HARINGEY TOILET STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN





Back	groundground	2
Wł	ny are public toilets important?	2
Wł	ny are we developing this strategy?	2
Ac	hievements to date	3
Ris	sk Groups	3
Introd	duction	4
Po	pulation and Demographics	4
De	privation	5
Air	ns of the strategy	6
Ali	gnment to other council strategies	6
Cons	sultation and Engagement	7
Co	nsultation	7
	gagement	
Strate	egic Priorities and Considerations	9
1.	Location of Public Toilets and Gaps in Provision	10
2.	Planning and Transport	11
3.	Safety and Hygiene	12
4.	Inclusive Access	13
5.	Communication and Signage	13
Actio	n Plan	14
Moni	toring and Reviewing the Strategy	17
	endix – Consultation Responses	
,	Age Breakdown	17
	Are you a resident, business owner, a member of a local group or do you work in the borough?	e 18
(Gender of Respondents	18
١	What do you think about public toilet provision in Haringey?	19
[Do you think that the location of facilities is convenient?	19
[Do you feel that toilets are clean and well maintained when you visit them?	20
	What impact would a lack of public toilets have on you and what may it prevent you doing?	
	Are there any particular issues which you have experienced when using publicly accessible toilets when out and about in Haringey?	21
	Which of the following statements relating to the provision of public toilets in Haringe do you agree with?	
	Would you feel comfortable using a toilet access card in local shops etc if a designa toilet wasn't available?	





Background

Why are public toilets important?

The World Health Organization highlights that access to safe, clean toilets is crucial for promoting public health¹. Public toilet accessibility is important to people of all ages and particularly for older people, disabled people, families with young children and people with chronic illnesses.

Public toilets are a key element of the built environment and influence our health behaviours and lifestyles². A lack of adequate public toilets will affect some people's decisions to leave their home to access parks and green spaces, high streets and shopping centres. Furthermore, a lack of public toilets can contribute to loneliness and social isolation as some residents choose to stay at home instead of seeking social interaction³. In Haringey, social isolation and loneliness are an issue among some adult social care users. In actual fact, 43% of adult social care users aged 65+ reported that they have as much social contact as they would like in 2022/23. This was similar to the England average of 42%⁴.

Publicly accessible toilets also contribute to the economic wellbeing of places. Good quality toilet facilities will make it more likely for people to go out and spend money in a high street for example.

Why are we developing this strategy?

Following publication of the Toilet Manifesto for London in November 2020, Age UK have campaigned to improve public toilet provision in the city, highlighting its importance for all Londoners, particularly older people and those with certain health conditions⁵. **Age UK reports a "worrying decline" in access to public toilets in London over the past decade and recommends that local authorities in London develop and implement a toilet strategy for their borough⁶. The Loos for Haringey group, which includes membership from Haringey Over 50s forum and the Friends of Chestnut Park group identified a need for more public toilets to be provided throughout the borough to meet current and future demand. Loos for Haringey took a deputation to Haringey's Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting in March 2023.**

Despite current and ongoing financial constraints to the council's budget, the panel agreed that a strategy and action plan were needed to:

1. Deliver improvements to toilet access in the borough and address gaps with a focus on the east of the borough in and around Tottenham.

¹ World Health Organization. WHO Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Strategy 2018–2025. 2019.

² What Is A Population Health Approach? | The King's Fund

³ Webpage: Bichard & Knight.pdf

⁴ NHS England, Adult Social Care and Outcomes Framework

⁵ Age UK webpage: Out and About

⁶ Age UK London (report published in January 2025), Lifting the lid: looking for a better understanding of local authorities and public toilet provision in London.





- **2.** Raise awareness of existing publicly accessible toilets in Haringey including in parks, transport terminals etc.
- **3.** Raise awareness of the benefits of having a community toilet scheme in cafes, restaurants, pubs etc.

Achievements to date

Key achievements thus far to improve the quality and quantity of public toilets in the borough are as follows:

- Collaborative meetings between Loos for Haringey, Senior Council Officers, and NHS
 representatives to agree the approach to producing a strategy, principles and
 priorities.
- Restoration of the toilets at Morrisons supermarket in Wood Green.
- A revised interactive <u>toilet map</u> published on the council's website following an audit by the Loos for Haringey group.
- A review of the unequal and uneven distribution of public toilets across the borough with better provision currently concentrated in the west of Haringey.
- Installation of new handwash dispensers in three Haringey owned facilities.

