

Cardiff Council

Local Toilets Strategy

Interim Progress Statement

February 2022



Toiled
Toilet



This document is available in Welsh / Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg

Context

The Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 requires each local authority within Wales to publish a local toilets strategy. Cardiff Council's strategy was published in December 2019.

The Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 Part 8 focuses on 'Provision of Toilets'. The provision and maintenance of toilets in public places is a discretionary function of local authorities who have the power under section 87 of the Public Health Act 1936 to provide public conveniences. There is no duty for local authorities to provide public toilets directly.

However, local authorities must action a strategic view on how facilities can be provided and accessed; addressing factors such as location, accessibility, facilities, frequency of use and quality of existing sites, as well as determining whether additional or fewer sites are required by their local population.

Prior to publication of the 2019 strategy, Cardiff Council undertook three separate reviews of toilet provision across the city, as well as an assessment of Changing Places provision.

To support the requirements of the Act, Cardiff Council adopted an integrated, community-centric approach to the provision of public conveniences.

The strategy established a 2-year implementation action plan and encompassed future consideration and opportunities, whilst assessing the evolving needs of local communities. The impact of the pandemic has had unavoidable impact on progressing the overarching aims of the strategy as well as impeding existing access to community toilet provision.

Cardiff is required to publish an interim progress statement on the 2019 Local Toilets Strategy. This statement covers the two year period between December 2019 and December 2021. The full review of the strategy will published in May 2023.

Strategic Objectives

- * *Work in partnership to enhance and maximise the use of existing facilities*
- * *Promote additional, appropriate and accessible facilities*



Aim of the Strategy

Cardiff's Local Toilets Strategy aims to ensure that everybody that lives or visits the city has the toilet provision they require to meet their physiological needs. A key component of this overarching aim is that people are made aware of the location of facilities, at the point they are needed.

The aims of this strategy will be achieved through a combination of council operated facilities as well as external organisations that participate in the community toilet scheme.

Impact of the Pandemic

Progress on the aims of the toilets strategy has inevitably been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. Throughout the last two years, many businesses were closed for significant periods of time as staff were furloughed or instructed to work from home. This limited the potential to approach partners within the private sector or within the community to explore participation in the community toilet scheme. Work on this aspect of the public toilets strategy has, however, recently started to move forward.

Key Developments

- Rollout of new accessible signage to tackle discrimination
- Increase in available toilet provision
- Improvements and enhancements to existing toilet provision
- Progress on visible signposting of public toilet availability
- Approach to City Centre business in relation to participation in community toilet scheme
- Alignment with Cardiff working towards an Age Friendly City agenda as well as Dementia Friendly Cardiff
- Progress against communications plan to increase awareness of toilet mapping within the city
- Changing Places mapping has also taken place, with approaches made to add them to the community toilet scheme as well as ensuring these facilities are also promoted on Changing Places Toilets (changing-places.org).



What progress has been made against the aims of the strategy?

Enhanced provision

The Hubs project has achieved significant gains for Cardiff's communities since it was piloted in autumn 2011. There is now a network of Community Hubs across Cardiff.

The Hub project ensures that citizens across all areas of the city have access to opportunities that enhance their life chances in buildings that provide safe, attractive and accessible physical spaces. This includes accessible toilet provision. During 2021, extensive refurbishments were completed on Rhydypennau and Whitchurch Hubs. In the case of Whitchurch, there were previously no public toilets available. The new facilities are now being enjoyed by visitors to the Hubs as well as visitors to the nearby local parks.



Whitchurch Hub toilets

“This has made a huge difference to my family ”

“My mother has dementia and it’s so hard to be confident when I take her out because I know she will need the toilet – thank you so much for putting these toilets in Whitchurch ”

“I am pregnant and I have a little boy – it is so great that the Whitchurch Hub toilets mean that we can now go outside and enjoy the park – without stress!!!”





Rhydpennau Hub toilet



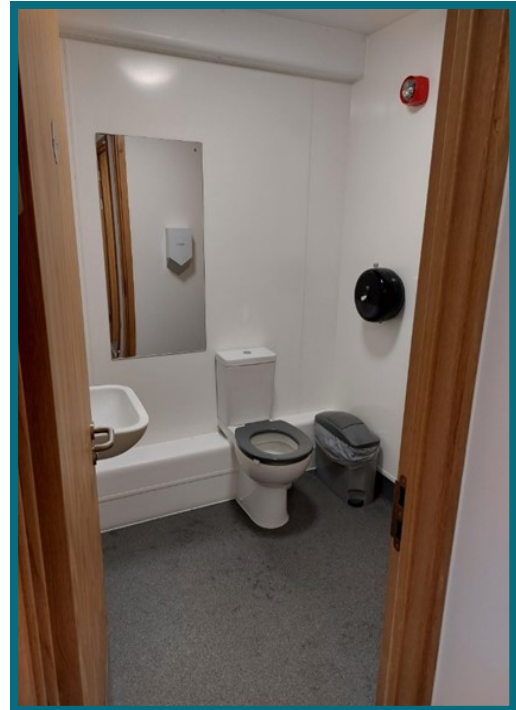
Capel i Bawb

The former Chapel at the CRI has recently been transformed into a vibrant health and wellbeing facility for local residents. It is now home to a new library, meeting spaces, IT suite and the 'Aroma' Café.

Public access toilets are now available in the community spaces including a fully accessible WC and baby changing facilities.



Capel i Bawb toilets



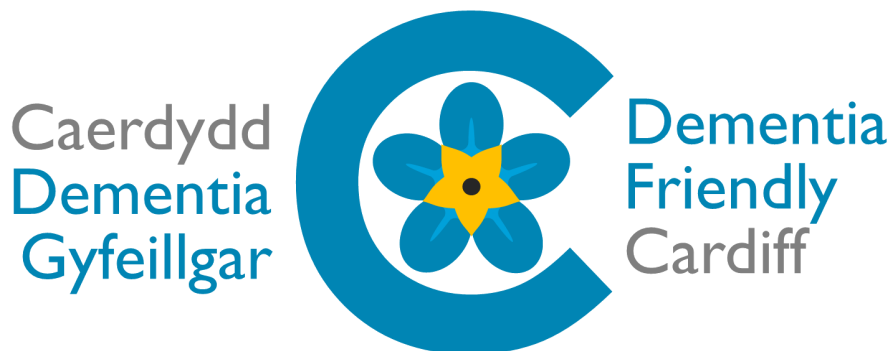
Dementia Environment Audit

Cardiff Hubs are located around the city, providing a comprehensive range of Council and partner services to the local community. The Hubs are accessible and vibrant buildings designed to be enjoyed by everyone. It is vitally important that toilet provision within the Hubs is accessible and inclusive, to cater for the needs of all visitors, particularly those who often face barriers when out in the community due to inadequate toilet facilities e.g. older people, parents with children, individuals with dementia.

As Cardiff works towards becoming a Dementia Friendly City, the Authority is committed to making positive changes to improve life for those living with dementia.

A dementia environmental audit of Cardiff's Hubs, day centres and Llanover Hall Arts Centre took place in December 2021. The results indicated that just four Hub toilets had a toilet seat that contrasted with the main body of the toilet. Contrasting colours are vital in assisting a person with dementia to make safe use of bathroom facilities.

New dementia appropriate toilet seats were immediately sourced and installation rollout has commenced.



#BeTheChange

#BeTheChange is a campaign that focuses on raising awareness that not all illnesses are visible and aims to tackle the discrimination that people can experience when visiting accessible toilets. New toilet signage designed by students from Cardiff Metropolitan University in collaboration with Pelican Healthcare, a leading manufacturer of disposable products for stoma care, was rolled out in Cardiff in June 2021. The broken circle symbolises the various illnesses people experience. The signage is representative of those who require accessible toilet facilities and who may not show any visible sign that they have an additional need for them. The new signage has been installed onto accessible toilets in all community Hubs and Libraries across the city to support those with invisible illnesses.

