

# PUBLICLY AVAILABLE TOILETS PROBLEM REDUCTION GUIDE

(Getting to where you want to go!)



Guidance for  
POLICE • ARCHITECTS • LOCAL AUTHORITIES

And any organisation involved with the design, construction, operation or management  
of publicly available toilets

Third edition. Formerly - Public Conveniences: Problem Reduction Guide



Hertfordshire Constabulary Crime Prevention Design Service  
The British Toilet Association

Originally authored by Staffordshire Police  
Crime Reduction and Community Safety Unit

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Photo 28 ..... BTA  
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Photo 32 ..... Wallgate Ltd  
Photo 33 ..... Wallgate Ltd  
Photo 34 ..... Bichard, VivaCity 2020 (2006)  
Photo 35 ..... FW3 Holdings Ltd  
Photo 36 ..... Wallgate Ltd  
Photo 37 ..... Wallgate Ltd  
Photo 38 ..... Bichard, VivaCity 2020 (2006)  
Photo 39 ..... Bichard, VivaCity 2020 (2006)  
Photo 40 ..... Bichard, VivaCity 2020 (2006)  
Photo 41 ..... Bichard & Knight, TACT3, 2009  
Photo 42 ..... Bichard, VivaCity 2020 (2006)  
Photo 43 ..... BTA  
Photo 44 ..... LOYA  
Photo 45 ..... Mike Le-Surf  
Photo 46 ..... LOYA  
Photo 47 ..... Wallgate Ltd  
Photo 48 ..... LOYA  
Photo 49 ..... Gillian Kemp  
Photo 50 ..... Gillian Kemp  
Photo 51 ..... LOYA  
Photo 52 ..... Gerry Brophy  
Photo 53 ..... Bichard, VivaCity 2020 (2006)  
Photo 54 ..... Bichard, VivaCity 2020 (2006)  
Photo 55 ..... Bichard, VivaCity 2020 (2006)  
Photo 56 ..... Danfo (UK) Ltd  
Photo 57 ..... Danfo (UK) Ltd  
Photo 58 ..... Gerry Brophy  
Photo 59 ..... Bichard, VivaCity 2020 (2006)  
Photo 60 ..... Gillian Kemp  
Photo 61 ..... Gerry Brophy  
Photo 62 ..... Bichard & Knight, TACT3, 2009  
Photo 63 ..... Bichard & Knight, TACT3, 2009

# Contents

<b>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>MANAGEMENT SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>8</b>
Conservation areas .....	8
Background .....	8
Why this Guide is needed .....	9
<b>SUGGESTIONS FOR BEST PRACTICE</b>	
<b>LOCATION .....</b>	<b>10</b>
Orientation.....	10
Natural surveillance.....	10
Artificial surveillance .....	11
Shrubbery.....	11
Perimeter .....	11
Pathways.....	12
Parking.....	12
Cycles, Buggies, Prams - and Dogs .....	13
Accessibility.....	14
Lighting.....	14
Street furniture .....	15
Siting (public toilets in close proximity to other buildings) .....	15
An attractive environment .....	16
Signage .....	17
<b>BUILDING EXTERIOR.....</b>	<b>20</b>
Walls.....	20
Roofing.....	20
Guttering and downpipes .....	21
Windows.....	21
Ventilation.....	21
Lighting.....	22
Servicing .....	22
Storage.....	23
Entrance / Exit.....	23

## **BUILDING INTERIOR.....24**

Impersonal surveillance: CCTV.....	24
Personal surveillance: Attendants .....	25
Ceiling .....	26
Walls.....	26
Floor.....	27
Lighting (Internal) .....	27
Doors.....	28
Cubicles .....	28
Toilet pan.....	29
Urinals .....	30
Flush .....	30
Toilet tissue dispensers.....	31
Sanpro bins .....	31
Handwashing / Drying .....	32
Sharps bins .....	33
Shelving .....	33
Hooks .....	34
Mirrors .....	34
Commercial Product Dispensers.....	34
Drinking water .....	34
Signage.....	35
Cleaning .....	35
Maintenance.....	36

## **OTHER FACILITIES.....37**

ACCESSIBLE TOILETS .....	37
General .....	37
Entrance / Exit .....	37
Fixtures and fittings within the accessible toilet .....	38
Emergency cord .....	38
Storage.....	38
CHANGING PLACES FACILITIES .....	39
General .....	39
External Access.....	39
Internal Access .....	39
Maintenance.....	39
FAMILY CUBICLES .....	40
General .....	40
Toilet pans and urinals .....	40
Baby changing benches.....	41
Paper Rolls .....	41
Toilet tissue .....	41
Disposal .....	41
Maintenance.....	41

AUTOMATIC PUBLIC CONVENIENCE (APC) .....	42
General .....	42
Location.....	42
Signage.....	43
Length of stay.....	43
Windows.....	44
Service area .....	44
STREET URINALS / URILIFTS / POP UPS.....	45
General .....	45
<b>REFURBISHMENT OF PUBLICLY AVAILABLE TOILETS .....</b>	<b>46</b>
General .....	46
Advice .....	47
Considerations .....	47
<b>INCOME GENERATION .....</b>	<b>48</b>
CHARGING .....	48
General .....	48
Charging.....	48
Signage.....	49
Cycles, Buggies, Prams, Motor Scooters.....	49
COMMERCIAL PRODUCT DISPENSERS .....	49
ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES .....	50
SMALL RETAIL OPPORTUNITIES .....	51
SPONSORSHIP .....	51
<b>CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>CONTACTS .....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY.....</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>LIST OF COMPANIES &amp; ORGANISATIONS.....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>SELF ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST .....</b>	<b>56</b>

# MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

It is the intention of this document to provide practical guidance and advice for the Police Service, Architects, Local Authorities and anyone involved with the design, construction, operation or management of Publicly Available Toilets.

