



Changing places - changing lives

Sometimes you just need to change one thing to open up a world of possibility. The public buildings that most of us take for granted - stations, hospitals, shops, cinemas and museums - are only accessible to us because they offer the most basic facilities. Like toilets...

Standard accessible toilets meet the needs of many disabled people - but not all. Thousands of people with profound and multiple learning disabilities need 'Changing Places' toilets. Without these facilities carers are often forced to change family members on a dirty toilet floor with little or no privacy. The other alternative is to limit outings to a couple of hours or to not go out at all.

Changing Places toilets are equipped rooms which allow people to use the toilet with assistance or have their continence pads changed. They include an adult-sized height adjustable changing bench, a hoist, a toilet with space either side for a carer and plenty of space.

Currently, there are almost no public Changing Places toilets in the UK. This means that thousands of people with profound and multiple learning disabilities and their families and carers cannot get out and about and enjoy life in the community. This issue also impacts on other people. For example, some people who have had a severe stroke or acquired head injuries as well as some frail and elderly people.

On 19 July 2006, the Changing Places Consortium launched a national campaign for Changing Places toilets. We want Changing Places toilets to be installed in all big public places, including city centres, shopping centres, arts venues, hospitals, motorway service stations, leisure complexes, large railway stations and airports. Changing Places toilets should be provided in addition to standard accessible toilets.

The Changing Places Consortium members are Mencap, PAMIS, Nottingham City Council, Dumfries and Galloway Council, the Department of Health Valuing People Team and the Scottish Executive Same as You Team.

The Changing Places Consortium has launched a campaign on behalf of the thousands of people with profound and multiple learning disabilities and their carers, and the many other disabled people who cannot use standard accessible toilets.

They need Changing Places toilets. These are toilets with enough space for disabled people and their carers, and the right equipment, including a height adjustable changing bench and a hoist.

There are almost no public Changing Places toilets in the UK. Providing these toilets in public places would make a dramatic difference to the lives of thousands of people who desperately need these facilities. Sometimes you just need to change one thing to open up a world of possibility. The time for change is **Now!**