

## **Londoners say lack of public conveniences is inconvenient!**

- *81% of Londoners think that public toilet provision in their borough is bad*
- *9 in 10 Londoners have considered public toilet provision before making a journey to a particular place*
- *Over half (52%) say they sometimes reduce the amount they drink before leaving home*

According to new research carried out by campaigning charity Age UK London, 81 percent of Londoners say that public toilet provision in their borough is bad, with only three percent of people surveyed reporting that it is good. The survey also reveals that 9 in 10 Londoners (90%) sometimes, or always, consider whether there is a public toilet available before leaving home.

The London Loos survey was undertaken by the charity as part of their Out and About campaign, which seeks to tackle the root causes of social isolation and loneliness amongst older people. One reason older people might not go out as much as they would like to is the concern that they won't be able to access a toilet when they need one.

One older Londoner told Age UK London: "Lack of clean, accessible public toilets traps people at home and prevents them getting out and about. It affects more of us than you might imagine."

Respondents also said places where provision of toilets were not good enough included high streets (70%) and parks (47%). In terms of what was regarded as most important when it came to public toilets 48 percent said cleanliness, followed by opening times (25%) and accessibility (13%).

Abigail Wood, CEO of Age UK London said: "Good public toilet provision is a hallmark of a civilised society and the fact that 81 percent of people think that the availability of toilets in their borough is bad is a scandal. The 'loo leash', where people don't leave their homes as much as they might like because of worries that they will not be able to find a public toilet, is a significant cause of social isolation."

Wood continued: “Last year we called on local authorities across London to think of public toilets as part of their public health responsibility.”

The research reveals that over half of Londoners sometimes reduce the amount they drink because of concern about the lack of available public toilets at a particular location. Wood said “This finding is shocking as dehydration is associated with ill health among people of all ages but especially older people, from infections to dizziness that can cause falls.”

Age UK London are calling for councils to adopt local toilet strategies to monitor and improve local provision. They’re also calling for more Community Toilet Schemes where the local council supports businesses in their borough who allow non-paying customers to use their facilities.

In the survey three in four people said they did not feel confident asking to use the toilets in a café or shop where they had not spent money, but four in five said they would feel confident asking if the business was part of a Community Toilet Scheme.

You can download a copy of the London Loos Paper [here](#).

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**Editors Notes:**

The survey was carried out from May to June 2022 with 637 respondents. For further information contact [campaigns@ageuklondon.org.uk](mailto:campaigns@ageuklondon.org.uk).

5 September 2022