The aim of this practitioners' short Guide is to:

- Highlight best crime prevention practice in toilet design
- Provide suggestions to design out crime and misuse
- Allow assessment by the use of a self check list
- Encourage working together in partnership

This publication is one of a series of Police Architectural Liaison documents providing advice and good practice on Crime Reduction and Community Safety

# INTRODUCTION

This Guide is aimed at the Police Service, Architects, Local Authorities and any other individual or organisation involved with:

- Building new toilet facilities
- The refurbishment of existing facilities
- Dealing with problem sites

It can also be used:

- As a background to consultation
- As a benchmark for assessment
- As an aid to problem solving

## Conservation areas

The appropriate regulations for conservation areas must be implemented.

## Background

The Victorian era saw the rapid introduction of toilet facilities for public use in town centres, parks and other public areas. This was in an effort to alleviate appalling health problems associated with both open sewers and standards of public behaviour.

Many of these original facilities were built in locations that allowed their use to go 'unseen' by the general public. This desire to 'hide away' the facility has, at times, caused them to be used for unintended purposes. The internal layout of many existing toilet blocks has also encouraged misuse. Such incidents have led to calls to 'close them down'. In addition, the need to comply with new legislation, such as the Disabled Discrimination Act, has resulted in some facilities being closed because of the cost of remedial works. This has resulted in a severe reduction of available toilets.

Over the course of time, lifestyles have changed and now reflect an increased need for this most basic and essential facility. One of the Government's stated intentions is to 'get people out of cars'. This has and will continue to result in longer periods away from home as people take to bicycles or walk. If we factor in the 'leisure rich' times in which we live, the need for more public toilets starts to become apparent. A quick look around town centres on a weekend will also produce evidence of such a requirement.

A happy consequence of modern living is that we are enjoying longer and healthier lives. People with or without physical disabilities are surviving into their 80's or 90's in increasing numbers. As a consequence, legislation to incorporate 'lifetime' designs into all new housing stock has been enacted. This consideration should also be reflected in the supply of public toilets.

If we accept that the need for publicly available toilets is on the increase, we should ensure that they are built in suitable locations with security and functionality designed in. The crime prevention world has moved on and lessons learnt must be incorporated into the designs.



When we consider how to improve existing facilities that have deteriorated, or were inappropriately designed by modern standards, we may have to think in different terms. The surrounding and internal environments will have to be examined in detail in an effort to understand why the facility is failing and what changes can be made to bring about the desired improvement.

For too long, public toilets have been considered in isolation, rather than being seen as a constituent part of all locations where the public congregates or passes through. If public toilets are considered within the design context of their location, they can be built to complement and enhance the area rather than contribute to its decline.

*Gerry Brophy*

## **Why this Guide is needed**

- The field of crime prevention has progressed and so the existing document has been updated in order to reflect the needs of a changing society
- To ensure sustainable reductions in crime and anti-social behaviour
- To promulgate good practice
- To stimulate new ideas
- To help reduce costs and manpower commitments
- To unify action and effort

# SUGGESTIONS FOR BEST PRACTICE

## LOCATION

### Orientation



Photo 2

- Toilet blocks or direct access cubicles? Whatever the choice there are a number of considerations to be addressed in order to discourage vandalism. The more visibility and accessibility there is the better.
- A well used location reduces opportunities for vandalism.
- Smaller locations where there is a sense of ownership by the community have been found to limit incidents of vandalism.
- Building toilets in subways are to be avoided as there are too many opportunities for loitering and natural surveillance is limited.
- Large open spaces with short cuts should be avoided.
- Locations near unsupervised or areas where children can play unseen should be avoided.

### Natural surveillance

- The practice in the past of hiding the door at the rear of the building is discouraged.
- Having the entrance to the toilets facing the street / footpath / car park / road provides natural surveillance.
- A high level of footfall past a toilet block increases natural surveillance and limits the opportunities for vandalism to occur.
- Blind corners and dark alleyways should be avoided.

## Artificial surveillance

- If CCTV is deemed necessary to reduce misuse, siting the toilet facility within an open area where CCTV coverage is already installed may be more appropriate.
- Positioning and usage of CCTV equipment must be in accordance with the appropriate regulations.

## Shrubbery

- If shrubbery is to be used it is recommended that the plants selected should have a 'mature growth height no higher than 1 metre and trees should have no foliage below 2 metres, thereby allowing a 1 metre clear field of vision' [ACPO Secured by Design, New Homes 2010, page 31]. This ensures the building is more visible to both users and passers by whilst restricting places in which to loiter and hide.
- The shrubbery should be deliberately dense in order to deter people crossing it but not too prickly so as to trap litter and spoil the appearance of the surroundings.
- Wall climbing plants can help prevent graffiti.
- The use of soft landscaping with well tended flower beds or hanging baskets makes the building appear attractive and welcoming, but must be maintained as otherwise it can be counter productive.

## Perimeter



Photo 3

- If the building has to be enclosed, then weld mesh fencing is recommended as it provides unobtrusive natural surveillance whilst reducing places for loitering.
- Railings which deny casual access are an alternative.
- Gates and chain link fencing are not recommended.
- Any feature which could be used as a climbing aid, e.g. bins, boundary walls or flat roofs, should be avoided.

## Pathways

- ‘.....pedestrian routes should be designed to ensure that they are visually open, direct and well used.’ [ACPO Secured by Design, New Homes 2010, page 9]
- There should not be too many pathways to the facility which might inadvertently facilitate criminal activity or anti-social behaviour.
- Constructing pathways at the rear of a toilet block should be avoided.
- Pathways should be ‘at least 3 metres wide (to allow people to pass without infringing personal space) with at least a 2 metre verge on either side.’ [ACPO Secured by Design, New Homes 2010, page 12].
- Pathways should be kept free of overgrown shrubbery to prevent possible hiding places.
- Consideration as to possible misuse should be given to the surface material chosen for pathways. For example, gravel could be used as missiles.

