

Health and Social Care Committee

Meeting Venue:
Committee Room 1 – Senedd

Meeting date:
19 January 2012

Meeting time:
09:30

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



For further information please contact:

Llinos Dafydd
Committee Clerk
029 2089 8403
HSCCommittee@wales.gov.uk

Agenda

1. Introductions, apologies and substitutions

2. Public health implications of inadequate public toilet facilities – oral evidence (09.30 – 10.15) (Pages 1 – 16)

Louise Hughes, lead petitioner, P-03-292 Public Toilet Provision
HSC(4)-02-12 paper 1

Graeme Francis, Head of Policy and Public Affairs, Age Cymru
HSC(4)-02-12 paper 2

John Vincent, Welsh Senate for Older People
HSC(4)-02-12 paper 3

3. Public health implications of inadequate public toilet facilities – oral evidence (10.15 – 11.00) (Pages 17 – 34)

Mike Bone, Director, British Toilet Association
HSC(4)-02-12 paper 4

Gillian Kemp, Irritable Bowel Syndrome Network
HSC(4)-02-12 paper 5

Karen Logan, Nurse Consultant – Head of Continence Service, Aneurin Bevan Health Board

Break 11.00 – 11.05

4. Public health implications of inadequate public toilet facilities – oral evidence (11.05 – 11.50) (Pages 35 – 39)

Chris Brereton, Deputy Chief Environmental Health Adviser, Welsh Government

Dr Sara Hayes, Acting Deputy Chief Medical Officer (public health)

HSC(4)-02-12 paper 6

5. Papers to note

5a. Letter from the Children and Young People Committee – Neonatal services

(Page 40)

HSC(4)-02-12 paper 7

5b. Organ Donation White Paper – further information from Welsh Government officials (Pages 41 – 44)

HSC(4)-07-09 paper 8a – Points of clarification following 8 December 2011 meeting

HSC(4)-07-09 paper 8b – Dates of public meetings, January 2012

Health and Social Care Committee

HSC(4)-02-12 paper 1

Public health implications of inadequate public toilet facilities - Evidence from Louise Hughes, lead petitioner, P-03-292 Public Toilet Provision

The following is a precis of my presentation to the Health & Social Care Committee on 19th January 2012.

Firstly, I would like to thank the Committee for the opportunity to express the views of the hundreds of people I have spoken to in the last three years on the rather indelicate subject of public toilet provision across Wales. Without wishing to offend the sensibilities of anyone present at the meeting I will be referring to bodily functions as "wee" and "poo" as this is how they were invariably said to me and, after all, they are terms with which we are all familiar.

I will begin by explaining why I have become so tenacious about this issue. Three years ago I saw an old lady of 83 on the High Street in Tywyn who was visibly distressed and as no-one was approaching her I asked her what was wrong and was there any way I could help. It turned out that she had wet herself because she couldn't make it to the toilet at the far end of the High Street in time and, in her words, she had "disgraced herself". Dorothy was utterly distraught and extremely embarrassed. I took her home and made her a cup of tea and reassured her that no-one she knew had seen her predicament. She felt she had lost all her dignity and was very upset - it took me quite a while to calm her down.

Can you imagine how she felt? An old lady of 83 suffering in a public place because of a lack of public toilets. This small incident sparked my anger at how financial cuts to public services are directly effecting the quality of life of the very people who pay for those public services. In Gwynedd the closure of dozens of public toilets across the county was to save the paltry sum of £133,000 - surely a drop in the ocean of funds available. I have since spoken with most of the other Local Authorities in Wales and the story is repeated in every area and with it much anguish is inflicted on countless hundreds of people every day.

This job of this committee is to examine the effects closing public toilets has on people, particularly the elderly who can feel disenfranchised from decisions made on their behalf and feel they have no way of getting their voices heard. It is also a subject which can cause embarrassment to the older generation as it is "private" and not something talked about in polite company. I, on the other hand, have no qualms whatsoever about discussing something which each and every one of us has no way avoiding and there is nothing to be coy about!

These are some of the many comments made to me during my campaign to raise the profile of lack of public toilet.

Winifred 80 "well I'm not as nimble on my feet as I used to be and since they closed the toilets in town I don't go out much anymore. I have friends come to visit me but days can go by when I don't see a soul and I get quite lonely. The boy from the shop delivers my groceries and I make him a cuppa if he has the time but that's about it really."

Alfred 76 "I don't drive anymore because my eyes are not so good and I rely on the bus. The trouble is if I need to "go" halfway through the journey I'm stuck aren't I? I'm on water pills and they make me want to pee all the time".

Enid (75) "I had to have a colostomy bag fitted for a while because of my cancer treatment and when the bag fills up it fills up so quickly you've got no time to get to the toilet if you're away from home. I was so scared of having an accident with it I didn't go out for months".

Bet (81) "Why are they closing the toilets anyway? – it doesn't make sense. It's not as if they have to build new ones is it? The world's gone mad – they spend so much money on stupid things but if you want to go to the loo when you're out and about, forget it".

Meirion (70) "I took good care of my health as a young man so I never expected to be like this now I'm older. My problem is my waterworks – I just can't "hold on" like I used to. I don't go out unless I know for certain there is a loo available – it's not too much to ask is it?".

Gwyneth (76) "It seems rude somehow to go into a cafe to use their toilet and not have anything to eat or drink and at my age I'm certainly not going into a pub on my own. I only go out once a month now when my daughter takes me into town".

Sulwyn (73) "Since they closed the toilets in the village people have been doing it round the back and it's disgusting there, the smell is awful and it's right by the bus stop".

All the comments above were made by real people but I have changed their names to protect their privacy. Sadly, Dorothy passed away last year.

What struck me most from the conversations I had was that almost all of the elderly folk had curtailed their lives in some way for fear of being "caught short" when they were away from home and some of them almost never or rarely went out at all. I'm sure all of us have experienced needing to go the toilet (particularly for a poo) and not being able to find one quickly enough. It is extremely distressing to say the least – you have stomach cramps, your heart rate goes up, you begin to sweat and you lose focus of anything other

than the need to get to a toilet. This distress is magnified tenfold if you have a medical condition or are on medication. According to the British Heart Foundation holding onto a full bladder causes your heart to beat faster and puts added strain on coronary arteries, triggering them to contract, which could lead to a heart attack or stroke, particularly in the elderly. We have an ageing population which brings this debate into sharp focus – we talk about dignity for the elderly but that's all we do ... talk.

With so many of our older citizens feeling trapped in their homes because of a lack of public toilets is that treating them with dignity and respect? Loneliness and social isolation is a potential killer for elderly people on their own for days, sometimes weeks on end and can lead to a downward spiral in physical health resulting in death. In a civilised society we have a duty of care to our elderly folk to enable them to live independent and fulfilling lives for as long as they are able and, in my opinion, a part of that responsibility is the provision of public toilets which were originally built because there was a need and that need still exists today. Perhaps more so because of the hundreds of thousands of visitors to our beautiful country every year.

I acknowledge that these are financially difficult times and that cuts have to be made. As public toilets are a non-statutory provision it is easy to make the decision to close them to save money but closing toilets does not stop people needing to use them. There have been many reported incidents in my area where people have "gone" behind closed toilet blocks which must surely be a health hazard.

I am happy to take any questions from the Committee but I would like to take the liberty of asking one of my own. So, we close public toilets and then what?

Louise Hughes
County Councillor

Health and Social Care Committee

HSC(4)-02-12 paper 2

Public health implications of inadequate public toilet facilities – Evidence from Age Cymru



Evidence Paper

Inquiry into public toilet provision in Wales

Health and Social Care Committee

December 2011

Introduction

Age Cymru is the leading national charity working to improve the lives of all older people in Wales. We believe older people should be able to lead healthy and fulfilled lives, have adequate income, access to high quality services and the opportunity to shape their own future. We seek to provide a strong voice for all older people in Wales and to raise awareness of the issues of importance to them.

We are pleased to respond to this inquiry as we believe public toilets play a vital role in ensuring that communities are accessible to older people. As people grow older they are more likely to develop continence issues, including needing to use the toilet more often and with greater urgency. In the UK, 1 in 3 women and 1 in 7 men over 65 experience incontinence.¹ Poor public toilet provision has a significant impact upon many older people as it reduces their ability to remain active and restricts how often, and for how long, they are able to leave their homes.

At present, the Public Health Act 1936 gives local authorities the power to provide public toilets, however it is a discretionary service which local authorities have no duty to provide. We believe that more can be done to ensure that Wales has network of public toilets that are fit for purpose.

In this response we have sought to briefly outline the experiences of older people in Wales in relation to accessing public toilets, and the consequences that a lack of provision can have. In the main we have focused our comments on the social impact of a shortage of public toilets, in terms of isolation and exclusion from community and services. Other organisations

¹ Systematic Review and Evaluation of Methods of Assessing Urinary Incontinence, Health Technology Assessment (2006) Martin et al.

responding to the Inquiry will have more information on the impact on people with specific health conditions.

We have included a number of comments and experiences from respondents to Age Cymru's Community Calculator. The Community Calculator™ is a tool designed to enable older people in Wales to assess how age-friendly their local community is. An age-friendly community is suitable and empowering for people of all ages, with a design and facilities that assist people to enjoy health, wellbeing and quality of life. Public toilets were identified by older people as one of 10 key factors which make a community age-friendly. The Community Calculator was distributed and the result collated between December 2009 and September 2010, and a total of 830 older people responded. We would be happy to provide more detailed Community Calculator data to the Committee if required.

What are the effects of public toilet provision (or lack thereof) on the health and social wellbeing of a person?

Adequate public toilet provision is vital to enable many older people to retain their dignity and the confidence to participate in community life. A lack of toilets can make people wary of going out and reinforce social isolation.

