

# Changing Places toilets

How can we make sure more buildings that the public visit have them?

What people said and what the government will do.



Easy Read version of:  
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local  
Government. Changing Places Toilets.  
The Government's response to the consultation paper  
July 2020

# What is in this booklet?

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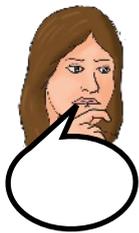
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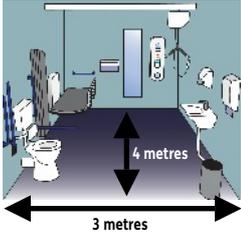
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Some words are in **bold**.  
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# 1. About this booklet

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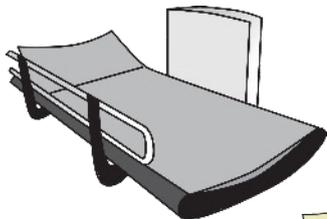


Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government wrote this booklet.



It is about having more Changing Places toilets in England.



Changing Places toilets have:

- a changing table big enough for adults
- **hoists**
- enough room for the person and their carer to move around
- a non slip floor
- paper sheets to cover the bench
- a large rubbish bin.

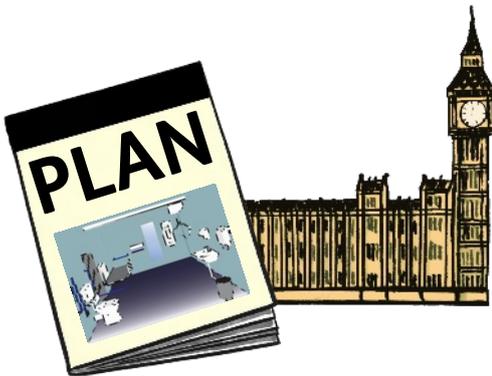




This means people with disabilities have a safe, clean place with everything they need.



Last year we asked how to have more Changing Places toilets in buildings that the public visit.



This booklet tells you what people said and what the government plans to do in England.



## 2. Why we need more Changing Places

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Changing Places toilets help people with severe disabilities use public buildings, shops and transport.



Without them, they cannot go out and do the things they want.



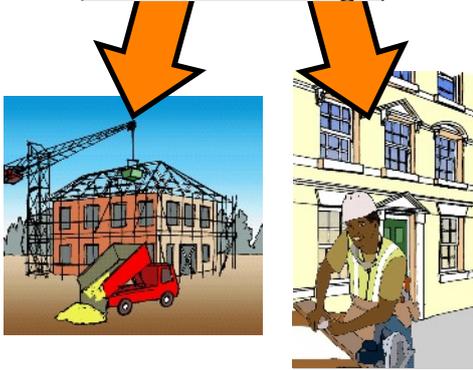
**Building regulations** are rules to make sure people are healthy and safe in and around buildings.



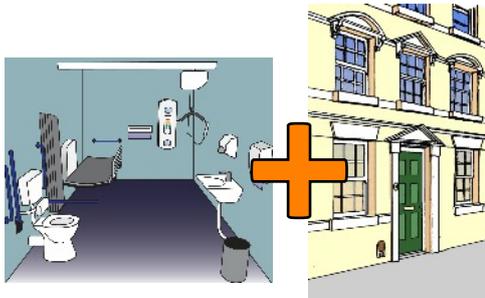
They include rules about making buildings **accessible** for people with disabilities.



We asked what people thought about using the **building regulations** to say there must be a Changing Places toilet in:



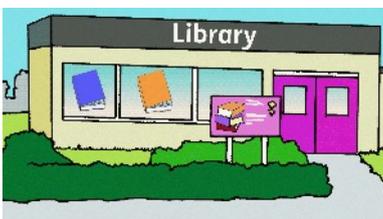
- many new large public buildings
- older large buildings that are changed, made bigger or used as a public building.



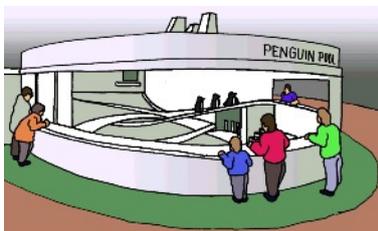
We also asked if Changing Places toilets could be slightly smaller when they are added to older buildings.