## Parking



Photo 4

- Situating public toilets in a car park provides natural surveillance and extends usage to a wider range of people including mobile workers who are often ignored when toilets are under consideration, e.g. taxi drivers, delivery personnel, health visitors and care assistants.
- It is recommended that only parking for disabled users should be allowed directly next to the toilet block, providing easy access to the facility but discouraging loitering.

## Cycles, Buggies, Prams - and Dogs



Photo 5



Photo 6

- Many owners are wary of leaving their property outside a public toilet in case it is stolen. The provision of secure anchorage will help to reduce incidents of theft. Railings could be used for this purpose.
- Somewhere to tether one's dog is also very useful – possibly even with a dog bowl – and would add to the welcoming atmosphere that should be engendered.



Photo 7

## Accessibility



Photo 8

- Toilets should preferably be at ground level with clear access.
- Stairs and lifts incur costs and attract problems with fouling and criminal activity.
- Lifts require maintenance. If they are rendered out of action and stairs are the only route to the facilities problems with access will arise.
- Having toilets at ground level assists maintenance workers, enabling any repair / replacement / cleaning requirements to be dealt with more easily. This means the facilities remain in good order and the opportunity to vandalise the property is reduced.

## Lighting



Photo 9

- Appropriate anti-vandalism luminaries should be installed.
- Lighting should not conflict with other crime prevention measures.
- Lighting should be uniform in nature with no shadows.
- It is advised that lighting should only be used when the toilets are open.

## Street furniture



Photo 10

- Secured seating outside of the toilet building and just a short distance away in a well used position with natural surveillance may be a useful addition to the area, allowing people to rest or wait for each other.
- The use of bench seats divided by individual armrests creates space between the sitters and discourages anti-social behaviour and misuse.

## Siting (public toilets in close proximity to other buildings)



Photo 11

- This may offer additional surveillance, depending on the area.
- However, the surrounding buildings should appear well maintained and be visibly in use. Rundown, dilapidated buildings would be counter productive and encourage vandalism rather than reduce it.
- The disadvantage of relying on nearby buildings to offer some protection against vandalism is that when the buildings are closed surveillance is reduced.
- Appropriate signage about opening times and alternative facilities is therefore important in discouraging misuse.

## An attractive environment



Photo 12

- Pleasant, well maintained surroundings discourage vandalism.
- If a facility appears welcoming, safe, well maintained and caters for as many people as possible, it will be used and vandalism will be considerably reduced.



## Signage

'Uncertainty of ownership can reduce responsibility and increase the likelihood of crime and anti-social behaviour going unchallenged' [ACPO Secured by Design. New Homes 2010, page 7].

### Directional



Photo 13

- Clear and appropriate signage can increase usage and therefore reduce the opportunity for crime.
- Appropriate, legible signage about opening times and alternative facilities is important in order to discourage street fouling which may occur when toilets are not available or are inaccessible.

### Information for potential users

- **Websites:** Easy to find, clear, detailed information on a Council's website about the available toilets would be very helpful to the prospective user and advantageous to the community. Whilst some Councils consider such advertising as an invitation to damage the facilities, well used and well maintained toilets do, in fact, deter potential vandals. Having public toilets available increases footfall to the area and brings with it financial benefits whilst cutting costs to the public health purse.
- **Maps:** Wherever maps of an area are available, e.g. at tourist information offices, council offices, information boards and on websites, they should include the locations of public toilets. This assists with planning a visit to an area.

## Information in the area



Photo 14

- A clear sign visible from the main thoroughfare, identifying it as a toilet facility, will allow for quick recognition. Symbols are better than words and can be understood by all nationalities.



Photo 15

- Additional signs on the exterior of the toilet building should include:
  - o The opening hours.
  - o The address of alternative facilities should the toilets be closed for any reason.
  - o Up to date contact details – telephone, text and possibly email – to enable visitors to the toilets the opportunity to report any problems and thereby assist in keeping the facilities well maintained.
  - o Symbols advising what is available at the facility, e.g. baby changing, accessible toilet, family cubicle, male and female facilities, which can be particularly helpful.

## Condition of signage

- All signage should be well maintained.
- All signage should be up to date.
- Attractive signage within an area provides both a focus and a talking point for the local community, and is rarely vandalised.



Photo 16

# BUILDING EXTERIOR



Photo 17

## Walls

- Smooth surfaces encourage graffiti and should be avoided.
- Whilst rough cast surfaces and bricks may not be easy to clean they do act as a deterrent for graffiti artists.
- Special non-stick paints and coatings are recommended to deter graffiti.
- The design of the building should not provide a climbing opportunity.
- If the toilet block is in a conservation area there may be special requirements which will need to be addressed.

## Roofing



Photo 18

- Pitched roofs are recommended to deter climbing.

## Guttering and downpipes

- Guttering and downpipes should be installed in a way that does not provide a climbing opportunity.
- In new builds it is recommended that downpipes are installed inside the building flush to the wall.

## Windows



Photo 19

- Laminated glass is recommended. Laminated glass reduces the scope for damage and has inherent thermal and acoustic qualities.
- Roof lights and sky pipes are alternatives to windows.
- Windows should be installed as high as possible in the building to make access more difficult.
- Windows should have restricted opening or be non-opening.
- Small panes of glass are easier to replace than larger panes.
- Alternatives such as glass blocks may be considered.

## Ventilation

- Ventilation is important to limit the effects of condensation and to alleviate the accumulation of odours.
- Ventilation should be as natural as possible. Correct positioning of the entrances and exits to the building should allow reasonable ventilation into the building.
- Mechanical ventilation will be required where natural ventilation is not possible. However, this is expensive and will require maintenance. Vandal resistant air vents are one solution.
- Automatic air fresheners can be aggravators of asthma conditions [*Hanson et al, 2007*].

## Lighting

- External lighting is only appropriate whilst the facility is open.
- If lighting sensors are used then a means by which security is maintained in the event of failure must be considered.
- Lighting provides comfort for the user and is also a crime deterrent.
- Security luminaries should be installed flush into the soffits.
- Low energy lighting that does not cast shadows is recommended.
- Several low energy lights casting an even illumination are better than isolated spot lighting.
- Sensors reduce light pollution and encourage sustainability.

## Servicing



Photo 20

- A service area should be included in the design of the toilet building wherever possible. This will allow maintenance to be completed in a separate area from user areas.
- Separate servicing and public access doors are recommended.
- The inclusion of a service area also helps to protect the mechanism of the units in the cubicles from possible damage.
- External access to maintenance areas is recommended.
- Service area doors should be secured with suitable vandal resistant locks.



Photo 21

## Storage

- Separate access for the storage of materials, including consumable items and cleaning materials, reduces theft and damage and provides security of storage for hazardous materials.
- Storage areas should be secured with suitable vandal resistant locks.

## Entrance / Exit

- In order to aid surveillance and reduce places for loitering, there should be no physical doors at the entrances / exits to toilet blocks. This does not include direct access cubicles.
- Entrances and exits should be located in a position that retains privacy whilst maintaining opportunities for natural surveillance (see section on LOCATION).
- It is recommended that the following be avoided:
  - o Sheltered entrances and exits providing a 'gathering' space.
  - o Entrances and exits at the rear of the building.
  - o Blind corners and alleyways.
  - o Exiting into direct sunlight.
- Entrance barriers may be installed but must be to a design that allows access for all types of users.
- Fire evacuation risk – which is increased with the use of barrier entries - should be evaluated as part of the risk assessment.



Photo 22

# BUILDING INTERIOR

## Impersonal surveillance: CCTV



Photo 23



Photo 24

- CCTV inside a large public toilet area may be considered necessary and beneficial if there is a history of vandalism in the area.
- Appropriate signage will need to be displayed.
- CCTV should only be sited to view washing, drying or cubicle access areas and must not provide any viewing of urinal areas or the insides of cubicles.
- As with external CCTV such installations are only successful if monitoring is controlled effectively and regular maintenance of the system is carried out.



## Personal surveillance: Attendants



Photo 25

- The presence of an attendant deters vandalism, allows for prompt reporting of any defects and helps to maintain the standards of cleanliness within the facility.
- The presence of an attendant means that someone is always on hand in the case of user difficulty or emergency.
- An attendant will have some personal basic requirements for his / her health and comfort whilst on duty. This will include a space to store outer clothing and personal items safely.
- The benefits of having an attendant in public toilets need to be weighed against the costs of repairing acts of criminal damage.
- The presence of an attendant with immediate recourse to repair and maintenance contacts should they be necessary may be less costly than installing a CCTV system.

## Ceiling

- The ceiling should be high enough not to encourage graffiti or other forms of damage (Note: Building Regulations to be taken into account).
- The ceiling should be constructed so as not to provide hiding places.

## Walls



Photo 26

- Low maintenance, graffiti resistant surfaces such as tough glazed ceramic tiles that meet the requirements of the DDA (i.e. reduction of glare for visually impaired people) are advised for internal walls and possibly cubicles. They are easy to keep clean.
- Low maintenance, graffiti resistant panels for cubicles are attractive and are easy to keep clean.
- All walls should be strong enough to hold any fittings. Appropriate fixings will be required to secure items to non masonry walling.
- Walls and fixtures should be strong enough to hold any fitting when the weight of a person is applied (e.g. people leaning on toilet roll holder for support).
- All walls should be impact resistant to minimise the need for maintenance and repair and retain an attractive appearance.
- Walls should be light reflecting. A light colour scheme such as an off-white colour is softer and preferable to a harsh bright white and shows marks less. Special non-stick paints and coatings are also available.

## Floor



Photo 27

- The floor should be slip resistant.
- The floor should be designed so that any excess water can drain away.

## Lighting (Internal)



Photo 28

- Secure luminaries should be installed flush with the ceiling.
- Low energy lighting that does not cast shadows is essential.
- Natural light should be taken from roof space if possible in order to reduce damage and opportunities for voyeurism.
- It is recommended that lighting is only available when the facility is in use.
- Sensors reduce light pollution and encourage sustainability.
- Blue lighting is not recommended. Partially sighted users find it difficult to negotiate such an environment; people with autism find it unsettling. Drug users make alternative arrangements.

## Doors



Photo 29

- Doors will require careful consideration with regard to issues relating to wheelchair mobility and health and safety.
- Cubicle door locks which can be opened from the outside more easily in an emergency are recommended.
- In direct access toilet blocks a viewing out only facility for use from within the cubicles (such as installed in hotel rooms) should be considered.

## Cubicles



Photo 30

- Having a gap either above or below the cubicle partitions makes sounds audible and discourages misuse. It also makes floor cleaning easier.
- Partitioning between each cubicle should be drill resistant to avoid holes being made for illicit use.

- The height of cubicle partitions should conform to the current British Standards to ensure privacy for the user and deter voyeurism and theft either from above or below the cubicle partitions. (BS6465 Part 4 recommends that the height of a cubicle wall or door should not be less than 1900 mm and any gaps beneath walls and doors should not exceed 150 mm).
- If a family cubicle is not available then space to move within the cubicle with room for bags, children or a buggy is recommended to avoid theft. However, as mentioned before, a suitably secure anchorage for leaving buggies and prams outside should also be considered.

