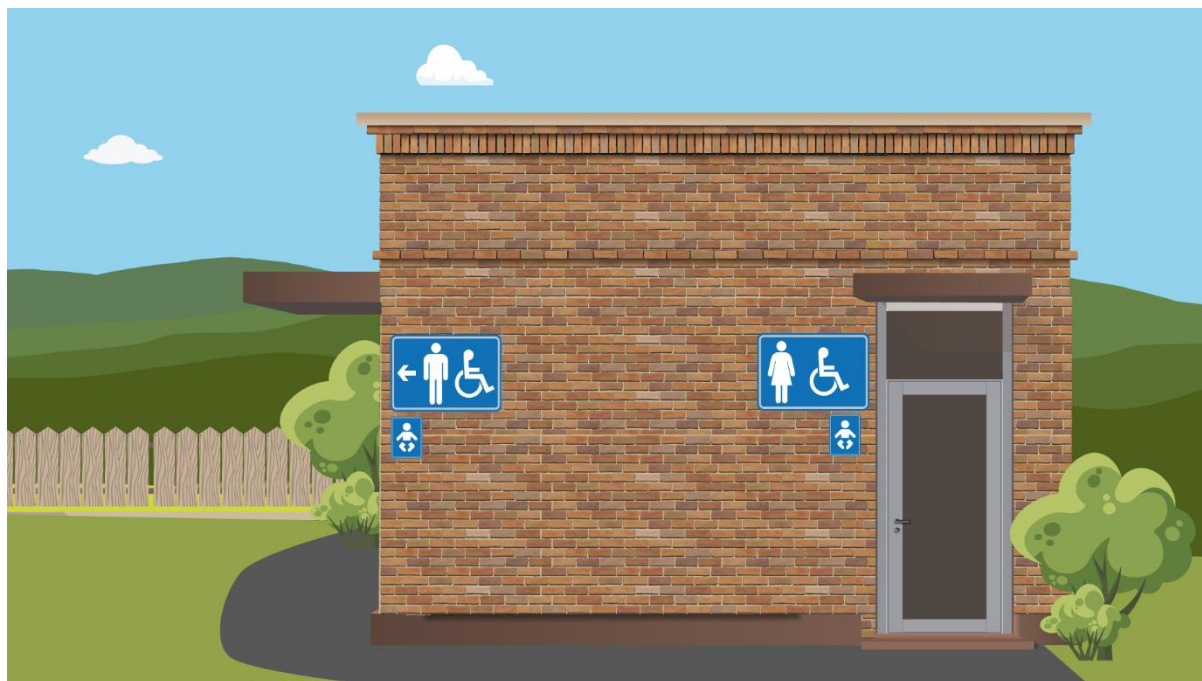


Conwy County Borough Council

Draft Public Toilet Strategy



Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg hefyd.

Large print, Braille and alternative language versions of this document are available on request.

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1. Introduction

Providing public toilets is not a statutory function of the Council. However, the demographic in Conwy and the influx of visitors every year makes public toilets important to the local economy, allowing people to enjoy the attractions and businesses in the area. The availability of public toilets in popular recreation areas encourages people to exercise and stay physically active, which has clear benefits to health and wellbeing.

Conwy is home to 118,200 residents, with 29% aged 65 and over and 2% aged under 2. There are currently 48 public toilets that are managed by the Council and 3 public toilets run by town and community councils, which include 41 disabled toilets and 22 baby changing facilities.

Public toilets in Conwy are located in both rural (33%) and coastal areas (67%). More than 80,000 customers use the public toilets in Conwy each year, which demonstrates the demand for this service.

This strategy aims to review the provision of public toilets in Conwy to ensure the service can continue in a way which is sustainable in the current and future financial pressures whilst meeting the needs of residents and visitors to Conwy. In a time of financial pressure for Local Authorities, we have to make decisions which could affect the public toilet service. These decisions will involve a review of current provision and consultation with the public.

2. Why have a Strategy

The Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 was passed by Welsh Government in 2017 and places a duty onto Local Authorities to address the current provision of public toilets and how the need will be met in the future.

The Act requires Local Authorities to take a strategic view on how public toilets can be provided and accessed, considering a range of options to make facilities available to the public.

The Act does not require Local Authorities to provide or maintain public toilets themselves. It does require them to consider all available options for providing public toilets through direct provision or working with private businesses to make facilities available to the public.

3. How this Strategy links to other plans

The Public Health (Wales) Act 2017

Part 8 of this Act - Improving and Protecting Health - outlines the Council's duty to provide local strategies that address the current provision of public toilets and how we will meet the identified need for toilets, including baby changing facilities and changing places for adults.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Act places a duty on public bodies to deliver services in a sustainable way, working to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales by setting and publishing well-being objectives and taking reasonable steps to meet those objectives.

