

**LOCAL TOILETS STRATEGY FOR TORFAEN:**

**FINAL – May 2019**

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**PSSU**

*The National Toilet Scheme logo*



## **FOREWORD**

Torfaen County Borough Council recognises the importance of public toilets in helping people to remain active in our communities and the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 makes the case for public toilets in preventing loneliness and social isolation. We provide a number of toilets across the borough and we also welcome members of the public using the toilets in some of our office buildings and libraries during opening hours.

In today's climate of austerity and pressures on public service budgets, it is clear that the Council cannot do this alone. We have for some time, worked to encourage local businesses and community groups to open their customer toilets to members of the public and we welcome the guidance given by Public Health Wales and Welsh Government that now requires all local authorities in Wales to work in this way.

Some businesses in Torfaen already open their customer toilets to the wider general public and we hope that more businesses and community groups will respond to our requests in a positive way, though there is no legal requirement for them to open their facilities to non-paying customers. However, businesses do see the benefits of being part of community schemes such as Safe Places and Dementia Friendly Communities, which many businesses in Torfaen already participate in.

I am, therefore, encouraged that they will also participate in the National Toilet Scheme and that people will feel confident and safe to go out and about in Torfaen, knowing where there are toilets for them to use.

**Councillor David Daniels**  
**Executive Member for Communities, Housing and Anti-Poverty**  
**(April 2019)**

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## **INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE LOCAL TOILETS STRATEGY**

Torfaen County Borough Council (CBC) already provides a number of public toilet facilities across the borough as part of our Neighbourhoods (Streetscene) Services.

Since 2003, as part of the local response to the national Strategy for Older People in Wales, we have been party to the national Community Toilet Scheme campaign to work with community groups and businesses to promote toilets, providing a leaflet detailing facilities across the borough and encouraging participation and display of a national logo.

Access to toilet facilities is important to all parts of our population and not just to older people, although the focus on the older population through the national Strategy was to encourage people to continue going out and about in their local communities and further afield. Lack of public toilets is commonly given as a reason that older people become socially isolated and loneliness can set in. However, many people (including younger people, families and people of all ages with a disability or health condition) require access to toilet facilities and a lack of provision can often lead to them also limiting their social contact with others.

Research has shown that loneliness can be a major factor in diminishing health and well-being, especially of older people. It is associated with poor mental health and with conditions such as cardiovascular disease, hypertension, and dementia. The risks are similar to smoking and obesity (Holt-Lunstad, 2015 /Hawkey et al, 2010)<sup>1</sup> This research discovered that lonely people had a 50 per cent increased risk of early death, compared to those with good social connections. In contrast, obesity raises the chance of dying before the age of 70 by around 30 per cent.

In July 2017, the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 ('the Act')<sup>2</sup> set out a range of practical actions for improving and protecting health and Part 8 of the Act introduces provision of toilets and specifically local toilets strategies.

The aim of Part 8 is to ensure each local authority in Wales assesses the needs of its community in relation to toilets, and then takes a strategic and transparent approach to best meet that need. The Act recognises the financial pressures on councils so does not require local authorities to provide public toilets themselves, but it does require them to work with others to provide access to toilets in their area. This includes community facilities, wider public services opening their facilities and engaging with private businesses.

The intended effect of Part 8 is not to prevent local authorities from taking decisions which they need to take during the course of their activities, which may include decisions to close a traditional public toilet or building when appropriate to do so. Instead, the intended effect is to improve the planning of provision so that where such decisions are taken, this is within the overall context of meeting their communities' identified needs. A strategic approach will also help to mitigate any negative impacts of changes to provision.

Torfaen CBC does not currently plan to close any of its toilet facilities or to reduce their opening hours. Partners we are already working with also say they have no plans to close or change access to their facilities. Should this position change due to continuing financial pressures, this Local Toilets Strategy will provide information and direction on how access to toilets can be provided through alternative services and so aid future decision making by the local authority.

This Strategy gives the headlines from the assessment of need and sets out our plans to provide and improve access to toilets in Torfaen for the people to have confidence to be able to go out and about in Torfaen.

Welsh Government is leading a National Toilet Scheme for Wales, where all toilets available to the public display the national logo and details of their location, opening hours and type of toilets are listed on a national toilet map. This map is available on the national website at: <http://lle.gov.wales/home>

This information is also recorded and available through local authority websites and public information points, giving people knowledge of access to toilets in all parts of Wales.

Torfaen's information is available at:

<https://www.torfaen.gov.uk/en/RoadsTravelParking/StreetCareandCleaning/Publicconveniences/PublicaccesstotoiletsinTorfaen.aspx>

## WELL-BEING AND THE FIVE WAYS OF WORKING

People’s well-being is important for physical and mental health as it helps to keep us healthy or to better manage any ill-health or condition. Having access to the outdoors for play, exercise and leisure; being able to go to and from school or work; being able to do day to day tasks such as shopping, visiting friends or social groups; and feeling safe, are just some of the things that help our well-being. They are also the main things that people tell us are important to them, and knowing there are toilet facilities available for them to use at these times means they can feel confident in going out and about.

The Welsh Government has set two pieces of legislation to improve well-being; the Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. These Acts require public services across Wales to consider and improve the well-being of both the places we live in and the people who live here.

The Well-being of Future Generations Act sets five ways of working that must be applied to all policy and service developments to make sure we are doing the best we can to improve well-being. In developing this Local Toilets Strategy we have:

 Integration	<p>Looked at other parts of the Council’s business and regional activities such as public transport and travel plans, parks and open spaces, libraries, tourism and heritage sites, so we can work towards people being able to access toilets when travelling or using these places.</p>
 Long term	<p>Looked at the location of the toilet facilities the Council currently operates and our current and future maintenance and refurbishment plans.</p> <p>Identified the gaps and how we can work with partners, businesses and community groups to try to provide toilet facilities in these areas.</p> <p>We have also looked at how we can use this Strategy to find alternative toilets in an area if, for any reason, existing facilities are closed.</p>
 Prevention	<p>Considered the importance of toilets in relation to social isolation and physical activity and the impact of this on people’s need to access health services in future.</p> <p>Looked at the cost and other resources needed to provide and maintain toilet facilities and how we can prevent any reduction going forward.</p> <p>Looked at the areas where there are no toilet facilities and identified other public services, community buildings or private businesses that we can approach to make facilities available in the future.</p>

 <p>Involvement</p>	<p>Engaged with people across Torfaen and asked for their views on toilet facilities, what issues they may have and, what they think some of the solutions could be.</p> <p>We have used this information to plan our actions and we will be keeping in touch with people who have shown a particular interest in this work. This will make sure we listen and work together with our communities to provide toilet facilities that are clean and safe for people to use.</p>
 <p>Collaboration</p>	<p>Worked with some of our partners in the public and private sectors to identify additional facilities to those the Council provides.</p> <p>We have further work to do in this area to maximise access to toilets in Torfaen and this forms part of the Strategy.</p>

## **ASSESSMENT OF NEED (FOR PUBLIC TOILETS)**

An assessment of need in relation to local toilets has been undertaken during the summer and early autumn of 2018. We used the Torfaen Public Services Board Assessment of Well-being (2017)<sup>3</sup> and the Gwent Regional Partnership Board Population Needs Assessment (2017)<sup>4</sup>, to understand the demography of our population, the range and level of health conditions affecting people in Torfaen, as well as related information on people interacting with their communities.

