

WE NEED YOUR HELP

Talk Toilets

Over the next three months, South Lakeland District Council are inviting local residents, businesses and visitors to have their say on the future of public toilets across the area. The feedback received will help us to make decisions about how any changes could be made.



Why Talk Toilets now?



A number of toilets in South Lakeland are in need of urgent upgrades to meet modern standards and the cost to the local taxpayer for running them is high. Importantly, despite the high-cost, some of our toilets are rarely used and others are not as accessible as they should be for all sections of our communities.

To meet the challenges that we are currently facing, changes must be made. Together, we need to find the right solutions. We need to look to save a significant amount from the current £790,000 annual public toilet cost.



The opportunity

Change brings opportunity and there are a number of different solutions available. We are committed to providing people with plenty of time and different ways to get involved and have their say. We want to work with local residents, businesses and visitors to reach the right decisions together.

This exhibition explores

- The challenges we currently face
- The opportunities and solutions available
- How you can get involved and have your say.



Talk Toilets
Making tough choices, together

TOILETS TODAY

The Council currently operate 39 public toilets across South Lakeland. The map below shows where they are located.



Bowness-on-Windermere	Rayrigg Car Park	Grasmere	Moss Parrock	Ulverston contd.	Canal Foot		
	Ferry Nab Car Park		Coniston		Bridge	Priory Road	
	Bowness Bay		Chapel Stile	Chapel Stile	Aldingham	Aldingham	
	Glebe Road		Grange	Ornamental Gardens		Bardsea	Bardsea
	Braithwaite Fold			Church Hill	Broughton	Broughton	
	Pinfold Car Park			Promenade Playground		Arnside	Promenade
	Rayrigg Meadow		Berners	Cark in Cartmel	Cark in Cartmel	Milnthorpe	Milnthorpe The Square
	Baddley Clock		Cartmel		Cartmel Village		Kendal
	Windermere			Broad Street Car Park	Lindale	Lindale	
Ambleside		Rydal Road	Flookburgh	Flookburgh		Kirkby Lonsdale	Devils Bridge
Mechanics Institute	Ulverston	Brogden Street		Jingling Lane			
Low Fold		The Gill	Sedbergh	Joss Lane			
Rothay Park							

THE CHALLENGES

In January 2009, South Lakeland District Council commissioned independent experts to conduct a study of the public toilets provided in South Lakeland. The basis for the study was an assessment of all public toilets and it identified a number of challenges. To meet these challenges, the way in which public toilets are provided in South Lakeland must change. The challenges are highlighted below.

Condition

Some of the toilets in South Lakeland are not fit for purpose in the 21st Century. They do not meet the standards people expect and are in urgent need of major upgrades.

Services available

Many of the facilities do not provide the full services people expect from public toilets. For example, some have no hot water, baby changing facilities, or hand dryers.

Accessibility

The toilet facilities are not as easy to access as they should be for all sections of the community, such as disabled or older people. Many would need major work to make them fully accessible.



Usage

Some toilets in South Lakeland are rarely used. The Council are spending a lot of taxpayers' money funding toilets in places where their need should be very carefully considered.

Running costs

The toilets currently cost South Lakeland taxpayers approximately £790,000 every year to run. This amount is continually increasing with the rise in the costs of electricity and water.

Upgrades

To upgrade all of the toilets to meet quality and accessibility standards would cost in the region of £39 million over the next three decades. There is no government funding available to do this. This means local taxpayers would have to bear the entire burden. Savings have to be made.