## Toilet pan



Photo 31



Photo 32

- Solid surface and stainless steel toilet pans both have vandal resistant properties.
- Stainless steel is easier to scratch and is difficult to maintain a pleasing appearance. However it is suitable for low footfall areas.
- Where there is a high level of usage, solid surface fittings and fixtures should be considered. They require heavy instruments and intense activity in order to cause damage. They are offered in a wide range of colours and are easy to clean. As they look attractive they have been found not to attract vandalism as much as the more austere stainless steel products and are more comfortable to use.
- Both solid surface pans and stainless steel pans can be installed with or without toilet seats. Solid surface pans can have a change of colour which appears to indicate a seat is in fact present. Apart from being easier to clean, a lack of a toilet seat discourages misuse and reduces maintenance.

## Urinals



Photo 33

- Unisex facilities are more inclusive and are preferable in all locations unless site specifics determine otherwise.
- Greater privacy for men needs consideration. Many men feel vulnerable in conventional male urinals that do not provide any privacy – whether perceived or actual.
- If urinals are to be installed privacy screens between urinals lessen the the sense of being observed.
- Stainless steel and solid service urinals provide vandal resistance and offer surfaces that are easy to clean with no gaps or crevices.
- The problems of anti-social behaviour and public needs are site specific and will form part of the risk assessment.

## Flush



Photo 34

- A non-touch system with a concealed cistern provides less opportunity to vandalise the unit and is more hygienic.

## Toilet tissue dispensers

- As well as being within easy reach and obtainable using one hand, the toilet tissue should be enclosed in a lockable container, to deter vandals.
- A large dispenser enables a bigger roll to be inserted which reduces the need for additional rolls to be sited within the cubicle thus discouraging theft or wastage from being dropped or thrown around. However this does reduce space within the cubicle.
- A roll of paper is preferable to single sheets which can easily be dropped from the dispenser and cause litter and an uncared for appearance to the facility thereby encouraging further unwanted behaviour.

## Sanpro bins



Photo 35



Photo 36

- Sanpro bins used for the disposal of feminine hygiene products and incontinence pads are seldom vandalised because of the nature of the contents (photo 26). However, they may be used to conceal items.
- Ducted disposal chutes or wall mounted bins are available. Not only do they allow more space in the cubicle, they also improve the appearance of the toilet area and thereby contribute to discouraging vandalism of the facilities (photo 27).
- Ducted systems are maintained from the service area behind the cubicles again discouraging any misuse and operatives do not have to work from inside the toilet area itself.

## Handwashing / Drying



Photo 37

### Handwashing

- Solid surface or stainless steel basins provide a deterrent for vandals as they are not easily destroyed.
- Automatic taps are better than uncontrolled taps as they limit opportunities for flooding.
- To avoid flooding, plugs should not be available.
- Soap, if not dispensed automatically, should be provided in a locked dispenser to reduce the possibility of misuse and theft.
- A flat surface or a hook for a bag or briefcase below the basin would allow the user to maintain control of the item whilst handwashing and reduce possible theft. Placing a bag on the floor is unhygienic and makes it easier to steal for an opportunist thief.

### Built in handwasher / driers

- Built in handwasher / driers take up less space, reducing the places in which drugs can be hidden and are less prone to criminal damage.
- Lack of visible piping reduces the ability to hide illicit items and keeps the toilet areas easier to maintain and clean.

### Paper towels

- The use of alternatives to paper towels should be considered to reduce problems of blockages and arson.
- If not well maintained and in unattended facilities, paper towels easily become litter which generates further lack of care by users.

### Roller towels

- Roller towels are not recommended as drugs can be hidden inside the mechanism.



## Sharps bins



Photo 38

- Clear signage, including a safety pin pictogram, will make the bin less threatening to toilet users and more user friendly.
- Sharps chutes and sharps disposal bins should be secured to walls at a height which deters children from tampering with the disposal facility and injuring themselves.

## Shelving



Photo 39

- Suitable shelving should be incorporated into the facility as an asset to users.
- Careful consideration should be given to the design of the shelving to minimise the risk of misuse.

## Hooks



Photo 40

- The provision of hooks on cubicle doors for coats and on the side of the cubicle for bags should be provided in preference to shelving.
- Hooks provide not only a hygienic method of depositing a coat or bag but they discourage theft if appropriately sited.
- Careful placement of the hooks will minimise the risk of theft and misuse.
- However, hooks should also be provided in addition to shelving in accessible toilets and family cubicles.

## Mirrors

- Mirrors should be installed flush to the wall to prevent substances being secreted behind.
- Mirrors should be shatter resistant.

## Commercial Product Dispensers

- The volume of footfall to the facility needs to be considered.
- Commercial product dispensers may be useful in areas where vandalism is not seen as a problem (see Income Generation).

## Drinking water

- This is not recommended in public toilets.

## Signage



Photo 41

- Internal signage should display a statement of the level of service provided and contact information of the person or department responsible for maintenance in the event of any problems.
- Information provided in welcoming terms contributes to the perception of a well run facility.

## Cleaning



Photo 42

- Storage for cleaning materials should be in a dedicated, locked area with no unauthorised access.
- A toilet cubicle or the attendant's room are not suitable places to keep chemicals and cleaning equipment as they may be too easily accessible to unauthorised users.
- Cleaning staff must have access to a dedicated sink and water supply preferably in a locked area to avoid opportunities for misuse by unauthorised users.

## Maintenance

- As with the exterior of the building, the interior of the facilities must be regularly maintained and inspected to avoid degeneration.
- Any repairs should be carried out as a matter of urgency to avoid attracting criminal damage and to minimise the additional cost inherent in delaying repairs.

# OTHER FACILITIES

## ACCESSIBLE TOILETS

---

### General

- Accessible toilets are for use by people with disabilities when standard toilets do not meet their needs.

### Entrance / Exit



Photo 43

- There should be no barriers to deter disabled users.
- Entry to many accessible toilets requires a RADAR key to deter unauthorised usage and potential misuse.
- Parking should be as close to the building as possible with secure anchorage for mobility scooters.