We mapped current toilets, looked at travel plans and commuter routes, noting petrol stations and retailers with customer toilets, tourist attractions, parks and open spaces. We have also taken account of public services other than the council, where toilets are made available.

We gathered views during the summer of 2018, meeting with people in community groups, in the town centres and at drop-in sessions across the borough. Our engagement survey helped us to understand the issues people have with public toilets as well as where they feel there are good facilities. Here is a brief overview of our findings.

### **Population**

Torfaen has a population of around 92,300 and as people live longer, we will have a growing proportion of older people. Population projections show that by 2039, the percentage of total population in Torfaen who are aged 65 and over will rise from 20.1% in 2016 to 28.3%. The number of Torfaen residents aged 85 and over is projected to more than double in the next 23 years, from 2,372 in 2016 to 5,595 in 2039; an increase of 136% [*source PSB Assessment of Well-being*].

Keeping people independent and able to participate in their local communities is an important factor in managing future demands on critical health and social care services. “Ageing Well” is an international programme that is promoted by the Welsh Government and Age Friendly Communities is one part of this programme – ensuring that people of all ages can access and negotiate the built and natural environment, and acknowledging the role that toilets play in enabling this. Access to toilet facilities is part of this approach.

The British Toilet Association makes recommendations on the number of toilet facilities needed in an area based on population density, gender mix and footfall. This is not a legal requirement but local authorities are urged to meet these recommendations. The ideal level is recommended as 1 cubicle per 550 females and 1 cubicle or urinal per 1100 males. For Torfaen this equates to 95 cubicles for women and for men, 41 cubicles and 41 urinals.

When preparing this Strategy (in February 2019) the public toilets available in Torfaen, including those local businesses who have agreed to participate in the national toilet scheme, we are slightly behind this suggested quota for women with 83 cubicles. However, there are a number of toilets available in major shops and supermarkets that have not been included as these businesses have yet to signal their agreement to join

the National Toilet Scheme. We do know that, whilst some people do not like to use customer toilets in small businesses they will do so in larger premises. We hope that, going forward, these businesses will join the Scheme and so formally increase the toilets available to the general public.

In respect of the cubicles and urinals for men, the current facilities in Torfaen exceed these suggested requirements with 49 cubicles and 56 urinals

The British Toilet Association also suggests that one accessible toilet and one baby change facility should be provided for every 10,000 population. The current toilet facilities in Torfaen already meet these suggested requirements, with 10 unisex changing cubicles, a further four baby changing facilities in male toilets and six in female toilets.

## **Health**

The 2017 Assessment of Well-being for Torfaen Public Services Board tells us that Torfaen has a higher rate of chronic ill health than Wales overall - and this is the case for most categories, most notably for rates of respiratory illness and poor mental wellbeing. There are many conditions that lead people to require frequent or urgent access to a toilet.

The Bladder and Bowel Community research<sup>5</sup> indicates that around 14 million people in the UK have a bladder control problem (approximately 1 in 5 people) and around 6.5 million suffer with a bowel control problem that is bothersome (approximately 1 in 10 people).

Extrapolating these figures against the population of Torfaen (92,300) would suggest that approximately 18,460 people in Torfaen have a bladder control problem and 9,230 people in Torfaen suffer with a bowel control problem that is bothersome.

Loneliness and social isolation can lead to ill-health and by the same token, people who are experiencing poor bowel or bladder health, are more likely to find themselves lonely or isolated.

There is a wealth of evidence to demonstrate that loneliness and social isolation can lead to both physical health and mental health problems. These are significant issues affecting people from all age ranges, including our older population. Data from the Cognitive Function and Ageing Study – Wales found that 25.3% of older people (aged 65 and over) in Wales reported being lonely and 26.9% socially isolated<sup>6</sup>.

Overall, 42% of respondents to our Local Toilet Survey agreed that there are sufficient suitable public toilet facilities for them to be able to go out and meet family or friends in public places, whilst 44% disagreed. This is broken down to 50% of accessible toilet users' agreed and 37% disagreed, whilst 38% of Changing Places users agreed and 56% disagreed.

About a third of respondents (percentages were fairly consistent amongst user groups) felt that a lack of suitable toilet facilities prevents them from attending venues where leisure activities take place. Just over a third of respondents to our Local Toilet Survey

agreed that a lack of suitable public toilets prevents them from being as physically active as they would like to be. This was a consistent level of response amongst the user groups.

It should be noted that this Strategy does not have influence or is meant to tackle, the number or type of toilets available within private businesses, including those providing leisure and retail facilities. However, where such businesses agree to participate in the national toilet scheme and allow non-customers to use their facilities, their location and opening hours are recorded within national and local maps and promotional information showing wider access to facilities than just those provided by the local authority.

### **Commuting and Active Travel**

Many people in Torfaen commute to work within the borough or to places outside Torfaen. There are also people travelling through or into Torfaen as part of their daily commute.

The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 places a legal requirement on local authorities in Wales to map, plan, improve and promote routes deemed suitable for active travel. Active travel means walking and cycling for everyday short-distance journeys, such as journeys to school, work, or for access to shops or services. Commuting can be by bus, train or car as well as walking or cycling.

In development of this Local Toilet Strategy, whilst we asked Torfaen residents broadly whether they had experienced difficulties commuting to work due to a lack of toilet facilities, we did not engage with wider commuters and this is something we will do as part of this Strategy to improve our understanding and support future planning.

Our 2018 survey revealed that 23% of respondents aged 18-64 claimed they have experienced difficulty commuting to work due to a lack of toilet facilities between their home and workplace. Further research will be carried out in order to ascertain any specifics in terms of the frequency of difficulties experienced, travel methods or correspondence to travel routes. Whilst 23% is a concerning figure, through our survey we also found that 66% of respondents in this age grouping felt there is not enough information on the location of public toilets and the facilities they offer, suggesting that at least some of this group may simply not be aware of toilets they could access on the way to and from work.

There are toilets for commuters at Cwmbran railway and bus stations, Pontypool Hanbury Road bus stops and several petrol stations, as well as other public facilities across the borough.

In most instances there is parking available in the vicinity of toilets, although not always immediately outside. Some people with disabilities raised this as being problematic, however the road and highways structure through the valley does not allow for lay-by or car parking near all public toilets.