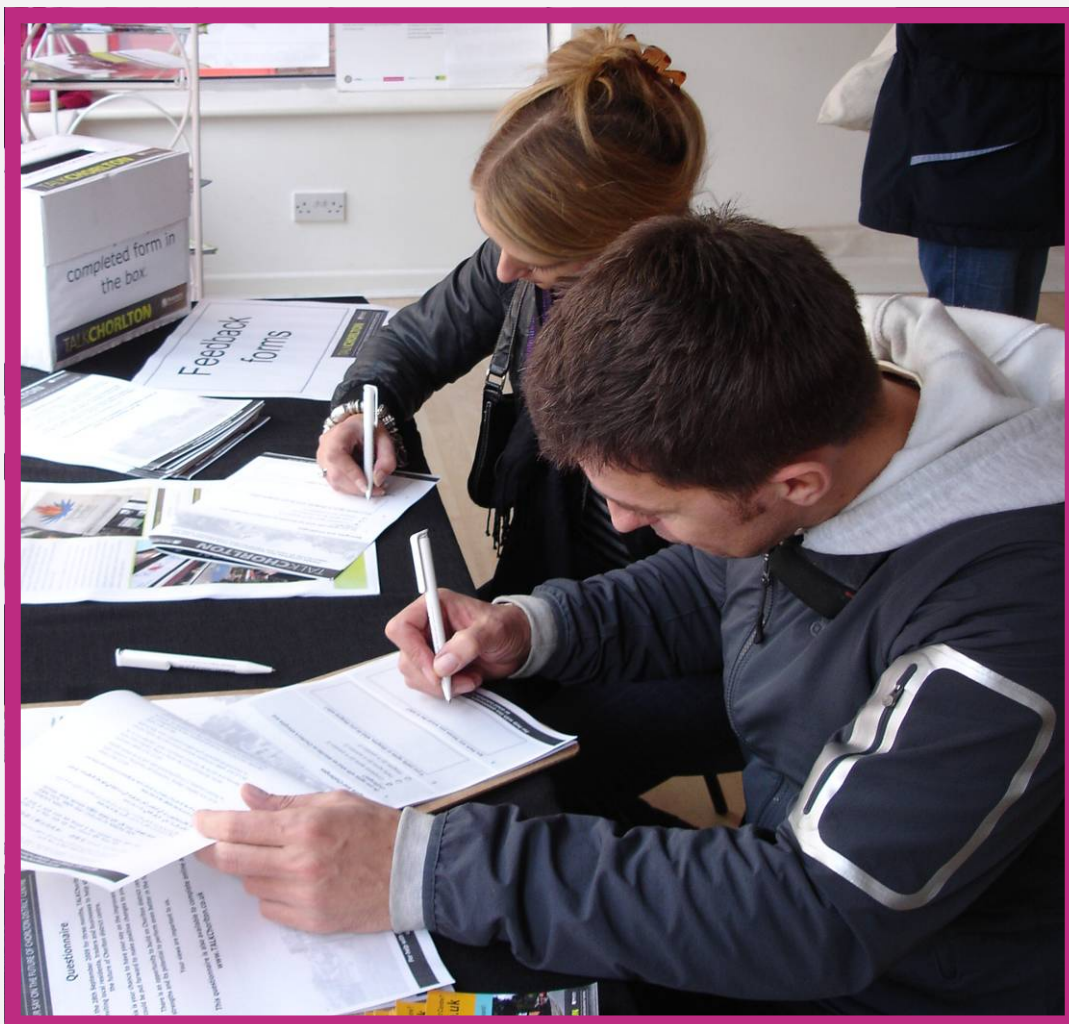


MAKING TOUGH CHOICES, TOGETHER

The challenges that we face mean that the way public toilets are provided in South Lakeland must change. Together, we need to find solutions that can save a significant amount from the £790,000 annual public toilet cost.

Why save?

- The cost to the local taxpayer for running public toilets is high, and is continuing to rise.
- Many of the facilities are not fully accessible to all sections of the community.
- Some toilets need significant upgrades to meet 21st Century standards.
- To pay for upgrades to make our facilities fully accessible and meet modern standards money must be saved from the overall cost.
- There are alternative ways in which toilets could be provided or funded that would both reduce the cost to the taxpayer and improve the facilities available.



