

Liberal Democrat Spokesperson for Open Spaces and for Planning at Cambridge City Council, Cllr Katie Porrer

I've been very keen to work with Cam-skate over the last year, since I became the Lib Dem spokesperson for Open Spaces and for Planning and I, with my fellow Lib Dem City Councillor Josh Matthews, have been in regular contact with James and colleagues at Cam Skate. We have discussed winter facilities (or rather, the lack of them), repairs at the Jesus Green skate park where I was happy to work with Cam Skate and officers to take this forward, and also how Cam Skate can raise their profile via council meetings, area committees and in the planning process. We have been really pleased to see them at full council recently. I was also really happy to discover that it was the Liberal Democrats who supported the original installation of ramps at Donkey Common and on Jesus Green, when former Cllr Joye Rosenstiel was in charge of our communities portfolio nearly two decades ago.

Liberal Democrats believe that Cam Skate, as a group with extensive expertise in this area, should be consulted in any developments which involve skateboarding proposals. I was disappointed and surprised to find that this had not happened recently with the ruling Labour group, even in their Meadows council run housing development. I am committed to involving Cam Skate in future for anything similar and I was therefore very glad to help Cam Skate make contact with council planners regarding the proposals for a skate park at the council's Meadows which I'd noticed coming forward, and to ensure that they could have input in to this proposal even if they had not been consulted at design stage.

I've been really impressed by the group's commitment to inclusive and accessible skateboarding – offering training and support to anyone interested, and considering recycling and sharing equipment to lower cost barriers to participation. Especially in pandemic times, but also more generally, anything that encourages exercise in the open air can only be a good thing. Cam Skate provide a community of individuals to encourage and support new skateboarders in the city and want to be good stewards of the facilities that we have across the city and to work with the council to develop new and robust provision. We welcome this.

Having discussed this with Cam skate, I understand how the [Donkey Common](#) ramp, whilst well used, is not really fit for purpose any more but I would want any proposals for a replacement to be made in consultation with Cam Skate to ensure that the best and most accessible choice is made. I'm already aware of [SkateboardGB/Sport England's guidance on Skateboard design and development](#) which should also be included in any site development.

In terms of winter provision, I know that Cam Skate have been asking the council whether it would be possible to use one of the multi-storey car parks in the city for a sheltered venue and I would be very keen to take this forward to explore what permissions would be needed and to consult residents for their views on this. There are considerations around noise levels, insurance and opening hours, but these are not insurmountable problems and can be addressed. We need more options for young people (and indeed those of all ages) around our city to allow them to participate in sport and exercise and to meet up safely and Cam Skate are offering this.