Many conditions such as IBS, Crohns disease and prostate cancer can increase how often and how urgently people need to use the toilet. Further to this, medications such as water tablets can have an impact on people's need to find a toilet at regular intervals.

In order to combat the problem of needing a toilet when there isn't one some older people report choosing to 'skip' medications that exacerbate the need to urinate frequently:

"They make you go often. So when I come out for the day I don't take mine."

People who experience incontinence, or need to use the toilet with greater frequency or urgency, are more likely to suffer both anxiety and depression.

Sadness and loneliness amongst people with incontinence is often caused not by the condition itself but by the behavioural changes they feel forced to make to cope with their condition.² A lack of public toilets can lead to dramatic behavioural changes, for example limiting time away from home and only visiting certain places. This may exacerbate feelings of isolation and sadness.

In an attempt to limit the risk of 'accidents' some older people have indicated to us that they limit their fluid intake in advance of leaving their home and whilst out. There are a number of negative effects dehydration can have on health and wellbeing, especially in older people. These include constipation, faecal impaction and cognitive impairment.³

Dehydration is also one of the risk factors for falls in older people, which are by far the greatest cause of hospitalisation among older people and the leading cause of death from injury in older people over the age of 75. Falling is also the primary cause of over 40% of

² Incontinence and Older People: is there a link to social isolation? Help the Aged, 2007.

³ Adverse effects of dehydration in older people (taken from Water UK 19/12/2011)

admissions to a nursing home.⁴ The risk of falls increases with age and it is important that older people are not deliberately reducing their fluid intake as a result of insufficient toilet facilities.

Dehydration can also lead to urinary tract infections as people need to be adequately hydrated to ensure bacteria are eliminated from the urinary tract. Further to this holding urine for longer than comfortable can result in urinary tract infections.⁵

For some older people the lack of public toilets can limit social activities and lead to a reduction in quality of life:

“The lack of toilets in Powys means that I have to plan any trip very carefully. Even a shopping trip into town must be short and planned between toilets. I don't go "out for the Day" as I would have to travel a long way before finding a toilet stop.”

Is there evidence of people being unable to leave their homes due to concerns over the availability of public toilets? If so, what are the health and wellbeing implications of this?

In a report by Help the Aged in Wales in 2009, 79 per cent of people indicated that they do not find it easy to find a public toilet, and 95 per cent reported that their local public toilets are not always open when they need them.⁶ The average score given to local public toilet provision by older people in communities across Wales via the Community Calculator was just 3.23.⁷ The impact of this cannot be underestimated. There is a tangible link between incontinence and social isolation and adequate public toilet provision can make an enormous difference, allowing people to live active and independent lives.⁸

Age Cymru receives a lot of qualitative evidence from older people negatively affected by a lack of public toilets in their local area. Many indicate that this has caused them to limit their activity outside the home. In other cases people have informed us that these limits can extend to not feeling confident to leave the house at all. The fear of leaving the house can lead to a failure to engage with appropriate services, for example healthcare and this can initiate a downward spiral in terms of condition management and health experiences.

Clear thought needs to be given to people who, because of a lack of toilets, have faced the indignity of having an accident in public. For anyone this would be a devastating experience, but for some it marks the end of them leading an active life within their community.

Older people tell us:

“Last weekend...all the toilets were locked including the disabled ones. This means many people are effectively housebound because they cannot rely on the facilities being open at

⁴ Welsh Assembly Government, National Service Framework for Older People in Wales, 2001

⁵ Nursing Times, The control of urinary tract infection in hospitalised older people, 2004. Vol: 100, Issue: 8, Page: 54

⁶ Nowhere to Go in Wales: public toilet provision, Help the Aged in Wales, 2009.

⁷ Community Calculator

⁸ Incontinence and Older People: is there a link to social isolation? Help the Aged, 2007.

their intended destination. In my opinion this action shows blatant discrimination against such people and possibly even contravenes their basic human rights.”

“I know people who only go to places where they know there are toilet facilities.”

“I got to keep running to the loo all the time and I wish that I could get our more but I’m afraid to go too far.”

“I’m frightened; I’m literally frightened to go out because I’m afraid I’m going to get caught.”

Is there equality across Wales – and in relation to all people – in the provision of public toilets?

The number of public toilets in Wales has steeply declined in recent years. There is a lack of recent data available about the exact numbers of public toilets in Wales however, according to the British Toilet Association; the UK’s public toilets have declined by in excess of 40 per cent in the past decade. There is now less than one public toilet for every 10,000 people in the UK.

Age Cymru’s Community Calculator showed a significant range in people’s experiences of public toilet provision in Wales. Comments and ratings from the Calculator identified the issue of public toilets as the primary concern for older people in Wales in relation to their local communities.

53.8% of respondents to the Community Calculator scored provision of public toilets in their community between 0 and 3 out of 10. Perhaps surprisingly, there was no discernible distinction between rural and urban areas, indicating that public toilet provision can be an issue regardless of location.

The range of results across local authorities in Wales was also the largest for any issue explored by the Community Calculator, providing first hand evidence of the variability of standards of toilet provision in communities across Wales. Out of 84 respondents in Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council the average score was 0.35 out of 10: this stark statistic gives an insight into the inadequacies of provision in some areas of Wales. Pembrokeshire’s toilets were given the highest rating of 6.83 out of ten.

The Welsh Government’s Public Facilities Scheme, provides local authorities with funds to issue a limited number of £500 grants to businesses for them to open their toilet facilities to the public. A total of 217 businesses across Wales took part in the scheme during 2010-11. Worryingly, four local authorities have not signed up to the scheme, and a further four have not funded a single business through it since 2009.

If more than a third of local authorities are not participating in the scheme it must be necessary to consider whether it is fit for purpose in ensuring a sustainable network of toilets across Wales, and we suggest that the Committee may wish to explore the reasons for the lack of uptake with local authorities.

It has been suggested that the uncertainty of the funding, which is currently guaranteed until 31 March 2013, may be one reason as some small businesses may question the benefits of opening their facilities to the public on the promise of an annual £500 grant that may come to an end next year.

Offering business rate relief to participants has been suggested as an alternative model which may be more attractive to businesses considering signing up to the scheme.

We believe that a properly functioning Public Facilities Grant Scheme could have an important role to play in increasing access to public toilets in many areas. Opening more existing toilets in public buildings and private business should also help prevent vandalism and increase user confidence in the safety and cleanliness of toilets.

Other models have also been advanced for protecting public toilets, including by community groups taking on responsibility for running and maintaining them, especially in rural areas. In these cases the costs are met through a combination of charging, donations or a small addition to local council tax. This may not work everywhere, but in some instances it has led to toilets being protected and maintained to a high standard with a strong sense of community ownership and pride.

Wales can best ensure that there is an equitable provision of public toilet facilities in Wales by requiring local authorities to ensure there is adequate provision in their area of responsibility. Community ownership may work in some places but should not be regarded as an appropriate solution for all areas.

Where toilets may be closed or transferred to other ownership it is essential that the public are adequately consulted and that the decision is 'age-proofed', meaning that express consideration is given to the potential impact upon the older people who may use them.

**How should public toilet facilities address the needs of different groups of people (men, women, disabled people, people with special health needs, children)?
Is there a particular need for improved facilities for specific groups?**

Public toilet provision is important to everyone but the impact of poor provision can be particularly pronounced for older people and for those with specific health conditions for example IBS, Crohns disease and prostate cancer. Certain commonly prescribed medications, such as water tablets, also increase the frequency with which people need to use the toilet.

It is important that people with conditions that impact upon their need to use a toilet are able to access services and community life with confidence. Toilets need to be clearly signposted, accessible and clean.

Respondents to the Community Calculator identified poor design and accessibility to public toilets as an area of particular difficulty that prevent them from using the limited toilets available.

“Some of the public toilets are totally inaccessible for me and many close early in the evening time”

“Toilet cubicles too small - especially in bus station ...”

“... Rails needed by toilets. More disabled provision needed”

Many comments received via the Community Calculator also raised the issue of poor cleanliness and hygiene in many public toilets around Wales. Dirty toilets are unsafe and unpleasant to use, and increase the risk of isolating older people from their community if they do not feel able to use public conveniences because of poor standards of hygiene.

“Poor standard - dark, dingy, damp”

“There is only one and that is not clean. We can only use the cafes to get a toilet if we have money”

“They are disgusting and smell terrible”

“Not of high standard, ladies toilets have no soap and drying facilities.”

Public toilets, including the floors, seats and walls need to be clean. There should always be toilet paper, and hot water and soap for washing hands. The comments above, and many others received, indicate that these basic standards are not maintained in many public toilets across communities in Wales.

The British Toilet Association has produced a best practice guide to toilets away from home which we feel comprehensively outlines things that can be done to ensure toilet provision is suitable. They also outline the following as making facilities age friendly:

- Adequate toilet facilities for the number of users at the location
- Accessible facilities – no steps or steep inclines
- Safe facilities – attendants on duty, well lit with exposed entrances
- Facilities available when needed – not just 09.00 to 17.00
- Larger cubicles available for the ambulant with wider cubicle doors
- Shelves for bags and hooks for outer clothing
- Door handles and locks easy to use and in good working order
- Automatic or push taps
- A warm, clean, nice smelling environment

What could the wider effects of inadequate public toilet provision be on public health and the community? E.g. correspondence sent to the Petitions Committee suggests that there is a risk of street fouling and a consequential spread of disease.

Usk town council has recently felt compelled to write an open letter outlining some of the problems that can occur when public toilets close:

"Of greater concern is the fact that it has resulted in anti social behaviour making the area a Health and Safety hazard. Specialist cleansing has had to be employed incurring unnecessary financial costs."

