

## FROM THE COAST

### Fences Down on Skate Park

Last week the fences began coming down on the new, much anticipated, Esperance Skate Park. No sooner had we posted it on Facebook than the area was flooded with enthusiastic skaters, scooters and BMX riders. It couldn't have been a better day for it with the weather turning on a warm 34 degrees, and swimmers and yachts in the bay framed in the background by the recycled jetty timbers at the new youth precinct.

While there's no doubt the Skate Park will be well used by the youth of Esperance, the area is an inclusive space for the whole community and visitors to enjoy. It is an extension of our existing award winning waterfront, allowing people to walk all the way from Castletown Quays to Taylor St. The extended pathways also improve access for cruise ship passengers into town.

The new skate park wouldn't be what it is without the help of so many individuals and organisations. It all started in 2014 when a delegation of young skateboarding enthusiasts approached Council to provide improvements to the existing skate park. A seed was planted and the magnificent new facility was designed by leading skate park designers Convic, who were awarded the tender by Council, along with significant input from community members at a number of workshops held last year. The project has been made possible thanks to funding and support from the Department of Regional Development, Lotterywest and Tourism WA.

Volunteers took part in a community tree planting last month which saw some stunning native species extend the landscaping of waterfront, with plants carefully chosen by contractors to provide a natural buffer to areas that may be exposed to high winds. This will help to minimise any disruption to skaters as well as protect the bowl from sand, rubbish and vegetation litter blowing into the site. Looking across the skate park and over the Esperance Bay, Esperance Port and further, it's hard to imagine a better location.

Skaters have been so eager to try out the new facility. When we first posted an update on social media showing a somewhat completed skate bowl, the post reached 20,000 people in a day with commenters vowing to visit Esperance to try out the new skate park. Although the lights are not yet operational, we simply had to open it to the public who were chomping at the bit to get in there and have a go.

The Shire will be holding an official opening on the 3-4 December called Edge of the Bay Esperance which will be a huge community celebration. There will be pro skater workshops, competitions, demos and product jams, live music and food vendors. We hope to see as many people as possible come down and enjoy this fabulous community area. If you do check it out or use the area, and post photos to social media please use hashtags #EdgeoftheBay and #EsperanceWA so we can all see the beautiful new area and how it is being used.