

Kevin Hollinrake MP
House of Commons
London
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By email: kevin.hollinrake.mp@parliament.uk

31st August 2021

Dear Mr Hollinrake MP

Saving the Halfpipe, Norton Skate Park

Thank you for your reply of 16th August.

You asked to be updated on how the NTC Extraordinary meeting went. It didn't. Disappointingly Councillor Ann Spencer cancelled it a few hours before we were due to meet. She thought it futile as certain councillors were not in a position to reach an agreement which would allow work to the Half pipe to continue to its final stage. Those opposed to resurrecting the Half pipe did not wish to engage, listen to or answer the questions of residents and surrounding townsfolk. It is a disgrace. The skatepark is also now closed as dangerous equipment has been exposed as a serious health & safety risk.

Thank you for making NTC aware of your concerns. I would urge you to take a more forensic look into this matter. Yes, the council has to manage risk, and we expect them to do so, but there is no evidence to support their uncompromising position. As a father of three young children myself, I can assure you that their safety is my utmost priority, as will be the safety of the children of the many families fighting this injustice. We have looked carefully at and are satisfied with the more authoritative advice which has now been provided to council. What is a travesty is that four councillors in particular are not able to look at this advice objectively and change their stance. This is not how we level up or ensure our community has decent facilities for younger generations that are easily accessible and free to use. It's an embarrassment and it's regressive.

The longer council delay, the more damage is likely to be done to the Half pipe which is now exposed to the elements, after the team of volunteers stripped back the structure to its steel frame as part of Phase 1 of the rescue project. By contrast, other councils manage to overcome different barriers and operate successful recreational skatepark facilities across our constituency and nationwide. But we are at an impasse.

Why is it different for Norton? Because some of our councillors are not willing to overcome obstacles.

The support for the campaign is growing, as is the time council are taking to reach a simple decision to renovate the Half pipe. We urge you to help further to save it.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mm.', followed by a period.

Marc Fothergill (Norton Citizen)

Co-signatories (list of names removed)

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