## What we will require

We said the new rules mean there must be Changing Places toilets in these types of new buildings:



- any theatre, motorway service station, library, place of worship or other entertainment building that holds more than 350 people



- any group of entertainment buildings like a zoo or theme park that hold more than 2 thousand people



- shopping centres or retail parks that are larger than 30 thousand square metres



- some larger shops



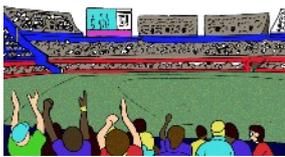
- some larger sports and leisure centres



- hospitals and community care centres



- crematoria and cemetery buildings.



Other buildings that meet these rules and that people use for sport, entertainment or meetings.

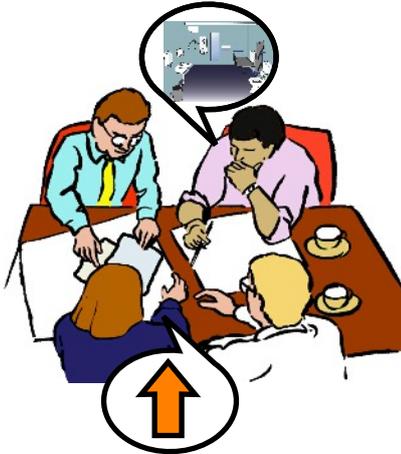


We would like to thank everyone who helped us understand how difficult it is for people with severe disabilities and their families. And how Changing Places toilets make their lives better.



### 3. What has happened so far

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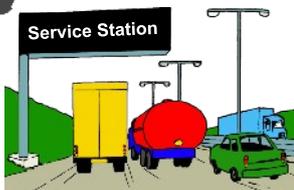


We have been working with the Changing Places organisation to find ways to have more Changing Places toilets.



This has included:

- an **online** map to help people find the nearest Changing Places toilet



- Changing Places toilets in hospitals and motorway service stations.



A group of MPs who advise the government about **equality** and **discrimination** said:

- all large buildings that the public use should have a Changing Places toilet



- the government should involve people with disabilities in planning changes to **building regulations**.



So far we have:

- run a **consultation**



- held a workshop to listen to people who use Changing Places toilets and their carers



- talked to other parts of the government to find out what types of buildings we should include



- found out how this would affect **building regulations** and public organisations.



In March 2020 the government agreed to use **building regulations guidance** to make sure more public buildings have Changing Places toilets.



They also set up a £30 million fund to pay for Changing Places toilets in some buildings.



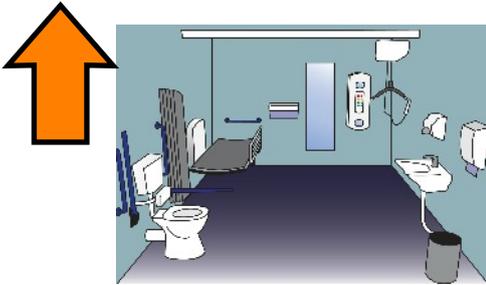
**1,460**

In March 2020 there were 1460 Changing Places toilets. This is 10 times more than in 2007.



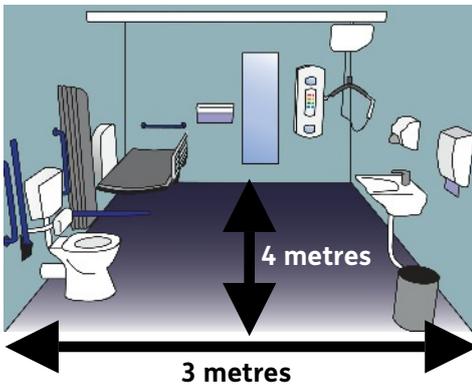
## 4. Finding out what people think

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The questions in the **consultation** asked about these things:

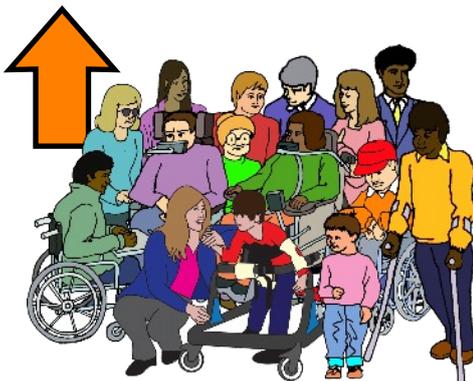
- having more Changing Places toilets



- size and equipment for Changing Places toilets



- is it worth the money it costs and will it give people the same chance to do things?



More than one and a half thousand people answered the questions.



Nearly half of these were people who use Changing Places toilets or their carers.



