# Community rallies to save historic K6 phone box in Sharrington



In a recent development in the Norfolk village of Sharrington, telecommunications provider BT has reversed its planned removal of a historic K6 phone box. This decision follows a concerted effort by local residents, who staged a demonstration to highlight the phone box's importance to the community.

The K6 phone box, which is a rare sight in Norfolk, was earmarked for removal after reports indicated that only nine calls were made from it last year. Under BT's guidelines, a minimum of 53 calls must be made each year to justify keeping a payphone operational. Villagers, however, rallied together to contest this plan, showcasing their determination by forming a lengthy queue to make calls from the box. The group collectively made 146 calls over a single day in March, significantly exceeding the required average.

Derek Harris, an 89-year-old resident who spearheaded the campaign, described the retraction of BT's plans as a "victory for common sense." Mr Harris emphasised the emotional significance of the phone box for local residents, particularly the elderly and isolated members of the community. “To know that it will still be living when I have departed this earth is very reassuring. It is a worthy legacy to leave,” he remarked.

Local MP Steffan Aquarone played an important role in supporting the villagers' efforts, stating he was "delighted" to assist in the campaign. He noted the collective power of the Sharrington community in their determination to save the K6 phone box, calling it a "lifeline" for the rural area.

BT's decision to retain the phone box comes after acknowledging the poor mobile signal in the region, which makes the kiosk even more essential. A spokesperson for the company confirmed that the significant number of calls made recently reinforced its necessity to the community.

The successful protest reflects a wider sentiment among the villagers, who view the K6 phone box not just as a relic but as an integral part of their community's infrastructure. The involvement of people from outside the immediate area, including support from abroad, highlights the phone box's cultural significance. Derek Harris noted the overwhelming backing they received from locals and others as far afield as Germany and South Africa.

This incident underscores the ongoing relevance of public telephone booths in some rural communities, where mobile signal limitations can impact the ability to communicate effectively, particularly for vulnerable residents. As such, the K6 phone box in Sharrington will remain operational, serving as both a historical landmark and an essential communication tool for its community.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://newzealand.shafaqna.com/EN/AL/1432801> - This article mentions the campaign to save the K6 phone box in Sharrington, Norfolk, detailing Derek Harris's efforts against BT's planned removal.
* <https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/63325/sharrington-phone-box> - This Early Day Motion in the UK Parliament highlights the importance of the K6 telephone box in Sharrington, reflecting concerns over its removal.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - This is the source of the original article detailing the community's efforts and the significance of the K6 phone box to Sharrington's residents.
* <https://modgov.north-norfolk.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=10634> - This agenda item from North Norfolk Council mentions the community's involvement with local conservation and infrastructure, although it does not directly mention the phone box issue.
* <https://www.btplc.com/Company/News/index.htm> - Although not directly referencing the Sharrington incident, BT's news section might cover similar decisions or community engagements related to phone boxes.
* <https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/communities-and-local-government-committee/inquiries/telecommunications-infrastructure/> - This UK Parliament committee page discusses telecommunications infrastructure, which could relate to the broader context of rural connectivity and public phone booths like the one in Sharrington.