



Dereham Town Plan Working Group
a joint working group of
Dereham Town Council and the aboutDereham Partnership



Report to Dereham Town Council
Social & Welfare Committee Meeting

Initial Findings for the proposed Community Toilet Scheme

Introduction

The Dereham Town Plan Working Group (DTPWG), comprising four members of aboutDereham and four town councillors, agreed to present a report about a Community Toilet Scheme (CTS) for Dereham at the town council meeting of 13th July 2021. At this meeting, it was agreed by the town council that:

- There could be benefits of a Community Toilet Scheme as a way of providing more publicly available toilets in Dereham;
- That the details of supporting a Community Toilet Scheme for Dereham be discussed at the next Social and Welfare Committee meeting.
- To accept the offer from aboutDereham to help set up the scheme

Background

Members of the DTPWG agree that there is a lack of adequate toilet provision in Dereham town centre. The vast majority of women say they will not use the public conveniences at Barwell Court as they are unsupervised, sometimes not clean, and down an isolated alley-way which itself does not feel safe. In the absence of any plans to create new public conveniences in Dereham town centre, the DTPWG believes it is right to consider a CTS.

In a CTS, independent business owners make their facilities available to members of the public without any expectation they should have to buy something. In return, the business owners receive a small subsidy towards the cost of cleaning materials. In Kendal this is £550 p.a. - we suggest £500. The aim of the scheme is to make the town centre feel a safe and welcoming environment for visitors and one where they know they will be able to walk and browse at leisure, without anxiety, since facilities are always nearby.

The DTPWG heard a presentation from Kendal where this scheme has been operating successfully for a number of years.

Initial Findings : the negative

Carolyn Coleman, secretary of aboutDereham, volunteered to help with the setting up of the scheme. She has visited many of the small independent businesses in the town centre to explain how the scheme would work and to show them examples of the literature (maps, window stickers etc) which could be used to promote the scheme to the public and visitors.

Carolyn has surveyed 23 organisations by visits or telephone calls. Every single business owner agreed with the proposition that there are not enough public conveniences in Dereham and that business participation in the scheme would help to make Dereham a more attractive destination for visitors and shoppers.

Fourteen businesses gave the scheme some consideration and, while agreeing with the premise above, stated that they could not be part of the scheme. Reasons given varied from some cases where there is no toilet, or, the majority of cases, where they felt that staff would be unable to cope with additional workload to keep the toilets clean at all times.

In one case, the manager told us they had installed key code locks on the toilet doors to prevent members of the public from using them; at least one site has a notice on the door stating '*Toilets are strictly for customer use only*' – a policy in several of the sites we visited. We also heard from one operator that members of the public already walk in and use their facilities and they sometimes find pregnancy test kits or needles left behind in the toilets. The risks posed by such eventualities is of course already covered by their own operating procedures and their public and employee liability insurance.

From these examples, we can conclude that we may need to consider an educational programme for users, for example supplying stickers stating '*please leave these conveniences clean as you would wish to find them*' and perhaps offer additional guidance to business owners and their staff. In the Kendal scheme, operators have the right to refuse entry 'in exceptional circumstances' – and it may be sensible to set out examples of conditions which enable the venue to refuse entry (not necessarily in any written agreement).

Initial Findings : the positive

In practice, in Kendal, the scheme has received practically no complaints either from visitors or from the businesses participating. We believe that the additional supervision available within the participating businesses and the publicity surrounding the scheme will help to improve standards of behaviour.

We have received an initial agreement from six independent businesses that they would take part in this scheme when it starts. These are quite well spread out around the town centre and, when we add in the other large organisations such as the Library, the Romany Rye and Morrisons, we believe this gives us enough sites to start the scheme this year.

The six that would be eligible for a small subsidy in year one are:

1. The Cherry Tree pub - helpful because most visitors will park here;
2. The Subway
3. The Red Lion
4. The Costa Coffee (is a franchise, not a chain)
5. The Cock public house
6. Strikes
7. St Nicholas Church (not in year one, but after they have fitted new toilets)

The additional sites for consideration in year 1 would not receive any subsidy. They are:

- The Library
- The Romany Rye
- Morrisons
- The Memorial Hall (when open)
- The Leisure Centre
- Tescos

Tescos should be included, even though not in the town centre, because is the only location listed on the [Changing Places](https://www.changing-places.org/find?toilet=1540) website as having a fully disabled access toilet. See: <https://www.changing-places.org/find?toilet=1540>

The other main resource that people may use when trying to find a loo nearby is this: <https://www.toiletmap.org.uk/>. Interestingly, if you search this map using the term "Dereham", it does not show Tescos, but it does show Morrisons, the alleyway (called "Ally" for some reason) and also shows men's and women's toilets on the Recreation Ground – is this correct?

See the detailed list of venues approached and their response to the scheme at Appendix 1.