The mapping and information we have produced will allow people to know where toilets are located and better plan their journeys.

## Night-time economy

Some people (emergency services, taxi drivers, delivery drivers and others) require access to the toilet during the evening and at night when traditional toilet blocks and public services are closed. There are some commercial businesses open such as 24 hour supermarkets and petrol stations as well as pubs and food outlets.

The mapping and information we have produced will allow people to know where toilets are located and when they are open.

## Tourism

Torfaen has several tourist spots and most of them have customer toilets. These include Big Pit, Blaenavon Iron Works, Blaenavon Heritage Centre, Pontypool Park, Pontypool Museum, Greenmeadow Community Farm, Llanyrafon Manor, Llantarnam Grange Arts Centre and Cwmbran Boating Lake.

Further attractions - such as the Congress Theatre, cinemas, the Bowlplex, Karting Centre, golf clubs, pubs and hotels - have customer toilets, as well as shops and businesses in the shopping centres of Blaenavon, Pontypool and Cwmbran. There are part-time toilets linked to the coffee shop at Pontymoile Basin on the Brecon to Monmouth Canal and this will be replaced in time with a new visitor centre.

When there are **large** public events, such as carnivals or festivals, there are specific regulations for temporary toilet provision that organisers must adhere to and council officers oversee this when issuing licenses for such events.

## Access to Green Spaces

We have recognised residents' concerns about access to green spaces; only 1 in 5 respondents to our Local Toilet Survey felt there is enough suitable toilet provision to allow them to access green spaces and only 1 in 10 disagreed that they would access green spaces more regularly if there were more suitable toilet facilities.

### **Canal:**

The lack of toilets along significant stretches of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal was highlighted by many respondents to our Local Toilet Survey. Whilst there are some commercial businesses (such as pubs) along some parts, Welsh Government has had the green light for EU funding for the construction of a Visitor Activity Centre at Pontymoile Canal Basin in Pontypool. This will be part of an overall £4 million project to transform the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal into an adventure hub. The programme of planned improvements include the aspiration to upgrade the toilet provision at Pontymoile, including a better design and layout, baby changing facility, access for all and changing facilities for water sport activity.

We will engage and work with businesses and community groups based on or near other stretches of the canal, to encourage them to open up use of their toilets to the public.

All those agreeing to participate in the National Toilet Scheme will then be promoted widely to raise awareness of accessible areas of the canal networks, giving people who need to use a toilet regularly the confidence to enjoy the canal, improving physical activity and mental wellbeing.

### **Parks:**

We recognise the importance of the toilet facilities that exist in or near parks and playgrounds. Whilst some of these have been closed in the past – due to unaffordable costs for repair or maintenance – the Council do not have any plans currently to close those located at Pontypool Park, South Fields and Cwmbran Boating Lake. Should our position change on this we will work with other businesses and community groups to continue to provide toilet facilities at or near our major parks.

We recognise that the majority of smaller parks do not have accompanying public toilets nearby. Although we are keen for families to be able to access parks across the borough, our current financial position does not allow us to provide toilets in such locations. We will be taking future opportunities to work with any new partners or businesses in local areas who could make their toilet facilities available to park users. We will also engage with local councillors and community groups who may be able to propose solutions to this issue in specific locations.

### **Equality of access:**

It is important for everyone to have fair access to shops, leisure and other facilities. This Strategy seeks to improve access to public toilets in Torfaen so people can go about their daily business and participate in community and leisure activities. Whilst it is impossible to provide public toilets in every local shopping centre, within every park or near every open green space, we will work to provide facilities wherever it is practical and affordable to do so.

The provision of toilets for people with a disability or for those needing baby changing facilities, can be limited due to space and / or cost. Where possible we will look to improve these facilities over time, seeking out funding grants and sponsorship and working with businesses and community groups wherever possible.

To support people using the right toilet facilities we will work with businesses and local traders in our town centres to open up their accessible toilet facilities.

As part of the National Toilet Scheme we will encourage businesses and community groups to make their customer toilets available to the wider public. We will look at sponsorship, advertising and any other opportunities to promote them joining the Scheme.

All participating businesses are promoted through the National Toilet Scheme with map locations and details of opening times, number and type of toilets available. This can be viewed on screens or downloaded for printing out and can be found at the Lle website: <http://lle.gov.wales/home>

Local information can be found at:

<https://www.torfaen.gov.uk/en/RoadsTravelParking/StreetCareandCleaning/Publicconveniences/PublicaccesstotoiletsinTorfaen.aspx>

### **Safety:**

The council works with local police, anti-social behaviour officers and local communities to look at all reported incidents and take necessary and proportionate action to address the issues.

### **Charging:**

Whilst Torfaen CBC does not make a charge for toilets at the moment, this could change over time should public service budgets be so reduced that Council has to look at making difficult decisions in order to support our residents and continue to provide core services.

Such a decision would not be taken lightly as we are aware that many people could not afford even a small charge and this could reduce their ability to leave their homes to participate in daily and community life. This will cause isolation and, over time, could reduce their physical and mental well-being. However, Council does reserve the right to consider charging in the future should this be necessary and the only way that some, or all, public toilets can continue to be provided.

It has been suggested that we explore running a pilot charging service to test the public response. This will be looked at in the short term, perhaps by installing a temporary toilet in an area where there is no current provision. This would be monitored on frequency of use, whether it is unaffordable for some people and, whether it is cost effective for the council to operate. At the time of publishing this strategy, no decision has been taken to pursue this suggestion but we are looking at it as one of our options to maintain or improve access to public toilets.

### **Sustainability:**

We will look at new ways to provide toilet services that are eco-friendly and reduce demand on our natural resources. There are many ways to reduce water and power usage and when we are re-furbishing council owned toilets we will seek to install new services that are eco-friendly wherever it is reasonable and practical to do so. Options such as waterless or compostable toilets, solar powered lighting and factors such as flush efficiency will be considered.

We will also encourage any private businesses who are refurbishing or developing new toilets available for public use to adopt eco-friendly methods wherever it is reasonable and practical for them to do so.

## TYPES OF TOILET

**General Toilets:** These are usually the traditional style toilet block with separate entrances for males and females. Male toilets have a number of urinal basins and one or more toilet cubicles. There is a communal area for hand washing. Female toilets usually have a number of toilet cubicles and a communal hand washing area.

**Gender neutral toilets:** These are usually a row of individual cubicles with no communal area. Hand washing facilities are provided within each cubicle. They can be used by everyone regardless of gender. Because they do not have a communal area, where people can gather, these toilets are seen as safer facilities by members of the public and by safety and security services.

**Accessible Toilets:** These are sometimes known as Disabled Toilets with one or more cubicles available to both males and females. Often big enough to get a wheelchair inside, they provide hand rails, internal low level hand basins and driers and sometimes have a pull cord to call for assistance in the case of an emergency. Not all public toilets in Torfaen have an Accessible Toilet.