## Fixtures and fittings within the accessible toilet



Photo 44

- There are some additional features in an accessible toilet that are not included in a standard toilet. However, as in a standard public toilet facility, all installations should be as vandal resistant as possible and advice sought on the priorities required.

## Emergency cord

- The red emergency cord is an important feature of an accessible toilet.
- There should be clarity as to how any call is monitored, where it is monitored and what is the expected response.

## Storage

- The accessible toilet should not be used as a storage facility or a base for cleaning materials. Not only does this mean a lack of access for a disabled person, it encourages misuse of the area.

# CHANGING PLACES FACILITIES

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## General



Photo 45

- Changing Places toilets are provided in addition to standard accessible toilets and are designed to meet the different needs of people with more complex and profound disabilities that need the support of up to two carers.

## External Access

- Many are situated in buildings with separate access via a reception area, which provides security and therefore opportunities for vandalism are significantly reduced.
- Parking should be as close to the building as possible.

## Internal Access

- As these facilities are usually locked and/or supervised they are less prone to vandalism.

## Maintenance

- Contact details for repairs and / or maintenance requirements should be clearly visible in the room.
- Any repairs should be carried out instantly to avoid attracting criminal damage.
- A separate secure area should be established for cleaning supplies. A Changing Places facility should not be used for storage.

## FAMILY CUBICLES

### General



Photo 46



Photo 47

- Family cubicles should be an important feature of public toilets in protecting a child from unwanted attention.
- Family cubicles improve the service offered and promote the family use concept, which can be a deterrent against criminal damage.
- Family cubicles should also be accessible to parents with disabilities.
- Most of the features which are suggested for the main toilet areas are also pertinent to family cubicles as they are part of the toilet facility.

### Toilet pans and urinals



Photo 48

- Vandal resistant fixtures and fittings suitably sized for young children can be installed in the facility alongside similar ones for adults.



## Baby changing benches



Photo 49



Photo 50

- Baby changing benches can be obtained in vandal resistant materials which are easy to clean.
- It is recommended that baby changing benches should be a pull down variety with straps and a weight limit to deter illicit use.

## Paper Rolls

- A disposable paper roll to cover the changing unit whilst in use should be available in a lockable dispenser to deter theft and misuse.
- A roll of paper is preferable to single sheets which can easily fall from the dispenser and cause litter. This produces an uncared for appearance within the facility and encourages further unwanted behaviour.

## Toilet tissue

- See Paper Rolls above.

## Disposal

- Nappy disposal units can be an integral feature which reduce the number of items in the cubicle that can be damaged. Ducted or wall mounted bins are available. Not only do they allow more space in the cubicle, they improve the appearance of the family cubicle and therefore contribute to discouraging vandalism of the facilities.
- Ducted systems are maintained from the service area behind the cubicles, again discouraging any misuse and operatives do not have to work from inside the toilet area.

## Maintenance

- Family cubicles should not be used as a storage facility or a base for cleaning materials. Not only does this mean a lack of access for a family it encourages misuse of the area.

# AUTOMATIC PUBLIC CONVENIENCE (APC)

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## General



Photo 51

- The concept of this design of toilet is a pre-constructed, unisex, single cubicle, including accessibility for wheelchair users and baby change facilities, with the added benefits of revenue generation through fee charging and advertising opportunities.
- Many potential users are wary of APCs for a variety of reasons. For example, the time limit may be set for too short a period for some disabled users and some APCs can be opened by a key user whilst the toilet is in use.
- As they are expensive to install, consideration needs to be given to the number of users they will attract.
- They are easy to use, clean, hygienic and safe.
- APCs should not be recommended in areas of high footfall as time is needed to allow for the cleaning process to take place between each use.
- APCs are rarely vandalised. They include inherent safety features which deter mis-use. Occasionally attempts are made to access the coin collection system.

## Location

- As with other toilets, APCs should be sited in a prominent position.
- They should be installed in areas where there is natural surveillance, for the safety of the user and to reduce any possibility of vandalism.
- Screening is not appropriate, although their location in the middle of a pedestrian area with the door opening straight onto a public place also deters use.

## Signage

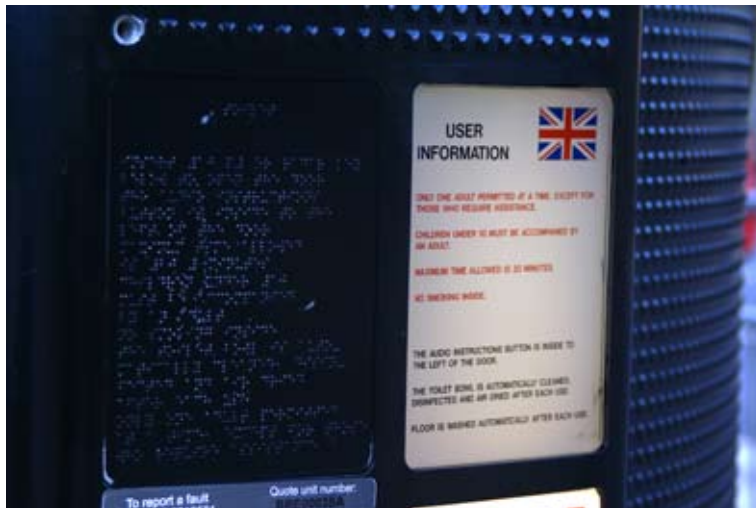


Photo 52

- Having access to a control centre is reassuring in case of need and how to access that help must be clearly described. Information on the reliability of response would need to be investigated for safety reasons.

## Length of stay



Photo 53

- Most APCs have a time limit of 15 minutes but this can be adjusted.
- APCs are designed for single use but, for example, a mother with a child or baby can use an APC together without activating the security system.

## Windows

- APCs do not have natural daylight.

## Service area

- The service area access door is usually flush to the unit and must be securely locked.