Risk Groups

The table below shows the main risk groups with additional needs and key considerations.

Group	Key considerations and additional needs of the group
Older Adults	 Increased availability across the borough so that older adults can leave their homes and maintain social lives to prevent isolation. Prioritize the cleanliness and hygiene of public toilets so that they are safe and comfortable for everyone.
People with Medical Conditions	 Provision of toilets which are accessible to people with medical needs such as bowel and bladder conditions.
Women and Girls	 Access to clean, safe, and private toilet facilities to manage their periods with dignity. Access to sanitary products Well maintained, accessible and readily available public toilets for women going through menopause.
Pregnant mothers	 Support rails are provided Sufficient space Comfortable seat height Ensure soap, water and drying facilities are stocked and in working order Sanitary bins are provided
Children and Young People	Baby changing facilities in both male and female public toilets.
Carers	 Provide practical adjustments such as grab rails and raised toilet seats. Increased availability of Changing Places toilet. More space available to maneuver a wheelchair.





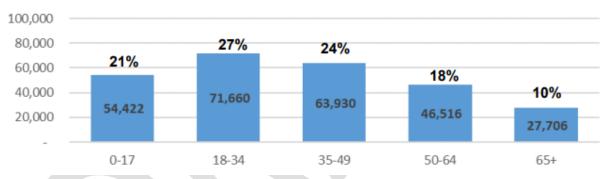
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People with Disabilities	 Facilities are configured to meet the needs of people with mobility impairments including the provision of ramps, height adjustable changing benches, space for wheelchair and carer. Increased availability of Changing Places toilets.
General Public	 Clean and well-maintained facilities Good lighting and feels safe Clear signage and maps to indicate toilet locations.

Introduction

Population and Demographics

Haringey has a young, ethnically diverse population. The total resident population in Haringey is 264,300⁷. There are 27,706 people sixty-five or over living in Haringey according to the ONS 2021 Census.

Age Breakdown (Census 2021)



Source of data: ONS 2021 Census. Reported in the State of the Borough report, December 2024.

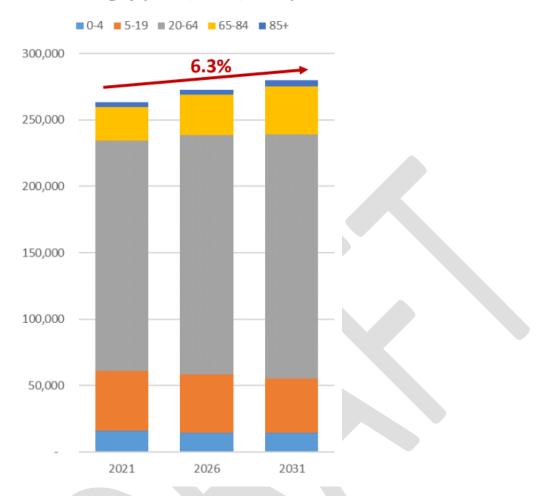
Haringey's population is predicted to increase by 6.3% by 2031 to 280,100, with the largest percentage growth in older adults (aged 65+). Notably, the population growth projected over the next ten years will be within the age-groups most affected by the lack of access to toilets.

⁷ ONS 2021 Census





Population Projections for Haringey (2021, 2026, 2031)



Source: Data sourced from GLA-2020 based population projections. Chart published in State of the Borough Report, December 2024.

Sixty-five percent of the Haringey population are from a Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) group or Other White ethnic group compared to 61% in London⁸.

Deprivation

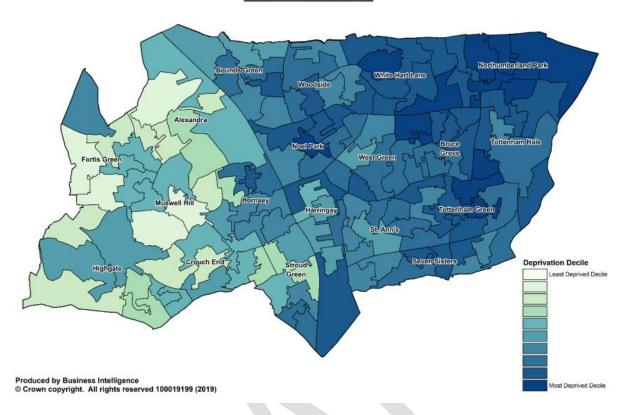
Haringey is the fourth most deprived borough in London, with deprivation more concentrated in wards situated in the north-east such as Northumberland Park and White Hart Lane.

