

Changing Places Toilets Awareness Day 2018: Campaign Update



Background

Changing Places Awareness day is all about celebrating all that the campaign has achieved and helping to raise more vital awareness of the life changing difference that Changing Places toilets make to the lives of hundreds of thousands of people across the UK.

What follows, is a report that looks back at the last 12 months and celebrates some of the big achievements of the campaign and the incredible campaigners who work so hard to increase the availability of Changing Places toilets. We also look to the future and what needs to be done to ensure that everybody who needs a Changing Places toilet is able to access one.

Where are the toilets?

NB: Figures from end of June 2018 based on 1,122 registered Changing Places toilets

| Country | Region | Number of Changing Places toilets |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| England | Channel Islands | 3 |
| | East Midlands | 97 |
| | East of England | 100 |
| | Isle of Wight | 1 |
| | London | 68 |
| | North East | 64 |
| | North West | 116 |
| | South East | 119 |
| | South West | 85 |
| | West Midlands | 74 |
| | Yorkshire and the Humber | 151 |
| Northern Ireland | Antrim | 12 |
| | Armagh | 2 |
| | Coleraine | 2 |
| | Down | 5 |
| | Fermanagh | 0 |
| | Tyrone | 0 |
| Scotland | Borders | 1 |
| | Central | 37 |
| | Dumfries and Galloway | 3 |
| | Grampian | 36 |
| | Highlands and Islands | 11 |
| | Lothian | 22 |
| | Orkney Islands | 1 |
| | Shetland Islands | 1 |
| | Strathclyde | 60 |
| Wales | Mid Wales | 3 |
| | North Wales | 12 |
| | South Wales | 36 |

| Venue category | Number of Changing Places toilets |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| Car park | 5 |
| Church | 7 |
| Community Centre | 187 |
| Conference centre/events space | 8 |
| Country park/open space | 63 |
| Cultural centres (e.g. museums) | 59 |
| Educational establishment | 45 |
| Health facilities | 76 |
| Key buildings in town centres (e.g. library) | 118 |
| Office building | 12 |
| Pub, restaurant or café | 17 |
| Public toilet | 62 |
| Retail, shopping centre and shopmobility centre | 103 |
| Sports and leisure facilities, including large hotels | 248 |
| Stadia and large auditoria | 21 |
| Tourist attraction | 29 |
| Transport hub | 62 |

The past 12 months

The past year has been an exciting one for the Changing Places toilet campaign. At the local level, we've made great progress on installations. Over 100 new Changing Places toilets have been registered across the UK over the last 12 months and this is largely thanks to the tireless hard work of campaigners across the UK. This included some really fantastic strategic locations like train stations, airports and hospitals, as well as fun family venues for days out. At the national level, we've created stronger links with the Scottish and UK governments and are advancing toward our goal to have Changing Places toilets introduced as a mandatory requirement within building regulations.

Internationally, New Zealand and Spain both opened their first Changing Places toilets and Ireland set up its own Changing Places campaign. Meanwhile, the campaigns in Australia, Germany and the USA continue to go from strength to strength.

What follows is a summary of some of things that have happened since the last Changing Places Awareness Day on 19 July 2017- thank you so much to everyone who has helped make these moments (and many others) possible.



July 2017

We celebrated last year's Changing Places Awareness Day with the opening of [the 1000th Changing Places toilet](#) which was in Retford, Nottinghamshire, which was the product of tireless campaigning by Alison Beevers. July also saw a few noteworthy registrations including Kingsbury Waterpark, York train station, the Harry Potter Studios, Cardiff Airport and Heathrow Terminal 3. Campaign co-chairs PAMIS also received their Pamiloo, a fully accessible Changing Places toilet on wheels.

August 2017

Several hospitals registered their Changing Places toilets, with the Diana Princess of Wales Hospital in Grimsby and Antrim Area Hospital added to the map. Liverpool John Lennon Airport also opened their Changing Places toilet, increasing air travel options for people who need Changing Places toilets.

September 2017

Campaigner [Anne Wilson marched 135 miles](#) from West Lavington to Westminster in order to deliver a letter to the Prime Minister to raise awareness of the need for more Changing Places toilets. Her letter formed an important part of the wider governmental outreach work we are doing as a Consortium and her walk raised £5,000 for Dorothy House Hospice and Motor Neurone Disease Association.

October 2017

New Changing Places toilets were registered at the National Army Museum, a Wetherspoons in Ramsgate and IKEA in Sheffield.

November 2017

Campaigner [Zack Kerr delivered his impactful petition](#) on the need for Changing Places toilets in motorway service stations to Parliament. His petition gathered over 100,000 signatures and led to an Early Day Motion in Parliament – the second on Changing Places toilets – and Zack was featured on the BBC. As a result of Zack's campaigning, Welcome Break and Roadchef committed to adding more Changing Places toilets across their network of service stations.

November was also the month in which [Muscular Dystrophy UK took over](#) as the new co-chairs of the Changing Places Consortium, alongside PAMIS.



December 2017

[Sarah Brisdon's LooAdvent Calendar](#) caused a stir in December (and rightly so!) Every day until Christmas, Sarah posted a toilet selfie in a different festive costume, accompanied by some information on the need for Changing Places toilets. Sarah's posts were shared widely on social media and a few newspapers including the Huffington Post featured her campaign. Her bold campaigning was also mentioned on Channel 4's The Last Leg!

During [Prime Ministers Questions](#), Rishi Sunak MP asked that the Prime Minister strongly consider updating regulations to ensure broader provision of Changing Places toilets. In responding, the Prime Minister said that Changing Places toilets were a very important issue and urged relevant buildings to install them.

