



# Strategic Public Toilet Review

conducted by the

## British Toilet Association

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	Page
Foreword	2
Aims and objectives	3
Review of current service	4
Public health and wellbeing	6
Tourism	7
Charging	8
Community Toilet Schemes	10
Mobile toilet units	11
Mixed-use facilities	13
Accessibility	14
Signposting	16
Advertising	17
Improving Glasgow Green	18
Internal / external service model	20
Appendix A – Online Consultation	21
Appendix B – GCC NRS Public Toilets	22
Appendix C – Healthmatic Public Toilets	27
Appendix D – Glasgow Life Public Toilets	32



## 1. Foreword

As human beings we have five fundamental requirements of life; to eat, drink, sleep, breathe, and go to the toilet.

Today more than ever there is a need for Local Authorities to make strategic investment in high-quality, clean, accessible, and safe public toilets. In this way, we can meet societal needs and encourage better social inclusion whilst recognising the central role of public toilets in public health and protecting the environment.

Public toilets encourage physical activity and fitness by supporting people to move with ease when out with the comfort of their home.

We also understand the particular necessity and importance of providing clean toilets with suitable sanitary provision for women and young girls.

Moreover, there is an evident correlation between health conditions and the need for access to public toilets. The decision of where to visit, and how long to stay in that area, can very often depend on the ability to find a public toilet when relief is needed.

Public toilets are, however, not only key to better public health outcomes; they also play a pivotal role within the local economy by providing important facilities for tourists, visitors, workers, and residents.

As high-streets recover from the Covid-19 pandemic and face increasing pressures arising from the cost-of-living crisis and the increase of online retail, an effective public toilet service can stimulate activity within the local economy.

It has been estimated that a well-maintained public toilet can generate between five and eight times its running costs every year by encouraging spend in the local area.

The British Toilet Association (“BTA”) are delighted that Glasgow City Council have recognised the strategic importance of public toilet services and their commitment to a Public Toilet Strategy made at the Full Council of 26<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

Working in partnership with Glasgow City Council and key stakeholders, the British Toilet Association has undertaken this Strategic Public Toilet Review to help inform and shape the council’s emerging Public Toilet Strategy.

The British Toilet Association and its Board would like to acknowledge the opportunity to prepare this report for Glasgow City Council and provide our thanks to the support and generous input from all key personnel.

We look forward to continuing to support our colleagues in Glasgow City Council as they develop and implement their strategic objectives.

- **Raymond Martin, Managing Director, British Toilet Association**

**6<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

## 2. Aims and objectives

The BTA is very aware of the sense of pride Glasgow City Council takes in the City and is grateful to have been commissioned to independently complete a Strategic Public Toilet Review.

Seeing first-hand how the council works to promote Glasgow as a clean, welcoming and healthy environment to live, work, relax and shop was key to conducting an effective review of public toilet services. As part of this review, the BTA has considered the current service provision and put forward a series of ideas and recommendations for consideration as part of the council's emerging Public Toilet Strategy.

### Aims and objectives

This aims and objectives of this review are to set out:

- The key considerations associated with public toilet services.
- The actual condition / provision of safe, clean and accessible public toilets.
- The quality levels and maintenance standards currently being achieved.
- Any deficiencies or aspects of concern in the current operating model.
- Opportunity areas for consideration.

### Review methodology

Recognising the strategic nature of this review and the need to meet a defined timescale, the BTA developed and agreed the following methodology with Glasgow City Council:

- **Phase 1 (July 2024):** Pre-plan survey and administration.
- **Phase 2 (August 2024):** Initial visits to Glasgow, stakeholder meetings and appraisal of existing public toilet facilities. Preparation and agreement of report template and Glasgow context.
- **Phase 3 (September 2024):** Further visits to Glasgow, data gathering, and detailed review of existing facilities.
- **Phase 4 (September – October 2024):** Attending dedicated internal Public Toilet Working group and stakeholder interviews.
- **Phase 5 (October 2024):** Prepare the initial draft of the Strategic Public Toilet Review report.
- **Phase 6 (November – December 2024):** Attend the council's Environment and Liveable Neighbourhoods City Policy Committee (ELN CPC), develop the public toilet consultation, refinement of Strategic Public Toilet Review report.
- **Phase 7 (December 2024):** Completion of Strategic Public Toilet Review and submission of final report.

### 3. Review of current service

#### Working group and stakeholder interviews

With the goal of guiding the Strategic Public Toilet Review, the BTA participated in a working group consisting of key officers throughout the council family and external partner organisations, as detailed below:

- Glasgow City Council, NRS – Property & asset management, greenspace and biodiversity, performance & information management, planning, community safety.
- Glasgow City Council, Glasgow Life – facilities management.
- Glasgow City Council, Financial Services - Catering & FM.
- Glasgow City Council, Chief Executive's Department – economic development, community's team.
- Police Scotland (Safer Communities).

As part of the review process, the BTA also conducted dedicated one-to-one interviews with key stakeholders and contributed to the preparation of an online public consultation which is being undertaken by the council between December 2024 and January 2025, allowing the public to provide feedback and inform the council's emerging Public Toilet Strategy.

Full details of the online public consultation questions are contained in **Appendix A – Online Consultation**.

#### Current public toilet model

The responsibility for providing and managing public toilets in Glasgow is split into three distinct elements:

- Glasgow City Council Neighbourhoods, Regeneration & Sustainability (GCC NRS) operate three units at Victoria Park, Botanic Gardens, and Kelvingrove Park. These facilities are free to use and cleaned by staff that work for Catering and Facilities Management within the council's Financial Services.
- In more built-up areas, four Automated Public Conveniences are provided at St Vincent Place, Collins Street, Stevenson Street, and Pollokshaws Road, by an external supplier, Healthmatic, as part of a contract with the council. These facilities are charged at 20p/ per visit and it is understood that Healthmatic are responsible for all cleaning and maintenance of these facilities.
- Glasgow Life (Culture and Sport Glasgow) – an Arm's Length External Organisation ("ALEO") of Glasgow City Council provides a further circa forty-five public toilets in libraries, museums, sports and cultural centres. These facilities are free-to-use and cleaned and maintained by Glasgow Life staff. All facilities contain Accessible units and some boast fully equipped Changing Places toilets for persons with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties ("PMLD"). Additional Changing Places toilets were planned subject to funding availability.

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This report focusses primarily on facilities operated by GCC NRS and contracted to Healthmatic, recognising the on-going commitment of Glasgow Life to the provision of high-quality toilet facilities within their existing and any emerging new buildings.

### Geographical distribution

A map showing the geographical distribution of the three GCC NRS and four Healthmatic public toilet facilities is provided below:



### Public toilet observations

As part of their commission, the BTA undertook a detailed inspection of all seven toilet units.

It was noted that the three GCC NRS facilities were in, or close, to public parks, whilst the four Healthmatic units were concentrated in more built-up areas primarily around the City Centre.

The detailed observations in respect of these units are contained in **Appendix B – GCC NRS Public Toilets** and **Appendix C – Healthmatic Public Toilets**.

### Glasgow Life public toilets – general observations

For completeness, the list of Glasgow Life public toilets is contained in **Appendix D – Glasgow Life Public Toilets**.

### Unused toilet units

It was observed during visits to Glasgow that there appear to be a number of unused toilet units, several of which were located underground and have been closed for many years.

These units may have been closed due to anti-social behaviour, health and safety risks, or other operational and budget reasons.

The opinion of BTA, however, is that these types of buildings are often unsuitable to act as a modern public toilet; immediate accessibility issues can be posed to disabled and older people, in addition to potential safety concerns - particularly for women and young girls.

Opportunities to market these facilities for alternative use should be considered by the council.

## 4. Public health and wellbeing

As we consider the future of public toilet services, we should not be complacent about their role in supporting positive public health and wellbeing outcomes and recognise their increasingly crucial role in making residents and visitors feel safe in public spaces.

This is particularly important as we continue to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic and the greater focus on public health and hygiene.

### The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic

When the Covid-19 pandemic was first reported in the UK in early 2020, most public toilets closed immediately, owing to a range of difficulties including cleaning, hygiene, and staffing. Sadly, many facilities never re-opened during the pandemic recovery.

The BTA observed that even the largest Local Authorities experienced difficulties both during and after the pandemic; the London boroughs, Cornwall, Highland Council, Bristol and Manchester have all struggled to maintain the budget required to operate public toilet services at pre-pandemic levels.

In summary, we recognise and sympathise with the impact of the pandemic on Local Authority budgets and the funding challenges associated with public infrastructure investment.

### Improving Glasgow's health and wellbeing

Whilst we note the above challenges faced by Local Authorities, we also must weigh this up against our view that access to public toilets is a fundamental human right which can bring significant benefits to overall health and wellbeing.

As we recover from the pandemic, public toilet services can play a key role in rebuilding our communities and ensuring that everyone living, working and visiting Glasgow feels welcome and respected. Linked to this ambition, we must particularly care for the elderly, disabled, women and girls, in our society and ensure they feel safe and secure when leaving their homes.

There is no doubt that the provision of adequate, clean, and accessible public toilets which are sensitive to the specific needs of the user are vital to maintaining public health. For these public health reasons, the BTA encourages public toilet investment to be prioritised alongside other key public services.

## 5. Tourism

In preparing this Strategic Public Toilet Review, the BTA reviewed the incredible work that is being done to promote Glasgow as a premier tourist destination set out in the Glasgow Tourism 2030 Strategy.

The provision of effective public toilet services directly complements these strategic objectives as detailed below.

### Glasgow Tourism 2030 Strategy

The Glasgow Tourism 2030 Strategy, developed by Glasgow Life in partnership with key stakeholders including VisitScotland, Glasgow City Council, Scottish Enterprise, industry, and the Chairs of Glasgow's leading attractions and the Greater Glasgow Hoteliers Association, commits the partners to working collaboratively across a range of areas including the promotion of Glasgow as an attractive location to day visitors.

It is understood that day visitors to the Glasgow City Region (i.e. Glasgow City Council and seven other neighbouring Local Authorities) are an important part of the economy, generating an average spend of £1,253 million per annum.

Day visits to the City Region typically involve shopping, attending local attractions, dining out, socialising in pubs or clubs, and attending events.

Encouraging day visitors to return more often, stay longer, and spend more is a key objective of the strategy and can be complemented by effective public toilet services.

### Supporting tourism in Glasgow

Public toilet services play a key role in how tourists and visitors think of Glasgow. A positive experience can help shape their overall opinion of the City as a premier destination, contributing to the objectives of the Glasgow Tourism 2030 Strategy by encouraging more day visitors.

This, in turn, can also provide a financial benefit to the local economy.



## 6. Charging

### Background

Flushing toilets were first introduced by George Jennings at the Great Exhibition held in London during 1851. Around 827,280 people reportedly paid one penny to try this invention. From historical records, the invention was met with applause by the public, recognising the effective design and freedom that it brought.

In particular, the invention was welcomed by women as it allowed them to spend longer in public and afforded greater privacy and dignity.

The one penny charge remained the standard for public toilets throughout the UK until the 1990's. With a rise in vandalism and operating costs, many Local Authorities increased charges to 10p and, later, 20p in the early 2000's.

Public toilets are a non-statutory service and Local Authorities set public toilet charges on a discretionary basis. This has resulted in a significant variation in charges between different Local Authority areas, which can range from 20p per visit to £1.50 per visit.

### Key considerations

The BTA acknowledges the pressures faced by Local Authorities driven by a reduction in operating budgets and the need to make financial savings.

It is generally accepted and understandable that Local Authorities have focussed their budgets on the provision of statutory services - street cleaning, bin collections, roads maintenance, etc – rather than discretionary services such as park benches, floral arrangements, signage, and – unfortunately - public toilet services.

Working with a wide range of Local Authorities and Town and Parish Councils, the BTA accepts the consensus for charges to be applied fairly and proportionately to compensate for the costs incurred in providing public toilet infrastructure; servicing, maintenance, water, lighting, heating, cleaning, provision of sanitary pad and tampon dispensers, etc.

The use of charging can also help discourage anti-social behaviour – particularly drug use and rough sleeping - and vandalism which can sadly occur within public toilet facilities. With advancements in technology, cashless card readers and digital technology can also offer an effective alternative to cash systems and reduce the risk of break-in and theft.

### The role of debit / credit card readers

The industry has witnessed a surge in the adoption of debit / credit card readers that are often retro-fitted to public toilets and offer an effective means of control to public toilets.

The readers conveniently replace the need for coin collection and the problems that can be associated with daily / weekly collections, counting and recording the value of transactions, deficiencies and theft, and the time consuming need to bank the coins.

Additionally, it helps to avoid the continued reports of customers not having the correct coins to gain entry – a particular issue with overseas visitors - and the UK Government's future economic planning to phase out smaller coins in the rapidly growing digital economy.

**An example system:**

One of the most popular systems being utilised by the toilet providers is the NAYAX card reader.

Nayax are a UK based company that offer a wide range of options for both public and private buildings. It allows users to gain access by simply tapping their card onto the screen which activates the paddle gates or door opening mechanism; the unit then charges the card holder the appropriate amount.

The readers are also time controlled to restrict access afterhours.



**Recommendations**

In the absence of regulation, there is no perfect arrangement with respect to the charging for public toilets, or a prescribed rate.

Local Authorities must weigh-up the cost of providing a public toilet service against available operating budgets, consideration of poverty and affordability for these critical services, and the potential for anti-social behaviour and vandalism which may be exacerbated if public toilets are free to use.

Often, Local Authorities provide public toilet services through a specialist external supplier. Being their core business, these suppliers may be better placed to manage the risks associated with operating a public toilet and collecting payment than the Local Authority.

We are aware that in Edinburgh have established a Residents Reward Scheme which we understand will ultimately grant residents free access to public toilets within the City.

## 7. Community Toilet Schemes

### Context

A very common practice these days is the introduction of a Community Toilet Scheme (“CTS”) which invites local retailers and businesses to provide public access to their units.

Local Authorities often understand the importance of having a better level of toilet provision to attract more visitors and consumers into the area and will partner with local retailers to provide such facilities. This arrangement often involves a brief but formal contract between the Local Authority and retailer with a small incentive given to the toilet providers to help towards cleaning and toiletry supplies.

Such schemes are intended to complement an existing public toilet service operated by the Local Authority rather than a direct replacement.

Many Local Authorities provide window / door-stickers to promote their participation; and also add these units directly onto their website or town map/planner to promote those businesses.

As an example, Richmond Borough Council was the first and is now a leading exponent of this model, having around 70 additional partner toilets across the Borough to cope with and welcome additional visitors. The scheme is often hailed as a progressive step in supporting local businesses and traders. Richmond Borough Council offered partner businesses a £500 inducement to cover cleaning materials, supplies and maintenance.

### Recommendations

A plethora of varying schemes exist throughout the UK and offer varying levels of inducement ranging from goodwill, through to annual cash incentives ranging from £250 up to a previous £1,000 per participant in the case of Wales.

Alternative incentives can include a reduction in business rates or a free black bag collection scheme to offset the operating costs involved.

Such a scheme should be considered for Glasgow.

## 8. Mobile toilet units

As part of their Strategic Public Toilet Review, the BTA considered whether there could be a role for mobile toilet units to form part of a future strategy; in particular, how they might provide additional public toilet provision during large events.

### Portable public toilets

Some UK councils, including Glasgow City Council, have embraced the concept of introducing additional public toilets for major festivals and events, such as concerts or commemoration events.

Traditionally the hire of multiple PolyVac single units has been the normal route; however, these units are often misused or vandalised.

Furthermore, these units are generally seen as unattractive and can make users feel unsafe, uneasy or vulnerable when entering or using this type of facility. This, in turn, could contribute to public urination.



PolyVac Unit

### Modular public toilets

An improved model which BTA have observed is the use of modular public toilets as an alternative to portable public toilets.

These modular units are far more robust than a PolyVac single unit. Being of modular construction and transportable, these units can be stored in an operational depot and simply rolled out in advance of festivals and events.

They use a chemical waste tank to store liquid wastes and can therefore be left in situ for some substantial time, dependant on the number of visitors.

A standard or custom interior design offers a wide range of flexible options for the number of urinals, washbasins and cubicles.

These units could be purchased by the council or, alternatively, contracted on a rental arrangement with an external supplier and stored at their facility.

The BTA has observed these units operating successfully in London with a full time attendant and an entry charge of £1/ per visit.



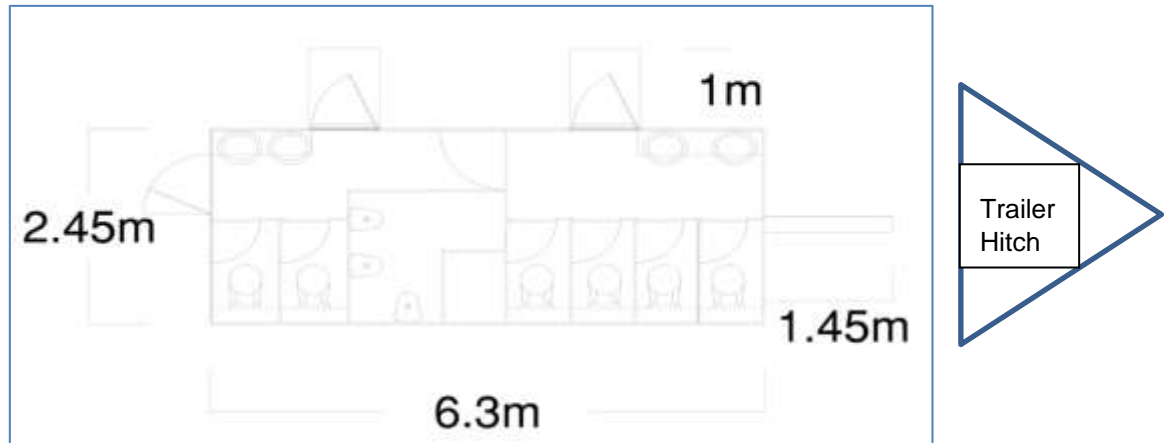
Modular Unit (external)



Modular Unit (internal)

## OFFICIAL

For information only, a typical schematic showing internal layout is provided below:



**Modular Unit (internal layout)**

These facilities can also be tailored specifically to meet accessibility needs and Changing Places requirements, as shown in the image below:



**Modular Unit  
(accessible)**

## 9. Mixed-use facilities

The BTA has observed a trend by Local Authorities towards providing public toilet services from mixed-use buildings, particularly within high-density public spaces.

This model works by splitting the public toilet building and offering a portion to a private sector operator; often a café or similar.

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These types of units are very quickly becoming the accepted way to provide publicly accessible toilets and can provide a range of benefits to the Local Authority.

### Opportunities

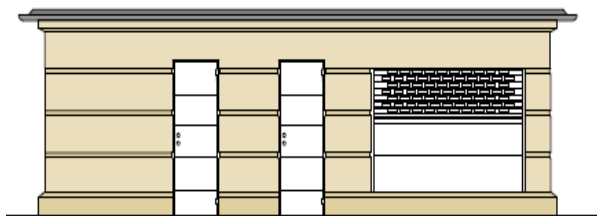
This type of model presents several opportunities.

For example, the private sector operator can be made responsible for the opening and closing of the public toilet, provide supervision as to how the facility is used, report issues, and generate a rental income to the Local Authority.

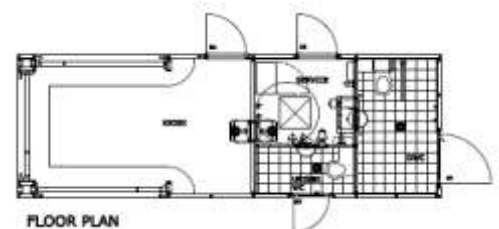
With greater supervisory presence, these facilities can become more attractive to women, young children, and transient workers in particular



Example of a mixed-use building



Example: external drawing of a mixed-use building



Example: internal floor plan of a mixed-use building

## 10. Accessibility

An effective public toilet service must be open and physically accessible to all people and should be designed to assist those with accessibility requirements and health issues.

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As BTA have identified, everyone has the right to an accessible, safe and clean public toilet. Some people, particularly those with a disability, and the elderly, can suffer discomfort and distress if there are a lack of public toilets, which can negatively impact their social lives.

Therefore, it is important to ensure that accessibility, inclusivity and the statutory compliance is achieved.

*BS 8300:2009+A1:2010 – Design of Buildings and Their Approaches to Meet the Needs of Disabled People – Code of Practice* explains how the built environment can be designed to anticipate, and overcome, restrictions that prevent disabled people from making full use of premises and their surroundings.

We also note that public toilets with limited opening hours, or that are closed for seasonal or other operational reasons, can create barriers for those who specifically rely on those facilities' being open and accessible.

There is an opportunity to improve public toilet facilities in Glasgow and make them more accessible to disabled people.

### Statutory compliance

Recent evidence shows that many toilets advertised as accessible do not comply with guidance in The Building Regulations, Approved Document M 2004, nor do they meet British Standard BS 8300-2009.

In part, this can be attributable to providers focussing on access for wheelchair users. However, it is important to remember that not all temporary or permanent disabilities are visible and public toilets are useful for a broad range of people. Whilst some of these toilets can be difficult to use, others could potentially be dangerous.

It may be difficult to appreciate exactly why some of the features provided in an accessible toilet are required and how important their positioning is.

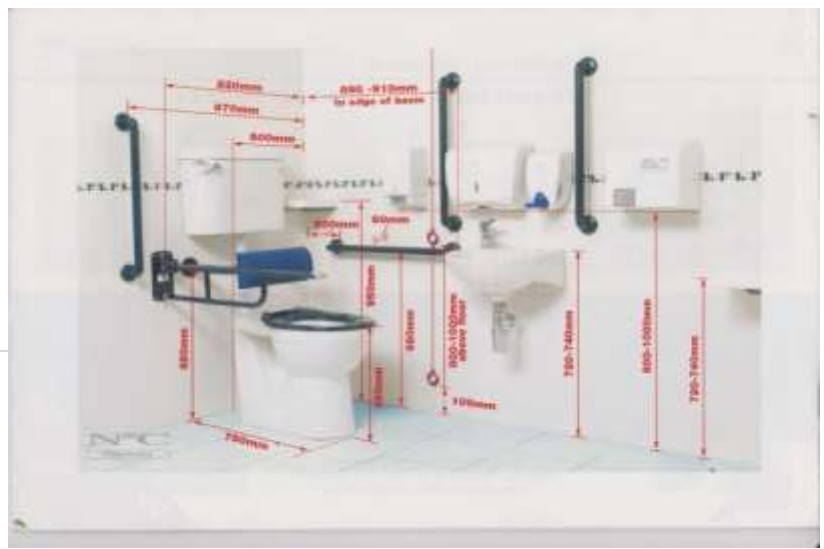
This note provides an explanation of the key statutory requirements to be considered as part of the emerging Public Toilet Strategy. This advice does not, however, attempt to replace the excellent and much more comprehensive guidance provided in BS8300 and Part M of the Building Regulations, which sets out how all accessible toilets, should be designed.

### Ambulant disabled facilities

For many older persons and anyone with mobility issues, either walking or standing / sitting, it is advised to put a single Ambulant Cubicle into every toilet block.

### Wheelchair accessibility

A detailed outline of the specific features required for wheelchair accessibility is provided in the





(BS Document M) image adjacent.

All accessible facilities built or upgraded after the introduction of the Equality Order 2010 need to conform to these measurements and internal provision.

#### [Layout providing for wheelchair access](#)

#### [Sanitary disposal – garments, ostomy bags, etc](#)

Ensuring there is a space and opportunity for sanitary disposal provides a dignified, sterile and safe space for users.

By prioritising this service when planning public toilets services, we can create an environment which is welcoming to women and young girls and ensure that users with health conditions are appropriately considered.

Importantly, this can also prevent such items being incorrectly being flushed in the toilet, which can be particularly problematic during wastewater treatment.

#### [RADAR Key System](#)

The RADAR key system is by far the most common locking device on accessible toilets which has been in place for many years.

However, the availability and ease by which a RADAR key can now be purchased has led to many organisations introducing further access controls to prevent unauthorised entry and anti-social behaviour.

The user has to identify themselves to the staff at the reception or checkout in order to obtain a second key, code or token with which to gain entry to the accessible unit.



#### [Feminist City Planning](#)

Women, girls, trans, and gender-nonconforming persons should be given specific consideration, recognising that access to suitable public toilet facilities can pose a particular issue of dignity to these users.

The BTA is aware that the council has committed to becoming a Feminist City and that as part of their commitment, the council will remain mindful to all gender perspectives; ensuring that public toilets enable the use of open space / parks and public spaces for all residents and visitors.

## **11. Signposting**

At present, Glasgow City Council uses the Great British Toilet Map – an online resource - to signpost their public toilets to visitors and travellers.

#### [Recommendations](#)

The current system is cumbersome to navigate and in the experience of BTA, users can become frustrated and agitated when trying to urgently locate a public toilet.



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Some consideration should be given to establishing a bespoke online platform to report public toilet information.

We would also recommend the production of a paper version of this map that could be distributed by tourist information, local shops, retailers and a range of venues.

This “pocket “paper version also has the potential of promoting advertising by several major venues which could generate a considerable revenue to support the continued refurbishment and upgrading of the toilets.

## 12. Advertising

Traditionally, Local Authorities often do not allow any form of advertising on or within public buildings.

However, advertising on public toilets can generate substantial revenues to the Local Authority if properly controlled.



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For example, A4 frames could be fitted inside toilet cubicle doors to promote local businesses and generate a new revenue stream to the Local Authority.

The BTA are aware that advertising these spaces can be challenging and have been unsuccessful in the past. For this reason, if the Local Authority wishes to pursue this avenue, we recommend engagement with a specialist marketing supplier.

### **13. Improving Glasgow Green**

During the Strategic Public Toilet Review, the BTA considered a petition – “Glasgow’s Parks and Public Spaces Need Public Toilets” - which was heard by the council’s Wellbeing, empowerment, Community and Citizen engagement City Policy Committee (“WECCE CPC”) of 12<sup>th</sup> August 2021.

The petition centred on complaints in respect of public urination around Glasgow Green, which was noted by petitioners as being a particular issue during large events.

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## **OFFICIAL**

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This section outlines options for consideration by the council, aimed at addressing these issues.



Glasgow Green People's Palace



Glasgow Green Winter Gardens

### Observations

The BTA noted that Glasgow Green is one of the most important outdoor areas within Glasgow for concerts and open-air festivals. Additionally, the park is an extremely popular recreational area for residents and visitors alike.

Central to the park is the Peoples Palace and adjoining Winter Gardens. These buildings are closed for renovations and planned to reopen in the spring of 2027.

Whilst the renovated buildings will contain a public toilet, it may be insufficient to cope with the large number of visitors to Glasgow Green – particularly during events. The lack of external toilet provision also causes concern.

### Opportunities

We believe the council needs to consider how it can stop the reported issues of public urination and indecent exposure within the park and nearby residential areas, which can be particularly problematic during large events.

Having surveyed the area, the following two options could present an opportunity to address the highlighted issues:

#### [Creation of a public toilet at the gatehouse building beside Greendyke Street entrance](#)

There appears to be a small gatehouse building close to the Greendyke Street entrance to Glasgow Green. It is understood that this building is used periodically to provide cycle training within the park.

There may be an opportunity to extend this building and provide a public toilet at Glasgow Green. This opportunity may allow the existing power, water and sewer supplies to the gatehouse building to be utilised.

Event organisers have a health and safety duty to provide toilet facilities for attendees and these public toilets could potentially be hired by the operators of events within Glasgow Green.



Glasgow Green entrance at Greendyke Street

#### Use of mobile units during events

As reported previously, Glasgow Council could purchase or rent a number of mobile modular toilet units to be used within the park or in nearby streets when a large event is organised.

Being linked to the event, these units could be chargeable at 50p - £1/ per visit. Given anticipated footfall, we believe this revenue should be sufficient to employ one or two supervisors / cleaners to oversee the operations, control and keep these units clean and fit-for-purpose for the duration of the event. The total cost of these mobile units could be charged to the event organiser as part of their agreement with the council.

#### Coffee on the Green and Free Wheel North

There are a few additional venues on the East side of Glasgow Green that may allow the public to use their toilets.

As a general principle, retailers and commercial businesses can be more willing to make their facilities public – provided the Local Authority makes adequate provision elsewhere.



Coffee on the Green

## **14. Internal / external service model**

### Context

It is understood that the council's revenue contribution for the provision of public toilets is circa £340k per annum and that they are considering reallocating these funds towards improving the overall condition, state and readiness of these publicly accessible toilets.

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Four of the seven units are already contracted out to a company in Wiltshire, Healthmatic Limited, at an annual cost of £206k

Glasgow City Council (NRS & C&FM) service and clean the existing three parks buildings at an annual cost of £134k – of which £87k is for cleaning services.

Additional grant funds recently secured are destined to be invested in additional facilities and installing Changing Places toilets for persons with severe mobility issues and profound handicaps.

The council is considering consolidating existing budgets and passing the overall responsibility for cleaning, maintenance and servicing to a single supplier. The additional benefit would be that staff could then be released to support other priority cleaning tasks.

### Comments

This service model has been installed and repeated in a growing number of Local Authorities across the UK and it has a great many advantages. For example, increased consistency of supply and cleanliness levels are the two primary objectives achieved.

Selecting a service company with the expertise and management skills to run and service these toilet facilities, and who is then tasked with maintaining the highest possible levels of cleanliness, hygiene and provision makes economic sense.

The council will need to decide if they are willing and, in a position, to make a substantial capital investment to replace, renovate, repair and bring these units up to an acceptable condition. Then, to agree an annual maintenance cost for the ongoing running and repair. Further capital investment might be required, and a contingency budget should also be implemented.

Alternatively, the council could allocate their annual budget to an extended operating period, allowing an external supplier to replace, upgrade and repair all the public toilet units to an agreed standard and / or design with payback over a prescribed period of time. As expected, all future running costs would be scheduled within the agreed contract and the contractor would be primarily responsible for making all repairs, upgrades and adjustments as they arise.

Outsourcing the contract has a great many advantages as it can often release staff to support other duties within the council.

A contractor then has the responsibility of maintaining and servicing these units daily, weekly and monthly over the fixed term. The council can be assured of a premium service; controlled by experienced staff and managers, with a realistic expectation that all the toilet units will be open, clean and – ideally - fully functioning throughout the seasons. Downtime and closures can be expected to be significantly reduced to an acceptable level.

## Appendix A – Online Consultation

The online consultation questions are provided under separate cover to this report.

## Appendix B – GCC NRS Public Toilets

Victoria Park Toilets – Victoria Park Drive North Entrance, Glasgow, G14 9RJ



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This free-to-use unit is a converted shipping container with an adjoining unit which is advertised as accessible. These units are very exposed to the elements.

A small mobile café is located beside the toilet.

Whilst potentially suitable for a temporary or extremely remote location, it is not an attractive facility for a public park which attracts large visitor numbers every day, particularly at weekends for park runs and children's fun runs.

These toilets are lacking many of the basic modern amenities that the residents and visitors would naturally expect to find at this type of location.



It was noted that the accessible toilet has been recently repaired and brought back into operation. The unit is quite sparsely fitted and urgently requires to be upgraded; whilst advertised as accessible, it does not meet the necessary standards in this respect.

Internally, these units are displaying considerable age, misuse and possibly a lack of care. Missing parts and provision, as well as wet and stained floors, does not give a good first impression or reflect the Local Authority's ambition to provide effective and clean toilets.

It is fairly evident that this facility needs to be monitored regularly or it could easily become subject to abuse and could attract anti-social activity and drug misuse. The unit is a prime case for a mixed-use facility with a Community / Visitor Card security device fitted to the doors, potentially linked to a charitable donation.



The unit is poorly situated as it is a barrier between the lake and the children's play area, which can make it difficult for parents to watch multiple children if enjoying both activities. Opportunities to re-locate the unit should be considered.

Additionally, the rear of the unit could be utilised for bicycle racks, lockers for sports competitors, or perhaps phone charging for visitors during events.

### Recommendations

- Upgrade all Internal fixtures and fittings.
- Totally refurbish the Accessible toilet.

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- Fit locked doors & Card Readers.
- Consider an Entry fee -- either 20p or 50p.
- Consider replacing the building with a new mixed-use unit. Our immediate preference would be to move the existing unit to a better location; allowing more visibility to the lake and the children's play area. We propose that replacing the shipping container with a new modern mixed-use unit and incorporating a small café would greatly improve security for this facility. However, we suggest that the café be set at 90 degrees to the toilet block to afford a better line of sight and added visibility to everyone entering.

### The Botanic Gardens Toilets – Bridge Street Glasgow, G12 0UE



These toilets are a traditional brick construction with separate male, female, and accessible toilets. The accessible toilet features a ramped entrance.

Located on the eastern side of the Botanic Gardens, these toilets can be easily accessed by park visitors and anyone passing close to the entrance.

These units appeared to be largely unsupervised and are free of charge to access.

On inspection, it appears obvious that the internal provision is old, very dated and did not reflect well on Glasgow.



During the visit, concerns were raised as to the safety and security of this unit, and the potential risk of misuse.

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On both visits by BTA, it was noted that no access could be gained to the accessible unit as the door remained locked for some considerable time.

There may be a potential to move or incorporate these toilets within the tea room, which is only a short distance away. The tea room contains a single accessible toilet, advertised for customers only. The number of tables on the veranda suggests a considerable number of visitors at peak times and therefore consideration should be given to the needs of these visitors.

If the existing units are to remain, a more robust upgrade should be considered.



### Recommendations

- Repair and replace internal fittings.
- Install locking doors and charge for entry.
- This toilet block is in a very vulnerable position and appears hidden from the public view. It is in urgent need of refurbishment as the fittings and provisions are very old fashioned and becoming harder to maintain. It is largely overgrown and shows significant signs of pest and fly infestations. Moving the unit to a more visible site would be of great benefit for the public and continuing site safety.

### Kelvingrove Park Toilets – Kelvin Way Glasgow, G12 8LU



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This unit is a traditional brick and rendered unit with separate male and female facilities. Accessible cubicles are contained within each unit; however, these are not compliant with modern regulations or guidance. Feedback on site suggested the accessible cubicles remain locked for major parts of the day or until a cleaner / supervisor is on site.

We did not observe any visible street signage – nor was there any prominent additional directional signage within the park to direct people to the toilet.

The exterior appeal is relatively modern, clean and well-presented; however, as a stand-alone unit, we understand it comes under intense pressure during the evenings, holiday seasons, festivals and events run locally within the park.

It was also noted that squirrels are now living in the roof void, which could cause building damage and deter users; in particular, small children or young females who may be frightened.

Whilst there is some limited room to expand this block to provide additional capacity, the Local Authority may wish to consider replacing this unit closer to the nearby children's play area and open parkland. This would provide a greater level of security and offer parents a welcomed provision when visiting the park with their families.

If relocated, the unit could be designed to be more family friendly – perhaps with exterior decoration. A more usable family room and baby-change could also be incorporated and perhaps even a seated area where parents could sit and watch their children enjoying the local park amenities.