It is hoped that the signage will be rolled out further across the city, and private business owners will adopt it to support the 92% of disabled toilet users that have a hidden illness.



Broken circle toilet symbol



Changing Places

Changing Places toilets are facilities that enable everyone, regardless of their access needs, disability or reliance on the assistance of carers or specialist equipment, to use a toilet facility with dignity and hygienically.

People with profound and multiple learning disabilities or 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. Changing Places toilets should be provided in addition to standard accessible toilets.

The provision of Changing Places enables people to have more choice to access more activities in the community, without having to go home, be changed in undignified circumstances or be uncomfortable and feel unhygienic. Scoping of the position regarding the availability of changing places in Cardiff has been completed and where additional facilities have been identified these have been registered with www.changing-places.org.



Changing Place at St Mellons Hub



Improving awareness and information available on toilet provision across the city

It is essential that residents and visitors are able to easily and quickly find the nearest suitable toilet facilities for their needs so they are able to go outside and participate fully in their community and capital city.

Initial work has been taken to explore a user friendly, localised toilet mapping solution that citizens and visitors can access on their mobile devices. Conversations are ongoing with Visit Cardiff to potentially host the mobile-friendly, interactive map on the website. Visit Cardiff is the official tourism body for Cardiff and the website already has information such as public transport and mobility buggy. Toilet mapping could sit alongside these. Links directly to this page will be made available on the Cardiff Council / Age Friendly City etc websites.

Another option being explored for this service is for the potential for the information to be hosted on the Cardiff Gov app. This app utilises 'use of location' services and could allow residents and visitors to the city to easily find the nearest, suitable toilet facilities on their mobile device when they are out and about, at the point that they are required. Cardiff App functionality and coverage will be reviewed in the coming months and consideration of toilet communications will be included in this review.

Once the mapping project is completed, it is just as important that people know that this platform exists, therefore an extensive traditional and non-traditional marketing campaign will be undertaken targeting the people that are identified as requiring these services the most. This will include direct links on the Cardiff Council website, BOBi chat bot, Age Friendly Cardiff website, Dementia Friendly Cardiff website, bus stop posters, bin lorry promotions, flyers, GP surgery screens, through partner communication channels etc.

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ChatBot BOBi





Work is currently underway to gather accurate and up-to-date data regarding the availability of public toilets across the city. This includes locations that were previously confirmed as part of the initial strategy, as well as the addition of new locations that agree to participate. Upon completion of the data review, the Welsh Government database will be updated, with the data accessible to the public via the Lle Geo-Portal website. Lle is an open access data repository that is used as a hub for data and information covering a wide spectrum of topics, primarily the environment.

The link to the “Lle” portal is: [Lle - National Toilet Map \(gov.wales\)](https://lle.gov.wales)

The Council will continue to periodically review and update the Lle data repository to ensure accurate information is available to the public, as well as guide and map publishers.



Cleansing and maintenance protocols

Council maintained toilet facilities are subject to rigorous routine cleansing operations. All toilets within Cardiff parks are cleaned at least once per day, seven days a week. Toilets within Bereavement Services are cleaned at least once per day, Monday to Friday.

Maintenance issues, such as broken toilets, are dealt with by dedicated officers within the service. Supervisor checks take place every quarter, and a review of cleaning profiles is carried out annually.

Toilets within Hubs and Libraries are also cleaned on a daily basis with additional cleaning carried out as required. The toilets are also monitored on a very regular basis so that interim cleaning can also take place.

