

# CITY OF PLYMOUTH



## Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel Working Group

### Review of Public Convenience Provision

**2006**

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## Preface



There is no statutory obligation on a Local Authority to provide public conveniences. However as part of our commitment to provide good local services for local people and visitors to the city, we should aim to provide high quality public conveniences in the right places whenever possible.

There is some history to this review. A number of public toilets were closed in 2002 as a budget reduction measure. In 2003, I became the cabinet member responsible for street services, which included public conveniences, and I received numerous requests for some of them to be re-opened. I was also pressed for improvements to be made to the existing ones and for new ones to be provided in other places. There were no criteria to judge which locations would offer most benefit and the only way to provide public toilets appeared to be for the council to provide a building and maintain and service it. In the absence of any extra resources, I suggested that a scrutiny review might provide some answers.

In 2005, I became chair of a scrutiny panel and the panel accepted the task of conducting this review. We started in autumn 2005 and after a break for the elections in May and June, we have now completed our review.

We have taken advice from organisations who represent people who have greater needs than most people, from community groups and other local authorities. The review has stimulated correspondence to the council, to members of the review group and to the local press. The latter have assessed the council's current sites. Most of the views expressed have been critical; most of the toilets provided by the council do not come up to public expectation. The buildings are not pleasant; although they are usually cleaned regularly, people try to avoid using them. However, while many people prefer to go home early rather than have to use our toilets, people with continence difficulties do not have this option; if there are no suitable toilets, they cannot make the trip.

We think the council should improve facilities as a whole: the standard of existing toilets need to be improved and toilets at new locations are needed, possibly where previous closures have been made. However, part of our remit was to avoid demanding an increase in the budget and that means doing things differently. We have some possibly controversial recommendations.

We recommend that the council should not be the only provider of public toilets and better information on their locations is needed. The only requirement to define a public convenience is that it should be available to the general public at the stated opening times. We recommend adopting some criteria to guide the choice of location, improving

accessibility, improving information on the cost of the existing toilets and the need to avoid anti-social behaviour. We also suggest how the council could make these assessments, taking advice from the area committees.

I would like to thank members of the Public Conveniences Overview and Scrutiny Working Group, Lead Officers Steve Moore, Nick Jones, Emma Fowler and Gareth Harrison-Poole, Council Officers and witnesses who have supported the review and our Democratic Support Officer, Gemma Bartell.

Councillor George Wheeler  
Chair, Public Conveniences  
Working Group

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## 1.0 SUMMARY

The Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny working group have completed their enquiry into Public Conveniences. The working group's aim was to review the current provision of public toilets provided by Plymouth City Council and to make recommendations for future provision. We have made recommendations to help achieve efficiency savings and looked at how best to prioritise existing and future locations of public toilets.

## 2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

### General

- 2.1 **We recommend** that the aim of the council should be to provide public conveniences in the right locations. The facilities should be of a high quality and should be accessible to their users. The cost of provision must be affordable to the council.

**For the attention of:** Cabinet

- 2.2 **We recommend** that a public convenience should be defined as a toilet facility which is available to the general public at its stated opening times, and is properly signed. It may be provided and maintained by the council itself, by the council in partnership with another organisation or by another public or private organisation.

**For the attention of:** Cabinet Member for Transport and Environmental Quality, Director of Development

- 2.3 **We recommend** that a 'master map' showing the locations of public conveniences in the city should be maintained on the Council's web site. Hard copy notices should be provided at appropriate locations, for example, tourism entry points (train and bus stations etc), tourist information centres and major visitor locations. Clear on-street signing to toilets should be provided. The availability of RADAR keys under the National Key Scheme for eligible persons should be more widely publicised.

**For the attention of:** Cabinet Member for Transport and Environmental Quality, Director of Development

- 2.4 **We recommend** that decisions on providing new sites or removing existing public conveniences should be based on four criteria:- the location, the accessibility of a facility, the cost per user and the avoidance of anti-social behaviour.

**For the attention of:** Cabinet Member for Transport and Environmental Quality, Director of Development

### Criteria for and assessment of preferred locations

- 2.5 **We recommend** that the desired locations, for daytime use, for public conveniences should be based on the weighted criteria given in Table 1 (Appendix 3), either for assessing the suitability of current sites or new provision.

**For the attention of:** Cabinet Member for Transport and Environmental Quality, Director of Development

- 2.6 **We recommend** that similar assessments should be made for evening and night-time use and should be based on the weighted criteria given in Table 2 (Appendix 3) (similar to Table 1 but excluding parks, swimming pools, leisure walking and cycling etc).

**For the attention of:** Cabinet Member for Transport and Environmental Quality,  
Director of Development

- 2.7 **We recommend** the acceptance of the evaluation of current Council-provided sites and some others (Tamar bridge and Torpoint ferry), pending examination by Area Committees. The evaluation is given in Table 3 and 4 of Appendix 3, showing data in alphabetical site order and priority site order respectively. The equivalent evening and night time scores are given in Tables 5 and 6.

**For the attention of:** Cabinet Member for Transport and Environmental Quality, The  
Director for Development

### Accessibility

- 2.8 **We recommend** that the public toilet provision across the city should be assessed for compliance with the Disabilities Discrimination Act 1995, as updated. The Act was updated in 2005 and now requires that where reasonably possible all buildings for public use are accessible to all. This assessment should deliver an accurate appraisal of current facilities that are non-compliant complete with supporting financial information to ascertain investments costs to achieve compliance.