**Changing Places:** These are larger cubicles with a hoist, hand rails, changing bench and facilities for people with severe disabilities to use a toilet or be changed with the help of their carer. These facilities allow people with profound or severe disabilities to have equal opportunities to go out and about in local communities. More information on Changing Places toilets can be seen at **appendix 1**.

At the moment there is only one Changing Places toilet in Torfaen, located at the Asda store in Cwmbran.

**RADAR Toilets:** The Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation (RADAR) operate a National Key Scheme (NKS) to disabled toilets which have to be locked to prevent damage and misuse. A RADAR key is a skeleton key that opens more than 10,000 disabled toilets in the UK.

Toilets fitted with RADAR or NKS locks can be found in shopping centres, pubs, cafes, department stores, bus and train stations and many other locations in most parts of the country.

The RADAR Key Scheme enables these disabled toilets to be locked to prevent vandalism and misuse, so customers can be confident that these toilets will be available to meet their needs.

In Torfaen RADAR keys can be purchased from the following places:

Age Connects Torfaen, East Avenue, Griffithstown, Pontypool NP4 5AB.

Argos, 2-4 Monmouth Walk, Cwmbran NP44 1PE.

Argos, 16 Crane Street, Pontypool NP4 6LY.

Bush Healthcare, 33 Gwent Square, Cwmbran NP44 1PQ.

Haven Mobility, Unit 14, Avondale Industrial Estate, Cwmbran NP44 1UG

Torfaen Community Transport/Shopmobility, 32 Gwent Square, Cwmbran NP44 1PL.

We understand there is no need to show identification or documentation to prove a disability so keys can be bought by carers and families for someone with a disability.

There are several sources on-line if you search for 'buying a radar key'.

Costs vary across all points of purchase, from £1.80 to £10 or more, depending on the metal used and style. A single key fits all participating RADAR toilets across the UK.

More information on buying a Radar key can be found on the following websites:

<https://www.radarkeys.org/prices.php>

<https://www.bluebadgecompany.co.uk/blog/radar-keys-locked-disabled-toilets-explained/>

**Baby Changing:** These are either a dedicated cubicle within a toilet block or a small drop-down bench within the communal area of some facilities. They are for parents, grandparents or carers to toilet and change nappies of babies and young children. In some places they are only in female toilets. It is now recognised across the UK that these facilities should be available to men caring for babies and children, as well as women and separate baby changing spaces are being developed in some places.

Information on the location and type of toilets available for public use in Torfaen can be seen at:

<https://www.torfaen.gov.uk/en/RoadsTravelParking/StreetCareandCleaning/Publicconveniences/PublicaccesstotoiletsinTorfaen.aspx>

## EXISTING FACILITIES

As mentioned in the introduction section above, Torfaen CBC has been part of a Community Toilet Scheme and has provided information on facilities available from the local authority and some other local businesses. The information gathered during the development of this Local Toilet Strategy has been added in and will be regularly updated and published on the Council website; people can download onto smartphones and computers. For those preferring a printed copy they can either download to print themselves or we will work with (and advertise) places who agree to print off and distribute a copy on request:

<https://www.torfaen.gov.uk/en/RoadsTravelParking/StreetCareandCleaning/Publicconveniences/PublicaccesstotoiletsinTorfaen.aspx>

*Please note that printed leaflets may be out of date as on-line information is regularly updated.*

Information has now been gathered at an all-Wales level to map toilet facilities and support local toilets strategies by identifying additional participating organisations and businesses.

All public services and private businesses participating in the National Toilet Scheme will display the national logo (pictured below) so people know they are welcome to use the toilet without having to be a user of that service or make a purchase from that business.



Pan welwch yr arwydd hwn,  
mae'n golygu bod croeso  
ichi ddefnyddio'r toiled

When you see this sign,  
it means you are welcome  
to use the toilet



Lle bynnag y gwelwch yr arwydd hwn yng Nghymru, mae'n golygu bod croeso ichi ddefnyddio'r toiled

Wherever you see this sign in Wales, it means you are welcome to use the toilet

### **Local authority owned and run public toilets**

When most people hear the words 'public toilets', they usually think of traditional public toilet blocks. These are stand-alone, purpose-built buildings providing separate areas for Ladies, Gents and more recently an accessible unit for disabled people. Nationally, such toilets are moving to gender neutral, individual cubicle style toilets with hand washing facilities within each cubicle. These can make it safer for everyone to use as there is no internal communal space for people to gather in.

As at May 2019, Torfaen CBC has a portfolio of five traditional toilet blocks located in:

Blaenavon (Lion Street);

Pontypool Park;

Pontypool Town Hall (Hanbury Road);

Cwmbran Boating Lake and;

South Fields (toilets & sports changing rooms), Llanyrafon.

The two toilet blocks in Pontypool do not include accessible toilets, although accessible toilets can be found in very close proximity, within Pontypool Active Living Centre (adjacent to the Pontypool Park Toilet Block) and Pontypool Library (adjacent to the Town Hall Toilet Block).

Torfaen CBC has responsibility for the maintenance, management and cleaning of all these toilet blocks and directly employs staff who look after the facilities.

The Council spent around £31k in 2017/18 operating the local authority run 'stand-alone' public toilets. These costs included repairs (manpower & materials), compliance inspections, electricity, non-domestic rates, water, soap, disposables & cleaning materials, sanitary collections and staff time for opening & closing. Currently Pontypool Community Council make an additional contribution towards the upkeep of the Hanbury Road toilet block.

The costs relating to toilets within public buildings are part of the overheads of each individual building and are not part of the above figure.

As of March 2019, there are no current plans to close any of the Council-run facilities or reduce the allocated budget. However, should there be a future need for the council to re-consider its position due to budget pressures, this Strategy will provide an approach of working with partners to seek and provide alternative facilities.

### **Torfaen CBC buildings that open their toilets to the public**

As well as the traditional toilet blocks, the Council tries to make the toilet facilities within Torfaen CBC buildings available to the general public where the individual location, access and circumstances allow, such as within the libraries, adult learning centres and some council offices. These facilities support the public toilet provision during office hours for members of the community. They are listed in our on-line information and any changes will be up-dated so people can access the latest information when searching for a local toilet.

### **Other public and third sector premises and community groups that open their toilets to the public**

There are a number of other public services in the borough who support people accessing toilet facilities during their hours of business. These include the four centres run by Torfaen Leisure Trust and five other third sector organisations. These buildings are located in Blaenavon, Garndiffaith, Pontypool and two different areas of Cwmbran, they are also listed in our on-line information. Croesyceiliog and Llanyrafon Community Council lease, fully fund and operate the public toilets at Woodland Road, Croesyceiliog, Cwmbran.