Older people tell us:

"Quite often people go behind the public toilet buildings in parks to urinate and it is pretty disgusting in the 21 century and should not be necessary. It cannot be beyond the wit of mankind to work a healthy alternative."

"We got public toilets on health ground because people simply have to pee in the street if these facilities are not provided."

Some older people report having to find alternatives to public toilets:

"I got a jar to carry around with me...if I go from here to Bath, I go to the toilet before I go and by the time I get to Bath I want to go again. But the toilets are locked. We have to park up and I've got my bottle and I have to sit in the car which – there 's no other way of doing it, you know. Do it in a jar and then I can pour it out."

"You know, relieving yourself in public places, well, everywhere in the street is public. But if there's an alley or something I can go, then I have to. Otherwise I'll just wet myself and then you've got that to contend with for the rest of the time you're out."

"I either manage to hang on or else I get behind a tree and go. At one time I thought that was (the) most disgusting thing anybody could do, really. You know, all right if you want to spend a penny, yeah, but nothing else, that's disgusting. But now I think, well, it's necessary. And you do it, you know."

"I was sat there and I was really, really in pain with it, sweating and cussing to myself and hanging on and hanging on. Anyway the cars went and I thought, that's it, and I had to nip out and rush over and go behind a tree. But I think I would have gone even if the cars had been there and there'd been a dozen people around. You know, it was that bad. It made me feel really ill. It's dreadful. It makes you feel so horrible."

Health and Social Care Committee

HSC(4)-02-12 paper 3

Public health implications of inadequate public toilet facilities - Evidence from the Welsh Senate of Older People



**Welsh Senate
of Older People**

Health and Social Care Committee

Inquiry into public toilet provision in Wales

Since its launch in October 2010, the Welsh Senate of Older People in Wales has provided a 'united voice for older people in Wales' by bringing together 57 older people's organisations across Wales, including the four national organisations of older people in Wales: National Pensioners Convention Wales; National Old Age Pensioners Association Wales; Pensioners Forum Wales and the Older Peoples Advisory Group Cymru.

The Welsh Senate of Older People calls on all older people's groups, forums and organisations from across Wales, to join the Senate to achieve the following objectives:

- To promote closer co-operation between existing older people's organisations in areas where they share common interests and to improve the channels of communication between them.
- To support the implementation of the Strategy for Older People in Wales and its key aims.
- To identify important issues that are of concern to, impact on or otherwise affect the interests of older people in Wales.
- To articulate and bring these issues and concerns to the attention of Central Government, the Welsh Government, other agencies and bodies and the general public as considered appropriate.

- To support the work of and make representations to the Older People's Commissioner for Wales.

Public Toilets – Our 'P is for People' Campaign

We believe that public toilet provision in Wales is an issue which requires urgent examination and action. Public toilets are an essential part of our communities, and adequate provision is vital to enable us to retain our dignity and the confidence to participate in community life. Poor public toilet provision has a major impact upon many people as it reduces their ability to remain active and restricts how often, and for how long, they are able to leave their homes. This can lead poor health, loneliness and isolation.

The Strategy for Older People in Wales focuses on wellbeing and promoting independence, but without adequate access to public toilets many older people remain unable to take advantage of services as they are not confident of being able to access a public toilet when away from their home.

We believe that public toilets are an essential facility within our communities, and that this issue is important for people of all ages. Everyone needs to use toilets whilst they are away from their home: for disabled people, pregnant women, young children, older people and those with health conditions this need can be much more urgent and acute. When toilets are not available, it poses a risk to an individual's dignity. This can have a significant negative impact on their sense of independence and confidence using community services.

In order to challenge this we held a Day of Action at the National Assembly for Wales on 16 November 2011. We were delighted that over 100 people attended to give their support, 38 Assembly Members took the time to come and meet with us with almost half of all Assembly Members signing a Statement of Opinion in support of our campaign.

During the Day of Action we asked older people who supported the event to tell us what public toilets mean to them. All quotes included in our response come from the people who attended, and we are very grateful they shared their stories with us.

We hope that this inquiry will go some way to identifying ways in which decision makers and the wider community can work together to make sure that there are enough accessible and clean public toilets available in our communities.

What are the effects of public toilet provision (or lack thereof) on the health and social wellbeing of a person?

The lack of suitable public toilets in Wales causes a wide range of problems for people of all ages. In many cases the fear of having an ‘accident’ limits how often, and for how long, people are willing to leave their home. Some people refuse to go to visit new places for fear of there not being suitable public toilet provision. In most extreme cases this can lead to people becoming housebound.

In terms of wellbeing the fear of having an accident can hugely limit how much a person can get out and about and engage in social activities. For some, simply having a well placed toilet at a local park or bus station would mean being able to be independent and enjoy life.

A lack of public toilets impacts on physical, mental, social and emotional health and wellbeing costing the NHS more than would adequate toilet provision. People experience a poor quality of life from isolation, lack of social contact and a loss of independence.

One of the most notable health risks of poor public toilet provision is the potential it has to make people feel forced to skip essential medication, or limit fluid intake, to minimise the risk of having an ‘accident’.

People have told us the following about the implications for them of poor public toilet provision in their communities:

“I regularly take water tablets...If I need to go out I don’t take them and this can make me ill. It is a matter of dignity, I don’t want to feel ashamed.”

“Having to stay at home = isolation, depression, due to bowel condition from an illness. This has lasted 2 years. Now I can go out if there are toilets en route to and at the destination. No toilets = I can’t go / join in.”

“Fear of urine infection if public toilets not available.”

“I avoid drinking because often there is no loo available”

Is there evidence of people being unable to leave their homes due to concerns over the availability of public toilets? If so, what are the health and wellbeing implications of this?

Many people who attended our ‘Day of Action’ at the Assembly had a friend, neighbour or relative who were unable to leave their home as often as they wanted to, or in some cases at all, because of the lack of public toilets.

In most cases people stay at home because of the fear of having an embarrassing accident. This fear shapes their lives and leads to isolation, depression and generally a poor quality of life.

Given that many people in Wales suffer with incontinence it is important that public toilets are available and clearly signposted so that people can leave their homes with confidence.

For some, the limits having no public toilets places on them going out include accessing basic services such as visiting the GP. This can lead to health problems reaching crisis point before anyone becomes aware this is the problem. It costs the NHS a lot more to treat things once they become a significant problem rather than catching them early on, or even preventing their onset in the first place. Poor public toilets do not just limit access to community life, they mean being unable to access anything for some people.

We know some people find it costly to visit places where you have to go into establishments and buy food or drink in order to use their facilities. As people's finances become limited the added cost of having to spend money on using private business' toilets can force them into having to stop going out at all.

Some examples include:

"Trapped at home as uncertain where I can go if I need to."

"I regularly take water tablets; this stops me from going places because of poor toilet provision"

"I have stress incontinence – have had it for some 30 years – after childbirth – I need to use the toilets urgently when necessary. If I know that there is no toilet I am unable to go to that place."

"Having undergone surgery for advanced bowel cancer I was very aware of public toilets in the area and trips to Bronglais for Chemo made it very tiring trip. Thank goodness for the Aber toilets, without them I would have been housebound as I have little control and when I had to go there was no time to wait."

"I will be unable to go out as I get older if there are not enough toilets in convenient places"

"Afraid to go to unknown or strange places."

"I need to take medication regarding water tablets, sometimes I have to rush back home if I am desperate, making my day quite difficult."

"I need the loo at least every two hours. I love the outdoors and visiting places of interest. I find I am forced to limit my trips e.g. Taff Trail by the lack of availability of facilities close to the Trail in local villages"

"No toilets means I cannot come to town to shop"

"I am a carer. My cared for needs to use a toilet frequently and usually at very short notice. There is only one toilet in our valley which means he is unable to stray far from home. When in Bridgend or other places we need to drink numerous cups of tea or coffee in order to use toilets in cafes etc"

"I suffer from IBS and it causes me to have urgent bowel actions. I always have to make sure I know where the nearest toilets are and I can get there quickly otherwise I soil myself which is most embarrassing. Shopping in particular seems to bring it on. We have a shopping centre, now very busy, in Llanishen, which has been built without toilets"

Is there equality across Wales - and in relation to all people - in the provision of public toilets?

- **How should public toilet facilities address the needs of different groups of people (men, women, disabled people, people with special health needs, children)?**
- **Is there a particular need for improved facilities for specific groups?**

It is important that public toilets are clean, accessible and clearly signposted. In particular cubicles need to be big enough to enable someone with limited mobility to move with ease and hand rails should be attached.

It is important that toilets are located in the right areas, for example at transport hubs and in shopping centres. It is also essential that they are open at convenient times and all year round.

In particular there is a need for changing rooms or unisex facilities which carers and those being cared for can access together if they are of a different sex. Those who are catheterised or who use colostomy bags may need help and often public toilets do not have enough space, or cater for the disposal of such waste e.g. sanitary bins are usually not available in men's toilets.

What could the wider effects of inadequate public toilet provision be on public health and the community? E.g. correspondence sent to the Petitions Committee suggests that there is a risk of street fouling and a consequential spread of disease.

The decreasing number of public toilets is of considerable concern to us in terms of hygiene and public health. Public toilets were introduced to remedy the fouling of pavements and we are worried that as more toilets close this will become an increasing problem.

On occasions where people can't find a toilet they may urinate or defecate in public, revealing themselves to others. This is anti social behaviour. In some areas you can

smell that people have relieved themselves in alleyways or shop doorways and we know in some areas councils have had to pay for special cleaning to be undertaken to make sure that the mess is cleaned up.

This is not just happening in commercial areas, it is happening in communities and at beauty spots. It is important that people are not forced to find alternatives to toilets as this is a health hazard and unpleasant for all.