**For the attention of:** Cabinet Member for Transport and Environmental Quality,  
Director of Development

### Cost Criteria

- 2.9 **We recommend** that the evaluation of the cost of each site should be based on the cost per user, rather than just the cost of provision. Assessments of the use of all sites should be made. The total cost of provision of each site should be assessed, including day-to-day running and maintenance costs and the costs of repair and improvement.

**For the attention of:** Cabinet Member for Transport and Environmental Quality,  
Director of Development

- 2.10 **We recommend** that although there is a budgetary provision to cover the day-to-day running costs and costs of essential repairs of Council-provided sites, this provision should also include maintenance and improvement costs. The adequacy of this budget to provide the current sites to a high standard should be assessed. If it is insufficient, a combination of three measures should be considered: (i) the budget could be increased, (ii) the number of sites could be reduced, or (iii) provision of existing sites could be made more cost-effective.

**For the attention of:** Cabinet

- 2.11 **We recommend** that consideration be given to assessing current adequacy and provision with the assistance of the British Toilet Association.

**For the attention of:** Cabinet Member for Transport and Environmental Quality,  
Director for Development

- 2.12 **We recommend** that management information should be improved. Running costs are currently attributable for each site. Repairs costs, for normal wear-and tear and vandalism are not currently attributed to specific sites; this should be added to the database.

**For the attention of:** Cabinet Member for Transport and Environmental Quality,

Director of Development

- 2.13 **We recommend** that a soft market testing exercise should be carried out to determine the most cost efficient way of delivering a high quality maintenance programme for the public toilet provision across the city.

**For the attention of:** Cabinet Member for Transport and Environmental Quality,  
Director of Development

- 2.14 **We recommend** that consideration should be given to applying a charge for using public conveniences in certain places.

**For the attention of:** Cabinet

### Anti-social behaviour

- 2.15 **We recommend** that information should be collated from enforcement agencies to inform the appraisal of misuse. Public conveniences can present themselves as places that can attract various forms of anti-social behaviour.

**For the attention of:** Cabinet Member for Transport and Environmental Quality,  
Director of Development

### Procedural recommendations

- 2.16 **We recommend** that public convenience provision is usually a local issue and should as far as possible be a matter for Area Committees. The Area Committees should be requested to:

- 2.16.1 confirm the weighted criteria for existing sites, updating them when necessary;
- 2.16.2 consult locally and recommend new locations when appropriate, providing assessments of weighted criteria for the sites;
- 2.16.3 recommend how provision can best be made at these locations, whether by the Council or in other ways.

**For the attention of:** Cabinet

- 2.17 **We recommend** that requests regarding specific locations of public conveniences should be normally referred to the appropriate Area Committee for their consideration and for local consultation.

**For the attention of:** Cabinet Member for Transport and Environmental Quality,  
Director of Development

- 2.18 **We recommend** the Cabinet be requested to normally implement the recommendations of Area Committees within the allocated budget.

**For the attention of:** Cabinet

- 2.19 **We recommend** in addition to local consultation carried out by the Area Committees, the Council should carry out city-wide consultation on changes in provision with organisations such as those who advised the review group and businesses that have a specific interest, e.g. public transport providers. Appendix 4 gives recommended organisations.

**For the attention of:** Cabinet



- 2.20 **We recommend** a task-and-finish scrutiny group should be convened on a bi-annual basis, to review current provision and decisions taken by the cabinet, whether based on recommendations of an area committee or not.

***For the attention of:*** Overview and Scrutiny Commission

### Tracking Progress

- 2.21 **We recommend** that the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel receive feedback on this report following its consideration at Cabinet and within 30 days of its receipt.

***For the attention of:*** Cabinet Member for Transport and Environmental Quality

- 2.22 **We recommend** that the panel receive and update on progress made on the recommendations of this review by within six months of it going to Cabinet.

***For the attention of:*** Overview and Scrutiny Commission

All of the above recommendations were agreed unanimously, except for 2.14 which was not supported by Councillor Ken Foster.

### **3.0 INTRODUCTION**

#### **3.1 Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Working Group**

3.1.1 The Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel agreed at their meeting on 5 September 2005 to undertake a review of Public Conveniences. This was approved by the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission in September 2005. A working group was appointed comprising the following Members –

- Councillor Wheeler (Chair)
- Councillor Bray
- Councillor Foster
- Councillor Gordon
- Councillor Vincent

3.1.2 The working group met on eight occasions between January and September 2006.

#### **3.2 Terms of Reference**

3.2.1 The purpose of the review, as identified in the working group's scrutiny plan was to make recommendations on how to improve the provision of public toilets. The recommendations should cover establishing criteria for determining the best locations, assessing current locations, prioritising preferred locations and offering ways to achieve these without an increase in resources.

#### **3.3 Scope of the Inquiry**

3.3.1 To provide a sustainable service, public toilets need to be strategically located, easy and cost-effective to manage and clearly publicised. This should lead to customer satisfaction, help meet the council's strategic objective of maintaining a clean and sustainable environment and contribute to Plymouth's visionary goal of being a safe and strong city. The aim of the scrutiny was to –

- investigate examples of best practice from surrounding local authorities;
- identify criteria for preferred locations of public toilets in order to compile a priority list;
- carry out an assessment of current locations;
- carry out a consultation exercise through the Plymouth points of view panel to ascertain public opinion.

