



Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1453  
Ein cyf/Our ref EM/05903/24

Jack Sargeant MS  
Chair  
Petitions Committee  
Senedd Cymru

[petitions@senedd.wales](mailto:petitions@senedd.wales)

03 July 2024

Dear Jack Sargeant MS,

Thank you for your letter about Petition P-06-1453 Provide funding and support for the adequate provision of accessible and clean public toilets.

The Welsh Government recognises that access to accessible and clean toilets affects public health. Toilets for public use matter to everybody, they are even more important to a growing number of people within society who are experiencing continence issues. Poor provision can lead to increased social isolation and inactivity, as well as affecting people's ability to maintain independence and dignity in later life.

Our *Strategy for an Ageing Society*, sets out our vision for an age-friendly Wales which supports people of all ages to live and age well and challenges the way we think and feel about ageing. One of the four aims of the strategy is to improve local services and environments, which looks to tackle loneliness and isolation and support wellbeing and a priority is to improve the availability of public toilets.

To deliver a strategic approach to the provision of toilets across Wales, the [Public Health \(Wales\) Act 2017](#) requires local authorities to publish a local toilets strategy for their respective areas. Comprehensive [statutory guidance](#) has been provided to help local authorities develop their strategies.

It is the aim that local authorities will consider the wide range of existing toilet facilities available in both the public sector (such as public libraries, community halls, sports centres, theatres, museums) and in private sector buildings when developing their strategies. The intention is to make better use of existing toilet facilities that could be made available to a wider public beyond a focus on traditional public toilets, given the financial challenges of providing and maintaining this type of facility.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Local authority public toilet strategies should be built around the principles of co-production, with local authorities required to engage with a broad range of potential providers and users to understand the challenges faced in both accessing and providing local toilet facilities and seeking their involvement in identifying and delivering potential solutions. On review of their strategies, local authorities are required to publish a statement of progress. A self-policing approach provides transparency to council members and the communities they represent, on the actions taken to progress the provision of toilets across Wales.

In the context of the ongoing challenging financial climate, it is more important than ever to encourage creative solutions to better meet the public's need for access to suitable toilet facilities.

Solutions could include community asset transfers and empowering town and community councils and social enterprises to take on responsibilities for managing standalone public toilets, if proposals are sustainable. The Welsh Government has worked with the UK Government to ensure that standalone public toilets in Wales now receive 100% relief from business rates.

We expect local authorities to continue to take every opportunity to talk to the public and representative groups about the challenges they face in accessing local toilet facilities and equally to key delivery partners, such as town and community councils, to listen to concerns and seek views and involvement in identifying and delivering sustainable solutions.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. E. Morgan'.

**Eluned Morgan AS/MS**

Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol