, Eaton Park looks the likely contender. A city centre venue has yet to be agreed.

Members of the council's cabinet will discuss the proposals at its meeting on Monday. Council leader and cabinet chairman Nick Williams said: "Obviously it is impossible to satisfy all the demand in our city for skateboarding facilities but this is an indication that we do recognise the problem and aim to address it."

"We chose these three sites

'We know there is a large skateboarding following in Norwich and we are doing what we can to help'

Council leader Nick Williams

based on the requests we have received from people throughout the city. There have been long-standing requests from Catton and Eaton for them and clearly there is a need in the city centre.

"We clearly know there is a large skateboarding following in Norwich and we are doing what we can to help. Hopefully this is a step in the right direction."

The plans for the new parks were welcomed by Jo Durrant, owner of the popular Extreme skateboarding park at Norwich bus station.

"It would take from our income but it's great for the kids. It's somewhere for

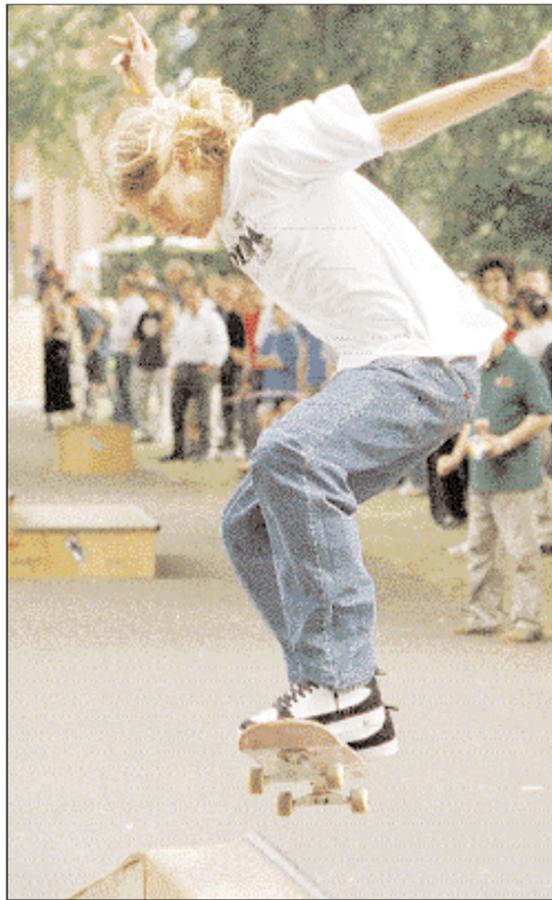
them to go and it's something positive," she said. "There are so many children who want to skate or learn how to skate."

But some community leaders feel that youngsters in their areas could be missing out.

Diana Cooper, of Heartsease Valley Drive Youth Action Group and Community Power, said: "It's a great idea to put resources into the provision of three skateboarding parks, but, unfortunately, they're on the wrong side of the city for our youngsters here. It's all very well having big plans for other parts of the city but they will not serve the majority of the city's demand. There are so many youngsters in the estate, as well as three schools."

Mr Williams said if the proposals were approved they had the funds to provide three parks this year, and they were hoping to provide more in the near future.

He added that the council would welcome people coming forward with their ideas and suggestions for suitable sites.



SKATE FUN: Norwich City Council has pledged £60,000 for new skate parks for the city's fans.

Photo: EN LIBRARY

Man in court for roof siege

by GRIZELDA GRAHAM
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A MAN who set fire to the roof of a city garage and held police and firefighters at bay for more than three hours has admitted affray and arson.

Brian Walker, 34, was finally talked down by a negotiator after more than three hours on the roof of the Jet service station in Aylsham Road.

Walker, who lives in nearby Palmer Road, admitted the offences, which took place on Thursday, when he appeared before Norwich magistrates yesterday.

He was sent to Norwich Crown Court for sentence and was bailed on condition he does not change his address and stays indoors each night from 7pm to 8am.

Prosecutor Richard Paterson said the prosecution contended that Walker had been on the roof with a hammer and wheelbrace because he intended to break in.

Walker disputed that, but it seemed an unusual place for an evening stroll, said Mr Paterson.

Police had gone to the garage after a 1.45am call that there was a man on the roof of the garage.

He refused to come down and started breaking tiles off and throwing them at the officers.

"In due course Mr Walker had stripped so many tiles off the roof he was down to the underfelt and at that stage he set light to the underfelt."

A negotiator had been called in and eventually succeeded in talking Walker down.

A ladder was put on the side of the garage and Walker came down it and he was arrested.

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