Further engagement with public services, third sector organisations and community groups is part of our strategic approach to widening access to toilet facilities across the borough.

### **Businesses that open their toilets to the public**

Many toilet facilities provided by commercial and retail businesses have been primarily or solely for use by paying customers. Some shops understand that people use their toilets and recognise that this may lead to people buying goods whilst inside.

Cwmbran Shopping own and manage public toilets within the town centre, at the Bus Station and in the underground car park at Monmouth Square; there are accessible toilets at both these locations.

Cwmbran Retail Park provides large retail space to a number of established national chains, two of whom provide toilets for customer use. Leisure and entertainment venues such as the cinema, bowling alley and private gyms/leisure centres all have toilet facilities for customer use.

Many people told us during our survey, that they feel uncomfortable using toilets within a commercial business if they are not buying anything. Participation in the National Toilet Scheme and displaying the logo (as page 17) is aimed to take away this feeling of obligation to make a purchase or guilt if you do not buy something.

To extend the number of toilets available to the public, we will engage with businesses across Torfaen encouraging and supporting them to join the National Toilet Scheme and display the logo. We will look at options such as sponsorship, free advertising for participating businesses and access to sponsored schemes for free toilet and cleaning products.

## OPENING TIMES

The local authority aims to provide access to Council-run toilet facilities for as long as possible on a seven day basis. However, staff availability, budget considerations and some concerns over safety mean that stand-alone facilities are locked up at a scheduled time in the early evening.

The council works with local police, anti-social behaviour officers and local communities to look at all reported incidents and take necessary and proportionate action to address the issues.

Facilities provided by shops and other organisations are limited to their business opening hours. Likewise, toilets that third sector organisations and community councils have in their buildings are sometimes accessible, but only when staff are present.

24 hour toilet facilities are available at Folly Tower Service Station on the outskirts of Pontypool and at Asda in Cwmbran, providing options for people travelling or working during the night, whilst several supermarkets and pubs open until late evening.

Information on location, type of toilet available and their opening times can be found on our local mapping data or on-line promotional leaflets. *Please be aware that printed out leaflets may be out of date.*

<https://www.torfaen.gov.uk/en/RoadsTravelParking/StreetCareandCleaning/Publicconveniences/PublicaccesstotoiletsinTorfaen.aspx>

This includes toilets that are participating in the National Toilet Scheme, including council owned and run toilets, those provided within public service buildings (such as our libraries and the Civic Centre in Pontypool) and those provided within commercial businesses or community owned buildings.

## **OUR PLAN (OR STRATEGY) TO PROVIDE ACCESS TO TOILETS IN TORFAEN**

Using the information we have gathered over the past 12 months and set out in the previous sections of this document, this is how we will work to provide public access to toilets in Torfaen.

### **Clean, safe and well maintained toilets**

- We will continually manage council-owned toilets effectively, taking account of environmental, safety and financial considerations in relation to heating, lighting and other sanitary provisions.
- We will provide regular cleaning and maintenance of the toilets we directly own and manage.
- We will review cleaning operations and standards on a periodic basis to ensure the most efficient and effective provision within allocated resources.
- Our Community Safety Team will continue to work with the Police, residents, community groups and others when necessary, to ensure that all public toilet facilities in Torfaen are as safe as possible.
- When refurbishing council owned toilets – and when we are working with private businesses on refurbishment or development of new public toilets - we will seek to install sustainable and eco-friendly systems wherever it is reasonable and practical to do so.

### **Facilities accessible to all, at all practicable locations**

- We will seek opportunities to increase the number of accessible toilets and changing places.
- We will seek opportunities to increase the number of baby changing facilities that can be used by men and women when caring for babies and young children.
- We will regularly look at funding opportunities and work with local businesses and community groups to improve local toilet provision.
- Where there are no accessible toilets in council-owned toilet blocks, we will provide signs to show near-by facilities that people can use. These will be in Welsh and English.

### **Geographical considerations**

- We will regularly look at areas of Torfaen where there are no public toilets available and, where opportunities arise, work with local council members, town and community councils and local residents to find solutions wherever possible.

- Where possible we will work with local businesses and community groups to provide toilets in these areas or near-by, for public use.
- We will engage with the wider commuter population and work to better inform them of toilets available to them. If they identify gaps in provision, this will be part of work above, where we will work with local council members, residents and local businesses to seek opportunities to improve toilet provision where we can.
- We will look at grants and other funding sources that can be used to provide additional toilets or, to improve the availability of accessible and changing places toilets.
- We will look at sponsorship and other ways that can encourage businesses and community groups to support the provision of local toilets.
- We may have to consider charging in some locations and will explore whether we run a pilot to test out the public response to this.
- We reserve the right to consider charging for wider toilet provision should this become a financial necessity for the Council as the only way we can continue to provide toilet services in Torfaen.

### **Working with public service partners, local businesses and community groups**

- We will work with local people to approach businesses and community groups to discuss ways of making their customer toilets accessible to everyone.
- We will encourage participating premises to display the National Toilet Scheme logo sticker in a prominent place (i.e. in their entrance, or a window if more visible), indicating that toilets are available for the public. These stickers are provided free of charge by Welsh Government and distributed by council officers to places participating in the scheme.
- On a local level we will look to introduce complimentary accompanying stickers as a no cost / low cost solution in addition to the national logo, highlighting the availability of a) an accessible toilet, and b) a baby changing station.

### **Information & promoting local facilities**

- We will provide information on all toilets in Torfaen available to the public, whether they are provided by the council as stand-alone toilet blocks, are within council and other public service buildings or, are provided by commercial businesses and community groups.
- This information will be provided in Welsh and English.

- This information will be published on-line and updated regularly.
- We will provide printed copies on request at our Customer Care Centres and Libraries.
- We will work with local businesses and third sector support groups, health and other public-facing services to download and print out copies for people who do not have on-line access.
- People who use printed information should be aware that such leaflets may be out of date, as the website information will change from time to time.
- We will publish the national mapping website and promote the National Toilet Scheme which identifies all publicly available toilets in Wales. This will help people to plan their journeys outside of Torfaen as well as in and around the borough.
- We will promote information on the Torfaen and National Toilet Schemes with public services operating in Torfaen (health, police, housing, leisure centres and town & community councils) as well as front-facing council services such as libraries and customer care centres.
- We will promote this information with third sector and community groups and post on community notice boards.
- We will use social media, local radio and other communications channels to promote toilets available to the public in Torfaen.

As a quick guide, see the 'Strategy on a Page' at **appendix 2**.

## **ENGAGEMENT, CONSULTATION & SCRUTINY**

When preparing this Strategy, we carried out a survey of need in the summer of 2018. We used the Public Health Act (Wales) 2017 and the accompanying statutory guidance to develop the assessment of need for toilets and a draft strategy.