3.3.2 As part of their review, the working group–

- considered the results of condition surveys provided by the asset management section;
- consulted with Plymouth residents;
- held a witness session;
- heard from Plymouth City Councillors on their concerns;
- compiled a comparison matrix comprising information relating to existing public toilets.

### **3.4 Public Conveniences in Plymouth – the facts**

- 3.4.1 Currently Plymouth City Council provides 34 public toilets across the City, 21 of these have disabled facilities.
- 3.4.2 The 2005 / 06 yearly budget was set at £280,000.
- 3.4.3 Vandalism and damage resulting from anti social behaviour costs Plymouth City Council approximately £10,000 annually, to rectify.
- 3.4.4 Due to the above point (3.4.3) most public toilets are opened and closed daily throughout the year to minimise the risk of vandalism.
- 3.4.5 Some toilets are only open during the summer tourist season to cope with the increased demand.

## **4.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **4.1 The National Context**

- 4.1.1 Plymouth City Council is under no statutory obligation to provide public toilets however if they are provided the Disability Discrimination Act guidance highlights that disabled facilities should be provided where practicably possible.

### **4.2 The Local Context – Experience in Plymouth**

- 4.2.1 Plymouth City Council is responsible for providing and maintaining 34 public toilets.
- 4.2.2 During 2002 nine public toilets across the city were closed for various reasons including anti social behaviour including excessive vandalism occurring at the sites.
- 4.2.3 As described in Plymouth's City Strategy and Action Plan, targets 12 and 13 aim to create a clean and sustainable environment through improving the sustainability of the city each year, the provision of sustainable and well managed public conveniences contribute to this strategy and action plan.

## **5.0 EVIDENCE**

### **5.1 Written Evidence**

- 5.1.1 During the course of the review, the working group consulted Plymouth City Councillors with a view to seeking their thoughts on public conveniences in Plymouth. There were four responses received which are attached in appendix 5.
- 5.1.2 The working group felt that it was essential to seek members' views on the subject and so consulted all Councillors for a second time in August 2006. The responses to this consultation are attached in Appendix 6, alongside the reply from the panel.

### **5.2 Oral Evidence**

- 5.2.1 The working group held a number of sessions to hear from council officers and representatives from community groups between January and June 2006. The findings of these sessions are at Section 6.0 of this report.

## 6.0 FINDINGS

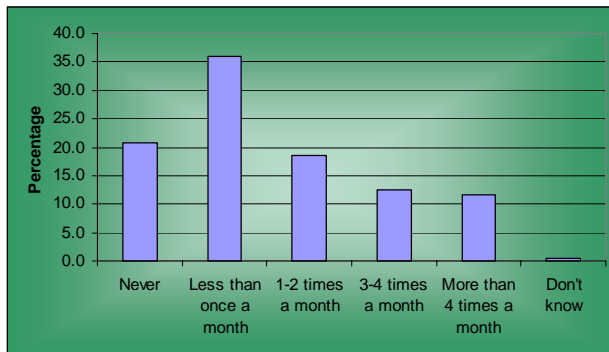
### 6.1 Consultation with Neighbouring Local Authorities

	Exeter	South Hams <sup>34</sup>	North Devon	Caradon	Teignbridge	Plymouth
No. of Council run PC's	21	58	70+	37	46	34
No of PC's closed in last 2 years	0	-	35	9 close 12 transferred		9
Charge for Council owned PC's	free	free	free	free	free	free
Opening times	7am-7pm	24 hours	24 hours	-	-	8.30am - 20.30pm
Cleaning	2-3 times a day	once a day	-	-	2-4 times a day	once a day

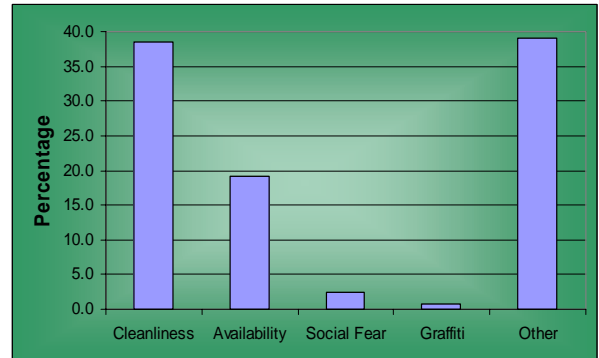
### 6.2 Consultation with Plymouth Points of View Panel

6.2.1 A telephone consultation was carried out during January 2006, consultee's consisted of members of the Plymouth Points of View Panel which is made up of a representative sample of the people of Plymouth encompassing a broad spectrum of age race and gender the graphs below indicate some of the findings of the survey;

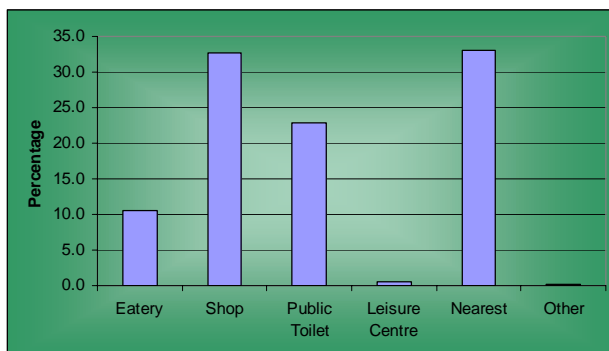
How often do people use public conveniences?