## STREET URINALS / URILIFTS / POP UPS

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### General

- Street urinals, automated Butterfly urinals and Uri Lift retractable urinals are all robust and designed to be vandal resistant. By definition they are 'open' and in full view of other street users and therefore not so liable to abuse as toilets situated in a building.
- The construction of the facility naturally limits opportunities for criminal damage.
- These facilities are site specific for men. However they are not suitable for all men (e.g. some older men, those with disabilities, medical conditions, paruresis or those who observe hygiene rituals).



Photo 54



Photo 55

# REFURBISHMENT OF PUBLICLY AVAILABLE TOILETS

## General

- ‘Surroundings can make an important contribution to community safety and crime prevention’ [ACPO *Secured by Design, New Homes 2010, page 6*].
- Publicly available toilets prevent areas becoming degraded.
- Whether there has been a problem of misuse in either the male or female toilets, the action taken is often the closure of both facilities.
- The provision of publicly available toilets encourages people to stay in an area and enjoy the facilities. This provides natural surveillance which deters misuse and damage to property.
- The lack of publicly available toilets can deter a large proportion of the population from visiting an area: older people, disabled people, parents out with children, women and tourists.



Photo 56



Photo 57

## Advice

- Much of the content relating to Best Practice in this Guide is applicable to the refurbishment of older toilets.
- The Police and the British Toilet Association are willing to give impartial advice on refurbishing older toilet facilities as well as offering consultation on the provision of new toilets.

## Considerations

- There should always be the opportunity to profile what has been done before.
- Reference to the police or local council will have to be made on any proposals.
- User requirements will depend on the demographics of the area.

# INCOME GENERATION

## CHARGING

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### General



Photo 58

- Paying to use the toilet creates an access barrier. Whilst this can be construed as a negative feature to many people, paying on entry can deter misuse whilst providing revenue for maintenance (“If I don’t have to pay for it, it must be worthless!”).
- Charging for entry if there is an attendant is often found to be more acceptable as the quality of cleanliness is generally better and defects get dealt with more quickly.
- The presence of an attendant also acts as a deterrent to possible vandalism.

### Charging

- Many years ago carrying a penny in one’s purse or pocket for the toilet was commonplace. Paying to enter a toilet deters the potential criminal who does not want to pay to vandalise property!
- A small coin charge will not inconvenience tourists if it is known to be a general requirement and is easy to carry around.
- Automatic public toilets are by coin payment or RADAR key.



## Signage

- Signage relating to charges needs to be very clear and should be included on directional signage as well as on the facility itself.

## Cycles, Buggies, Prams, Motor Scooters

- It is recommended that anchorage points are free.
- The costs of implementing charges for anchorage is considered to outweigh the benefits for income generation.

## COMMERCIAL PRODUCT DISPENSERS



Photo 59

- Commercial product dispensers are useful to the public and can include sanitary products, contraceptives, nappies and vanity packs.
- The presence of commercial product dispensers does invite a criminal element into the toilet facility.
- The introduction of commercial product dispensers is therefore site specific, i.e. in areas where criminal damage is not considered a problem.
- Access to small change from a machine may be appropriate where vandalism is not a problem.
- Commercial product dispensers may be included in family cubicles where there is a high usage of the room and vandalism is not considered a problem.

## ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES



Photo 60



Photo 61

- Information boards inside or outside the facility containing advertisements for local attractions, hotels and so on.
- Advertisements of wider interest to the public.
- It is recommended that advertisements are of a non-threatening nature, i.e. don't give rise to unease over criminal activity.

## SMALL RETAIL OPPORTUNITIES

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- Areas of regeneration could include facilities for small retailers situated either adjacent to the toilet facility or as an attachment to it.
- The advantage of having small retailers is the added surveillance they provide.
- Types of small retail units that might be appropriate depending on the location include: information, toiletries, newsagents.

## SPONSORSHIP

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- In some areas there may be opportunities to companies for sponsorship in or around the toilet facility, e.g. landscaping, lighting. Whilst the maintenance may still rest on the local authority, the capital expenditure would be covered by the sponsor.



Photo 62

# CONCLUSION

It is quite clear that the best practice identified in this document has been brought about by the establishment of a properly structured partnership between those agencies who have most to gain and have in the past suffered from duplication of effort. It is obvious that traditional methods of dealing with many of the problems have failed to have any lasting impact.

A changed approach to environment and building design can lead to a lasting solution which also enhances the public perception of an area whilst giving the partners a long term saving in revenue costs.

Using the problem solving approach advocated in this document will result in reduced problems for each agency and will assist the partners in achieving a safe and tranquil environment for the public.

This document complements the principles of Best Value and the three 'C's are clear:

- Consult
- Compare
- Challenge



Photo 63

# CONTACTS

## **The Crime Prevention Design Advice Service**

Hertfordshire Constabulary Headquarters  
Stanborough Road  
Welwyn Garden City  
Hertfordshire  
AL8 6XF

phone: 0845 3300 222

## **The British Toilet Association**

PO Box 847  
Horsham  
West Sussex  
RH12 5AL

phone: 01403 258779  
email: [enquiries@britloos.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@britloos.co.uk)  
website: [www.britloos.co.uk](http://www.britloos.co.uk)

## **ACPO Secured by Design**

First Floor, 10 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0NN

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email: [acpocpi@acpo.pnn.police.uk](mailto:acpocpi@acpo.pnn.police.uk)  
website: [www.securedbydesign.com](http://www.securedbydesign.com)

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- *Vandalism* Colin Ward [editor], Palgrave Macmillan, 2004