⁸ ONS Census 2021





2019 IMD Decile Ranks



Source of data: IMD 2019. Map produced by Haringey Business Intelligence Team.

Aims of the strategy

The overall aims of the strategy are to:

- Improve the quality and quantity of public toilet provision in the borough
- Provide facilities which are suitable and inclusive for diverse groups
- Improve the cleanliness of facilities and address safety concerns.

Alignment to other council strategies

The strategy aligns closely with the **Health and Wellbeing Strategy**, **2024-29**, which includes the theme of Healthier High Streets and Healthy Place Shaping. An underlying priority of this theme is to **develop a Toilet Strategy reporting into the Health and Wellbeing Board**.

The Health and Wellbeing Strategy includes mental health as a priority and tackling issues including social isolation and loneliness. Improving toilet availability would help more residents to connect with one another where they currently feel unable to leave their home due to a fear of being unable to access a toilet. Apart from social isolation, a lack of public toilets can lead to people not drinking before they go out, resulting in dehydration and Urinary Tract Infections (UTIs).

The **Haringey Vision**, which was adopted in 2025, includes the following key priorities:

 All our residents have the opportunity to thrive and enjoy the best possible version of their life.





- The quality of life in every part of the borough is comparable to our cleanest, greenest and safest neighbourhoods.
- At a time of insecurity and change, Haringey is a place where people can put down roots and feel they really belong.

Haringey Vision sets out six calls to action to deliver in 2035. These are:

- 1. Safe and affordable housing
- 2. Thriving places
- 3. Supporting children and young people's experiences and skills
- 4. Feeling safe and being safe
- 5. Tackling inequalities in health and wellbeing
- 6. Supporting greener choices

However, the two main calls to action which this strategy is focused on are:

- Thriving places
- · Tackling inequalities in health and wellbeing.

Consultation and Engagement

Consultation

A consultation survey was published online for a period of three months between January 2024 and April 2024.

A multi-disciplinary toilet strategy delivery group was established to analyse the findings of the public consultation. The group included representation from:

- Haringey Public Health
- Planning
- Placemaking
- Corporate Landlord
- NHS North Central London Integrated Care Board
- Loos for Haringey







- The consultation was open to residents of Haringey, Elected Members, anyone who works in the borough, local business owners, visitors and members of local community groups.
- A total of 371 responses were received: 346 online and twenty-five paper copies.

Data and information gathered throughout the consultation process was analysed. A summary of the main findings are:

- Twenty-six respondents agreed that the location of facilities is convenient.
- Twenty respondents felt that toilet provision was good in Haringey and fifty-eight thought that it is satisfactory.
- Thirty-five respondents agreed that toilets are clean and maintained when they visit them.
- Forty-two percent of respondents felt that current toilet provision in Haringey is bad.
- Forty-one percent of respondents disagreed that the location of facilities was convenient followed by 31% of respondents who strongly disagreed.
- Forty percent of respondents felt that a lack of public toilets would prevent them from spending time in parks or green space.
- Thirty-four percent of respondents disagreed that toilets are clean and well maintained, followed by 29% of respondents who strongly disagreed.
- Forty-four percent of respondents would be prepared to pay to use a public toilet.
- Forty-nine percent of respondents would feel comfortable using a public toilet access card in shops, cafes, restaurants etc.

Charts showing a summary of the consultation findings can be found in the Appendix.

Engagement

Various user groups were engaged with to obtain resident and community feedback. The table below shows the key points.

User Group	Summary of the key points		
	 Some public toilets have been closed for many years such as those at Turnpike Lane bus station and Bruce Grove. 		
	 In some restaurants and cafes, the toilets can be too small and not suitable for wheelchairs and that it can be difficult for people with autism and learning disabilities to access these facilities. 		
Severe Complex Autism Learning Disability Group	 Park toilets are often closed when the adjoining café is closed such as those in Priory Park. 		
	There are discrepancies between the provision of toilets between the east and the west of the borough.		
	 There is a need to improve the availability of full-sized changing tables and hoists. 		
	There are no longer any toilet facilities in Downhills Park and the nearest facilities are at Lordship Hub.		