Comments we have received include:

“Last week a very nice car parked by my house. A gentleman got out, crossed the road to the bank, which is part of my garden and disappeared into the bushes. When he reappeared, my neighbour asked him what he was up to and very embarrassed he explained that he had been caught in traffic on the M4, got off at Junction 28 and had been bursting for the loo and there wasn't one on the A246 through Bassaleg, Rhiwderin, Lower Machen or Machen and he had seen the convenient leafy lane and grabbed the opportunity. What could I say? there are no public toilets between Newport and Caerphilly.”

“In our village (we) have no toilet facilities and (youngsters) have been moved on by the police for urinating behind hedges. This has caused hygiene problems amongst many others.”

Conclusion

We firmly believe that it is important to the health and wellbeing of all people in Wales for there to be a suitable network of public toilets.

Even though financial times are tough we are sure that the human cost of not providing clean and accessible toilets is far too high to ignore.

Health and Social Care Committee

HSC(4)-02-12 paper 4

Public health implications of inadequate public toilet facilities – Evidence from the British Toilet Association

December 2011

British Toilet Association

Written evidence provided by the British Toilet Association:

Mr Mike Bone, Director

Mrs Gillian Kemp, Management Committee Member

PUBLIC TOILET PROVISION IN WALES

Public Health Implications of inadequate public toilet facilities

Memorandum to the Health and Social Care Committee
National Assembly for Wales

Introduction

The aim of the British Toilet Association [BTA] is to represent the interest and aspirations of 'away from home' toilet providers, suppliers and users of all types. The BTA acts as an important link between the private sector toilet producers, local authority providers, local authority policy makers, planners and voluntary campaign groups representing users.

What are the effects of public toilet provision (or lack thereof) on the health and social wellbeing of a person

Elderly people

1 Independence

As we become older we become increasingly likely to develop bladder and bowel conditions. This means that older people have to use the toilet more frequently and with greater urgency. Physically getting to a toilet is also more difficult as mobility becomes restricted because of age. '*Nowhere to Go*' published in 2007 by Help the Aged [now Age UK] states that 3-3.5 million people suffer from urinary incontinence in the UK and more than half are over 65 with the majority being women. That was 4 years ago and the numbers of older people continue to increase

For many older people leaving the home requires careful planning to ascertain the location of the public toilets in the area they want to visit. Some may have suffered discomfort or embarrassment because of the lack of public toilets and many are anxious in case they do. Toilet facilities on public transport and

at interchanges can be poor or non-existent and the answer for many older people is to stay at home.

2 Quality of life

In 'Nowhere to Go' 52% of respondents agreed that the lack of public toilets in their area stopped them from going out as often as they would like. For those older people who are particularly anxious, the lack of facilities stops them going out at all.

3 Cost

Not going out and not keeping active can result in depression. The cost of health and social care falls on local authorities as well as the national health services. It is therefore important to encourage older people to remain involved with their friends and community.

Women

Many public toilets in the UK were established at a time when women stayed at home to raise the family and the men went out to work. Consequently there were many more facilities provided for men than women. The balance is slowly changing but the closure of public toilets affects women in several ways.

1 Time

Women take on average twice as long to use the toilet as men, but there are still too few women's cubicles compared to the male provision of urinals AND cubicles.

2 Out and about

A survey carried out to support the revision of the British Standard for public toilet provision showed that more women than men are out and about in the community. ENCAMS [now known as Keep Britain Tidy] reported that women outnumber men 70:30 in shopping centres and even higher in some places, yet there are more toilets available for men. A report by the Bladder & Bowel Foundation in June 2008 found that 32% of women of a sample of 1040 adults have bladder control problems compared to 13% of men.

3 Particular needs

Women who are pregnant or at the menopause need to use the toilet more often, as do those with other conditions such as diabetes [Clara Greed, *Inclusive Urban Design: Public Toilets*, Architectural Press, 2003]

In the same publication, Professor Greed acknowledges research by Armstrong & Scott in 1992 and Rothburn & Dunningan in 2004 which found that there is a higher risk of tampon infection if toilets are not available. Yet at any one time, about a quarter of all women of childbearing age will be menstruating but there is '*little allowance...for acknowledgement of women's menstruation and how urination demands might change within the monthly cycle*'.

4 Caring

Women often take on the role of carer, whether of older people or children. In these situations they need toilets in accessible locations with facilities to accommodate the needs of those for whom they are caring as well as their own – often with shopping bags and luggage in tow.

Children

1 Sanitary equipment

The BTA has observed that there are very few publicly available toilets dedicated for children's use with appropriate child sized sanitary equipment. There are an increasing number of low level urinals for boys but there are seldom toilet pans at a suitable height for young boys and girls or low level washing facilities to encourage proper hand hygiene.

2 Baby changing

There are now many separate baby changing facilities included in public toilet premises, although very few actually cater for the carer who also wishes to use the toilet. Carers often have to negotiate a buggy, sometimes with an additional child and its accoutrements into the main toilet area in order to use the toilet.

The closure of a public toilet means that those with babies to change have to find alternative, less sanitary means— such as on a park bench if the weather is fine – with suitable means of disposal. The choice for many in this situation is to leave the soiled nappy behind incurring additional cleaning costs for the local authority.

3 Small children

Small children need a toilet several times a day. They do not have control over their bladders which are still growing and outings can be abruptly curtailed should a child suddenly demand the use of a toilet. If there is no public toilet available, the choice for the carer is either to go home if home is comparatively nearby and spoil the day for everyone, or find a convenient bush; a choice which is understandable but unhygienic and again involves a cleaning operation by the appropriate council department.

4 Older children

Toilet closures affect older children. They may be out on their own and need access to a toilet that takes into account both road and personal safety. Girls may have just started learning to cope with menstruation. Holding on for children, or anyone is unacceptable.

5 Young people

The Bladder & Bowel Foundation reports that 4.8 million people in the UK under the age of 24 years are estimated to have already experienced some kind of problem with their bladder control and a similar number with bowel control [June 2008]. Young people suffer from embarrassment and anxiety about toilet related issues and their need for publicly available toilets should be recognised.

As Adams & Ingham, 1998 and Bartlett, 1999 [Clara Greed, *Inclusive Urban Design: Public Toilets*, Architectural Press, 2003] suggest 'children are the last great minority to be "discovered" as worthy of priority policy treatment'.

Disabled people

1 Importance of accessing public toilets

Anne McGuire in the Foreword to *Improving Public Access to Better Quality Toilets: A Strategic Guide*, 2008 pointed out how access to high-quality public toilet facilities plays an important part in all our lives but a lack of such facilities can prevent or restrict the opportunities to take part in everyday activities such as shopping and leisure pursuits.

According to Professor Greed one in eight (12.5%) of the population is classified as disabled. Whilst only around 3% of disabled people actually use wheelchairs, others have problems with mobility, fragility or lack of stamina which require consideration with regard to accessing public toilets.

2 The value of Changing Places facilities

People with profound and multiple learning disabilities and other severely disabled people cannot use standard accessible toilets. The lack of what has become known as Changing Places facilities which have space, a hoist and the equipment to cater for all ages restricts access to many activities and places not only for the disabled person, but for the carers as well.

3 Bladder and bowel problems

More people suffer from some form of bladder and bowel problems than with asthma, diabetes and epilepsy put together. [Bladder & Bowel Foundation]. Anyone can develop health problems at any age but bladder and bowel issues, because they are not considered a suitable topic for conversation, can have a huge impact on how you live your life.

4 Isolation

Once again, the feelings of isolation and inability to enjoy the community and contribute to the economy because of the lack of suitable toilet facilities can cause depression and stress. The BTA argues that the cost of supposed savings from closing public toilets has to be seen in a much wider context, to include the impact on local quality of life, particularly the health and life style of residents within a community as well as the visitor economy.

Mobile workers

Postmen, carers, bus crews, delivery personnel, taxi drivers, lorry drivers, police officers and other mobile workers need access to public toilets as they carry out their duties. The closure of public toilets impinges on their ability to carry out their work effectively. An article in the Daily Mail dated 31 May 2011 suggested that police officers in a particular county in England were being advised to 'Try to restrict fluids to prevent visits to the bathroom'. The BTA would argue that this is unacceptable and ill advised on health grounds.

1 Women

Many mobile workers, especially in the cleaning and caring industries are women who would be affected by the issues already discussed above.

2 Cycling and walking

In these days of being environmentally friendly we are being encouraged to leave our cars behind and either become a cyclist or a pedestrian. Neither activity is suitable without publicly available toilets open at times that people need them. A toilet opening at ten o'clock in the morning is no good if you're on your way to work five hours earlier.

Is there evidence of people being unable to leave their homes due to concerns over the availability of public toilets? If so, what are the health and wellbeing implications of this?

Older people

As mentioned in connection with the first question, having public toilets available can make the difference between being independent or house bound.

1 Living longer

Now that people are living longer but are also developing conditions which require frequent visits to the toilet, public facilities are an essential requirement for every day life. An elderly person's fear of soiling or wetting themselves in public is a very real one. The long term effect of actually doing so is even worse.

2 Health risks

The lack of public toilets increases health risks and incurs costs for medical treatment because if people feel they cannot leave their homes, they can't keep physically active. In '*Nowhere to Go*' mentioned previously '52% of respondents admitted that the lack of public toilets in their area stops them from going out as often as they would like'. Attending graves of loved ones in cemeteries or visiting local shops on the bus are inaccessible activities if there are no toilets close by. Losing public toilets in areas such as parks and promenades where older people could take some exercise results in many people becoming inactive and prone to health problems.

3 Isolation

The '*Nowhere to Go*' report suggests that 'about half of the over-75 population of the UK lives alone' with many feeling lonely and trapped within their four walls and that evidence implies that the lack of public toilets is a contributory factor. Depression, states the report, affects an estimated 1 in 8 people over the age of 65.

