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Headline: Forsyth letter to Hamilton

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Article: THE Scottish Secretary, Michael Forsyth, had urged Thomas Hamilton to publicise having his name cleared by a body investigating complaints against local authorities.

Hamilton sent copies of the letter from Mr Forsyth - his MP -to parents who questioned the running of his boys' clubs.

Hamilton had complained that Central Region abruptly terminated the lease of Dunblane High School for a boys' club after parents reported fears about him in 1983.

On 15 November 1984, the local government ombudsman wrote to Mr Hamilton, telling him "injustice has been cause by maladministration".

He wrote to Mr Forsyth, who wrote back on 23 November, 1984. Mr Forsyth wrote: "Thank you for sending me the Commissioner's report and may I congratulate you on your success. I hope that you will take steps to ensure this is given proper publicity."

One mother who received copies from Hamilton was Paula Morbey, who lived in Linlithgow in the late 1980s. She said: "I had been warning my friends that I was not happy about my son being made to take his top off. This enraged Hamilton."

Mrs Morbey, 42, raised her suspicions with her local council and her MP Tam Dayell. The police became involved and Hamilton threatened Mrs Morbey with "legal action". He also sent her the letter from Mr Forsyth, then a back-bencher, to back up his claim of innocence.

Mrs Morbey, who moved to Wales six years ago, said: "The alarm bells should have been sounding even then because Hamilton had a gun licence at that time."

She said her son James, now 18, had not been molested but she had been worried. "I did everything I could legally to draw attention to Hamilton but the system let us down. I feel sick about what he has done, and that no one managed to stop him." Mrs Morbey said she felt the letter "gave Hamilton encouragement".

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