Tottenham Pensioners Group	 It would be beneficial for people aged 70 years and over to be provided with a radar key to access facilities whenever they need to do so. There is a lack of public toilets on Tottenham High Road. However, coverage around Wood Green High Road is significantly better highlighting the disparity in the borough. Having suitable toilet provision is vital in supporting residents, communities and visitors to embrace the opportunities and enjoyment of services in Haringey.
Carers Group	 There are inequalities in provision across the east and west of the borough, with better availability around the most affluent parts of Haringey in the west. People with medical conditions or long-term health problems are apprehensive about leaving the home due to being caught short. A toilet access card would help reduce these concerns. Improved toilet provision is required on the transport system in Haringey including at tube and train stations. More signs are needed to direct people to the nearest facilities.
Period Dignity Group	 The "Boys Need Bins" campaign led by Prostate Cancer UK promotes the use of sanitary bins in male toilets to help people with incontinence. The availability of menstrual products and specialised amenities in toilet facilities including touch free disposable bins, toilet seat and hand sanitisers could be improved.



Strategic Priorities and Considerations

Strategic priorities were identified through the analyses of the consultation responses, engagement with diverse user groups, and reports from officers, members and colleagues at Loos for Haringey. The key findings are set out below under broad themes from the consultation and engagement process.





1. Location of Public Toilets and Gaps in Provision

The convenience and location of a public toilet has a significant influence on whether a person decides to use it, or not, as illustrated by the consultation and engagement findings.

Responses to the consultation show that twenty respondents felt that current provision is good and fifty-eight respondents thought that it is satisfactory.

The engagement findings show that toilets located in the Mall Shopping Centre in Wood Green meet a good quality standard in terms of cleanliness and provide a benchmark for other facilities to achieve. Most of the other facilities in Wood Green are offered by commercial and retail businesses such as Morrisons and Wetherspoons, so toilet coverage in this part of the borough is good overall.

Community toilet schemes, where businesses make toilets available for the public to use in return for financial incentives from the council are an option being explored in parts of the borough where there are gaps.

In the west of the borough, there is good provision offered in most parks and green spaces including those in Alexandra Palace Park and Finsbury Park.

Other key points to note from the responses are:

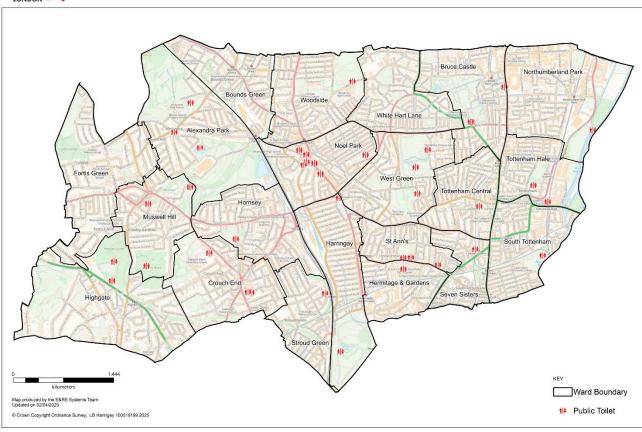
- Thirty-one percent of respondents strongly disagreed that the location of facilities in the borough was convenient.
- Some toilets in the borough are co-located in a café in a park, such as those in Priory Park. These toilets are only accessible during the cafés opening hours. Other toilets are co-located in libraries. These toilets tend to have better cleanliness overall compared to standalone facilities.
- Toilets at some stations including those at Turnpike Lane underground and bus station are currently closed off to the public. Some of the mainline and overground stations in the borough do not have any toilet facilities available for public use.
- In other parts of the borough such as Bounds Green and Northumberland Park there are gaps or areas regarded as "loo deserts". These are correlated with the most deprived parts in the east of the borough.
- Location of facilities is correlated to other factors such as perceptions of safety and attractiveness. Some toilets in the borough don't feel safe to use including those located on St Anns Road due to anti-social behaviour and people loitering.
- In some parts of the borough, there is a mismatch relating to the location of a public
 toilet and the actual demand of local residents and communities who access the
 facility. For example, the toilet situated at Stonebridge lock is convenient for those
 people who are using the Lea River navigation towpath but has limited benefit for
 people living or working in Northumberland Park.
- Toilet cubicles such as those put up around Tottenham Hotspur Stadium to coincide with match days and concerts offer a temporary solution but are not available all year round.





The map below shows the current distribution of toilets in Haringey highlighting gaps and inequalities in provision.





