

Community Toilet Scheme Update

Final Decision-Maker	Communities, Housing and Environment Committee
Lead Head of Service/Lead Director	Director of Regeneration and Place
Lead Officer and Report Author	Head of Environment and Public Realm Street Scene Operations Manager
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All, but specifically High Street Ward

Executive Summary

The Community Toilet Scheme was launched in 2008 to enable residents and visitors of Maidstone to use private toilet facilities provided by a number of local businesses. In March 2016, the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee agreed to refresh the scheme and a number of changes were implemented. This report provides an update on the changes made.

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the updates made to the Community Toilet Scheme be noted.

Timetable

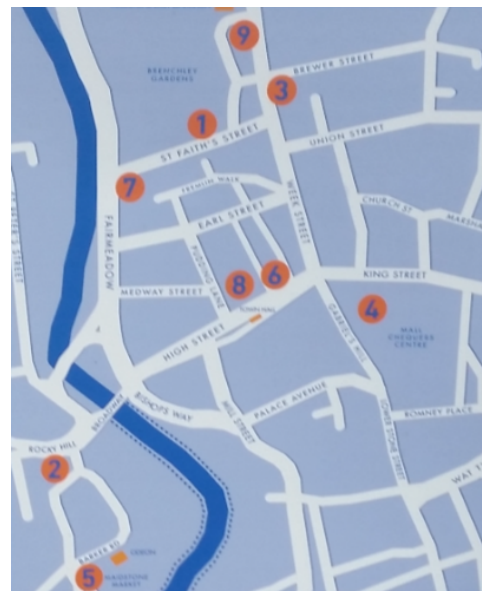
Meeting	Date
Communities, Housing and Environment Committee	Tuesday 20 March 2018

Community Toilet Scheme Update

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Council does not have a statutory duty to provide public conveniences, however historically has operated a number throughout the Borough. In 2008, the provision was reviewed and many of the toilets were closed or leased to Parish Councils. A small number remained within Parks, the Market and at Allington shopping parade.
- 1.2 Within the Town Centre, the toilets which were regularly vandalised were also closed and replaced with a Community Toilet Scheme, making use of private facilities already available. This type of scheme is now commonly used across the Country as it reduces the cost to the local authority and reduces the risk of vandalism and anti-social behaviour.
- 1.3 In March 2016, the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee agreed to retain, review and refresh the Community Toilet Scheme which had been in place since 2008. The scheme consisted of 13 facilities at that time, however it was highlighted that not all of them achieved the level of cleaning or the standards expected. It was therefore decided to remove some facilities from the scheme.
- 1.4 Since the scheme started in 2008, a number of new businesses had moved into Maidstone. One Maidstone agreed to approach businesses on Maidstone Borough Council's behalf to encourage them to participate in the scheme. This resulted in two new businesses joining the scheme; The Muggleton Inn and McDonalds (Tonbridge Road).
- 1.5 Unfortunately Fremlin's Walk decided to withdraw from the scheme, however continue to operate public toilets for shoppers. A number of other businesses indicated interest including Creams and Starbucks, however approval could not be obtained from their Head Offices.
- 1.6 This has resulted in a total of 9 businesses or facilities now signed up to the scheme. These are:

1. Maidstone Museum
2. McDonalds (Tonbridge Road)
3. McDonalds (Week Street)
4. The Mall, King Street
5. Maidstone Market
6. The Muggleton Inn (Wetherspoons)
7. Royal Albion
8. Royal Star Arcade
9. Society Rooms (Wetherspoons)



- 1.7 A copy of the legal agreement is included in Appendix 1.
- 1.8 The toilets are inspected every month by the Street Scene Operations Manager or the Cleansing Manager along with the Council's own public conveniences. A copy of the monitoring sheet is provided in Appendix 2. The standard of cleansing has been good, with very few issues identified. In addition, no complaints have been received regarding the scheme or the quality of the facilities provided.
- 1.9 Eleven new signs were installed around the Town Centre, new leaflets were produced and window stickers were provided to those participating in the scheme.



A copy of the leaflet is included in Appendix 3.

- 1.10 The signs were positioned at main car parks and routes into the Town Centre, as well as where previous requests had been received for them, including by The Kentish Lady and Maidstone Museum. The leaflets are available at The Mall, The Link and Maidstone Museum.
- 1.11 Details of the scheme are also available on the Council's website.