Reasons for not using public conveniences



When you are out and need to use a public convenience which are you most likely to use.



Purpose of trip against preferred nearest toilet.



6.2.2 The survey also showed that 95 per cent of people were of the opinion that Plymouth City Council has a duty to provide public conveniences.

### **6.3 Barbican Harbourside Community Association**

6.3.1 Members of the Barbican Harbourside Community Association were continually expressing concern about the late night revellers (male and female) urinating throughout the area;

6.3.2 They felt strongly that conveniences should be properly maintained or should not be provided if this is not possible, for example, instead of two dilapidated and filthy provisions on the Barbican and one on the Hoe, it would be better to have one decent purpose built facility on the Hoe;

6.3.3 It was their view that the needs of the general public were catered for in bars, restaurants, and supermarkets etc and the Plymouth City Council should focus on providing conveniences for visitors to the city who arrive by coach or boat etc.

6.3.4 It was said that the Council needed to think carefully about how it can afford to supply and maintain decent facilities and should consider charging for use and employing an attendant or caretaker.

### **6.4 Plymouth Senior Citizens Forum**

6.4.1 Due to unforeseen circumstances, the representative of the Plymouth Senior Citizens Forum was unable to attend the witness session. As such, written comments were submitted.

6.4.2 It was their view that whether the Council had a statutory duty to provide conveniences was questionable as no provision could be a health risk.

6.4.3 They felt that it would be a very sorry state of affairs if the Council decided to close all public conveniences because of financial restrictions.

6.4.4 Plymouth would soon lose its attraction to visitors which visit tourist attractions and use the city as a shopping centre if toilets were not available.

6.4.5 The elderly, disabled and those with a medical condition need the conveniences as a must, many of our major shops only allow customers to use their facilities.

6.4.6 They appreciate the problem of vandals wanting to wreck everything, but do not feel that it should be a reason to close down a very necessary public service.

6.4.7 They did not believe that council tax payers should have to pay to use public conveniences.

6.4.8 The suggestion was made that the Council allow the public to use Council facilities like the Guildhall and other Council properties where supervision is available which would deter vandalism

## **6.5 Disability Action Network**

- 6.5.1 Many disabled citizens did not use public conveniences due to accessibility issues such as a lack of rails or pull down transfer bars, some need more room for a carer or a dog, lighting is also an issue for those with glaucoma.
- 6.5.2 Concern was expressed that leaking pipes and floors can be dangerous for anyone but especially disabled or elderly citizens.
- 6.5.3 They felt that some toilets are hard to locate due to lack of signage, and some people may be too embarrassed to ask others for directions.

## **6.6 Contenance Advisory Service, Derriford Hospital**

- 6.6.1 Bladder and bowel problems increase in the older generation but can affect males and females of all ages a lack of facilities can really affect peoples lives for example,
- Those with bladder and/or bowel incontinence are restricted when it comes to activities and outings; many just don't go out in case there are no facilities available.
  - Self catheterisation requires full toilet facilities, many have difficulties finding a suitable place.
- 6.6.2 It was also commented that many toilets are dark and isolated making people who need to use them feel unsafe.
- 6.6.3 the representative also gave panel members a copy of a letter which was due to be sent to the Herald. Having heard that this review was happening, they decided to submit it to the panel rather than sending it. The letter is attached to this report in Appendix 7

## **6.7 Disability Discrimination Act**

From October 2005 Companies and Organisations that provide services to the public are required by the Disability Discrimination Act to ensure that their services are reasonably accessible to disabled people.

## **6.8 RADAR Keys**

The RADAR disability network runs a National Key Scheme (NKS) which offers independent access to disabled people to around 7,000 locked public toilets around the country. RADAR would like all providers of accessible to toilets to keep their toilets unlocked if at all possible. The NKS is suggested for use only if the provider concerned has to keep the toilets locked to stop vandalism and misuse.

## **7.0 CONCLUSIONS**

### **7.1 Overall Conclusions**

- 7.1.1 The provision of public conveniences is an area which has taken a back seat in Plymouth for sometime, we hope that this review will highlight the issues and bring it to the forefront for consideration.
- 7.1.2 The feedback received from those that we have spoken to indicates unanimously that it is not the quantity of conveniences that is important, but rather, the standard of the convenience in respect of maintenance and cleanliness and that any conveniences we do have are in a safe and accessible location for all.

### **7.2 Progress on Implementation**

- 7.2.1 It is suggested that the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel should ask the Cabinet Member to provide an update on the progress of the approved recommendations arising from this review by within six months of it being accepted.

## **Appendix 1 – Reference Materials**

1. Service providers and the DDA, Department for Work and Pensions, 2004.
2. The British Toilet Association Website
3. The RADAR Website
4. Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (updated October 2005)

## **Appendix 2 – Contributors**

The working group would like to express their sincere thanks to all those who provided information and advice:

Emma Fowler, Service Development Officer, Development

Gareth Harrison-Poole, Technical Assistant, Development

Nick Jones, Acting Head of Street Services, Development

David Weeks, Principal Cleansing Manager, Development

Louise Harvey, Exeter City Council

Geoff Barclay, North Devon District Council

Chris James, Caradon District Council

Steve Mason, South Hams District Council

Steve Moore, Assistant Director for Waste and Street Services

Steve Hawrhain, South Hams District Council

Sandy Teske, Corporate Consultation Officer, Corporate Performance

Theresa Brooks, Assistant to the Corporate Consultation Officer, Corporate Performance



## Appendix 3 – Scoring Matrix and Priority Lists

Table 1

### Scoring Matrix to Indicate Public Convenience Priority List

The scoring matrix relies on the assumption that the higher the score attained by a public convenience the more fundamental it is to the community and Plymouth as a whole. The scores are cumulative so that if, for example, a location is both a shopping centre and a transport interchange, the overall score of the location is the sum of the scores for both functions. The matrix also takes account of the cost to the Council of running, maintaining, repairing and improving the facility. Separate scores are calculated for location criteria and costs.