Based on the gaps identified, key priorities are to:

- Identify opportunities to integrate the actions set out in this strategy into the councils wider placemaking agenda and the shaping of public spaces and buildings through community-based participation, planning, and design.
- Keep community navigators and social prescribers informed on improvements to toilet access in their localities and provide feedback on any gaps identified where toilets are not meeting resident need.
- Work with businesses or their forums to negotiate better toilet access for members of the public.
- Work with primary care to negotiate better access to toilet facilities in GP surgeries and health centres where this is considered a feasible option.

2. Planning and Transport

The Council is preparing a new Local Plan which will provide a planning framework for new developments in the borough. The Plan contains enhanced policies around delivering social value through new development including the provision of social infrastructure. Specific reference will be made to the need to improve public toilet provision in Haringey and large developments will be required to consider opportunities to contribute to this objective.





The Council collects two types of infrastructure funding from developers: Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 planning obligations. There may be opportunities to use some of this funding to help deliver new or improved toilet provision in the borough although it is noted that there are many competing uses for this type of funding and securing it for the purpose of supporting this strategy cannot be guaranteed.

National Rail public toilets are located at Finsbury Park, Seven Sisters and Tottenham Hale train and overground stations for customers who are accessing the platforms but are not directly accessible from the street. In 2024, Transport for London (TfL) allocated £3 million in funding per year to improve toilet provision on its network, including at three Haringey stations. Thus far, TfL have installed a new accessible toilet at White Hart Lane station. A new accessible toilet will be installed at Seven Sisters and at South Tottenham station later in 2025.

3. Safety and Hygiene

Responses to the survey and engagement with different groups highlighted a range of issues relating to the safety and hygiene of public toilets, including:

- Some toilet blocks are in a very poor condition or dilapidated, even in the most affluent parts of the borough in Muswell Hill and Crouch End.
- Toilets are in a very poor condition at Markfield Park and St Anns Road (Chestnuts Park) where graffiti and anti-social behaviour have been reported.
- Some toilets only have basic facilities such as a cold water tap and hand basin.
- Some toilets don't have a hand dryer or one that works.
- Toilets in Hornsey and Chestnuts Park are often blocked, and the locks don't work on doors.
- Toilets in Bruce Castle Park are open from 7am-5pm in the bowling pavilion. After 5pm, local residents reported that people urinate in the bushes in the park.
- The water pressure at the toilets in Finsbury Park is sometimes too weak to wash hands properly with.

To improve safety, best practice guidelines indicate that public toilets should be located in highly visible areas such as car parks which allow for passive and active natural surveillance⁹.

The following opportunities exist to tackle issues relating to safety and hygiene in and around toilet facilities.

- Further engagement between Regeneration and Town Centre Management to review where facilities are currently sited and if the location meets best practice guidelines and safety considerations.
- Corporate Landlord to explore with Veolia whether the frequency of sanitising toilets could be increased and re-stocking supplies such as toilet paper and liquid soap.
- New designs are fully integral and configured to the local streetscape and public realm with the aim of discouraging crime and anti-social behaviour within the facility and immediate surroundings.

⁹ British Toilet Association: PubliclyAvailableToiletsProblemReductionGuide.pdf



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Integrated Care Board

 Opportunities for natural surveillance is improved to discourage loitering and improve feelings of safety. The installation of better lighting and the removal of obstructions to improve sight lines from within buildings would help to achieve this.

4. Inclusive Access

The strategy and action plan are developed within the context of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), a legal obligation for public bodies in the UK to support inclusivity and diversity.

Creating a more inclusive built environments is a key element of the planning agenda in Haringey. To help achieve inclusivity and accessibility, the following considerations are suggested.

- Undertake an annual review of toilet facilities across the borough to ensure that the
 toilet configuration and design features do not discriminate against protected
 characteristics such as gender, sexuality, race, religion and age.
- Ensure the provision of all gender toilets when upgrading or building new facilities.
- Ensure that necessary amenities such as toilet seat sanitiser, menstrual products for women and incontinence pads for men are made available wherever feasible.
- Explore the feasibility of integrating Changing Places facilities into future developments ensuring adequate space for a disabled person and their carer. Grab rails, wheelchair friendly layouts and adequate lighting for safety will improve accessibility.
- Upgrading facilities in all female facilities to ensure that there are baby change tables, space for prams and dedicated spaces for nursing mothers.
- Provision of all gender facilities which are accessible to all people regardless of gender to support the needs of members of the LGBTQ+ community who do not identify as either male or female. The implications of the April 2025 supreme court ruling on gender definitions should be considered in decision making processes¹⁰.
- Working with certain businesses to encourage them to sign up to the toilet access card scheme and that its purpose is clearly defined and understood by all staff working in cafés, restaurants, entertainment venues etc.