# LIST OF COMPANIES & ORGANISATIONS

**Please note:** inclusion in this list does not constitute an endorsement by the authors of this document

Aaztec Cubicles	<a href="http://www.aaztec.com">www.aaztec.com</a>
Airdri Ltd	<a href="http://www.airdri.com">www.airdri.com</a>
Albany Hygiene Facilities	<a href="http://www.albanyfacilities.com">www.albanyfacilities.com</a>
Andy Loos Ltd	<a href="http://www.andyloos.co.uk">www.andyloos.co.uk</a>
Blyth Valley Toilets	<a href="http://www.blythvalleytoilets.com">www.blythvalleytoilets.com</a>
Brighton & Hove Council	<a href="http://www.brighton_hove.gov.uk">www.brighton_hove.gov.uk</a>
British Cleaning Council	<a href="http://www.britishcleaningcouncil.org">www.britishcleaningcouncil.org</a>
Cambridge City Council, Environmental Services	<a href="http://www.cambridge.gov.uk">www.cambridge.gov.uk</a>
Ceredigion County Council	<a href="http://www.ceredigion.gov.uk">www.ceredigion.gov.uk</a>
Changing Places Campaign	<a href="http://www.changing-places.org">www.changing-places.org</a>
Clear Channel UK	<a href="http://www.clearchannel.co.uk">www.clearchannel.co.uk</a>
Cubicle Centre Ltd	<a href="http://www.washroomcubicles.co.uk">www.washroomcubicles.co.uk</a>
Danfo (UK) Ltd	<a href="http://www.danfo.co.uk">www.danfo.co.uk</a>
Environmental BioTech UK	<a href="http://www.environmentalbiotech.com">www.environmentalbiotech.com</a>
Gentworks Ltd	<a href="http://www.gentworks.co.uk">www.gentworks.co.uk</a>
Gillett Morrissey	<a href="http://www.gillettmorrissey.co.uk">www.gillettmorrissey.co.uk</a>
Healthmatic Ltd	<a href="http://www.healthmatic.com">www.healthmatic.com</a>
Initial Washroom Solutions	<a href="http://www.initial.co.uk">www.initial.co.uk</a>
InterPublic Urban Systems (UK) Ltd	<a href="http://www.interpublicurbansystems.co.uk">www.interpublicurbansystems.co.uk</a>
J C Decaux UK	<a href="http://www.jcdecaux.co.uk">www.jcdecaux.co.uk</a>
JMG Toilet Solutions	<a href="http://www.toiletsolutions.co.uk">www.toiletsolutions.co.uk</a>
Magrini Ltd	<a href="http://www.magrinichildcare.co.uk">www.magrinichildcare.co.uk</a>
Metsä Tissue Corp	<a href="http://www.metsatissue.com">www.metsatissue.com</a>
Ocean Contract Cleaning Ltd	<a href="http://www.oceanccl.com">www.oceanccl.com</a>
Phlexicare	<a href="http://www.phlexicare.com">www.phlexicare.com</a>
PHS Washrooms	<a href="http://www.phs.co.uk">www.phs.co.uk</a>
Portakabin Portaloo	<a href="http://www.portakabin.co.uk">www.portakabin.co.uk</a>
Premier Hygienic Ltd	<a href="http://www.PremierHygienic.co.uk">www.PremierHygienic.co.uk</a>
Premier Luxury Loos	<a href="http://www.premierluxuryloos.co.uk">www.premierluxuryloos.co.uk</a>
SaniPod	<a href="http://www.sanipod.com">www.sanipod.com</a>
Total Hygiene Ltd	<a href="http://www.clos-o-mat.com">www.clos-o-mat.com</a>
Vectair Systems Ltd	<a href="http://www.vectair.co.uk">www.vectair.co.uk</a>
Wallgate Ltd	<a href="http://www.wallgate.com">www.wallgate.com</a>
Wetton Cleaning Services Ltd	<a href="http://www.wettons.co.uk">www.wettons.co.uk</a>
Willings Services Ltd	<a href="http://www.willings.co.uk">www.willings.co.uk</a>

# SELF ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Use this checklist to evaluate all existing premises and proposed new development - Tick appropriate boxes ✓

**Priority Level 1 = IMMEDIATE ACTION 2 = MERITS ATTENTION 3 = LONG TERM ACTION**

FEATURE	YES	NO	PRIORITY LEVEL 1	PRIORITY LEVEL 2	PRIORITY LEVEL 3
<b>SITE CONSIDERATIONS</b>					
Is it accessible to all?					
Is there a confirmed need for this facility?					
Is this the best location for the facility?					
Has full consultation taken place?					
Have the appropriate partners been identified?					
Will there be an adverse effect on neighbours?					
Is the planned layout likely to lead to misuse?					
Do planning conditions need to be applied?					
Does the building orientation best suit surveillance?					
Is the orientation of the building best suited to the plot?					
Is the design size appropriate for the demand?					
Will future development impact on usage?					
<b>EXTERNAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>					
Are parking numbers commensurate with need?					
Are parking bays likely to generate crime?					
Have disabled parking facilities been considered?					
Is soft landscaping required?					
Have the right species of plant been identified?					
Are litter bins provided outside?					
Is the external furniture suitably vandal resistant?					
Is the building finish appropriate?					
<b>INTERNAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>					
Have secure facilities for storage been identified?					
Are the materials suitably vandal resistant?					
Are the internal fixings suitably vandal resistant?					
Is the lighting appropriate?					
Are the right luminaries used for economy?					
Are the right luminaries used for colour retention?					
Is the signage right and appropriate?					
Is the floor material appropriate?					
Is the roof design appropriate?					
Can natural lighting be lent other than via windows?					
Are the windows and glass of appropriate materials?					
Are the doors of appropriate materials and finish?					
Are combustible materials avoided internally?					
Has the provision of Sharps Bin(s) been explored?					
Are recesses and crevices kept minimal?					
Is the internal wall finish appropriate?					
<b>OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b>					
Building regulations, DDA compliance etc.					
Is there an opportunity for income generation?					
Has a maintenance policy been produced?					
Has a correct cleaning regime been introduced?					