### Recommendations

- Repair and replace internal fittings.
- Install locking doors and charge for entry.
- Refurbish the Accessible units as a priority.
- This unit is tired and in urgent need of upgrading, preferably as a new mixed-use building. The internal fittings are old and worn and the Accessible units contained within are not compliant with modern standards. It appears hidden and under-used/valued and could be of greater benefit to all if it was relocated closer to the

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children's playground and an area where it would be safeguarded by higher visitor numbers.



## Appendix C – Healthmatic Public Toilets

[St Vincent Place Toilets – St Vincent Street, Glasgow, GL1 3VG](#)

Located in the heart of the City centre, this is the only unit that has been sited to facilitate

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and service the thousands of daily visitors to the nearby shopping areas on Buchanan Street, Sauchiehall Street, and Argyle Street.

Originally an underground toilet facility, the unit was re-purposed to an above-ground unit and now contains 3 x Unisex cubicles and 1 x Unisex Accessible cubicle with an integral Baby-change.

The unit has a 20p entry fee.

Unfortunately, due to extensive misuse and abuse, the unit was out of commission during the visit and awaiting repair.

We felt the unit was visually unappealing and could attract negative media attention.

Information gained from the Scottish Police also highlighted this unit as being under constant threat and attack and noted that it has become a place of congregation for rough sleepers and drug users.

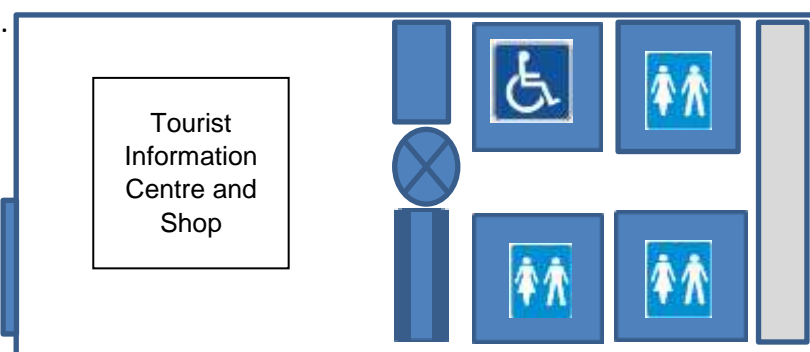
If the unit is to be replaced in the current location, it is strongly suggested that a mixed-use facility is considered and specified. This would remove the danger of the unit being misused and offer improved relief and safety.

There is a substantial footprint in this area which could accommodate a new mixed-use building. This would allow for the removal of the existing structure and for the toilet facilities to be incorporated totally within the new block.

A potential solution could be to re-locate the VisitScotland Glasgow iCentre on Buchanan Street to within a new public toilet building.

This would give visitors and tourists a greater opportunity to gain information and visibility of local attractions, centres and retailers as well as concise directions to their required destinations.

The schematic shows how the toilets could be integrated within the shop and with a controlled entry system in place.



### Recommendations

- Remove the current structure which is visually unappealing.
- Upgrading and / or repair would be relatively expensive and probably not be favoured by either BTA or Police Scotland.
- Reopening the Underground facilities below this unit may be possible - but this option would not be favoured by BTA.
- Design and construct a new mixed-use facility incorporating a visitor information centre – a focal point where those visiting can find instant information on local amenities and events. The installation of a single storey building on this site could

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easily facilitate a Visitor Welcome Centre and up to six integral publicly accessible toilet cubicles.

### Collin Street Car Park – Cathedral Precinct, Glasgow, G4 0NL



This modern double unit has been designed and designated to service visitors to the beautiful Cathedral and local heritage sites including the Royal Infirmary, the Necropolis and St Mungo Museum.

It incorporates a single Unisex cubicle and a separate Accessible Unisex unit with Baby-change.

The unit has a 20p entry fee.

The toilet is self-contained and therefore fully automatic in operation. Even so, it will require some scheduled attendance including when it breaks down and requires repair.

These automated units are self-cleaning and enter a wash cycle automatically after each use. The advantage is that users encounter a fresh, clean, unit every time the door opens. The disadvantage is that a substantial amount of water is used on each cycle, and the next user is forced to wait until this wash cycle has finished.

We would consider this a semi-remote location and therefore expect a constant stream of visitors but not a high volume of footfall through the unit.

A careful check should be kept on the number of days and/or times this unit is operational.

Disabled or wheelchair access to this unit is via a ramp which was poorly located and could be dangerous for anyone with limited mobility.

The unit is some distance away from the core tourist area and public thoroughfare; improved signage to raise awareness of the toilet would be advisable if it is to remain at the current location.

An alternative recommendation would be to move this unit to a better location situated closer to the Cathedral. A more traditional Semi-Automatic unit would allow for larger volumes of visits and potentially better value for money.

### Recommendations

- Convert this unit to a semi-automatic unit.
- Increase the entry fee to 40p.
- This unit is in a small car park, two streets away and around 700 metres from the main centre for visitors. On our inspections it was noted that very few people were using this car park. We believe the unit would be of greater benefit if it was located closer to the main traffic area near the Cathedral.

### Pollokshaws Road – Queens Park, Glasgow, G41 3YF

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The original toilet block was extended by Healthmatic to provide a small café and outdoor seated area; thereby creating the Glasgow's first mixed-use toilet. BTA supports this concept, as it encourages visibility and supervision over the toilet.

This unit has not been fully operational for some considerable time due to damage caused by fire. It is currently under a demolition notice for the safe removal of the damaged elements.

The unit is understood to have a 20p entry fee.

It is unclear as to why the unit has remained closed and in a very poor state of repair for such a length of time, however, BTA believes this may be due to the difficulty in obtaining spare parts for the toilet machinery, or perhaps delays in settling the insurance claims.

Work has begun to demolish the unsafe roofing and side walls and we understand, from the contractor, that these toilets will be completely fixed and back in operation early 2025.

Vandalism is understood to be a recurring issue at this location and when the toilet is repaired, arrangements could be improved by requiring users to obtain a token from the café to use the public toilet facilities, further improving security at the location.