We met with members of the public to hear their views on public toilets in Torfaen. Some of this was on a one to one basis by telephone or face to face; some of it was in group sessions. Members of the public we met with included young people, parents of babies and young children, disabled people, carers and older people.

We promoted the draft strategy and consultation on the Council website.

We asked our public service partners - in Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, Bron Afon Housing, Melin Homes, the six town & community councils, Torfaen Voluntary Alliance and third sector services, Heddlu Gwent Police and South Wales Fire & Rescue Services - to promote the draft Strategy and encourage people to let us have their views.

We consulted on the draft strategy with members of the public and those community groups who had assisted us with the assessment of need for toilets.

Elected members of Torfaen CBC shared their views on the draft strategy in a cross-cutting scrutiny and overview session.

We have considered all the information received to produce this final strategy.

A summary of consultation comments can be seen at ***appendix 3***.

## REVIEW, REPORTING AND REVISION

The Act requires local authorities to undertake regular reviews of the local Strategy and provide progress reports. These should be done on a two year cycle, except where there is a general local authority election in which case the review should be carried out within one year of the election and either the Strategy redrafted or, an interim progress report provided.

Timescales for our planned review and reporting cycle is set out in the table below:

Statutory review & interim progress report for period 30 <sup>th</sup> May 2019 to 30 <sup>th</sup> May 2021.	June to October 2021
Secure Cabinet approval and translate into Welsh	October & November 2021
<b>Publish (bilingual) interim progress report on website</b>	30 <sup>th</sup> November 2021
Review within one year of local authority election (5 <sup>th</sup> May 2022).	By 4 <sup>th</sup> May 2023
If changes to the Strategy republish the full approved (bilingual) document.	By 3 <sup>rd</sup> November 2023
If no changes to the Strategy, prepare an interim progress report for 22 <sup>nd</sup> November 2022 to 22 <sup>nd</sup> November 2024.	December 2024 to April 2025
Secure Cabinet approval and translate into Welsh	April / May 2025
Publish (bilingual) interim progress report on website	By 22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2025
<b>Repeat this review process and production of interim progress statements every 2 years or within one year of a local authority election</b>	

## REFERENCES

- <sup>1</sup> Holt-Lunstad, 2015 / Hawkey et al, 2010  
<https://www.ahsw.org.uk/userfiles/Research/Perspectives%20on%20Psychological%20Science-2015-Holt-Lunstad-227-37.pdf>
- <sup>2</sup> Public Health Wales Act – Part 8  
<https://gov.wales/topics/health/nhswales/act/publictoilets/?lang=en>
- <sup>3</sup> Torfaen Public Services Board Assessment of Well-being 2017  
<http://www.torfaenpublicservicesboard.co.uk/en/Documents/Assessment-of-Well-being/Part-1-Torfaen-Well-being-Assessment.pdf>
- <sup>4</sup> Gwent Regional Partnership Board Population Needs Assessment 2017  
<http://www.gwentrbp.wales/population-needs-assessment>
- <sup>5</sup> Bladder and Bowel Community research <https://psnc.org.uk/south-staffordshire-lpc/wp-content/uploads/sites/95/2015/02/BowelProblems.pdf>
- <sup>6</sup> Cognitive Function and Ageing Study - Wales <http://www.cfas.ac.uk/cfas-wales/>

## APPENDICES (see separate document)

<https://www.torfaen.gov.uk/en/RoadsTravelParking/StreetCareandCleaning/Publicconveniences/PublicaccesstotoiletsinTorfaen.aspx>

Appendix 1: Detailed information on Changing Places

Appendix 2: Strategy on a Page

Appendix 3: Summary of engagement and consultation responses

**APPENDICES TO TORFAEN'S LOCAL TOILETS STRATEGY:  
(for publication on 31<sup>ST</sup> MAY 2019)**



**Appendix 1: Changes Places national scheme**

**Appendix 2: Strategy on a Page**

**Appendix 3: Summary of engagement and consultation responses**

## APPENDIX 1

### Changing Places national scheme

Standard accessible toilets are usually a larger cubicle that provides some hand rails, low level hand basins and dryers to assist people who are disabled / use a wheelchair. They do not meet the needs of all people with a disability.

People with profound and multiple learning disabilities, as well people with physical disabilities such as spinal injuries, muscular dystrophy and multiple sclerosis often need extra equipment and space to allow them to use the toilets safely and comfortably. These needs are met by Changing Places toilets.

Each Changing Places toilet provides:

The right equipment:

- a height adjustable adult-sized changing bench
- a tracking hoist system, or mobile hoist if this is not possible

Enough space:

- adequate space in the changing area for the disabled person and up to two carers
- a centrally placed toilet with room either side
- a screen or curtain to allow some privacy

A safe and clean environment:

- wide tear off paper roll to cover the bench
- a large waste bin for disposable pads
- a non-slip floor

Changing Places toilets are different to standard accessible toilets (or "disabled toilets") and where possible, should be provided in addition to accessible toilets.

A Changing Places toilet has specific dimensions and requirements and can only be classified as a Changing Place if it meets the Changing Places Standard, based on the BS8300:2009.

There is currently one existing Changing Places toilet facility within Torfaen and this is located at:

- ASDA Cwmbran Superstore, Llewelyn, Cwmbran, NP44 1UL

Significant funding would be required to develop new Changing Places. Estimated equipment costs for a Changing Places toilet can vary but are in the region of between £12,000 - £15,000 including VAT [source: [www.changing-places.org](http://www.changing-places.org)]. However, equipment costs will vary depending on the specific equipment chosen.

There are further costs to providing Changing Places toilet and these will vary depending on the venue. For example:

- building costs if structural changes need to be made to an existing building
- maintenance costs
- security costs

Torfaen CBC will support our service areas and external organisations to access funding to provide new Changing Places facilities in Torfaen.

## APPENDIX 2: LOCAL TOILETS STRATEGY ON A PAGE

Welsh Government Law – the Public Health Wales Act 2017

All local authorities in Wales must carry out a needs assessment of local toilets and produce a Local Toilets Strategy by 31<sup>st</sup> May 2019

Torfaen CBC provide public toilets in three main towns and in other places

There is a Changing Places toilet at Asda in Cwmbran

Some people use toilets in large shops

Toilets are also available at Cwmbran Shopping

Torfaen Council provide information on public toilets on their website

We spoke with lots of people during 2018 and they told us that:

Some toilets are not cleaned often enough

Parents struggle with space for pushchairs

Sometimes baby changing cubicles are only in ladies toilets and of no use to fathers with babies

There are not enough accessible toilets, especially in Pontypool – and very limited access on a Monday afternoon

There are other places in Torfaen where there are no public toilets

We have mapped all toilets in Torfaen that are open to the public

Currently all toilets in Torfaen are free to use

There is a new national sign and you can use the toilet in places displaying this sign

This information will be available on the Torfaen website and on the Wales toilet mapping website

We **may** have to consider charging in the future if that is the only way we can continue to provide toilets for public use



We will add in any new toilets with public access as they become available

**The Strategy will seek to:**

**Gradually improve the public toilets already available - replace equipment or make better use of space**

**Increase the number of baby changing facilities for fathers**

**Increase the number of Changing Places & accessible toilets (look for funding)**

**Improve information**

**At a minimum, maintain the level of toilets available. If any toilet closes we will seek to find another toilet in the near area**

**Increase the number of toilets available.**

## APPENDIX 3

### Summary of engagement and consultation responses

Torfaen Council staff hosted face to face consultation sessions in a variety of community spaces. These sessions were arranged on varying days of the week for morning, afternoon and evening, to ensure people would have an opportunity to attend around their work and family commitments.

The consultation sessions were advertised bilingually on posters displayed at the entrances to toilets across the borough and in libraries and health centres. We also produced leaflets containing the dates and a one page 'Local Toilets Strategy on a Page' summary, designed to present the key points in an accessible way to generate interest. These were distributed in high footfall locations and key locations visited by target groups.

The Corporate Communications Team promoted the consultation via the Council's Stay Connected email bulletins and advertised on multiple occasions via the Council's social media channels.

Local partners, across various sectors, were encouraged to share the online information and a range of partners and businesses shared the sessions on Facebook. These included Blaenavon Town Team, Blaenavon Constitutional Club, Happy Hands toddler sessions and community based staff from Bron Afon Housing.

#### Face to face and group consultation:

Torfaen has three 50 Plus Forums, which were all visited twice during the process of developing our Local Toilets Strategy; members completed Local Toilet Surveys in August/September and updates were provided in December/January, giving members an opportunity to view the draft Local Toilets Strategy and to hear how their initial views are being responded to.

Recognising the importance of toilets to older people, we also visited Age Connects Torfaen lunch clubs whilst producing the Assessment of Need and returned to update once the draft strategy was available.

Torfaen CBC Play and Youth Services supported the Local Toilets Strategy by involving staff and service users in the Assessment of Need and raising awareness of how to respond to the formal consultation once the draft strategy had been produced.

We also worked with Torfaen Carers Centre and visited a dementia support group to better understand the needs of carers and provide an opportunity for them to hear about and respond to the consultation.

We held drop-in sessions and face to face engagement across the borough, including Pontypool Indoor Market, which houses the most used toilets in the borough. We attended the market on three occasions in total and spoke to people with a range of illnesses and disabilities who were able to highlight some key issues that influenced the strategy.

#### Publicly advertised consultation sessions (reviewing the draft Local Toilets Strategy):

Wednesday 12th December 2018, 10:00am-12:00pm at **Pontypool Indoor Market**

Thursday 13th December 2018, 10:00am-12:00pm at **Blaenavon Resource Centre**

Friday 14th December 2018, 10:00am-12:00pm at **Cwmbran Library**

Wednesday 9th January 2019, 2:00pm-3:30pm at **Age Connects Torfaen**

Monday 14th January 2019, 4:30pm-6:30pm at **Tesco Pontypool**

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2019, 2:30pm-4:00pm at **Torfaen Carers Centre**  
Monday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2019, 12:00pm-2:00pm at **Blaenavon Town Council Offices**

**Group consultation sessions/updates (reviewing the draft Local Toilets Strategy):**

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2019 with **Blaenavon 50 Plus Forum**  
Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2019 with **Pontypool Senior Active Support Forum**  
Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2019 with **Croesyceiliog Lunch Club at St. Mary's Church, Croesyceiliog**  
Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2019 with **Cwmbran 50 Plus Forum**  
Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> January with **Dementia Group at Torfaen Carers Centre**

**Previous engagement sessions for Local Toilets Strategy (completion of Local Toilets Survey, informing the Assessment of Need):**

Cwmbran 50+ Forum 24/07/18  
Ponthir Community Hub / Lunch Club 07/08/18  
Blaenavon 50+ Forum 07/08/18  
Pontypool 50+ Forum 08/08/18  
Croesyceiliog Community Hub / Lunch Club 09/08/18  
Greenmeadow Community Farm 14/08/18  
Widdershins, Sebastopol - Age Connects Torfaen 20/08/18  
Pontypool Indoor Market – 22/08/18  
Pontypool Indoor Market – 29/08/18  
Cwmbran Library – 30/08/18  
Blaenavon Resource Centre – 31/08/18  
Youth Service engagement session(s) – 08/18  
Play Services engagement session(s) – 08/18  
Dad and Me session – 06/10/18

**Summary of Group Responses:**

We found the groups we visited to be generally appreciative of the effort Torfaen County Borough Council and other partners make to provide toilets and understanding of the financial pressures involved.

**50 Plus Forums**

More than 80 people attending the three forums in January had opportunity to give their views on the draft strategy. They were supportive of all actions proposed although highlighted the importance of ensuring information is also available to those who are not online. Blaenavon 50 Plus Forum fed two issues into the formal scrutiny session via the local councillors.

**Croesyceiliog Lunch Club**

This group were very engaged in our strategy and supportive of the actions proposed. They brought several practical considerations to our attention relating to the fittings within toilets.

**Dementia Group at Torfaen Carers Centre**

This group were supportive of the proposed actions within the draft strategy. One concern raised was whether someone will actually attend if the emergency cord in accessible toilets is pulled because of a fall, and whether these staff are trained in manual handling of people. It should be noted that responses

to the emergency cord are the responsibility of the toilet provider and not a council service. They also highlighted how gender neutral toilets are more practical for carers, particularly if they are caring for a partner of the opposite sex.

Torfaen Carers Centre said they are happy for members of the public to pop in and use their toilets and requested to be included on maps of toilets.

### Individual Consultation responses

We received 32 individual responses to the formal consultation.

At least 75% of respondents were in agreement with our proposed actions in 8 of the 10 areas of the consultation. Two questions received less support. These were:

***Question 6: Do you agree that the production and promotion of online leaflets will improve information and access to toilets?***

62.5% of respondents agreed, whilst 21.9% disagreed. Comments noted concerns about some people not being able to access information online.

***Question 8 a): Do you agree that we should encourage and promote gender neutral provision in new facilities developed? (i.e. individual cubicles with no gender specified)***

40.6% of respondents agreed with this action, whilst 50.0% disagreed.

A lot of time and effort was put into speaking with people as we developed this strategy and the responses to the consultation overall reflect this effort and demonstrate that our proposals are in tune with the thoughts and needs of our residents.

### Full Summary of Individual Formal Consultation Responses

The analysis below collates responses to our online consultation and responses by individuals who completed a hard copy consultation in person at our consultation events in December 2018 and January 2019.