Public toilets

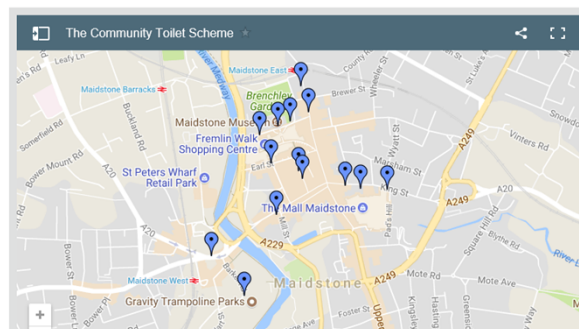
Page contents

- [Community Toilet Scheme](#)
- [Town Centre](#)
- [Parks](#)
- [Out of Town](#)

Community Toilet Scheme

We are working with a number of shops, pubs, cafes and businesses in the town centre to provide a Community Toilet Scheme. The businesses open up their toilets for free without you having to buy anything.

[View a map](#) of the businesses taking part in the scheme.



- 1.12 Each facility, excluding the Market and Museum, receives £150 per quarter for being part of the scheme. The Community Toilet Scheme therefore costs the Council £4,200 per year to operate.
- 1.13 The current budget for the provision of public conveniences within the Borough is £241,950 per year. Therefore the cost of the Community Toilet Scheme equates to less than 2% of the services budget, yet provides the same number of facilities to local residents and visitors.
- 1.14 The Community Toilet Scheme continues to deliver a cost effective solution to providing public conveniences within the Town Centre. In 2016, alternative options were considered, however presented significant cost and risk to the Council.
- 1.15 The Town Centre toilets at Brenchley Gardens and Fairmeadow experienced repeated vandalism and anti-social behaviour when open. Therefore in order for the Council to provide a facility in the Town Centre it would need to be manned for security reasons. The cost for providing this level of service in Mote Park is £31,000 in addition to business rates and utilities. Compared with the cost and safety of the Community Toilet Scheme, this option is not considered financially viable.
- 1.16 As new businesses move into the Town Centre, the Council will continue to seek new facilities to add to the scheme. The Community Toilet Scheme budget has been maintained at £6,400 per year allowing for some future growth in service.
- 1.17 The Council has also been contacted recently about the provision of disabled changing and toilet facilities in the Town Centre. As the Council does not now directly provide toilet facilities, it is not possible for the Council to install the appropriate equipment. However the Council will work with businesses in the Community Toilet Scheme to identify if there is an opportunity to install a hoist into one of the facilities. If this is possible, the Council will look to set aside £1,500 from the remaining Community Toilet Scheme budget for 2018/19 as a contribution towards the installation.
-

2. RISK

- 2.1 This report is presented for information only and has no risk management implications.
-

3. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 3.1 The Committee agreed to retain, review and refresh the Community Toilet Scheme in 2016. The updated scheme is now in operation and will continue to be monitored monthly to ensure standards are maintained.
-

4. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 4.1 The Community Toilet Scheme will continue to be promoted through the Council’s website and on appropriate Apps.
- 4.2 The participating businesses and One Maidstone will be engaged on the potential to provide a disabled changing facility for adults in the Town Centre over the next couple of months.

5. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The Community Toilet Scheme supports the Council’s priority for a “Clean and Safe Borough” by providing a number of toilet facilities in the Town Centre at minimal cost to the Council.	Head of Environment and Public Realm
Risk Management	This report is presented for information only and has no risk management implications.	Head of Environment and Public Realm
Financial	There are no additional cost implications of this report as it is for information only. It is noted that there is a clear commitment on behalf of the Council to continue to work with businesses in the Community Toilet Scheme to improve facilities, particularly disabled changing facilities.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Staffing		
Legal	There are no additional legal implications arising from the report as it is for information only. Any agreements entered into must be in a form approved by the Head of Legal Partnership.	Keith Trowell, Interim Team Leader (Corporate Governance)
Privacy and Data Protection	There are no specific privacy or data protection issues to address.	Keith Trowell, Interim Team Leader (Corporate Governance)

Equalities	The report is for information only and does not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment. However, it remains important that the scheme and any changes to the facilities on offer is communicated well, particularly to hard-to -reach groups via the council's links with community forums.	Equalities and Corporate Policy Officer
Crime and Disorder		
Procurement		

6. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix 1 – Community Toilet Scheme Agreement
- Appendix 2 – Monitoring sheet
- Appendix 3 – CTS leaflet

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None