Furthermore, a semi-automatic toilet fitting is recommended as this is far easier to refurbish and standard parts are readily available. If this unit had been a semi-automatic type, it perhaps could have been returned to operation some time ago.

We did not observe any signage on this unit; however, this may have been removed due to the on-going refurbishment works. Moving forward, a fascia board giving full details of the provider, contact numbers and opening times is always recommended to help older and more vulnerable persons using that facility.

### Recommendations

- Repair or preferably replace the existing internal toilets with a semi-automatic unit.
- Increase the entry fee to 50p to deter anti-social activity

Stevenson Street – The Barras, Glasgow, G40 2SB



Situated in a densely populated area of the City; this traditional toilet block appeared well positioned.

The unit houses a single Unisex toilet and an Accessible Unisex unit with an integral baby-change. A 20p entry fee is charged at this unit.

We understand the toilet is intended to service the local Barras market which is very popular with residents and visitors to the City. However, we were discouraged to observe the unit was inoperable during our visits to the location and, during our visits, there were clear signs of regular attack by vandals.

As with all Healthmatic facilities in Glasgow, the unit is fully automatic and appeared to be experiencing repeated technical difficulties.

Consideration must be given to the vulnerability of this unit as it is left unsupervised for long periods of the day.

This unit could benefit from being incorporated or adopted into a Community Scheme or Social Trust, where the local residents adopt some responsibility. This could help combat the clear vandalism issues.



If operated as part of a Community Scheme or Social Trust, any revenue generated by the unit could be returned to local causes and encourage residents, local businesses and youth leaders to take a greater interest in encouraging better behaviour and more respect for local amenities.

This can also be a very positive media opportunity, sending a positive message to reduce persistent abuse.

Consideration should also be given to re-locating this toilet into the market area where it would enjoy greater visibility and perhaps greater security.

Recommendations

- Convert this unit to a semi-automatic unit.
- Increase the entry charge to 50p.
- Consider some type of Community involvement.
- Replace the building with a new mixed-use unit.
- This automatic toilet unit appears to be under constant threat of vandalism and anti-social misuse. It is isolated from the main shopping area and has no apparent visual defence. Consideration should be given to adding a retail unit onto the block to afford some additional protection to it – or moving the toilet to the main shopping area.

**Appendix D – Glasgow Life Public Toilets**



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Area 	Description - Service Area	Property/Venue	Venue Acc	Public Toilet	Acc	Changing Places
North West	Library	Anniesland Library	Yes	Yes	Yes	
North West	Library	Drumchapel Library	Yes	Yes	Yes	
North West	Sport	Drumchapel Pool	Yes	Yes	Yes	
North West	Museum	Gallery of Modern Art Campus - Gallery	Yes	Yes	Yes	
North West	Library	Hillhead Library	Yes	Yes	No	
North West	Sport	Kelvin Hall	Yes	Yes	Yes	Fully Comp
North West	Museum	Kelvingrove Art Gallery & Museum	Yes	Yes	Yes	
North West	Sport	Kelvingrove Radnor Bowls & Tennis	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not comp
North West	Library	Knightwood Community Campus - Library	Yes	Yes	Yes	
North West	Sport	Maryhill Leisure Centre	Yes	Yes	Yes	
North West	Sport	Milton Community Campus	Yes	Yes	Yes	
North West	Cultural Venue	Mitchell Library	Yes	Yes	Yes	
North West	Sport	North Woodside Leisure Centre	Yes	Yes	Yes	
North West	Library	Partick Library	Yes	Yes	Yes	
North West	Library	Possilpark Library	Yes	Yes	Yes	
North West	Museum	Riverside Museum	Yes	Yes	Yes	Fully Comp
North West	Sport	Scotstoun Leisure Centre	Yes	Yes	Yes	

Area 	Description - Service Area	Property/Venue	Venue Acc	Public Toilet	Acc	Changing Places
South	Sport	Bellahouston Leisure Centre	Yes	Yes	Yes	
South	Library	Cardonald Library	Yes	Yes	Yes	
South	Library	Castlemilk Library	Yes	Yes	Yes	
South	Sport	Castlemilk Pool	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not comp
South	Sport	Castlemilk Sports Centre	Yes	Yes	Yes	
South	Library	Bridgeton Library	Yes	Yes	Yes	
South	Sport	Gorbals Leisure Centre	Yes	Yes	Yes	
South	Library	Gorbals Library	Yes	Yes	Yes	
South	Library	Govanhill Library	Yes	Yes	Yes	
South	Library	Ibrox Library	Yes	Yes	Yes	
South	Library	Langside Library	Yes	Yes	Yes	
South	Sport	Pollok Civic Realm	Yes	Yes	Yes	
South	Library	Pollokshaws Library	Yes	Yes	Yes	
South	Sport	Toryglen Regional Football Centre	Yes	Yes	Yes	
South	Cultural Venues	Tramway	Yes	Yes	Yes	

Area 	Description - Service Area	Property/Venue	Venue Acc	Public Toilet	Acc	Changing Places
North East	Library	Baillieston Library	Yes	Yes	No	
North East	Library	Dennistoun Library	Yes	Yes	Yes	
North East	Sport	Easterhouse Cultural Campus - The Bridge Pool	Yes	Yes	Yes	
North East	Library	Easterhouse Cultural Campus - The Bridge Library				
North East	Sport	Emirates Arena	Yes	Yes	Yes	
North East	Sport	Glasgow Green Football Centre	Yes	Yes	Yes	
North East	Sport	Littlehill Golf	Yes	Yes	No	
North East	Library	Parkhead Library	No	Yes	Yes	
North East	Library	Riddrie Library	Yes	Yes	No	
North East	Library	Royston Library	Yes	Yes	Yes	
North East	Sport	Springburn Leisure Centre & Library	Yes	Yes	Yes	
North East	Sport	Tollcross Aquatic Centre	Yes	Yes	Yes	Fully Comp
North East	Sport	Whitehill Pool	Yes	Yes	Yes	Fully Comp

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