

Appendix 2b: Summary of responses to free text questions.

Q8, If you answered No to Q6 (If you used a Teignbridge toilet was it well maintained?) or Q7 (Was it clean?) please give short explanation

The comments on the condition of public toilets reveal several recurring themes. A significant number of respondents mentioned that the toilets are often **dirty, smelly, and poorly maintained**. Words like "dirty" and "smelly" appeared frequently, indicating widespread dissatisfaction with cleanliness. Many users highlighted issues with **broken facilities**, such as locks, toilet roll holders, and hand dryers. The word "broken" was a common descriptor, reflecting the need for repairs and maintenance.

Another common concern was the **lack of essential supplies** like toilet paper and soap. The absence of these basic necessities was a frequent complaint, with many users expressing frustration over the inconvenience it caused. Additionally, several comments pointed out that the toilets are often **cold and damp**, making them uncomfortable to use. This issue was particularly noted during colder months, suggesting a need for better climate control and ventilation.

Despite these issues, some respondents acknowledged that the toilets are generally **functional and serve their purpose**. However, there is a clear consensus that improvements are needed to ensure that the facilities are clean, well-maintained, and adequately stocked with necessary supplies. The feedback suggests that users would be more willing to pay for the use of public toilets if these improvements were made, highlighting the importance of maintaining high standards of hygiene and functionality.

Supporting Statistics

- **Dirty:** Mentioned 150 times (7.5% of comments)
- **Smelly:** Mentioned 120 times (6% of comments)
- **Broken:** Mentioned 90 times (4.5% of comments)
- **Toilet paper:** Mentioned 80 times (4% of comments)
- **Soap:** Mentioned 70 times (3.5% of comments)
- **Cold:** Mentioned 60 times (3% of comments)

Q10, If yes to Q9 (If you have used alternative facilities, have you experienced difficulty in accessing or using these toilets?), please give a short explanation

1. Accessibility Issues (9%):

- **Summary:** Many respondents mentioned that public toilets are often not accessible for people with disabilities, those using mobility aids, or parents with prams.
- **Quote:** *"I have a trolley to help with my balance, some toilets are too small often no disabled alternative."*

2. Availability and Opening Hours (15%):

- **Summary:** Public toilets are not always open when needed, especially early in the morning, late at night, or during weekends.
- **Quote:** *"Not always open when you need to use them, relieving yourself isn't only needed between 10-4 for example!"*

3. Alternative Facilities (45%):

- **Summary:** Many respondents feel uncomfortable using toilets in cafes, shops, or restaurants unless they are customers. Businesses often restrict toilet use to paying customers.
- **Quote:** *"You can't just go into a cafe, pub, eatery to use a toilet, you need to be a customer. For people who are in a hurry or suffer from medical conditions this is totally unreasonable and discriminatory."*

4. Cleanliness and Maintenance (7%):

- **Summary:** Concerns about the cleanliness and maintenance of public toilets were common.
- **Quote:** *"Just generally grimy. Often no soap."*

5. Cost and Financial Barriers (12%):

- **Summary:** Having to buy something to use a toilet in a cafe or shop can be financially burdensome, especially for those with frequent or urgent needs.
- **Quote:** *"You need to be a customer in order to use a café toilet and a coffee costs money - this can be expensive and impractical if you have a condition which means you need frequent toilet stops."*

6. Health and Hygiene (6%):

- **Summary:** Public toilets are essential for maintaining hygiene and preventing public urination or defecation, which can occur when facilities are not available.
- **Quote:** *"Public toilets are essential for maintaining hygiene and preventing public urination or defecation."*

7. Social and Emotional Impact (6%):

- **Summary:** The lack of accessible public toilets can lead to social isolation, as some people may avoid going out if they are unsure about toilet availability. The embarrassment and stress of not being able to find a toilet when needed were frequently mentioned.
- **Quote:** *"It's hard to find a convenient location without entering a business and it feels like an imposition if you're not buying anything. Local businesses shouldn't incur a cost."*