Exploring all available options

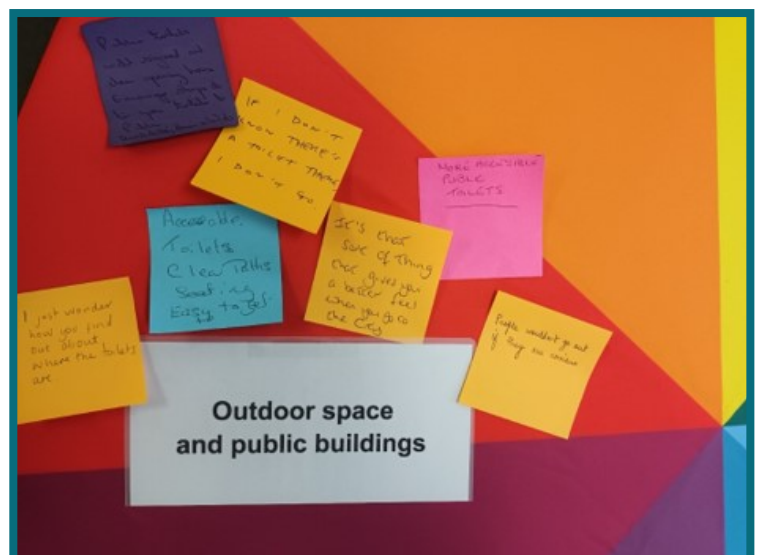
Work is ongoing to identify a range of locations across the city with pre-existing toilet facilities, to explore whether they would agree to allow the use of their toilets by non-patrons and passers-by. A variety of methods are being employed for this, including liaising with local business networks and individual contacts. This will help to ensure a broad reach across the city and, ultimately, increase the potential availability of toilets for public use.

Engagement is taking place with local faith groups and networks to explore the possibility of religious buildings allowing public access to their toilets. This would broaden the range of toilet facilities available, and importantly, provide options for people from a range of religious backgrounds.

Consultation

As part of Cardiff's work to join the WHO Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities, a consultation took place on the 10th September 2021 with members of Cardiff's 50+ Forum and Independent Living Service customers. Older people were offered the choice to participate in either a digital or face to face session at Cardiff Central Library Hub, and participants were encouraged to think aspirationally about what could make Cardiff a better place for them to live in.

Digital and paper surveys were also distributed to the wider group of members and customers who were unable to attend, to extend the reach of this work.



Public toilet provision within the city was highlighted as a key area of concern for older people. Specifically, attention was focused on a lack of clear, accessible information identifying the location of public toilets around the city. Participants suggested that it would be helpful for toilet facilities to be included on the Cardiff Council app and/or website, and another commented on a lack of clear signage. Notably, it was clear that this issue has significant impact on older peoples' confidence levels regarding going out into the community, and some said that they knew older people who would decide not to go out for a walk as a result.

As a result of the consultation, toilet provision has now been identified as a key area of focus in the Council's Age Friendly Cities work programme.

“It is a big issue for confidence in going out. A lot of people I know don't want to go for a walk because if you need to use the toilet, you're stuck”

“I just wonder how you find out about where the toilets are...”

“It [toilet facilities] should be on the [Cardiff Council] app”

“...people won't go out if they're anxious...it's not a friendly place if you can't, with your child, go to the toilet”

“It's social wellbeing and stopping me going outside in the sunshine”

“If you know you can't find the toilet, you don't want to go out...it's linked to health, linked to loneliness, everything you know. It stops me going to places that I love best”

“Public toilets well signed and clear opening hours. Encourage shops to open toilets to public. Availability shown on web”



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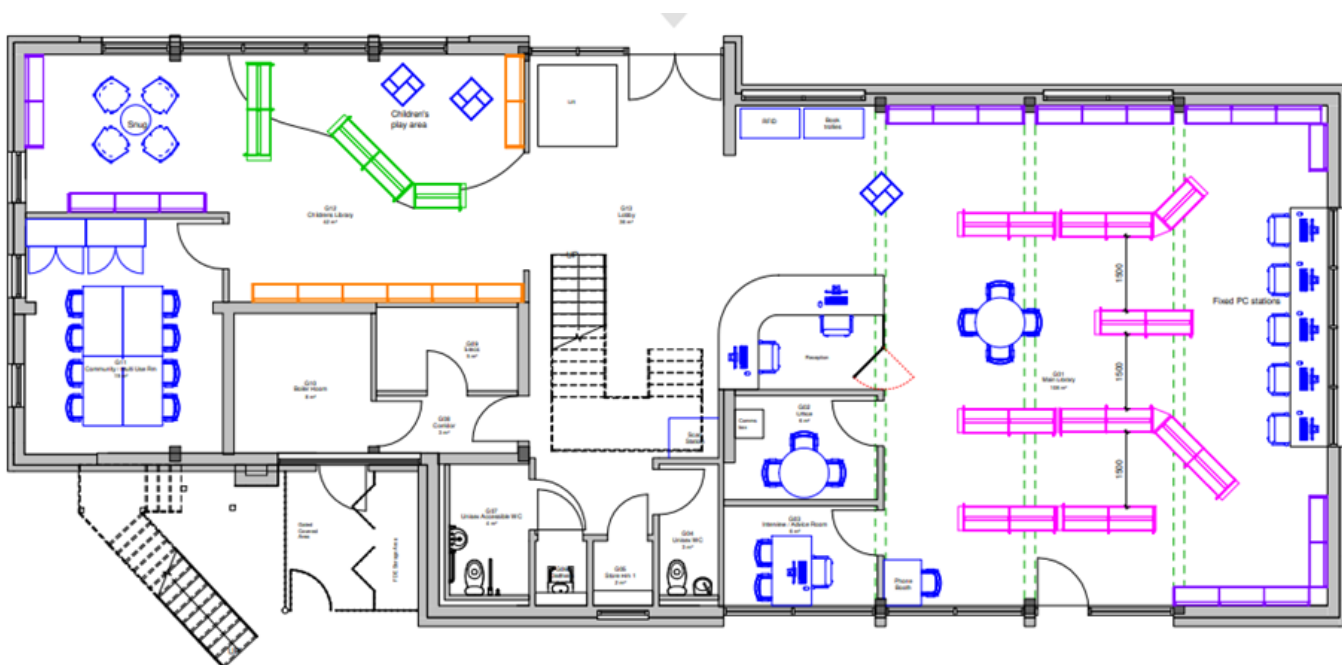


What happens next?

Rhiwbina Community Hub

The Rhiwbina Library building will become the latest in the city's network of Community Hubs with an extensive refurbishment due to be completed during 2022. The aim of this project is to secure the ongoing sustainability of this valuable facility, where the delivery of a modern library service is combined with the ability for council and partner organisations to provide a range of services that meet the needs of the community that the Hub will serve.

The project will deliver refurbished public toilets that meet current accessibility standards.



Cardiff Bus Interchange

Opening in Summer 2023, the Cardiff Bus Interchange will be operated and managed by Transport for Wales (TfW). This exciting new Interchange is an integral part of the integrated transport network that TfW are building for the people of Wales. The new bus facility will include 14 bus bays, and also provide various retail units and public toilets. The public toilets within the Interchange will consist of 8 unisex toilets, 2 fully accessible toilets, a family room, and a Changing Places facility. The public toilets will be accessible during the operating hours of the Interchange.



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Cardiff
50+
Caerdydd



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Developing Networks

Mapping of emerging toilet provision across the city will continue. Liaison will also take place with businesses and others within the community to identify locations where toilets could be made publicly available. Through knowledge sharing with Manchester, it is understood that the expansion of their community toilet scheme was made possible through a volunteer approach. The volunteers live in local areas and champion the project as well as approaching local businesses and cafes etc. These volunteers make a huge difference as they promote it by word of mouth within the community. The potential to work with volunteers within Cardiff to expand and embed the Cardiff toilet scheme within communities will be explored in the coming months.

