

London Loos in-focus: Local authorities and toilet strategies



About this information sheet

This information sheet has been produced by Age UK London as part of the [London Loos](#) campaign for better public toilet provision in London. Along with other information sheets produced by Age UK London it has been written for anyone interested in actions London's local authorities can take to improve the provision of public toilets in their borough. It is recommended in particular for council officers and council directors as well as councillors.

Toilet strategies

Age UK London has recommended that local authorities in London develop and implement a toilet strategy based on local population needs as part of their broader public health work. Toilet strategies have also been called for by the [Toilet Manifesto for London](#) group, the [London Assembly's Health Committee](#) and as part of research in to public toilet provision in the [Royal Borough of Greenwich](#).

The importance of toilet strategies

Toilet strategies provide an important framework for local authorities to coordinate the actions needed to improve public toilet provision locally. Public toilet provision can feature in the plans of many different council departments and strategies can offer a more joined-up approach for auditing and evaluating current provision, listening to residents and making decisions based on population needs. It is recommended that a named officer has the responsibility to lead on and report on the strategy.

A good toilet strategy should include:

- Meaningful ongoing community engagement with residents. This should be a diverse group, including older residents, representative of the wider community. It is important that meaningful consultation is inclusive and that people without the internet are included.
- A needs assessment based on mapping existing toilets available for public use, identifying gaps by working with communities and other partners to identify solutions.
- An action plan to review and improve public information about provision. Consideration should be given to the quality of signage, maps, website information, and the use of newsletters, media, posters and leaflets to raise awareness about toilet locations.
- Aim to mainstream public toilet provision into strategic policy such as urban planning policy.

The Welsh Government has produced [guidance to support local authorities](#) in Wales to develop and implement toilet strategies. The guidance includes 'do's and don'ts'; a flowchart outlining the process for developing and implementing a toilet strategy; and advice on taking a long-term approach.

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Case study: Cardiff (population 362,000)

Cardiff Council published their Toilet Strategy in December 2019. In February 2022 they published a progress statement covering the period between December 2019 and December 2021. Key developments during this period included:

- 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 a communications plan to increase awareness of toilet mapping within the city.
- Changing Places mapping, 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).

The full progress statement can be found [here](#).

Useful information

- Public toilets: Recommendations for local authorities by Age UK London and public toilets survey results. [Read here](#).
- In-focus information sheets on Community Toilet Schemes and planning and public information can be found at bit.ly/LondonLoosCampaign.
- The Toilet Paper by the London Assembly Health Committee. [Read here](#).
- The Toilet Manifesto for London. [Read here](#).
- Taking the P***: the decline of the great British public toilet by the Royal Society for Public Health. [Read here](#).

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