PAMIS received £20,000 of funding for their Pamiloo from the Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks' Resilient Communities Fund, helping to make more events and venues in Scotland accessible to all.

January 2018

The New Year started off with some successes for the “Art of incLOOsion” Museum Campaign which Alison Beevers started. Yorkshire Sculpture Garden opened its Changing Places toilet, as well as the John Gray Centre of East Lothian History. The Glan Clwyd Hospital also opened its Changing Places toilet, adding to the important provision of Changing Places toilets in hospitals.



February 2018

In February, [Lorna Fillingham submitted her petition](#) to include Changing Places toilets as mandatory in building regulations for larger new builds to parliament. Lorna also used the opportunity to meet with MPs to discuss the need for Changing Places and to get their support for her work. Her efforts were supported by Paralympian Anne Wafula Strike. Lorna's petition led to the 3rd Changing Places Early Day Motion in Parliament which was supported by 41 MPs.

Noteworthy Changing Places registrations in February were the University of Kent Library which makes another higher education institution accessible for more students. Meanwhile, Birmingham New Street became another major train station to provide a Changing Places toilet.

March 2018

Alison Beevers' “The Art of IncLOOsion” campaign led to the Hepworth Wakefield Gallery installing a Changing Places toilet. Alison also launched some new campaign posters which showed famous art works sporting the Changing Places selfie glasses. The Deep Aquarium in Hull opened a very colourful Changing Places toilet, much to the delight of many families who can now enjoy a day out at the Aquarium together. The National Museum in Scotland also became more accessible by opening its Changing Places toilet. The Royal Priors Shopping Centre in Leamington Spa opened a Changing Places toilet with a beautiful mural, thanks to the tireless campaigner Emily Naismith.

April 2018

In April, Clare and Marion from the Changing Places Campaign at Muscular Dystrophy had a productive meeting with the Department for Transport, talking about the need for Changing Places toilets at motorway service stations. We were told that the upcoming inclusive transport action plan would include reference to Changing Places toilets.

A big Changing Places toilet opening in April was the new toilet at Heartlands Hospital in Birmingham, allowing all those in the Midlands who use Heartlands Hospital to go to the toilet in comfort.

May 2018

Sarah Brisdion organised [the Looathon](#), a huge awareness raising event on Baker Street in Central London. Dozens of campaigners from all across the country came together to take turns sitting on toilets outside the Bathstore's Baker Street store to raise awareness of the vital importance of Changing Places toilets. Sarah got the media's attention once more and the Looathon was featured on ITV and the BBC.



Adam George served Flambards Theme Park in Cornwall court papers for not providing a reasonable adjustment for visitors who need Changing Places toilets. Adam and his Mum, Rachel George, tried to work with Flambards to provide a Changing Places toilet, including hiring a Mobiloo several times in order to be able to be there. You can read more about the family's difficult decision on whether to sue in Rachel's blog, [Ordinary Hopes](#). This is an important test case on whether Changing Places toilets can be considered a "reasonable adjustment" in the language of the Equality Act and received a lot of media attention.

The "Around the toilet" research project released its final [report](#) after conducting research over 3 years on safe and accessible toilet spaces. Jane Carver and Gillian Scotford, long-time Changing Places campaigners and founders of Accessible Derbyshire and Access for all UK, provided some support on the Changing Places aspects of the report. The research provides a wide range of case studies on the impact of inadequate toilet provisions.

PAMIS received a confirmation from Kevin Stewart MSP, Minister for Local Government and Housing, that the Scottish Government has begun working on introducing Changing Places toilets into Scottish building regulations for certain types of new buildings. While it will take a few years for this process to make it into law, it is a great step for the campaign goal of having Changing Places toilets made mandatory in building regulations.

June 2018

Thanks to Tony Clough MBE's campaign work, Thorpe Park registered its Changing Places toilet in June. Other noteworthy registrations in June included two motorway service stations with Welcome Break Keele and Cairn Lodge Services, as well as Bridgend train station.

At the end of June, Paula Sheriff MP presented a [Ten Minute Rule Bill](#) in the House of Commons which proposed to include Changing Places toilets as a mandatory provision in building regulations for new builds of a certain size. The Bill passed the first reading and has its second reading scheduled for November 2018. This is a really positive step forward for the campaign.



What is next for the campaign?

Although this has been another year of great progress, we know there is still a lot of work to be done to ensure that everybody who needs a Changing Places toilet is able to access one with ease. As such, the Consortium will be focussing its efforts on increasing Changing Places provision and raising awareness. To do this, we are committed to:

Changing building regulations and standards

Under current building regulations Changing Places toilets are recommended in larger buildings but it is not mandatory for them to be provided. We would like to change this to make the provision of Changing Places toilets mandatory in all large new builds and complexes with public access, or where visitors might be expected to spend long periods of time. Such a change would be a welcome recognition of the needs of those people who require Changing Places toilets and would help make Changing Places toilets more commonplace.

Increasing the number of Changing Places toilets in strategic venues

There are still areas in the UK with no Changing Places toilets and many large venues that have no provision. By targeting key venues such as transport hubs, supermarkets and other larger venues we want to not only increase the overall number of Changing Places toilets but also ensure that everyday life gets easier to manage for people who require Changing Places toilets.

How can you help?

- Write to your MP to encourage them to support our parliamentary work. We will soon release a template letter which you can use, or you can email or tweet them on your own.
- Work with a venue in your local area where you'd like to see a Changing Places toilet.
- Raise awareness in your local area or online.

If you want to join in but are not sure where to start, you can always get in touch with us at changingplaces@muscular dystrophyuk.org and we can help you figure out how to start a local campaign.