**The scoring explanations below relate to both existing public conveniences and any proposed new locations. This creates a uniform approach for baseline comparisons of public convenience locations. The scores, location, costs and combined, are given in the table.**

The headings relate directly to those that appear on this scoring explanation.

All locations should be considered with respect to their immediate surroundings. Each location should be given a score of zero if the category that is being considered does not apply.

#### **Shopping Centre**

Primary Shopping Centre (City Centre)	= 10
Secondary (District) Shopping Centre	= 5
Small Shopping Centre	= 3
Small group of local shops	= 1

#### **Tourism/Leisure**

Principal Tourist Areas	= 7
Principal parks, leisure, open spaces (inc beaches)	= 5
Local parks, leisure and open spaces	= 3

#### **Public transport**

Public Transport Interchanges	= 7
Park and Ride Site	= 5
Minor Bus Interchange or Ferry terminal	= 3

#### **Walking** (well-used right of way, school route etc)

Major use	= 5
Minor use	= 3

#### **Cycling**

Major route	= 5
Minor route	= 3

#### **Proximity to other facilities**

Distance to next Public Convenience less than 500m	= 0
Distance between 500m and 1000m	= 3
Distance more than 1000m	= 5

**Table 2**

**Scoring Matrix to Indicate Public Convenience Priority List**

**(Evening and night-time criteria)**

The matrix is similar to that given in table 1 but provides criteria for assessment of evening and night-time usage.

**'Night-time economy' Centre**

Primary Centre (City Centre, Barbican, Union street)	= 10
Secondary Centre	= 5

**Public transport**

Public Transport Interchanges	= 7
Park and Ride Site	= 5
Minor Bus Interchange or Ferry terminal	= 3

**Proximity to other facilities**

Distance to next Public Convenience less than 500m	= 0
Distance between 500m and 1000m	= 3
Distance more than 1000m	= 5

**Table 3 – Public Conveniences Location Preference - Alphabetical**

Location	Shopping Centre	Tourism/ Leisure	Public Transport	Walking	Cycling	Proximity to other facilities	Location Score
Armada Way (Gents)	10	7	7	5	0	0	29
Armada Way (Ladies)	10	7	7	5	0	0	29
Barbican	3	7	3	5	3	0	21
Barn Park	0	5	0	3	3	5	16
Beaumont Park	0	0	0	3	3	3	9
Blandford Road	3	0	3	0	0	5	11
Bretonside (Gents)	10	7	7	5	0	0	29
Bretonside (Ladies)	10	7	7	5	0	0	29
Central Park (JC Decaux)	0	5	0	3	3	5	16
Coxside	0	3	0	5	5	3	16
Coypool	0	0	5	0	5	5	15
Cremyll Street	0	0	3	3	5	0	11
Crownhill	5	0	3	5	5	5	23
Dean Hill	5	0	3	0	0	5	13
Devils Point	0	5	0	5	0	5	15
Freedom Park	0	5	0	0	0	3	8
George Street	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
Granby Green	3	0	0	0	0	3	6
Hartley Park	0	5	0	0	3	0	8
Hoe Promenade	0	7	0	5	5	0	17
Hooe	3	3	0	3	5	3	17
Jennycliffe	0	5	0	5	5	5	20
Masterman Road	5	3	0	0	0	5	13
Milehouse	0	5	3	0	3	5	16
Millbridge	3	3	0	0	0	5	11
Mount Wise Pools	0	5	0	0	0	0	5
Mountbatten	0	5	0	5	5	5	20
Mutley Plain	5	0	7	0	0	3	15

<b>Mutton Cove</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Outland Road</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Phoenix Wharf</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Richmond Walk</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Ridgeway</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Saltash Passage</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Southway Drive</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Springfield Road</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>St Budeaux</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>St Levan Road</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Tamar Bridge</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Tamerton Foliot</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Tavistock Road (North Hill)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Thorn Park</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Torpoint Ferry</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Tothill</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>West Hoe</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Whitleigh Green</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>