*Note: Percentages may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding. Comments are quoted as written.*

#### Clean, safe and well maintained facilities

Question 1: Do you agree that our proposed actions will provide clean, safe and well-maintained public toilets?

Option	Total	Percentage
Yes	25	78.1
No	3	9.4
Don't Know	3	9.4
Not Answered	1	3.1

Comments:

1. Toilets need to have an attendant in toilets to ensure no damage

**Facilities accessible to all, at all practicable locations**

Question 2: Do you agree that our proposed actions will support and improve access to toilets?

Option	Total	Percentage
Yes	24	75.0
No	5	15.6
Don't Know	2	6.3
Not Answered	1	3.1

Comments:

- Highlighting nearby accessible toilets would be very beneficial for the community.
- People need to know exactly where toilets are situated.
- I have a few ideas to share if possible. (Verbally these were given as: 1) Sponsorship by businesses, and 2) Private companies providing additional toilets that are charged for.
- Engagement with businesses - not public toilets but perhaps we could still map businesses with accessible toilets who are happy for that info to be made public.
- I don't believe muddy boots in other locations would be acceptable
- Saying you will do something (open toilets for use in CBC buildings) is different to doing something.
- Need hard copies

**Geographical considerations**

Question 3: Do you agree that our proposed actions will improve access to toilets in most areas of Torfaen?

Option	Total	Percentage
Yes	24	75.0
No	6	18.8
Don't Know	2	6.3
Not Answered	0	0.0

Comments:

- Access to toilets is especially important to our senior citizens who need the facilities more frequently as they get older.
- Especially for people with special needs.
- Few ideas to share (Verbally this included concerns around lack of toilets along canal and other green spaces.)

- Maybe look at installing lights - battery or mains - in outdoor area toilets as they are often dark.
- Who's paying for cleaning and supplies? Not reopening toilets so what's the point
- Not all people, elderly and or vulnerable, who need frequent access to toilets will have any form of I.T. At the risk of vandalism it may be of value to some to have a map of toilets in town in every toilet or one map somewhere obvious. Avoiding vandalism is the difficult and expensive part.

### Working with public service partners and local businesses

Question 4: Do you agree working with other public services and private businesses will support and improve access to toilets?

Option	Total	Percentage
Yes	26	81.3
No	4	12.5
Don't Know	2	6.3
Not Answered	0	0.0

Comments:

- Really good idea!
- Who's cleaning the private toilet
- If you have to refresh and relaunch, it suggests it didn't work in the first place. More like rehash and let wither?
- I think it is very important that a mix of "providers" is found to maintain and improve access to toilets due to budget cuts that local authorities face. It is particularly important to me as I suffer from a chronic bladder disorder - public toilets allow me to maintain my social life and help me whilst commuting.
- As in many countries it would be beneficial to increase the availability of toilets in cafe's, restaurants, pubs and shops to non-customers. Perhaps some kind of financial incentive may help
- Do not like the toilet sign

### Online map of facilities

Question 5: Do you agree the national and local maps will support and improve access to toilets?

Option	Total	Percentage
Yes	25	78.1
No	5	15.6
Don't Know	2	6.3
Not Answered	0	0.0

Comments:

- Maps will only be useful if people actually know about them.
- This would be fab for the younger generations but maybe an alternative map could be displayed in public areas for those who can not access a computer.
- So long as they are kept up to date.
- Only for those with modern smart phones. What about the elderly?
- Possibly. Not all that need facilities have smart phones, ipads etc. Good signage is always needed.
- Not many older people use the internet hard copes need to be available
- But you mnd to consider that digital exclusion is a perpetual problem for the elderly and many disabled town centre information points open information centres central to towns and not non-central tourist facilities

**Information & promoting local facilities**

Question 6: Do you agree that the production and promotion of online leaflets will improve information and access to toilets?

Option	Total	Percentage
Yes	20	62.5
No	7	21.9
Don't Know	5	15.6
Not Answered	0	0.0

Comments:

- Appropriate signs alongside existing direction posts at, for example the Afon Llwyd Trail, would be very helpful, especially to visitors.
- Yes I'm sure this feature would be helpful
- Leaflets to go where? Sounds like more money being wasted.
- It will help with the 'tech savvy' but not for older/elderly users who do not have internet access.
- Need hard copies
- Ditto d renamrks on fdigital exclusion

**Signage**

Question 7: a) Do you agree that we should explore ways to improve signage on toilets the local authority provides?

Option	Total	Percentage
Yes	27	84.4
No	3	9.4
Don't Know	2	6.3
Not Answered	0	0.0

Comments:

- Wasting more money on bilingualism in a county where welsh is dead?
- This would take the stress out for many people.
- Having young children I feel clear signage would benift myself
- Just because a sign states open times, doesn't mean it will be open. More money wasted.

Question 7 b): And that we should encourage other organisations and private businesses to display these signs?

Option	Total	Percentage
Yes	30	93.8
No	2	6.3
Don't Know	0	0.0
Not Answered	0	0.0

Comments:

- Why should private business offer their toilets?
- This would help you make an informed decision on where you would like to go.
- Yes as I would feel much more comfortable going in for this if they advertised I was welcome... It would also make me feel more tempted to purchase something rather than rush home

**Future developments**

Question 8 a): Do you agree that we should encourage and promote gender neutral provision in new facilities developed? (i.e. individual cubicles with no gender specified)

Option	Total	Percentage
Yes	13	40.6
No	16	50.0
Don't Know	3	9.4
Not Answered	0	0.0

Comments:

- No should be separate like for the last 100 years... i'm male, would be uncomfortable sharing with a female. More politically correct nonsense costing money.
- I am not in favour of gender neutral facilities.
- There is no real need for gender separation when it comes to toilets and individual cubicles are far safer, logical and comfortable.
- Definitely. I think in a few years it will probably be law, so it's best to start now.
- Not fair on the females who have to contend with morons who can't lift a seat and leave it wet. Probably the same morons who never wash there hands which brings me onto another topic -

door handles. Those who value hygiene need door opening methods that do not entail touching handles. A push with a foot or elbow is far more inviting but probably out of the question due to cost which can not be forgotten.

- I can understand how this can make people feel intimidated in a public space
- Gender neutral is not appropriate when genders are physically different. It is intimidating to enter premises open to both sexes plus seats are more likely to be weeded on
- I am not sure how I would feel about using these facilities as a female I may feel concerned about my personal space/safety. Although I respect the principle of gender neutral provision.
- Baby changing facilities need to be gender neutral but where possible it would be best to provide gender specific and gender neutral toilets
- Would like ladies and gents to stay separate

Question 8 b): Do you agree that we should encourage and promote environmental considerations?

Option	Total	Percentage
Yes	31	96.9%
No	0	0.0%
Don't Know	1	3.1%
Not Answered	0	0.0%

Comments:

- In order to promote environmental issues you must practice what you preach.

**Images taken during our engagement:**