But we also heard from people who:

- design, build and manage buildings



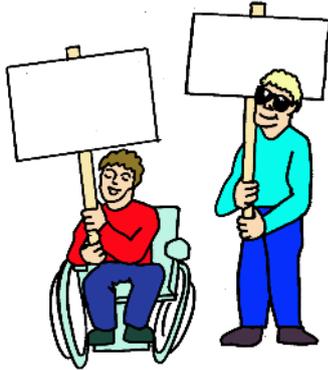
- run shops, entertainment and leisure services



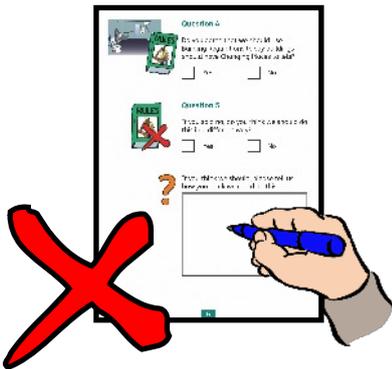
- work for local councils



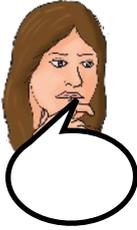
- understand **accessibility**



- are part of charities or fighting for things to change.

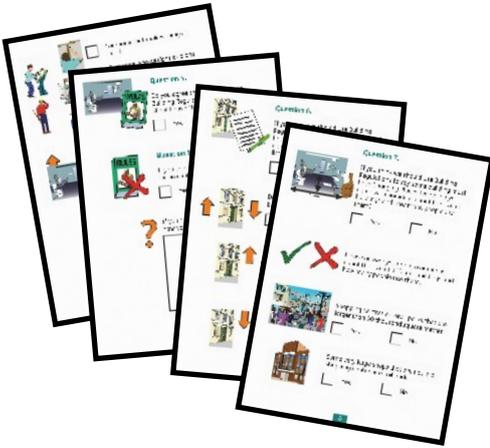


Some people did not answer all the questions.



## 5. What people said

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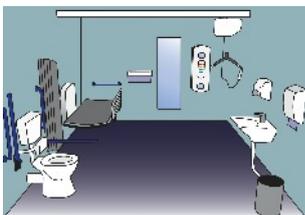
### Having more Changing Places toilets

These were the answers to **consultation** questions 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7.



### Rules about building work

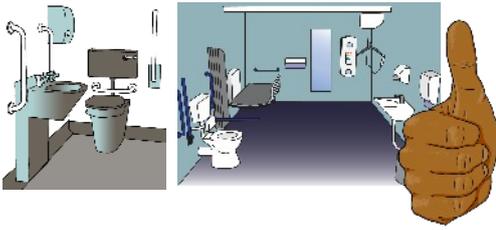
Nearly everyone agreed we need more Changing Places toilets.



Most people agreed the government should change **building regulations** so there must be a Changing Places toilet in:



- all new, large public buildings
- older large buildings that are changed, made bigger or used as a public building.



People thought this would be better than just having **accessible** toilets for people in wheelchairs.



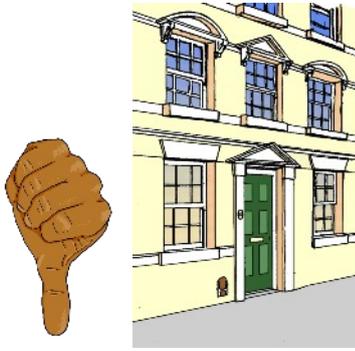
People with severe disabilities would be able to go to more places if they had safe, clean toilets with all the equipment they need.



A few people said we do not need more Changing Places toilets. They were worried about:



- how much it will cost organisations



- spoiling important old buildings



- using the law to change things.

Some people said instead of using rules about building work to have more Changing Places toilets we should:



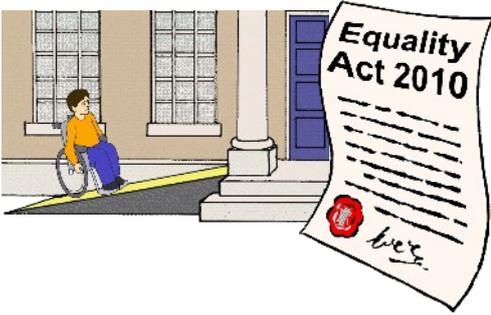
- give organisations money or help to build them



- ask local councils to tell organisations they must have one when they ask their permission to build or change a building



- allow people who own or manage buildings to decide if they need one to meet the **Equality Act** (2010).