Hard choices

We need to find creative solutions to the way toilets are provided in South Lakeland to meet the challenges that we have identified. Together we need to reach the right solutions that mean we can reduce the total public toilet cost. To reach a solution together, we want to hear what you think.

THE DECISION

Retaining

South Lakeland District Council want to continue to provide some toilets in South Lakeland. We want to do this in key areas where they are most needed and most used. Some of the money we save through other options will mean we can re-invest in the toilets that we provide. This will ensure that they are fully accessible, well maintained and meet 21st Century expectations.



Withdrawing

To meet the challenges, South Lakeland District Council will have to withdraw funding from some public toilets; for example, toilets in areas that are rarely used compared to others. With the high cost of provision in mind, we need to think carefully about whether the need for a toilet really exists in some areas.

Alternative solutions

Change means opportunity. South Lakeland District Council want to work creatively with local residents, businesses and visitors to look at the different solutions available if funding is withdrawn from a toilet. There are a range of schemes that could mean toilets are still provided in an area even if the Council's name is not above the door. On the following board are some of the alternative ideas we have for the future of toilets in South Lakeland.



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THE ALTERNATIVES

The ideas below introduce the different approaches we could use to make changes to the way toilets are provided. It is important to bear in mind that no one idea will work on its own. We need to find the right mix to reach a solution that will work across the whole of South Lakeland. We want to know what you think.

Paid toilets

- We would like to introduce a charge for the use of some toilets.
- The money raised will help towards running costs, keeping the toilets clean and help fund improvements.
- This will work best in areas where toilets are used frequently.

Handover to Town and Parish Councils

- Another solution would be to handover the upkeep of toilets to willing Town and Parish Councils.
- Some Parish Councils already do this and contribute different amounts of money.
- We would need to handover toilets fairly.

Private companies

- Private companies may be interested in taking over the running of some of the existing toilets.
- They might also be able to provide alternative services such as 'superloos'.
- The Council would have to pay for private companies to do this but it may be cheaper, especially if the companies operate a pay-to-use scheme.
- This solution wouldn't work everywhere because of the costs involved.



THE ALTERNATIVES

Community schemes

- A community scheme would make existing toilets available to the public. For example, pubs, cafes and shops could be involved and people would be able to use them without buying anything.
- The Council would give them a grant to make sure the toilets are fully accessible and kept clean and to a high standard.
- There are benefits to business because it increases the number of people entering their premises.
- Community schemes work best where there are lots of businesses to get involved.
- Similar schemes have worked really well in other areas of the country.

Other local ideas

- Whilst we know that the ideas above can offer good alternatives, we are keen to hear other ideas from local residents, businesses and visitors.
- With your understanding of your area, you might be able to suggest a solution that we haven't already thought of.
- You can let us know what you think of all of the options, and any other ideas you have, by filling in a questionnaire.

HAVE YOUR SAY

What happens next?

We will collect your views over the next three months, until the 4th of April 2010. When we have finished collecting views, we will draw up a report based upon your feedback. This report will help South Lakeland District Council to make its decisions about the way in which toilets will be provided across South Lakeland in the future.



Have your say

We really want to know what you think about the solutions. We've allowed plenty of time for you to tell us what you think and to spread the word and encourage your family, friends and neighbours to have their say too. All comments must be received by 4th April 2010. You can have your say in a number of ways:

Fill in a paper questionnaire:

Please fill in a questionnaire and post it in one of the boxes provided. If you would like more time, please take the form away and return it in one of the freepost envelopes provided.

Visit the website and fill in an online questionnaire:

The website provides all the exhibition boards, diagrams and information about the consultation. There's also an online version of the questionnaire that you can complete in your own time.

www.southlakeland.gov.uk/talktoilets

Get in touch

If you have any queries about the process then the Talk Toilets team can be contacted in the following ways:

Telephone **0845 230 0139** (local rate)

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