**Table 4 – Public Conveniences Location Preference – In order of Score**

Location	Shopping Centre	Tourism/ Leisure	Public Transport	Walking	Cycling	Proximity to other facilities	Location Score
Armada Way (Gents)	10	7	7	5	0	0	29
Armada Way (Ladies)	10	7	7	5	0	0	29
Bretonside (Gents)	10	7	7	5	0	0	29
Bretonside (Ladies)	10	7	7	5	0	0	29
Crownhill	5	0	3	5	5	5	23
Barbican	3	7	3	5	3	0	21
Outland Road	3	5	0	3	5	5	21
Jennycliffe	0	5	0	5	5	5	20
Mountbatten	0	5	0	5	5	5	20
Phoenix Wharf	0	7	3	5	5	0	20
Torpoint Ferry	0	3	3	3	5	5	19
Ridgeway	5	0	3	0	5	5	18
Hoe Promenade	0	7	0	5	5	0	17
Hooe	3	3	0	3	5	3	17
Barn Park	0	5	0	3	3	5	16
Central Park (JC Decaux)	0	5	0	3	3	5	16
Coxside	0	3	0	5	5	3	16
Milehouse	0	5	3	0	3	5	16
Southway Drive	5	0	3	0	3	5	16
St Budeaux	5	0	3	0	3	5	16
Tamerton Foliot	0	3	0	5	3	5	16
Coypool	0	0	5	0	5	5	15
Devils Point	0	5	0	5	0	5	15
Mutley Plain	5	0	7	0	0	3	15
Dean Hill	5	0	3	0	0	5	13
Masterman Road	5	3	0	0	0	5	13
Tothill	0	3	0	0	5	5	13
Blandford Road	3	0	3	0	0	5	11
Cremyll Street	0	0	3	3	5	0	11

<b>Millbridge</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Springfield Road</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Tamar Bridge</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>West Hoe</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Whitleigh Green</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Beaumont Park</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Freedom Park</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Hartley Park</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Saltash Passage</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>St Levan Road</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Tavistock Road (North Hill)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Granby Green</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Thorn Park</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Mount Wise Pools</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Mutton Cove</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Richmond Walk</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>George Street</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>

**Table 5 – Public Conveniences Location Preference (Evening) - Alphabetical**

Location	Shopping Centre	Public Transport	Proximity to other facilities	Location Score
Armada Way (Gents)	10	7	5	22
Armada Way (Ladies)	10	7	5	22
Barbican	10	3	5	18
Bretonside (Gents)	10	7	5	22
Bretonside (Ladies)	10	7	5	22
Crownhill	5	3	5	13
Dean Hill	5	3	5	13
Masterman Road	5	0	5	10
Mutley Plain	5	7	5	17
Ridgeway	5	3	5	13

**Table 6 – Public Conveniences Location Preference (Evening) – In order of Score**

Location	Shopping Centre	Public Transport	Proximity to other facilities	Location Score
Armada Way (Gents)	10	7	5	22
Armada Way (Ladies)	10	7	5	22
Bretonside (Gents)	10	7	5	22
Bretonside (Ladies)	10	7	5	22
Mutley Plain	5	7	5	17
Barbican	10	3	5	18
Crownhill	5	3	5	13
Dean Hill	5	3	5	13
Ridgeway	5	3	5	13
Masterman Road	5	0	5	10

#### **Appendix 4 – Suggested Consultees**

List of recommended consultees (not to be seen as exhaustive):

- Age Concern
- Continence Advisory Service, Derriford Hospital
- Devon and Cornwall Police
- Disability Action Network
- Local Community Groups
- Plymouth Community Partnership (as a collective for all community groups, though appropriate individual groups should be consulted as part of the Area Committee consultations)
- Plymouth Points of View Panel
- Plymouth Senior Citizens' Forum
- Plymouth Local Access Forum
- Plymouth Cycle Forum
- Plymouth City Council, Public Transport
- Public Transport Providers



## Appendix 5 – First Consultation with City Councillors

It does seem to me that the current system is flawed in that the matrix is incomplete in many cases; unless I am totally incorrect in my understanding of the thing. Take Plymstock, for instance. There are five PCs.

Dean Hill - it is adjacent to a District shopping Centre, many bus services converge here, there are a Community centre, Clinic, Library, Senior Citizens club building all within a short distance.

Hooe - currently closed - adjacent to Hooe Green a much used local play area, also a tertiary shopping area.

Springfield Road = tertiary shopping centre, public transport terminus.

Similarly Ridgeway at Plympton - District Shopping, transport hub, and Community hub.

Also, what about the toilets in the Market serving the West End?

Perhaps the other greatest problem of toilets apart from ' security' is the opening and closing times.

Turning to your letter of 15 March, I can really only comment on questions 1. and 2. I have no particular views on the other questions you raise. When in the city centre I am invariably on Council business and have the facilities of our various properties according to which address I am visiting.

I am concerned that the Tamerton Foliot toilets be restored and would make a special pleading that this cause should be raised higher than the score it would ordinarily receive on the matrix. The toilets have been closed since 2003 when a tree fell on the building from the adjoining yard of Williams builders; they have subsequently repaired the roof tiles to make the building secure, so far as can be seen. The building is in a conservation area and I understand that it must therefore be retained - thus a good use for it would be as a public toilet. I have argued that it could be opened and closed 10 - 15 minutes either side of the Southway toilet which is opened and closed each morning and evening by a council employee.

Whilst, on the scoring system that has emerged, a fair enough one in general, it does not score particularly highly there a very peculiar circumstances surrounding the Tamerton location.

1. It is close to the points of access to a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSI) and a site of Outstanding Natural Beauty (ONB) there is a finger board hard by the toilet pointing to the Warleigh Point Nature Reserve.
2. It is on the line of the walking route from Holly Park to Mary Dean school. Schools as you know are developing (by law by 2010) a School Transport Plan, walking routes and walking "trains" are amongst nationally favoured features.
3. It is at the entrance to Cann Woods which is being developed by PCC with other, as a tourist attraction for walking, bridleway etc.
4. It is at the terminus of the public footpath/bridleway which PCC is again developing with others down the Coombe Valley from Belliver to Tamerton Foliot.
5. It was a valuable asset to bus/taxi drivers.