4 Physical activity

Physical activity, especially in later life, is important. It reduces the demands on local health services and helps older people maintain their independence. Losing public toilets means that many older people are excluded from activities such as shopping which contributes to the local economy.

Women

1 Times

Women need toilets at different times from men – particularly during the day time when they doing the school run, going to full or part time work, looking after children and / or relatives. 52 per cent of the population are women.

2 Night time

Also, as mentioned previously women's toileting needs are different to those of men due to biological differences. Yet the night time economy caters more for the male population than for women. In many areas, urinals are provided at night with no provision for women. The headline in a local newspaper dated 31 October 2011, was '*Use new Swansea urinals or get arrested*'. No mention of any toilet facilities made available for women! Women have 2 options: to stay at home or go out and deal with the consequences in the best way they can.

Disabled People

1 Invisible disabilities

Conditions such as irritable bowel syndrome, ulcerative colitis, and Crohn's disease affect both men and women and cause many people to stay at home because of the lack of public toilets [*Ladies and Gents* p54]. These 'invisible' disabilities can be intermittent or chronic but the urgent and frequent need to access a toilet means many sufferers feel anxious about being away from home. Others plan their routes very carefully based on the availability of public toilets and even then many will continue to feel anxious and prefer to restrict their outing in case they find themselves in an embarrassing situation. Leaving the security of home is, for many, a stressful experience, especially when journeying somewhere new [*Nowhere to Go* p5]

Is there equality across Wales – and in relation to all people – in the provision of public toilets?

There is equality in the fact that the closure or lack of public toilets affects everyone as we all have to use the toilet several times a day.

1 Impact of non statutory duty

Public toilet provision is not a statutory duty and as a consequence the type of provision varies greatly from area to area. For many people, especially visitors, finding a toilet in a new area is not easy. For those with medical conditions the choice for many is to stay at home rather than risk an 'accident'. Grandparents out with their children face similar problems. For public places to be 'inclusive' the services provided must include public toilets to ensure they are accessible to all.

2 Inequality for women

Women, as we have mentioned, need more provision than men, due to their biological needs and the fact they are the majority of the population but they are not properly catered for, especially during evening hours. Research by Goldsmith, (1992) suggests that as men have a higher level of toilet provision

they drink more fluids than women and therefore may never see the need for a toilet as a problem!

3 Community Partnership Toilets

These are toilets in private premises such as pubs, cafes and offices which can be used by the public without having to make a purchase. The Local Authority pays the owner of the premises for providing the facility which is cheaper than maintaining public toilets. However, some people do not want to enter pubs for a variety of reasons and children may not be welcome. Community toilets may not be able to cope with large groups of people and the premises may not be open when needed. Some local authorities are now finding there are fewer companies willing to allow the public into their premises just to use the toilet. With public toilet closures and no other facilities available those who need frequent access to a toilet are restricted in the length of time they can risk being away from home.

Community partnership toilets should not be used to replace public toilets but may be a useful addition to a particular area if properly signposted.

4 The Disability Discrimination Act

This Act was intended to improve access for disabled people. However, some authorities use it as an excuse to close toilets that do not fulfil the appropriate standards. The effect of this is not only to close down a facility which a large number of people could use but also to take away a facility that some disabled people also used albeit with difficulty. This restricts the activities of disabled people even more!

The Act does *not* state that non compliant toilets have to close. It asks that reasonable adjustments be made if possible or to include facilities for disabled people where appropriate. This can be the addition of handrails and painting walls so that the hand rails stand out to help poorly sighted people. Neither of these ideas is expensive. All new builds, however, must include facilities for disabled people. This misuse of the Act is causing problems throughout the UK by reducing facilities for everyone and goes against what the law originally set out to achieve.

It is hard not to disagree with a comment in the introduction to *Ladies and Gents* that 'denying access to a toilet remains a remarkably effective form of social exclusion'

- **How should public toilet facilities address the needs of different groups of people (men, women, disabled people, people with special health needs, children)?**

Many of the needs of these groups have already been addressed but there are some additional points we would like to raise.

1 Keys

The BTA feels it is unacceptable, even discriminatory, for a significant section of the population to have to possess or ask for a key to use a toilet. Some

toilets are accessible by a RADAR key but the rest of the population – around 85% - are denied access to ordinary public toilet facilities once they have been locked at dusk or at weekends. Some people feel anxious about asking in case their request is refused and then they will have to spend more time finding another toilet. An incident on this issue was witnessed in a well known department store. The key had been 'lost' and the lady in a wheelchair who was accompanied by her husband had to find another suitable toilet; the nearest being at the far end of the shopping centre. This scenario reinforces the lack of dignity and embarrassment this situation engenders.

2 Locking up times

Bladders and bowels function on a daily basis. Therefore locking toilets during afternoons and over weekends can cause problems. Firstly, it can encourage street fouling with its attendant cleaning costs. Secondly, it can affect the local economy because if there are no toilets available people will not stay long. In a survey in 2001, The Association of Town Centre Managers showed that towns with good toilet facilities have a higher retail turnover than those without. Thirdly it can affect those working out of 'normal' hours.

3 Queuing

Queues for the women's toilets are due to the inadequate number of cubicles provided. Women take longer than men to use the toilet and as mentioned before, have specific biological needs which do not affect men. It is rare to see men queuing for the toilet even when a coach party arrives at a 'comfort' stop but the women have to wait their turn.

During this time of waiting, they are having to 'hold on'. This as Anthony and Dufresne [*Ladies and Gents* p54] remind us can make women a 'potential candidate for cystitis and other urinary tract infections' which could progress into something worse should they be allowed to develop. This applies to pregnant women too and of course children, many of whom have difficulty in 'holding on'.

Anthony and Dufresne provide evidence from the National Institutes of Health, 1995, that should someone have to 'hold on' to a bowel movement then conditions such as constipation, abdominal pain, diverticulitis and haemorrhoids can result.

- **Is there a particular need for improved facilities for specific groups?**

We have discussed the various needs of people in our answers to previous questions but one group which we have not mentioned so far is that of **Tourists**.

1 Importance of tourism to Wales

In her presentation to Welsh Assembly members and Age Cymru on 16 November 2011, Susan Cunningham, founder of All Mod Cons, a campaigning body that pre-dates the BTA said '*The total tourism spend in Wales in 2008 was £4.3 billion. Tourism means jobs and is increasingly*

important to the Welsh economy. Visitors have high expectations but sadly, many local authorities in Wales and throughout the UK make disgracefully poor provision.'

2 Who are the tourists?

Tourists include elderly people, disabled people, women, men, and children, and amongst them will be those with various medical conditions requiring access to public toilets. They arrive in a variety of transport and their visit may include walking tours and beaches as well as visits to specific places of interest. The growth of festivals requires thought given to temporary toilet provision – and gender equality – to avoid fouling the area, particularly where there are a lot of people crowded together. Short break holidays are rising in popularity and are particularly enjoyed by those over 55 – an age group most likely to need public toilet facilities. Families on beach holidays also require easy to access toilets. Research carried out by ENCAMS [now Keep Britain Tidy] found that the availability of public toilets was an important factor in choosing a beach to visit.

3 The impressions of the tourist

To be a visitor or tourist to any area just getting there will probably involve a visit to a toilet. Tourists always remember their toilet experience – especially if it is a bad one - as illustrated by letters to various local newspapers!

What could the wider effects of inadequate public toilet provision be on public health and the community? e.g. correspondence sent to the Petitions Committee suggests that there is a risk of street fouling and a consequential spread of disease

The industrial revolution had caused the population of towns and cities to greatly increase resulting in a need for a dramatic change to the poor standards of health and hygiene of the times. The provision of public toilets grew out of the need to combat contaminated water and diseases such as cholera and typhus. Britain proudly led the way in public toilet provision but sadly that is no longer the case, although the population today is rising and people are living longer.

1 Rural areas

In rural areas the failure to provide toilet facilities in addition to parking areas can lead to public health issues as demonstrated by Councillor Louise Hughes in the television programme *X-ray* in November this year. In the programme she showed the rubbish – used toilet paper, tissues, faeces, nappies – left by visitors in an area where the public toilets had been closed. Although one can't condone it, for those in desperate need there appears to have been little option.

2 Night time economy

This topic has already been briefly discussed but there are some additional issues we would like to raise.

In many areas the standards of hygiene in public places can be very poor. Very few towns and cities have 24 hour toilets available. In some areas there are retractable urinals, which rise from the ground for use during the night time - one authority in Wales has also installed plastic urinals for night time drinkers but no facilities for women. As mentioned previously, women are poorly catered for at night. There seems to be an assumption that women do not need toilet facilities at this time. The lack of provision for both sexes results in councils having to provide a clean up operation – which of course involves time and costs. In the meantime those going about their daily busy in those areas have to negotiate streams of urine and worse.

Some elderly people have described their embarrassment at seeing men – and children – relieving themselves in public after the bars and pubs have closed. Many do not venture out in the evenings. They have also described their fear of the possibility of someone knocking at their door asking to use the toilet and not knowing whether it is a real case of need or a distraction burglary. [Merton Older People's Housing Forum]

Unfortunately street fouling does exist in our society today and much of occurs because of the absence of public toilets. Toilet closures and general lack of funding to support current toilet provision has also meant a decline in hygiene and cleanliness with some premises having no soap, no hot water and no suitable hand drying facilities. The failure to wash one's hands after using the toilet increases the opportunity of spreading diseases such as Clostridium Difficile and MRSA to name but two. [The Chartered Institution of Wastes Management]. The appearance of a nasty strain of e-coli, which flourishes as a result of poor hygiene has led to renewed efforts to encourage good hygiene and the 'Now Wash Your Hands' reminder is appearing once again in many public toilets.

3 Problems of poor facilities

Apart from giving an unwelcome image to visitors and tourists, having poor facilities means that in many cases babies and those with disabilities have to be changed on the floors of a public toilet. This is not only undignified but is totally unhygienic. The question of what to do with the nappy or pad if there are no disposal facilities has then to be addressed.

4 The homeless

The needs of the homeless are seldom mentioned in connection with public toilets, but their toileting requirements do need to be addressed if street fouling is to be reduced.

5 Cleaning

Unfortunately cleaning toilets is considered by many to be a low paid, unskilled task when in fact it is a very important one that should be carried out properly with appropriate training regimes and regular inspections. The annual Loo of the Year Awards recognises many aspects of toilet provision including the efforts made by cleaning staff whose pride in their work and in their Award should be an example to all local authorities. Good cleaning in public toilets reduces the spread of infection and encourages users to

maintain the standards within the facility. Yet it would appear that public toilets are not always given the same priority as other health facilities when it comes to hygiene and public health.

A high standard of cleanliness is extremely important for those with catheters and other medical conditions as well as for pregnant and menstruating women in order to prevent spreading any infections.

Ulrich Beck, mentioned by Clara Greed in *Inclusive Urban Design: Public Toilets*, suggests that those who instigate toilet closures should prove that the action will not cause health risks! .

Conclusion

All around the UK groups such as P is for the People in Wales are campaigning hard to save their public toilets. The efforts these groups put into their campaigns demonstrates how valuable public toilets are in the communities. Whilst public toilets remain a discretionary service, local authorities will continue with the closures without offering an alternative solution. The organisation Keep Britain Tidy argues that the only time public toilets should be closed is if the facility is clearly no longer viable and the community agrees to the closure.

Vandalism is another excuse for closure where the actions of the few cause inconvenience and difficulties for the majority. Many toilets are closed without any recourse to the advice and suggestions available from organisations such as the British Toilet Association.

Closing public toilets is seen by many local authorities as a solution to reducing costs. The BTA argues that the overall cost of closing public toilets should be seen in a much wider context in that they impact on everyone's quality of life, particularly the health and lifestyle of local communities and their economic well being. There may be a direct cost saving of toilet provision but the potential increased costs of healthcare and cleaning, as mentioned above, must also be considered. Also, residents and tourists will not visit areas without the facilities that they need, which in turn will result in a decline in income for local businesses, as evidenced throughout the UK. Closed shops and other commercial premises are often accompanied by public toilet closures in areas of decline.

Despite the current depressed economic climate many local authorities are continuing to provide high standards of public toilet provision meeting the basic human needs of their residents and visitors in an attractive, clean, safe and hygienic way. Winners in the 2011 Loo of the Year Awards, promoted by the BTA, included Bridgend County Borough Council, Ceredigion County Council, Carmarthenshire County Council, and Vale of Glamorgan Council; all proud to provide award winning toilets.

The provision of public toilets affects tourists and visitors to our towns and cities, and as a result also determines the reputation of Wales and the UK both at home and abroad.

Summary

The British Toilet Association believes that for all of us the lack of public toilets:

- reduces independence
- leads to incidences of embarrassment, indignity and distress
- affects quality of life
- causes problems for women's health and wellbeing
- causes problems for children
- restricts opportunities for disabled people
- causes distress for those with 'invisible' disabilities
- can contribute to mental health problems
- causes problems for mobile workers
- reduces opportunities for physical activity
- increases risks to public health, especially at night
- can be considered gender discriminatory
- incurs additional costs related to medical and social services.
- can affect the perception of tourists
- encourages street fouling
- encourages unhygienic practices [also in poorly maintained toilets]
- ignores the fact that needing the toilet is a basic human requirement
- is often a symptom of a town in decline

We thank the Health and Social Care Committee for the opportunity to contribute to the consultation.

Health and Social Care Committee

HSC(4)-02-12 paper 5

Public health implications of inadequate public toilet facilities – Evidence from the IBS Network

December 2011

From The IBS Network:

Dr Nick Read, MA, MD, FRCP, Chair of The IBS Network

Mrs Gillian Kemp, MA, Supporter of The IBS Network

PUBLIC TOILET PROVISION IN WALES

Public Health Implications of inadequate public toilet facilities

Memorandum to the Health and Social Care Committee
National Assembly for Wales

Introduction

The IBS Network is a national charity which supports people of *all ages* who are suffering from Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)

Irritable Bowel Syndrome or IBS is the name doctors have given to a collection of otherwise unexplained symptoms relating to a disturbance of the colon or large intestine. IBS affects around a third of the population at some point in their lives. The symptoms of Irritable Bowel Syndrome are various but include an urgent need to visit the toilet with very little time to find one. The closure of public toilet facilities is therefore of great concern to people suffering from IBS with urgency problems.

What are the effects of public toilet provision (or lack thereof) on the health and social wellbeing of a person?

Fighting the taboo

Nowadays we can talk about most things, but there is still a taboo about talking about the bowel and its functions. It is not considered polite even when the bowel is working normally. When there are problems with bowel control the situation is even worse. The unwillingness of people to talk clearly and openly about their illness, even to their GP, means they can feel alienated from family and friends and become depressed and isolated as a consequence. Councils and those in charge of public toilets may therefore assume that because people are not protesting against a proposed toilet

closure, there is no need to have them. But the provision of public toilets is an issue of great concern to people living with the unpredictable nature of their IBS symptoms.

Impact on everyday life.

The anxiety of not knowing when a toilet is going to be needed can have a devastating impact on everyday life. Many people with IBS find it difficult to participate in activities away from home unless there is a toilet available, not only at their destination but also along the way.

The diarrhoea associated with IBS is not only unpredictable but can be frequent. The experience of losing control of one's bowels in public because of the lack of available – and open – toilets is a real one. Lewis Moody the Rugby player who suffers from colitis wrote about his own experience of losing bowel control and the awful embarrassment and shame which he felt when he found toilets in a car park closed [*Mail on Line, 29 October 2011*]. Not only is a situation like this highly embarrassing, it undermines confidence and self esteem and many people find the easiest way to cope with the possibility of it happening is to remain at home.

Not having access to a toilet can mean that socialising, going shopping, even travelling to work can become almost impossible with the result that a person become isolated from the community.

The need to know the locations of toilets, whether they are still available and, if they are, whether they are actually open at the time of visiting causes anxiety and for many it is easier to stay at home. A lack of adequate facilities at bus and train stations and on board trains, excludes many patients from using public transport

IBS members are issued with a 'Can't Wait' card which has the message:

'Please Help! I have a medical condition which means I need to use your toilet facilities urgently. Your co-operation and kindness would be very much appreciated.'

This card is intended to make it easier for members to ask to use the toilet in shops and offices if the premises do not belong to a Community Partnership Scheme [*additional comment later*], without having to give a long explanation about their condition. However, it doesn't guarantee access and some members have been very distressed when access to toilet facilities has been refused.

Is there evidence of people being unable to leave their homes due to concerns over the availability of public toilets? If so, what are the health and wellbeing implications of this?

Isolation:

If people cannot leave their homes because of the fear of soiling themselves because of the worry that they will not be able to find a toilet in time they become isolated from their community.

'I feel so ashamed I daren't leave home unless I know where all the loos are'

Mental health

Withdrawal from the community brings with it mental health problems, particularly loneliness and depression.

Work opportunities

Needing a toilet on the way to work is an issue for many people with IBS. It can be a distraction for those who need to travel distances to their place of employment and they can arrive stressed and unhappy. This has a knock on effect as stress can make IBS symptoms worse.

One of the problems with IBS is that you can have good days and bad days but you never know which and it can't be factored into any activity planning. So, if a job opportunity arises some distance from home, do you take the plunge or do you remain within the known environment? Lack of toilets can limit job opportunities for some people with IBS.

"I felt too embarrassed to talk about my problem to anyone at work, but when my boss put an article she'd written about her own experience of IBS on the notice board, I felt able to ask for help in getting to work"

Physical health

The simple act of going for a walk, encouraged by many organisations and health professionals, cannot be considered by many people with IBS. Are toilets available?

"I have to find out if there are toilets there – they're usually not advertised in any information provided - because if there aren't any along the route I can't go! It's as simple as that"

Similarly with sports, you can play sport but on the way to and from the sports centre you may find yourself needing a toilet urgently with no toilets available. It's easier not to bother.

With shopping available on line, you won't starve, but your body won't be exercised and other health issues can arise.

Is there equality across Wales – and in relation to all people – in the provision of public toilets?

- **How should public toilet facilities address the needs of different groups of people (men, women, disabled people, people with special health needs, children)?**
- **Is there a particular need for improved facilities for specific groups**

Toilets are being closed in Wales as they are in other parts of the UK. Some areas such as the Upper Rhymney Valley have no facilities at all. Merthyr Tydfil has only 3 facilities [*Merthyr Express, 24 November 2011*]

- How should public toilet facilities address the needs of different groups of people (men, women, disabled people, people with special health needs, children)?

In some areas of the UK, including Wales, there has been a move to introduce Community Partnership Schemes [CPS] where businesses such as cafes, pubs, offices allow members of the public to use their toilets. There are positive and negative reactions to this. The good news for IBS sufferers is that toilets may become available in places where perhaps there have previously been none or the public toilets have been closed down. The bad news is that CPS toilets are not always clearly signposted and so someone, possibly in distress, may not have the appropriate information to access them. Many CPS toilets are only open during office hours and there remains the problem of the night time economy. Many women do not feel comfortable or able, possibly for religious reasons, or because they are accompanied by children – to visit pubs, especially at night. Standards and accessibility of CPS toilets vary greatly and information is not always widely available. In a department store, you have a reasonable idea of what to expect; visiting an office, you are venturing into the unknown – which adds to the anxiety. Some businesses offering a CPS toilet have moved or closed down and the information has not been updated. Many businesses see offering a toilet facility to paying customers as part of the service and do not want having non paying public using their facilities.