The **Equality Act** says shops and public organisations must make sensible and practical changes to help people with disabilities use their services. The law understands that you cannot make big changes to some older buildings.



## Which buildings should have Changing Places toilets?

More than 8 out of 10 people agreed with our list of buildings that should have Changing Places toilets.

## People who wanted to include more buildings.

Some people said we should:

- also include smaller museums, art galleries, concert halls





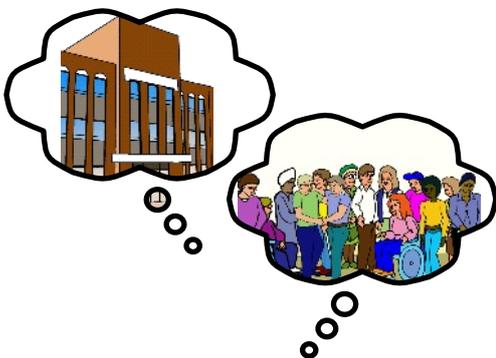
- think about how many people might go to hotels for other things and not just how many rooms they have



- think about toilets in small towns and villages



- include council buildings, crematoria and cemeteries



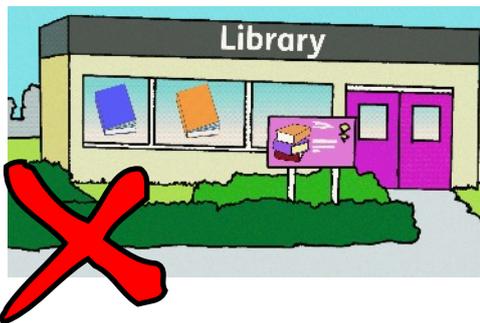
- think about how we decide how big or busy buildings should be before to need a Changing Places toilet.

## People who wanted to include fewer buildings.

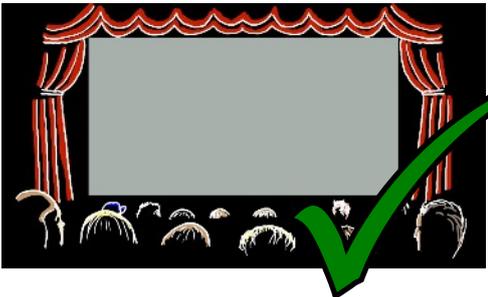
Some people said:



- we do not need to include all schools or colleges



- we should not include public libraries



- only very large or busy theatres and cinemas should be on the list.

## Deciding which buildings should have Changing Places toilets



Some people said the way we decided which buildings should have Changing Places toilets did not always make sense.

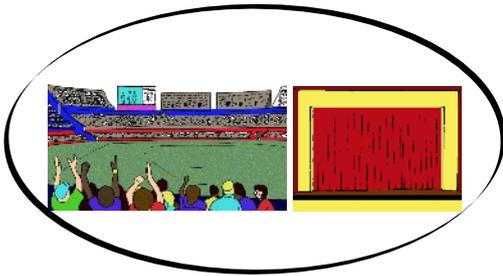


For example we should think about:

- how many people use buildings like shopping centres or cinemas and not how large they are



- having the same rules for theatres and cinemas



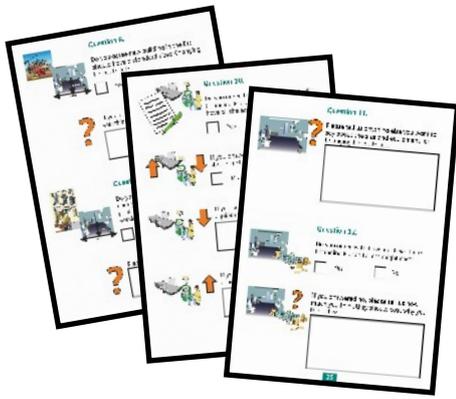
- why some buildings have been grouped together when they are very different



- where toilets should go in transport buildings so people who are leaving and arriving can use them

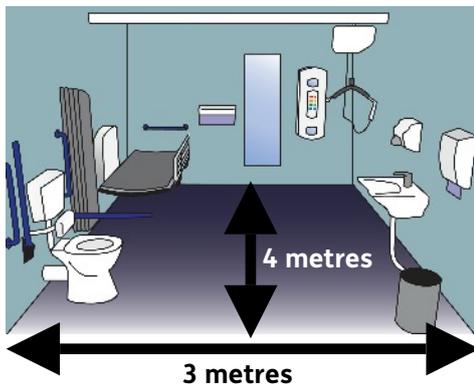


- whether small shops, businesses and religious buildings could afford a Changing Places toilet.