5. Communication and Signage

As part of the action plan, further consideration will be given to the quality of website information, and the use of newsletters, media, posters and leaflets to raise awareness about toilet locations in the borough.

¹⁰ The supreme court ruling on gender definition were that the words "woman" and "sex" in the Equality Act refer to a biological woman and biological sex. The ruling has been interpreted to mean that trans women, who are considered to be biologically male but identify as women, can be excluded from women-only spaces like toilets and changing rooms.





Improved signage directing people to the nearest public toilets in parks, green spaces and other sites were highlighted as an important consideration in the consultation and engagement findings.

A review of existing wayfinding signage will facilitate improvements so that information is not misleading, does not confuse or does not discriminate against diverse groups. Guidelines suggests that using clear, easily understood signage, including icons and visual cues, to guide users to restrooms and specific features is recommended in toilet design¹¹. Furthermore, the <u>British Toilet Association</u> recommends that the following is displayed on the outside of all toilet buildings.

- · Opening hours
- Contact information to report issues
- Accessibility and Changing Places facilities.

The list of public toilets on the council's webpage will be updated to reflect any changes to the above.

Action Plan

The actions in the table below are based on the consultation findings and engagement with diverse groups.

Priority	Action	Lead/Governance	By when?
	Engage with businesses, libraries and leisure centres to improve public access to toilets in Tottenham and 'loo deserts' in the east of the borough.	Placemaking and Town Centre Management	December 2026
Identify and address gaps in current toilet provision in the borough –	Engage TfL to progress new toilet facilities at South Tottenham Station and improve existing provision at Seven Sisters Overground station.	Placemaking to work with TfL	April 2026
focusing on Tottenham	Identify opportunities to increase toilet access through the council's corporate estate.	Corporate Landlord	April 2026
	Work with businesses including cafés and pubs to incentivise toilet access so that there is mutual benefit to the community and local business.	Placemaking and Town Centre Management	Ongoing
	Ensure that there is adequate provision of toilets including Portaloo availability year-round in the vicinity of Tottenham	Transport and Travel through the stadium's Local Area Management Plan team.	Ongoing

¹¹ Webpage: Equality impact assessment for the provision of toilets - GOV.UK





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	Hotspur stadium and that these are configured to the local streetscape and public realm.		
	Recommended improvements in toilet facilities at Down Lane Park are progressed.	Placemaking/ Property Delivery	April 2026
	Completion of the installation of a new public toilet at Bruce Grove Cafe which includes an accessible toilet.	Placemaking/Property Delivery	December 2025
Planning and New Developments	Ensure that the Haringey Local Plan includes a commitment for new large- scale developments to incorporate publicly accessible toilet facilities where these can be accommodated.	Planning	December 2025
	Further work to consider how S106 and CIL monies can be used to support toilet provision in the borough	Planning team and Toilet Strategy Delivery group	Ongoing
	Engage with businesses to make sure that toilet facilities are clean and maintained to the required standard.	Regeneration and Town Centre Management	Ongoing
Addressing issues relating to toilet cleanliness, safety, standard and antisocial behaviour	Review the contractual and management arrangements with Veolia of the three existing council owned public toilets to standardise cleaning and maintenance of these sites.	Corporate Landlord	April 2026
	Review toilet provision in libraries, parks and leisure centres and that these are meeting consistent standards of accessibility and cleanliness.	Libraries, Parks and Leisure and Corporate Landlord	Ongoing
	Further investigation to better understand the safety concerns raised by the community on St Anns Road/Chestnuts Park toilets. Improve the safety of the public toilets where this was raised as a	Corporate Landlord	April 2026