Conwy and Denbighshire public service board local wellbeing plan 2013-2028

The Public Service Board will work together to improve the economic, social, cultural and environmental well-being for the local area in Conwy and Denbighshire.

Corporate Plan 2022 – 2027

This 5 year plan sets out the Council's key priorities to support the needs of the citizens who live in, work in and visit the County Borough of Conwy, contributing to delivering the Conwy & Denbighshire Public Service Board Local Well-being Plan.

Strategic Equalities Plan 2020-2024

The Equality Act 2010 and the Statutory Duties (Wales) Regulations 2011 require all public bodies to review and publish equality objectives and a Strategic Equalities Plan, considering relevant data and engaging with groups representing each of the protected characteristics.

4. The current position

There are currently 48 public toilets that are managed by the Council and 3 public toilets run by town and community councils, which include 41 disabled toilets and 22 baby changing facilities.

During the summer public toilets in Conwy are opened daily between 7-10am and closed between 7-9pm. During the winter they are opened between 7:30-10am and closed between 4:30-5:30pm. The toilets are locked outside of these times for safety.

There are 2 public toilets which are staffed during opening hours, these are in Betws y Coed and Llandudno. These facilities are cleaned by the staff based there during opening hours, all other public toilets are cleaned twice each day.

Consultation

We carried out a public consultation in 2019 to identify the main areas of focus for this strategy. The survey asked questions about how people use public toilets, what is important about the location of public toilets, how they felt about paying to use public toilets and overall what they thought of public toilets in Conwy.

There were 501 responses to the survey. 78% said they use public toilets regularly, those who said they didn't use them stated cleanliness and condition as the main reasons for this.

The majority of respondents felt that less than 5 minutes was an acceptable time to walk or drive to use a public toilet. Preferable locations for public toilets was a fairly even split between close to shopping areas, near tourist attractions and at popular beaches.

54% of respondents said they would be happy to pay to use public toilets. The majority of those who said they would be willing to pay said they would pay 30p, 10% said they would pay 50p, 1% said they would pay £1 and other respondents said they would pay 20p or 10p.

When asked about the community toilet scheme the majority of respondents (55%) said they didn't know about the scheme. Of those who did know about the scheme 57% said they didn't feel comfortable using the facilities without using the services of the business.

Most respondents (93%) felt more could be done to communicate the locations of public toilets, with the top suggestions being better local signage and social media.

When asked if they felt there were sufficient baby change and changing places available in Conwy to enjoy a day out with friends and family, most respondents (81%) didn't feel the current provision is sufficient. The comments received on this question related to not enough toilet facilities (26%), the cleanliness of toilets (20%), respondents wanting more baby change facilities (17%), more accessible toilet facilities (11%) and more changing places (10%).

There is a summary report on the results of the survey in Appendix 1.

The locations of all public toilets run by Conwy County Borough Council and the locations of businesses signed up to the community toilet scheme are shown on a map on the Council's website: [Public Toilets - Conwy County Borough Council](#)

5. How we plan to meet future needs

With reduced funding available for providing the service from 2023/24 we will look at ways to continue providing public toilets in Conwy on a cost neutral basis.

To enable this we will:

- Explore opportunities to transfer the responsibility for public toilets to town and community councils. This allows a facility to remain open when they might otherwise be closed.

- Work collaboratively to make facilities at existing Council buildings available to the public. These sites are located around Conwy and include leisure centres, tourist information centres, town halls, theatres and libraries.
- Engage with local businesses and encourage them to make their facilities available to the public.
- Review the Community Toilet Scheme with a view to improving the quality and range of facilities available at businesses that are signed up to the scheme.
- Review the current charging arrangements and consider additional paid-for facilities where appropriate.
- Maximise grant funding opportunities to enhance the provision of public toilets in Conwy.
- Encourage the use of the national public toilet logo at all premises where toilets are available for public use.

We will prioritise investment into the service based on the following considerations and with a focus on improving the quality of public toilet provision:

- Level of funding available
- Facilities provided, such as disabled provision, changing facilities
- History of anti-social behaviour or vandalism
- Visitor numbers or footfall in an area
- Proximity to other facilities

Anti-social behaviour and vandalism

Unfortunately public toilets are often the target of anti-social behaviour and vandalism. We work closely with North Wales Police to address these issues and try to keep facilities open. However, continued vandalism will result in public toilets being closed where repairs are deemed unaffordable.

The current budget for public toilets in Conwy is insufficient to upgrade existing facilities and is primarily used to fund the cleaning, essential maintenance and reactive maintenance/repairs following vandalism required to keep facilities open.

6. Approval and review

Following public consultation, this Strategy will be presented to Economy & Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee for approval.

We will publish the strategy on the Council's website once it is approved.

We will prepare an interim progress report 2 years after this strategy is published.

There will be a full review of Conwy's Public Toilet Strategy after each Local Government election.