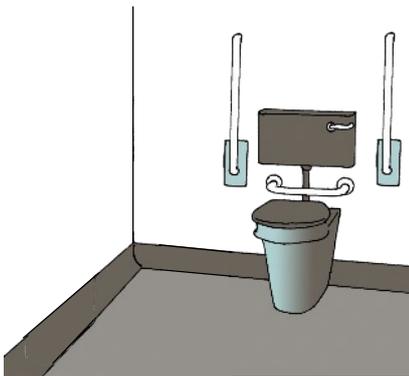
## Size and equipment for Changing Place toilets

These were the answers to **consultation** questions 8, 9, 10 and 11.



### What size?

Most people thought new buildings should have Standard Changing Places toilets. This is a room that is 3 metres wide and 4 metres long.



There should be:

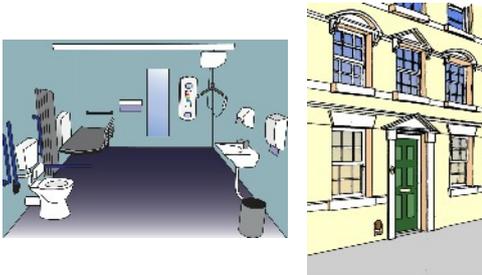
- space on either side of the toilet for the person to get out of their wheelchair or for carers to help them
- space for the person to move around or to be lifted safely to use different equipment.



People who did not agree with this size said:



- it might be too small to use safely



- it might be too big for small businesses or older buildings



- there might be a lot of these toilets in places like town centres



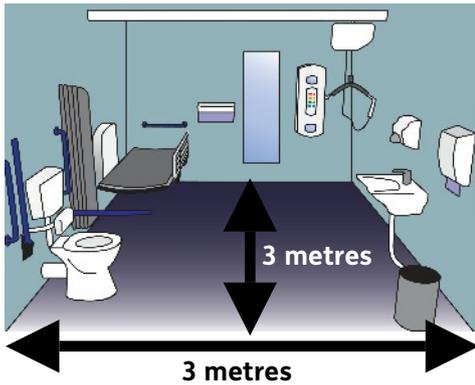
- local councils should decide the right size when people ask permission to build or change buildings



- some older buildings might need a smaller version of the toilet

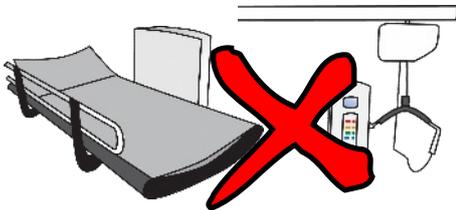


- people told us smaller Changing Places toilets were better than none at all



- they said the room should be at least 3 metres by 3 metres so people can turn round in an electric wheelchair.

People were worried that smaller toilets:



- might not have room for all the equipment



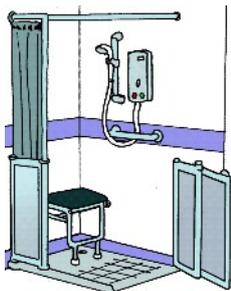
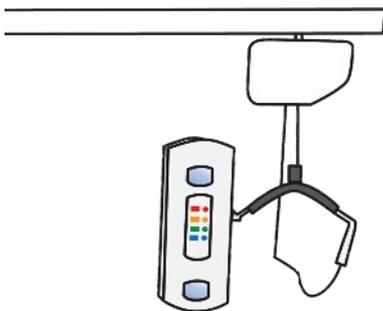
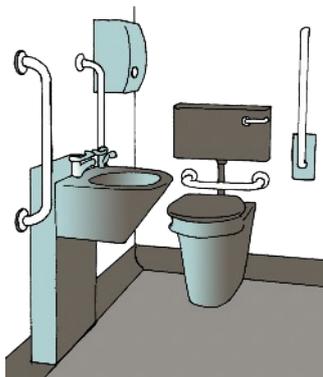
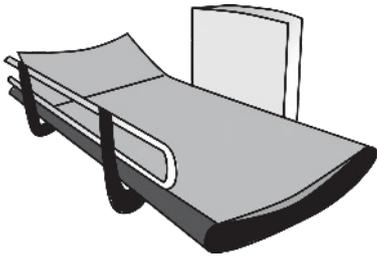
- might give people an excuse not to put a standard Changing Places toilet in their building



- might not be as easy to use as the larger toilet.

