

Public Toilet Provision

Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to speak, I'm here to talk about why we need a better public toilet strategy.

I come here with three different hats on

Personally

I live with a genetic medical condition. Which affects, among other things, my digestion and bowels. I was born here and I grew up here and so I have been acutely aware of the decline in public conveniences within the city. And having said that I will no longer use the word convenience in this context, it is not "convenient" to not wet yourself or soil yourself in public as you are unable to access a free to use toilet.

Professionally

For over ten years the Guildhall Deli, in the Guildhall Market, has been run by members of my family and I work there regularly too. And aside from "what's scotch egg?" The most commonly asked question we get on a daily basis is "can you tell me where the toilets are?" It's always seemed ridiculous to me that a market with a delicatessen, a coffee shop and a cafe has no public toilet and I have send people out of the market and away from local independent businesses to supermarkets and chain coffee shops.

Tourism

Finally for the past 4 years I have worked in tourism in the city as a guide for Savouring Bath and Akeman tours. As I said I'm born and raised here and I have learned so much about this amazing city, it's history, heritage and the people working right now to make it a fantastic place to live, work and visit. Combining that with my own family's history in the area I am immensely proud to take tourists and locals alike around this fascinating and beautiful place. But the one constant negative is the embarrassment of apologising for the lack of public facilities. To bring the voices of my colleagues to this proceeding, they talk of their own shame and embarrassment as the meet coaches at Terrace walk and have to tell there aren't any public toilets and the best idea is to find a coffee shop, make a purchase, and then use their toilet. And if we are taking a large group on a walking tour 10-20 minutes can be taken up as we wait for clients to traipse through Marks and Sparks or Waitrose. Worse still are the stories of elderly and impaired clients in tears as they have been unable to make it to the loo in time.

In conclusion, I want to say it's going to be easy to vote yes in favour of this motion and then forget all about it so please get local people, organisations and experts around the table to solve the toilet problem. Let's turn this in to an opportunity to be proud