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	concern including better lighting.			
	Implement the toilet access card scheme so that people with certain medical conditions have better access to toilet facilities in cafes/NHS buildings etc which meet their needs.	NHS NCL ICB	April 2026	
Improve accessibility and	Improve the provision of menstrual products and specialised amenities in council run toilet facilities including touch free disposable bins, toilet seat and hand sanitisers.	Haringey Council departments (Public health linking with libraries, leisure, parks etc)	Ongoing	
inclusive access for different groups	Improve the provision of facilities to dispose of men's incontinence pads and align to the work of Prostate Cancer UK's Boys Need Bins campaign.	NHS NCL ICB/Public Health	Ongoing	
	Consider the implications of the Supreme Court ruling on gender definitions in public toilet design plans.	Corporate Landlord	December 2025	
Communication of the strategy, action	Present the strategy findings and actions at Haringey's Age Well Board and Neighbourhood Delivery Board. Agree sign off of the strategy and action plan at Health and Wellbeing Board/Cabinet.	Public Health	December 2025	
plan and toilet map using relevant forums and media	Review the quality of signage, maps and website information and update council webpages, social media, posters and flyers to raise awareness of any changes to toilet locations.	Public Health/ Communications	Ongoing	
	Undertake a regular audit of the toilet map and update this every 12 month with feedback and new information from Loos for Haringey and the public.	Environment Team Loos for Haringey	Ongoing	
	Ensure that there is clear communication with businesses and residents to publicise the toilet access card and radar key schemes	NHS NCL ICB/Public Health/ Communications	April 2026	





LONDON		In	tegrated Care Board
Funding	Developer funding contribution is sought to support the sustainability of public toilets relating to the overall maintenance and upkeep.	Capital Projects and Property	December 2025
	Ensure that the councils medium to long- term financial strategy addresses the sustainability and maintenance of public toilets in Haringey	Capital Projects and Property	Ongoing

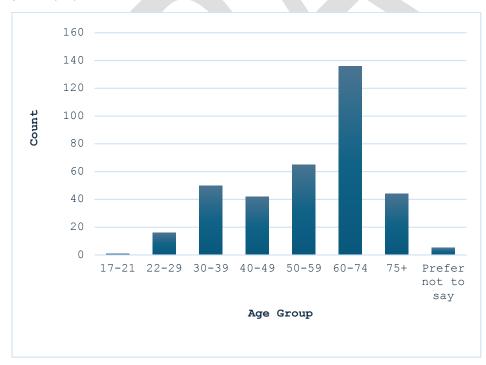
Monitoring and Reviewing the Strategy

The Strategy and Action Plan will be **reviewed every two years** following sign off to determine progress against each action and any further measures required. The actions in the above plan are based around this timeframe and will be progressed over the next two years.

Appendix – Consultation Responses

Age Breakdown

The majority of respondents (136) were aged 60-74 years, followed by people aged 50-59 years (65).

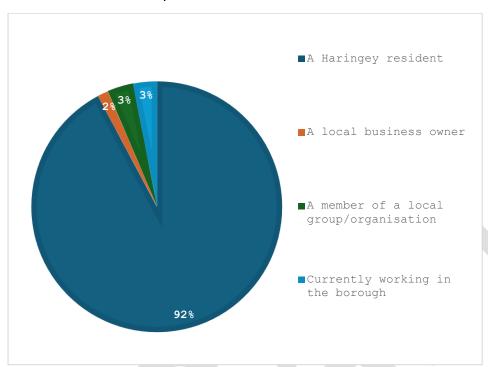






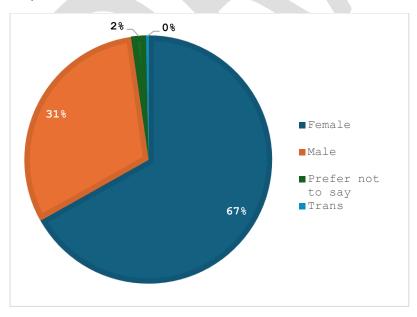
Are you a resident, business owner, a member of a local group or do you work in the borough?

Haringey residents (92%) accounted for the highest proportion of survey respondents. Members of a local group/organisation and people currently working in the borough both accounted for 3% of respondents.



Gender of Respondents

The highest proportion of respondents were female (67%), and males accounted for 31% of responses.

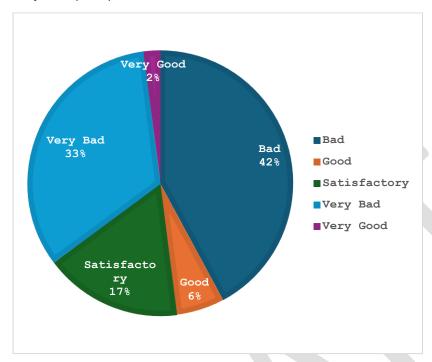






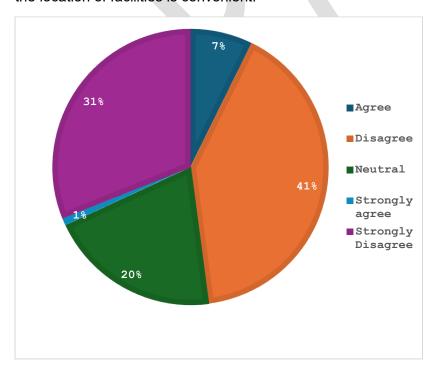
What do you think about public toilet provision in Haringey?