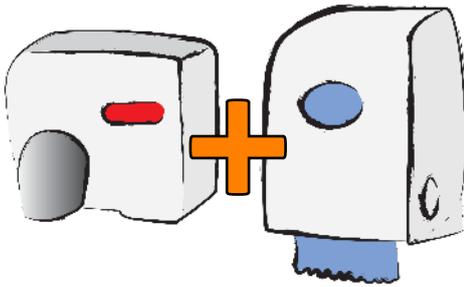
## Which equipment?

9 out of 10 people agreed that a Standard Changing Places toilet and a smaller version should have:



- a **hoist**
- basin
- adult-sized changing table that you can move up and down
- shelves
- safety rails
- a non-slip floor
- a track on the ceiling so carers can fit slings to the **hoist** to lift the person around the room
- a shower if there is enough space.

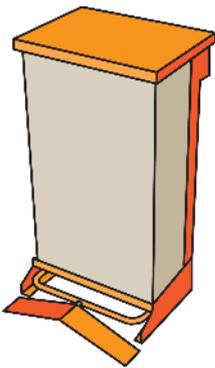
People also said:



- some people do not like noisy hand dryers so there should be paper towels as well



- showers need a lot of cleaning and looking after so might not be right for all buildings



- bins should have a handle and a pedal so people can open them with their hand or foot

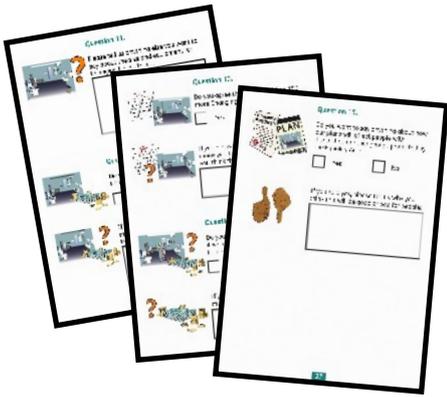


- toilet seats that lift you up automatically would help people who cannot pull themselves to stand



- the equipment should be good quality, well looked after and repaired.

## Is it worth doing and will it give people the same chance to do things?



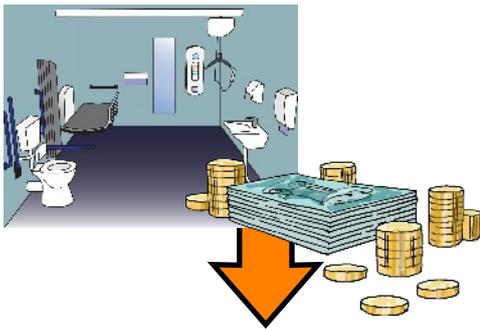
These were the answers to **consultation** question 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15

## How much will it cost?

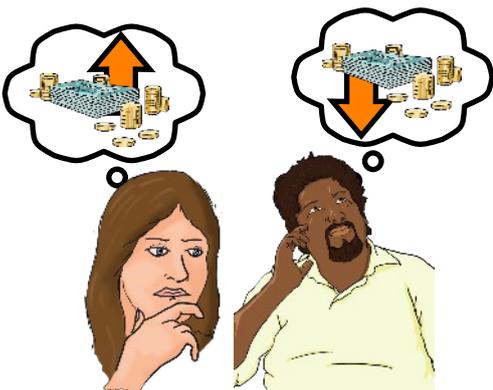
**£28,000 - £43,000**



We said a Changing Places toilet could cost between £28 thousand and £43 thousand. This depends on whether it is in a new or an old building and how much work must be done.



We now think this would be less than £25 thousand in a new building or buildings that are being changed for the public to use.



Some people thought it would cost less than this and others said it would cost much more.



Businesses would also have to pay to keep the toilets clean and working properly. This also includes testing the equipment.



Most people agreed the new rules would mean about 156 new Changing Places each year.



People were worried this could be too many for Changing Places to check and say they met their rules.

## How the cost would affect organisations:



- some people said private organisations might need help to pay for the toilets



- the public help pay for buildings like museums, art galleries and concert halls. Some people said these will need more money to pay for the toilets.