I hope that these issues will be considered by the Scrutiny Committee and a favourable outcome achieved.

1. Yes. If a convenience is provided, members of the public rely on it being open. The

convenience at St Budeaux square was closed for repairs in June 2005. Nothing was done, despite frequent requests from ward councillors and members of the public and discussion at the Area Committee. Scaffolding was erected in February, the roof appears to have been replaced and the scaffolding has now been taken down but the toilets are still closed. There must be an adequate budget for repairs and they must be carried out expeditiously.

Is there any reason why public convenience provision has to be made by the council providing a building and servicing it? There are several locations where the Council has contracted with a local individual or company for servicing of a facility, e.g. freedom park and at Hoe Road. Could consideration be given to extending this way of provision, perhaps by contracting with an organisation with a suitable building?

2. Yes. As described above, there is what used to be a well-used facility at St Budeaux Square which has been closed for some 9 months. There have been a lot of complaints about the temporary closure.
3. I don't think it is easy to forecast one's needs!
4. Any one.
5. Some of the Council's own sites are not of a particularly good standard and people probably try to avoid using these. However, if the need is strong enough, anything is better than nothing.
6. There should be some way of prioritising sites. This seems a good start.

I really do not know what the answer to the problem is – apart from having attendants on site to clean the places and see there is no misuse.

In the U.S. when I visited – the business premises have REST ROOMS and they appeared to be well maintained. I was not aware of any problems.

Presumably the new shopping centre at Drakes Circus will have some toilet provision - Preferably in business premises for customers rather than a block to serve the whole area. I think that is the way to go – now that business hours are being extended to late night shopping etc.

I think night time / early hours facilities could be catered for by individual street cubicles rather than closing the larger public conveniences altogether and having nothing at all.

I really do not see how you can improve public toilet provision if you ensure there are going to be no additional resources.

The bus station has buses coming in the small hours and people waiting to catch them. There really ought to be some cubicles there.

The Hoe is a wide open space used by hundreds of people by day. The Café there would not reasonably be expected to provide toilet facilities to cater for all, so public facilities are required – and the staff could be responsible for other work as well – hedge trimming, gardening, sweeping up, dealing with rubbish bins etc.

These toilets should be upgraded and kept in pristine condition as hundreds of people visit the area. I used the facility after the Remembrance Day Service – and it was quite disgusting.

It is ridiculous that the toilets in Beaumont Park have been withdrawn. A few one person cubicles could be provided as there are no shops or business premises nearby which could offer REST ROOM facilities.

You cannot deal with the problem without a proper budget for toilets.

I regret the matrix is too complicated for me to comment.

**Appendix 6 – Second Consultation with City Councillors and responses.**

1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coding of public conveniences is too simplistic</li> <li>• No account of footfall.</li> <li>• Too many assumptions regarding the local shopping area - e.g. how close is this shopping centre to other public toilets, or other opportunities for people to use toilets e.g., cafes, sporting facilities.</li> <li>• Focus is primarily on location of facilities rather than on type of facilities</li> <li>• DDA compliance</li> <li>• Could we not encourage public conveniences to be attached to other places, e.g. day centers, youth centre's, community buildings etc.</li> <li>• Attendants within the PC's</li> <li>• Pay to use PC's?</li> </ul>
2	<p>Would it be possible to subcontract for routine cleaning and maintenance?</p>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The assessment of preferred locations only covers daytime needs. It doesn't cover evening needs or those associated with the nighttime economy. There could be an amendment to recommendation 2.1, a new recommendation 2.2, with present 2.2 renumbered 2.3:</li> </ul> <p>2.1) Add after "desired locations" in line 1, "for daytime use". Recommendation will read: The desired locations, for daytime use, for public conveniences ... etc.</p> <p>2.2) Similar assessments should be made for evening and night-time use and should be based on the weighted criteria given in Table 2 (similar to table 1 but excluding parks, swimming pools, leisure walking and cycling etc).</p> <p>I would like to offer amended versions of the spreadsheets.</p> <p>I have examined the maps of the various sites belonging to Street Services and I am suggesting corrections to the values of proximity to other facilities.</p> <p>I have also looked at the Council's Cycle Guide and I'm suggesting corrections to the values for cycling.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I would also like to suggest extra consultees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Plymouth Local Access Forum, for advice on walking routes.</li> <li>b) Plymouth Cycle Forum, for advice on cycling routes.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Bus companies and the Council's public transport section, for advice on public transport locations.</p>
4	<p>Reassess points scoring in terms of seasonal activity therefore in the summer all toilets near to the coastal/tourist areas would be upgraded e.g. in May until mid October.</p>
5	<p>There are no public conveniences in my Ward so I would rather wait to see what other Members say! The rank ordering of the current conveniences was helpful</p>
6	<p>Springfield Road Public Convenience needs to be reevaluated as it is on a public transport route and is in the centre for the main shopping centre in Elberton.</p>
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I would recommend that the Tamerton Foliot Village Conservation Society be consulted via its Secretary (details provided)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The weighting for Tamerton Public Conveniences I would broadly agree with your points score except as follows: -             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <b>Shopping Centre</b> - I believe that Tamerton should have a score of 1 not 0. There is a post office/general store, a late shop and a fast food take away immediately by the toilets, not to mention three public houses.</li> <li>b) <b>Public Transport</b> - I argue that Tamerton should have a points score of 3 not 0. It is near the terminus of the 42 and 42B (the two buses that serve the village).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
8	<p>Could bus drivers be issued with keys for disabled toilets as most toilets are closed from early evening?</p>
9	<p>I wondered what was happening in regard to the disused toilets in Beaumont Park.</p>
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Happy with the recommendations, but in practical terms they are far removed from reality</li> <li>• Crownhill car park conveniences sharply illustrated the problem of lack of maintenance and general decay of facilities.</li> </ul> <p>The panel's review may be better to concentrate on the high priority locations and do the job properly to make the facilities attractive and user friendly rather than tolerate a greater number of unattractive and poorly maintained locations.</p>