The highest proportion of respondents felt that current provision was bad (42%), followed by very bad (33%).



Do you think that the location of facilities is convenient?

Forty-one percent, or 145 respondents, disagreed that the location of facilities was convenient followed by 31% of 111 respondents who strongly disagreed. Only 1% felt that the location of facilities is convenient.

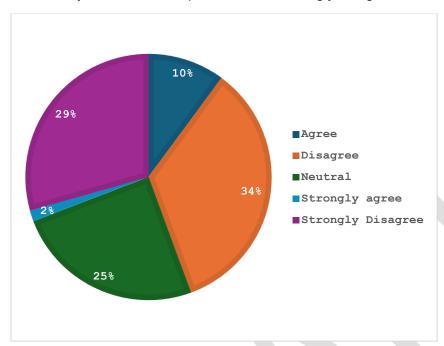






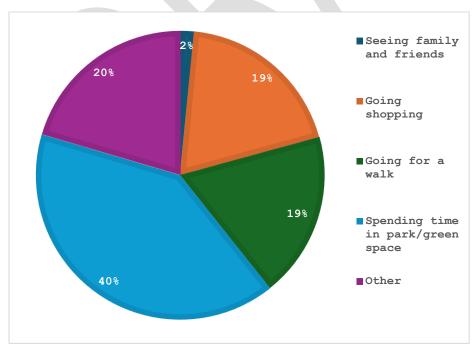
Do you feel that toilets are clean and well maintained when you visit them?

Thirty-four percent or 119 respondents disagreed that toilets are clean and well maintained, followed by 29% or 102 respondents who strongly disagreed.



What impact would a lack of public toilets have on you and what may it prevent you from doing?

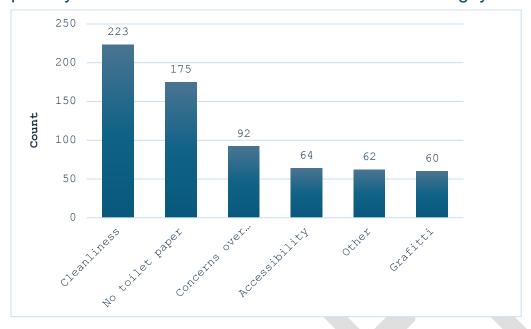
Forty percent or 130 respondents felt that a lack of public toilets would prevent them from spending time in parks or green space.



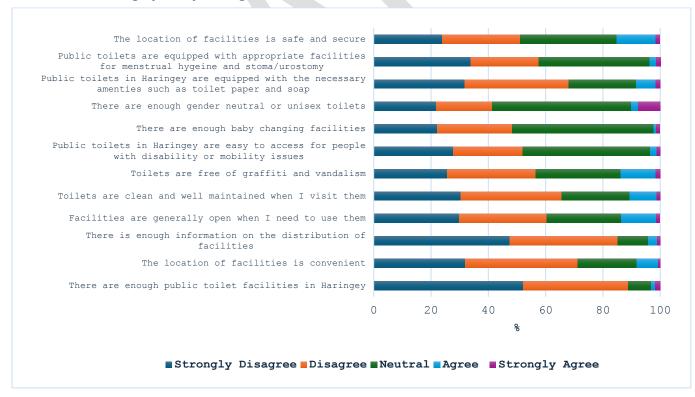




Are there any particular issues which you have experienced when using publicly accessible toilets when out and about in Haringey?



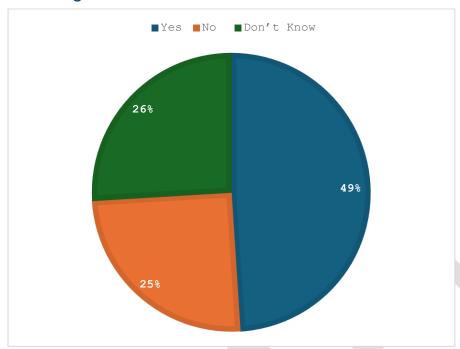
Which of the following statements relating to the provision of public toilets in Haringey do you agree with?







Would you feel comfortable using a toilet access card in local shops etc if a designated toilet wasn't available?



Would you be prepared to pay to use a public toilet if required?