### Problems with Changing Places toilets now:

- equipment in many Changing Places toilets is poor quality. Toilets are closed for a long time for repairs



- some toilets are not looked after properly and are even used to store things



- it is not possible to build enough good quality toilets



- you cannot use a Changing Places toilet when the building they are in is closed



- you sometimes have to go a long way to get to the toilet in very large buildings like shopping centres

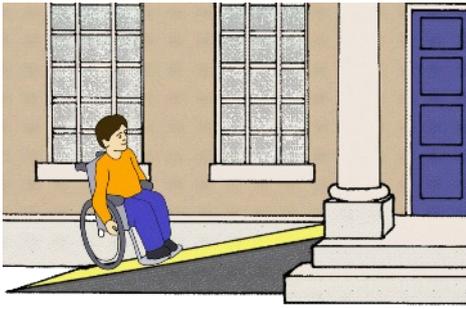


- many people do not know about the **online** map to help people find the nearest Changing Places toilet.  
<https://www.uktoiletmap.org>

## What will happen if the rules say buildings must have these toilets:



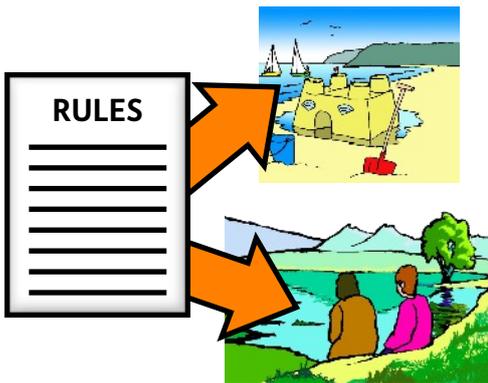
- more people will understand what people with disabilities and their carers need to use toilets safely



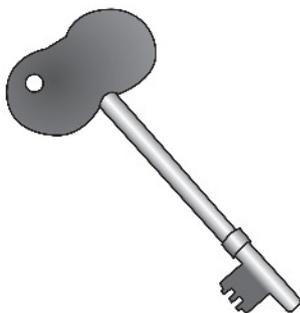
- public buildings will be more **accessible**



- people will know what to expect in different places



- the rules should also include beaches, national parks and other places away from towns and cities



- some people suggested people with disabilities should use a special **RADAR key** to get into Changing Places toilets.

## Will it give people the same chance to do things?



The **Equality Act** says the government must:

- get rid of **discrimination, harassment and victimisation**



- find ways to make sure everyone has the same chances in life.

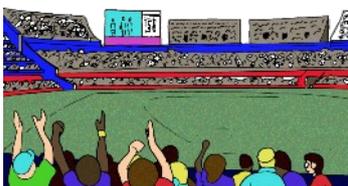
Most people agreed that more Changing Places would mean more people with severe disabilities could:



- travel
- work



- go shopping
- go out for the day



- go to concerts, the cinema and sports events.



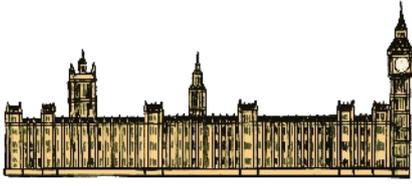
They thought it would also make life better for carers. As more women than men are carers it could mean they are treated equally and not **discriminated** against.



We said Changing Places toilets help about 250 thousand people in the UK to go to places they could not go before. Some people felt they help more people than this. Including carers and older people.



People agreed that businesses might get more customers if they have a Changing Places toilet.



## 6. What the government will do

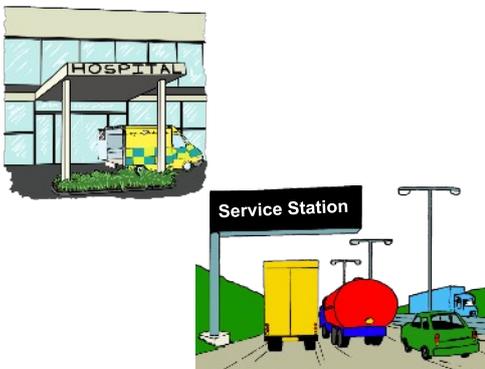
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### The main ideas

#### Having more Changing Places toilets



We have a plan to make public buildings more **accessible**. Having more Changing Places toilets is part of this plan.



We have already helped pay for Changing Places toilets in hospitals and in service stations on motorways and main roads.



People with disabilities, carers and people fighting for change are pleased with these plans.



We will now change **building regulations guidance** so there must be a Changing Places toilet in:



- all new, large public buildings
- older large buildings that are changed, made bigger or used as a public building.



We will use the ideas from the **consultation** to make these rules clearer, so people can see what types of toilets they must have in different types of building.