### Response to Councillors

1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the absence of any alternative suggestions no action has been taken with the regards to the comment that the coding is simplistic</li> <li>• Footfall counters will be put in place shortly</li> <li>• This is covered by the column headed proximity to other locations</li> <li>• The scope of this working group was to focus primarily on location of public conveniences</li> <li>• Provision of conveniences through other places has formed part of the consideration of the working group</li> <li>• There are currently 2 attendant and further would require revision of the budget and cab member decision</li> <li>• A recommendation of this report is too assess facilities for DDA compliance</li> <li>• A recommendation of this report is to consider charging for PC's in some areas</li> </ul>
2	There is a dedicated in house cleaning team available
3	All points have been accepted and incorporated into the report.
4	Although a criteria has not be created for seasonal activity, footfall counters should provide results with regard to this.
5	Thank you for your comments we hope that you will read our report with interest
6	The score for public transport remains the same as it is not classed as minor interchange.
7	<p>It is a recommendation of this report that local community groups are consulted.</p> <p>Following your comments, the score for Tamerton Foliot Shopping centre was changed to 1, however the score for public transport remains the same as it is not classed as minor interchange.</p>
8	Disabled Keys for bus drivers is something that has already been put in place and given consideration, it is the bus operators responsibility to provide facilities for its staff, the option to buy keys is there should they wish to do so.
9	The site at Beaumont Park has been declared surplus to requirements.
10	Crownhill scores well on the matrix and so should trigger consideration of maintenance and cleanliness issues. Usage surveys will also play a part.

## Appendix 7 – Letter from Derriford Continence Advisory Service

The Editor  
Evening Herald  
17 Brest Road  
Derriford Business Park  
Plymouth

Dear Editor,

As Professionals with a specialist interest in toilet facilities we would like to comment regarding the correspondence which has appeared over the last few months.

Toilets in Plymouth were surveyed by the Continence Department at Derriford Hospital ten years ago, and over the last year some public toilets were revisited to see if things had changed.

There are fewer toilets now and generally they looked “tired” and in need of painting/redecoration; however most were cleaner and smelt of the “standard issue disinfectant”. For the most part there appeared to be less vandalism noted probably because of the current trend for stainless steel toilets. They were free but locked early evening, with only two open for 24hours; one assumes this is an attempt at curtailing vandalism. The location of many toilets does not help, as they are often secluded and surrounded by bushes: many have steps, sharp corners to negotiate which makes pushing prams or pushchairs into the difficult. The disabled toilets which are accessed by Radar keys are of a similar standard; however quite a few do not have all the facilities suitable for disabled users such as rails and may be poorly designed and a lack of space. These toilets generally have better access though.

Toilets are important to everybody and we do not appreciate this until we are faced with a problem and cannot find one. People with bladder and/or bowel problems require good toilet facilities to maintain their dignity. Bladder and/or bowel problems are no respecter of age or sex so no one should be disadvantaged.

According to the Pharmacia Sifo research done in 1998 there are 111, 000 people over the age of 40 in Plymouth and of these 26, 000 will have bladder problems. Bowel incontinence is more difficult to quantify because of the nature of the problem and there are no known figures for this.

Plymouth is not only a retirement area but also a tourist centre and as such good facilities can mean the difference between revisiting and choosing to holiday to elsewhere.

We have come up with some suggestions that may help the Council improve public toilets because these facilities are important for everyone to be able to access.

If the community want to keep local facilities, whatever they are, then they have to be prepared to work with others such as the council to do this.

- a) Obtain sponsorship from Companies such as builders, paint manufacturers, cleaning Companies etc. The money obtained can be used for redecoration and repair while offering free advertising for the Companies that participate. After all roundabouts in the City are now sponsored so why not local toilets.

- b) In a community competition possibly over a weekend where the local community get together to “do up” and decorate their local toilets. A bit like the programmes on television where communities work together to improve their surroundings and environments or build community gardens.
- c) Involve local art students to decorate the inside and outside of the buildings to make them brighter and more attractive.
- d) Run a competition with local schools and colleges to design new signs which are attractive and easy to read to direct the public to the toilets. These signs can then be prominently displayed so that people can find the toilets without the need to be embarrassed about asking for directions.
- e) Rather than the Council having the “stand-alone” toilets which cost money to build, maintain and clean; why not have partnership and co-operation between retailers, sports facilities, entertainments venues and pubs etc. By sharing the cost it would allow the facilities to be kept clean, conveniently sited, easily accessible, not isolated so reducing vandalism and they would form part of the local community.

An essential component for good toilets is a shared responsibility between the Council, local communities and the facility users regardless of who they are.

I hope that this will give food for thought.