The best solution to support people with IBS is to have publicly available toilets open when needed with the location and opening times clearly signposted.

- Is there a particular need for improved facilities for specific groups

Like everyone else people with IBS need access to a clean, well maintained publicly available toilets. Having toilets in towns, cities, transport interchanges, tourist areas, play areas and motorways will bring people into the area and boost the economy. Having toilets will allow people with IBS to enjoy green spaces with their children, teenagers with the condition will be able to play outside, and they will all have the confidence to participate in activities other people take for granted and take part in community life.

“Public toilets in places like parks and promenades help to encourage people who may need regular toilet access to take exercise and stay physically active” *Improving Public Access to Better Quality Toilets: A Strategic Guide (Department for Communities & Local Government, March 2008)*

What could the wider effects of inadequate public toilet provision be on public health and the community? e.g. correspondence sent to the

Petitions Committee suggests that there is a risk of street fouling and a consequential spread of disease

For people with IBS there is always the risk of street fouling if they cannot find a toilet.

Someone with IBS who has soiled themselves in public finds it horrendously embarrassing and distressing and will make every effort for it not to occur again. This could mean that the person becomes fearful of leaving home preferring to remain 'safe' rather than take the risk of such an incident happening again. As we have explained earlier in the Memorandum, staying at home in these circumstances can lead to depression and mental health problems.

The Council, in the meantime, has to clean up the area which involves time and costs. As more and more toilets become under threat of closure or actually close, the situation is likely to become worse.

"Inadequate provision also has a significant effect on public health and environmental issues, particularly in terms of street cleanliness and disease control" Ivan Lewis, Department of Health, *Improving Public Access to Better Quality Toilets: A Strategic Guide (Department for Communities & Local Government, March 2008)*

People affected by IBS are constantly anxious about suddenly needing a toilet and having very little time to find one. Their lives can be dominated by finding a toilet and the fear of embarrassment. Consequently, this can have a devastating impact on their ability to engage in day to day activities. People with IBS need – and want - to minimise the disabling impact of IBS. They need the reassurance that when away from home they can access a public toilet.

For people with IBS access to toilet facilities is of paramount importance.

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Agenda Item 4

Health and Social Care Committee

HSC(4)-02-12 paper 6

Public health implications of inadequate public toilet provision in Wales – Evidence from the Minister for Health & Social Services

Purpose

I welcome the Committee's decision to conduct this inquiry on the public health implications of inadequate public toilet provision in Wales. I believe it will raise the profile of an issue that affects the health, dignity and quality of people's lives. At the request of the Committee this paper addresses the following issues:

- What are the effects of public toilet provision (or lack thereof) on the health and social wellbeing of a person?
- Is there evidence of people being unable to leave their homes due to concerns over the availability of public toilets? If so, what are the health and wellbeing implications of this?
- Is there equality across Wales – and in relation to all people – in the provision of public toilets?
- How should public toilet facilities address the needs of different groups of people (men, women, disabled people, people with special health needs, children)?
- Is there a particular need for improved facilities for specific groups?
- What could the wider effects of inadequate public toilet provision be on public health and the community?

Health implications of inadequate public toilet provision in Wales

Going to the toilet is a universal need, therefore, public toilets matter to everybody, regardless of their age, class, ethnic origin, gender, mental ability or physical ability. They are, however, even more important to certain sections of our society, including older people, disabled people, women, children and young people and their families, tourists and visitors.

In Wales, we have a higher percentage of older people than anywhere else in the UK. Birth rates have been falling while increases in life expectancy for men are predicted to rise from 76.4 years in 2004 to 80.3 years in 2024 and for women the rise will be from 80.7 years to 84.0 years in the same period. An increasing proportion of the population will be of pensionable age.¹ We are more likely to suffer from conditions such as incontinence, urgency and prostate problems as we age.

In 2006, Help the Aged published a report 'Nowhere to go – Public Toilet Provision in the UK' which summarised a survey of older people's views on public toilet provision in their local area. The survey was sent to older peoples forums and 10% of the respondents lived in Wales. The report showed more than half of older people found that a lack of local public toilets prevented them from going out as often as they would like.

¹ <http://wales.gov.uk/strategy/strategies/2166490/strategyphaseII.doc?lang=en>

As people get older they become increasingly likely to develop continence issues, experiencing the need to use the toilet more often and with greater urgency. Many older people suffer from incontinence or have continence issues, caused by muscle weakness. It is estimated that 3–3.5 million people suffer from urinary incontinence in the UK. More than half are over 65 and the majority are women.² As people age they will experience an increased dependency on public toilets.

Help the Aged's paper "Nowhere to Go" highlights the social cost to older people of the decrease in public toilets:

- 52 % of respondents agree that the lack of public toilets in their area stops them from going out as often as they would like
- 80 % of respondents did not find it easy to find a public toilet
- 78 % of respondents found that their local public toilets are not open when they needed them
- 79 % of respondents find that safety concerns make public toilets unappealing
- 74 % of respondents are frequently disturbed by the lack of cleanliness of their local public toilets

Evidence from the Help the Aged survey has led them to conclude there are large numbers of people who are 'tethered by an invisible bladder leash' which restricts their movements to within easy reach of toilets. About half of the over-75 population of the UK live alone, with studies showing as many as 1.75 million older people report feeling lonely. Twelve per cent of older people (1.2 million) feel trapped in their own home, 13 per cent of older people (1.26 million) do not go out more than once a week and about 100,000 older people *never* go out. Their evidence suggests lack of public toilets is a significant contributory factor in the isolation of older people and the situation will worsen if toilet provision continues to decline.

Help the Aged argue the cost of this isolation is not just a moral one. In their view, if older people are restricted to their own homes, they are more likely to suffer from depression, a condition affecting an estimated 1 in 8 people over the age of 65. The lack of public toilets in places where older people may otherwise take exercise, also means many become inactive. Physical activity is essential in later life, in order to enable older people to remain independent in their own homes for as long as possible. The absence of public toilets excludes older people from economic activities, such as shopping, which they would otherwise be undertaking, preventing them from engaging in the local economy. Help the Aged have concluded older people require toilets to be clean, safe, accessible, open, staffed and located in the wide variety of places where they go.

Disabled people and their carers may also lack the freedom to leave their homes without the reassurance of adequate toilet facilities being available. The National Association for Colitis and Crohn's Disease (NACC) is a national charity offering support to people who have Colitis or Crohn's Disease. NACC has previously raised concerns about the lack of public toilet provision. Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) affects approximately 1 in 400 people living in the UK. The sudden and uncontrollable need to use a toilet is a genuine and recognised symptom of IBD and the fear of having an 'accident' in public can have a devastating effect on an individual's ability to undertake everyday activities such as going to work, shopping or socialising³.

² Nowhere to go: Public toilet provision in the UK (May 2007)

³ Memorandum by the National Association for Colitis and Crohn's Disease to CLGC 2008

Poor public toilet provision affects some groups disproportionately such as women, who are more likely to be accompanied by children, elderly adults and disabled people. Children, young people and their families also need access to suitable facilities, including baby change facilities, in both male and female toilets. As discussed previously, some people may feel unable or reluctant to leave their homes and visit areas where they fear they will not be able to find a public toilet. This will, in turn, limit their ability to take exercise and travel, particularly when using public transport. Older people, parents, and carers with young children, disabled people and people with chronic health problems, all need easy access to suitably equipped public toilet facilities.

Whilst women make up slightly more than half of the UK population and a higher proportion of older people, the balance of toilet provision for men and women is at best 50:50 and more typically 70:30 in favour of men, because cubicles take up more room than urinals.⁴ Women are also more likely to be accompanied by children. Women are likely to outnumber men in ratio 65:35 in shopping areas and up to 80:20 in busy shopping malls (for example before Christmas)⁵. Women take longer to go to the toilet because of a range of sartorial, biological and functional reasons. Women have more functions than men [and] at any time about a quarter of all women of childbearing age will be menstruating, whereas pregnant women, those at menopause and those with diabetes will need to use the toilet more often⁶.

Equalities legislation places special responsibilities on public authorities in relation to facilities for men/women and disabled people. There are around 10 million disabled people

in Britain and more than one third of people aged over 50 are registered⁷ as disabled in some way⁸, and disability rates increase with age. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995, which requires service providers to make 'reasonable adjustments' to allow disabled people to access those services, has helped to boost the provision of accessible toilets. However there are also around 40,000 people in the UK with profound and multiple disabilities who cannot use standard accessible toilets because they need special equipment and support from one or two carers. The lack of suitable facilities can prevent them from taking part in everyday activities that others take for granted. Better disabled provision not only benefits the disabled themselves, but the rest of the family too, as their carers have often had to limit their journeys when accompanied by disabled relatives⁶. Anecdotally, the DDA has been cited as an excuse used by some local authorities to close public toilets, rather than bring them up to the standards required by the Act.⁹

The Changing Places Consortium campaigns for public toilets which are spacious and clean, with suitable equipment for severely disabled people, including a height-adjusted adult sized changing bench and hoist¹⁰. People with profound and multiple learning disabilities, as well as other serious impairments such as spinal injuries, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis or an acquired brain injury, often need extra facilities to allow them to use the toilets comfortably.

4 Taking Stock: An Overview of Toilet Provision and Standards, Dr. Clara Greed 2005.

5 A COP for Public Toilets in Britain Dr Clara Greed UWE

6 Memorandum by Clara Greed, Professor of Inclusive Urban Planning, UWE, Bristol to CLG

7 The Disability Discrimination Act defines a disabled person as 'someone with a mental or physical impairment which has a substantial, long-term adverse effect on the ability to undertake normal day-to-day activities'.

8 Family Resources Survey, commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions.

9 House of Commons 'The Provision of Public Toilets CLG 12th report 2007-8.

¹⁰ <http://www.changing-places.org/>

Changing Places toilets are different to standard disabled toilets with extra features and more space to meet these needs. The consortium wants local authorities to be more proactive in creating toilets for severely disabled people, alongside standard disabled toilet provision. There are currently 14 Changing Places public toilets listed for Wales one of which is located in the National Assembly building. Three more Changing Places public toilets are in the process of development in Wales.

Wider effects of inadequate public toilet provision on public health and the community

Inadequate public toilet provision could have a significant effect on public health and environmental issues, particularly in terms of street cleanliness and disease control. A lack of adequate well located toilets that are open at the time they are needed, may well result in dirty streets that are unsanitary, unpleasant and may present a risk of infection. Cleaning up street fouling is an unpleasant and costly task. Street urination, mainly by men, but sometimes by women too, can be a major nuisance in some areas, particularly after closing time. There are mixed views about whether the cause of street urination is solely because of a lack of public toilets but lack of adequate toilet provision makes it a harder problem to tackle.

Public toilets that are poorly designed, inadequately maintained and poorly located, can create an atmosphere of neglect that discourages public use. These conditions attract vandalism, graffiti, criminal damage and anti-social behavior. These issues, if not tackled effectively, can generate a cycle of decline, leading to more entrenched social problems, and seriously impairing quality of place and quality of life for local people. Public toilets need to be seen as a benefit not a problem. They must not be allowed to degenerate into a location for crime, vandalism and anti-social behaviour.

Accessible clean public toilets that are well located in places like parks, promenades, cycle trails and walking routes, will help to encourage people who may need regular toilet access to take exercise and stay more physically active. Public toilets help to encourage people out of their cars and back onto more sustainable public transport, cycling and walking.

Equality in the provision of public toilets across Wales

The provision and maintenance of toilets in public places in Wales is at the discretion of local authorities who have, under section 87 of the Public Health Act 1936, a power to provide public conveniences, but no duty to do so. It is, therefore, for individual local authorities to decide whether or not to provide public toilets and, if so, how many. The provision of public toilets in Wales will, therefore, vary according to the local authority.

Some local authorities in Wales have championed the provision of good public toilets. I am pleased to note that in 2011 Ceredigion County Council won the UK Overall Winners Trophy in the British Toilet Association Loo of the Year Awards. Ceredigion was only the fourth council to win the Award, in the 24th Anniversary Loo of the Year Awards competition to find the very best 'away from home' toilets in the UK. The British Toilet Association (BTA) is a campaigning body established in 1999 and has 160 members, of whom 64 are local authorities. Since 2006, it has held an annual "Loo of the Year" award.

The Welsh Government has sought to increase the provision of free public access to toilet facilities in Wales and to improve the quality and accessibility of these facilities by encouraging local authorities to work, in partnership, with local businesses to allow public access to their facilities. The Community Toilet Grant scheme was established by the Welsh Government in 2009–10 for three years and all local authorities in Wales were invited to participate. It reimburses local authorities (to a maximum of £17,500 per local authority per year) for payments of up to £500 made to local businesses, for allowing free public access to their toilet facilities (although local authorities may provide a higher level of funding at their discretion from their own resources). The scheme has been extended for another year from April 2012. Businesses in receipt of a grant must allow public access, free of charge, to the toilet facilities for a number of hours agreed with the Authority. The toilet facilities provided must have acceptable standards of safety, hygiene, accessibility for disabled people and provision for both sexes. Businesses must clearly publicise the availability of the facilities and the opening hours, so that the information can be seen clearly by people from the outside the premises, and display the bilingual sign designated by the Welsh Government.

Conclusion

There are public health and environmental costs to the wider community of not providing public toilet facilities. However, the effect of any decline in provision is likely to be disproportionate affecting, in particular, the elderly, disabled, those with medical problems and parents / carers of young children. Local authorities should be encouraged to allocate sufficient resources to keep public toilets open, accessible, safe, clean and usable. They need to consider all aspects of equality when planning their public services and use appropriate guidance and legislation when doing so. The provision of greater access to public toilets across Wales could have positive health benefits. Greater provision would help older people, parents and people with health problems to maintain a more active lifestyle and confidently enjoy their local environment. Public toilets help to encourage people out of their cars and back onto more sustainable public transport, cycling and walking.

January 2012

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru
National
Assembly for
Wales



**Y Pwyllgor Plant a Phobl Ifanc
Children and Young People Committee**

Mark Drakeford AM
Chair
Health and Social Care Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff CF99 1NA

Bae Caerdydd / Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd / Cardiff CF99 1NA

6 January 2012

Dear Mark

Children and Young People Committee – Neonatal Services

I am writing to inform you that the Children and Young People Committee has agreed to conduct a short inquiry into neonatal services.

Whilst the subject matter of the inquiry falls within the remit of the Children and Young People Committee, I appreciate it is something that members of the Health and Social Care Committee may be interested in. With that in mind, I am happy to share any evidence we receive with your Committee, and would welcome any members of your Committee who would like to participate in our oral evidence session on 9 February. Do get in touch with me, or with the Clerk, Claire Morris, if you would like to discuss further.

Yours sincerely

**Christine Chapman
Chair**

Bae Caerdydd
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

Agenda Item 5b

Health and Social Care Committee

HSC(4)-02-12 paper 8a

Organ Donation White Paper – Points of clarification following 8 December meeting

To: Health and Social Care Committee

From: Legislation Office

Date: 12 December 2011

ORGAN DONATION WHITE PAPER: TECHNICAL BRIEFING FROM GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS – POINTS OF CLARIFICATION

Purpose

1. Annex A to this paper contains points of clarification, provided by the Minister's officials, further to the technical briefing on the Organ Donation White Paper.

Background

2. During the technical briefing on 8 December, the Minister's officials agreed to provide the Committee with clarification of the following points—
 - a list of Third Sector organisations included in the consultation exercise on the White Paper;
 - details of future public meetings on the White Paper;
 - clarification as to whether the current arrangements for organ and tissue donation extend to England and Wales only, or also include Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Action

3. Members are invited to note the contents of Annex A.

ANNEX A

Points of Clarification for the Health and Social Services Committee

1. While the consultation is on the website and open to all voluntary sector organisations to respond to, we specifically drew it to the attention of:

Kidney Wales Foundation
Transplant 2013
Diabetes UK
Children In Wales
Welsh Kidney Patients Association
British Heart Foundation
Donor Family Network
Patient concern
Age Concern
Age Cymru
Welsh Mental Health Alliance
Anthony Nolan Trust
British Lung Foundation
Cystic Fibrosis Trust
British Liver Trust
Live Life then Give Life
RNIB
Learning Disability Wales
British Organ Donor Society
Kidney Research UK
National Kidney Federation
Haemophilia Society
Citizens advice
Snap Cymru
Cruse
Wales Cancer Alliance
Wales Neurological Alliance
Independent Hospices Cymru

In addition, the following organisations were invited to a stakeholder meeting to discuss the issues that would inform the Welsh Government's thinking on the White paper in August 2011 and a further meeting on 8 December to discuss the proposals contained in the White Paper:

Kidney Wales Foundation
Age Concern Torfaen
Welsh Kidney Patients Association
British Heart Foundation
Diabetes UK

British Lung Foundation
Citizens Advice
RNIB
Children in Wales
Age Cymru
Wales Mental Health Alliance
Anthony Nolan Trust
Cystic Fibrosis Trust
British Liver Trust
Live Life Then Give Life
Learning Disability Wales
Haemophilia Society
Snap Cymru
Cruse
RNID
Wales Cancer Alliance
Wales Neurological Alliance
Independent Hospices Cymru
Donor Family Network
Welsh Council for the Deaf

2. The remaining public meetings are as follows:

- Tuesday 13 December 17:00 – 18:30, Barry Memorial Hall, Gladstone Rd, Barry, Vale of Glamorgan CF62 8NA
- Tuesday 13 December 19:30 – 21:00 Cardiff - Sports Wales National Centre, Sophia Gardens, Cardiff, CF11 9SW
- Tuesday 20 December -17:30 – 19:00 Wrexham - Glyndŵr University, Plas Coch Site, Mold Road, Wrexham, LL11 2AQ

Further meetings will be organised for January, details of which will be sent to the Committee once finalised.

3. Currently, organs and tissues are matched and allocated on a UK wide basis by NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT), which is a joint England and Wales Special Health Authority.

Health and Social Care Committee

HSC(4)-02-12 paper 8b

Organ Donation White Paper – Dates of Welsh Government public meetings in January 2012

To: Health and Social Care Committee

From: Legislation Office

Date: 10 January 2012

ORGAN DONATION WHITE PAPER – DATES OF PUBLIC MEETINGS IN JANUARY

Purpose

1. To provide Members with the dates of the public meetings on the Organ Donation White Paper being held by Welsh Government officials in January.

Background

2. As a follow-up to the technical briefing on the White Paper, government officials agreed to provide Members with the dates and venues of the public meetings arranged for January. These are as follows—
 - Tuesday 17 January, 18.30 – 20.00, Brangwyn Hall, Swansea;
 - Wednesday 18 January, 18.30 – 20.00, Newport Centre, Newport;
 - Wednesday 25 January, 18.30 – 20.00, Venue Cymru, Llandudno.

Action

3. Members are invited to note the dates and venues of the public meetings to be held in January.