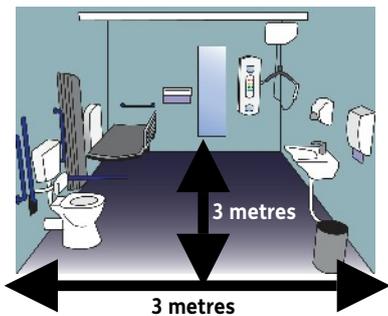


The changes to the **building regulations guidance** will also make sure the toilets are right for everyone who uses the building. This includes older people, mothers with children or people carrying suitcases or bags.



We will use the ideas from the **consultation** to make the list of buildings that need Changing Places toilets easier to check and understand.

## Size and equipment for Changing Places toilets



We will look at whether a smaller Changing Places toilet measuring 3m by 3m would be big enough for existing buildings. It would need space for people with different disabilities and up to 2 carers to move around safely.



We will say Changing Places toilets must include all the equipment apart from a shower and floor drain.

## How much will it cost and will it give people the same chance to do things?



People agreed the changes would make life better for people with disabilities and carers.



As more women are carers it could help their mental and physical health if they can get out and do more.

## What other government departments will do



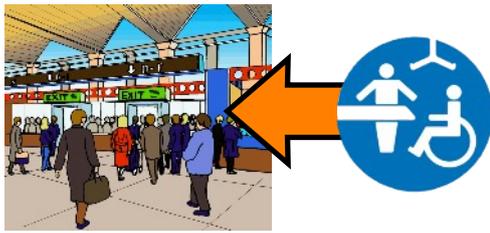
The Department of Education will use these ideas in its 2021 plan for new school buildings.



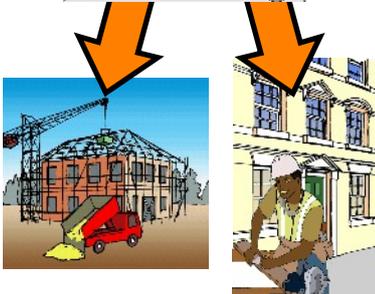
Most transport buildings use different rules instead of **building regulations**.



But many airports, large railway stations and bus and coach stations already have Changing Places toilets.



The Department of Transport will expect at least one Changing Places toilet in any transport building used by more than 10 million people a year.



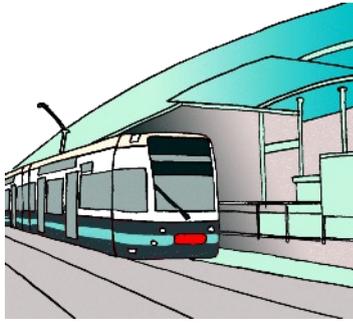
This should happen in new buildings or when older buildings are changed to be used by the public.



These transport buildings include:

- airports
- ferry ports

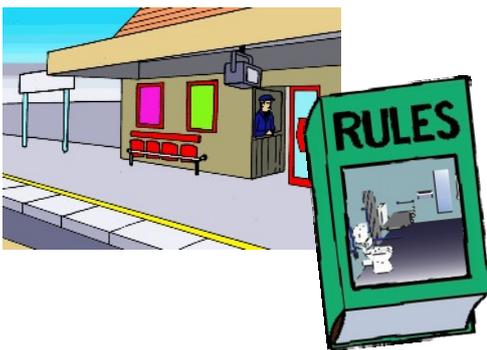




- bus and coach stations



- any other building where people get on and off transport.



Railway stations have their own rules about **accessible** buildings. These rules say all large railway stations must have a Changing Places toilet when the toilets are first built, replaced or rebuilt.

YEAR			
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec



## The Changing Places Fund

The government sets a budget each year to say how much it will spend on different things.



In March 2020 we said the Changing Places Fund would help pay for toilets in some existing buildings.



We are looking at the best ways to use this money.

## 7. What the words mean

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### **Accessible**

Easy for everyone to use or get into.

### **Building Regulations**

Rules to make sure people are healthy and safe in and around buildings.

### **Consultation**

An organised way of asking people what they think.

### **Discrimination**

Treating someone worse than other people because of things like a disability or their race, age or sex.

### **Equality**

Treating everyone fairly and giving them the same chance to do things.

### **Harassment**

When someone deliberately does something to frighten, upset or anger you.

### **Hoist**

Equipment that you use to lift something or someone.

### **Online**

On the internet.

**RADAR key**

People with a disability need a RADAR key to get into some accessible toilets. Your local council might give it to you or tell you where you can buy one.

**Victimisation**

Picking on someone.



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