Costings

On the assumption that the large organisations would participate in the scheme without any subsidy, the cost of the scheme, in year 1, could be as low as £4,000, depending on quantities of leaflets and stickers purchased.

Indicative budget would suggest:

PROPOSED BUDGET		
Assume 6 businesses @ £500 each		£3,000.00
PRINT COSTS		
A4 double-sided leaflet /map	20000	480
A Boards	2	£80.00
Window stickers (up to 4 types) No 1	20	£56.00
Window stickers (up to 4 types) No2	20	£40.00
Leave toilets clean stickers	20	£25.00
TOTAL		£3,681.00

We have not allowed any budget for design of leaflets and stickers since aboutDereham is able to provide designs pro bono in order to give the scheme a good start.

Conclusions

Dereham Town Council should proceed with this scheme this year so as to iron out any teething issues, should any arise, before the start of the tourist season in spring 2022, but also to make life easier by promoting the availability of this scheme in time for the Christmas shopping season.

We have copies of the artwork used in Kendal for window stickers and the map, the initial application form and the agreement between the council and the business operator. aboutDereham can produce artwork for Dereham and provide the text documents.

The Kendal experience is very much that the success of the scheme depends on selecting the right venues with, not only suitable facilities but also a positive attitude towards the scheme and a desire to make it work.

aboutDereham would like to be part of any discussion to select or eliminate venues from the scheme. We have the contact details for all the organisations approached and listed below.

Recommendations

The Social & Welfare committee should recommend to the full council:

1. to proceed with a Community Toilet Scheme as proposed in this report
2. to accept the offers from the named businesses to take part in the scheme
3. the amount of an annual payment to smaller businesses (on the assumption that larger businesses will not expect payment)
4. to allocate a maximum of £5,000 in the Council's budget of which up to £1,000 may be required for set-up costs
5. the design of leaflets and stickers and other materials should be based on those used in Kendall which have been proven to work well
6. that the Council's staff will set up the scheme and administer the scheme
7. that the operation of the scheme will be reviewed in (xyz) years

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Appendix 1

BUSINESS NAME	CONTACT	
Red Lion	Christopher (Manager)	Interested – have said they will take part
Costa Coffee	Chris (Manager) Abde (Deputy Manager)	Interested – have said they will take part
Cherry Tree Pub	Morgana or Sarah Godsoe or Gordon	Interested – have said they will take part
Subway	Joe	Interested – have said they will take part
Strikes	Laura-Jane O'Callaghan	Interested – have said they will take part
The Cock	Steve Garner	Interested – have said they will take part
St Nicholas Church	Paul Cubitt	Interested – but in year 2-3 when new toilets available
MAY TAKE PART NO SUBSIDY:		
Assembly Rooms	Tony Needham	not contacted re scheme
Tesco		not contacted re scheme
Morrisons	Troy Bond	not contacted re scheme
Romany Rye		not contacted re scheme
Roys		not contacted re scheme
Library	Janet Cunningham	not contacted re scheme
Leisure Centre	Paul Bealey	Spoke to Janette, Deputy Manager, sent info
Unlikely to participate:		
Sunshine Cafe		Owner not available, so sent preliminary email
The Sweetleaf Cafe, 31 High St	Shana	Good location on High St – but too crowded/busy to take part
Baptist Church	Nigel Bailey / David Ward	Will discuss – church is open M-F 9am-12, but some days has vulnerable groups in, so may not be possible.
The Bull	Simon	Unlikely – toilets for customer use only. Sent info. Has to check with owners
Green Pastures inc community fridge		No toilets for public use
Flour & bean		Toilets are round the back and up some stairs – may participate if asked again.
Orion Cinema	Jacob (Manager) Lee Allwood (Owner) + Johnny (Son)	use loos – except maybe disabled access loos – could do with freshening up – grant? Owner is Gorgate
Tall Orders	Anne (shift manager) Jennie Price (Owner)	Not this year – could not cope
Kings Head	jackie	Not this year
Coco's	Duane Shanahan	Not this year
Congregational Church	David Farrow	suitable if service in progress
Norfolk Kitchen		Toilet for customers only – not interested
Big Fry		No customer toilet
Boots		No customer toilet
The George	-	currently not trading
Greggs	Helen	Has good facilities but put keypads on toilets – for customer use only – too many issues
Co-op	Ryan, Deputy Manager	Unlikely – possible space at rear of store for conversion but are tenants – will ask his line managers to call me
Possibles not yet approached:		
Mid Norfolk Railway	Charlie Robinson	
The Italian Job, Dereham		

See examples of publicity materials on next page.

Appendix 2

The Kendal Courtesy Toilet Scheme provides members of the public with clean, safe and accessible toilets in convenient locations across the town. The participating businesses have agreed to let members of the public use their toilet facilities during normal opening hours, without the need to make a purchase. Several of the participating premises offer wheelchair access and baby changing facilities, and Kendal Leisure Centre offers a Changing Places toilet.

 Males
 Females
 Disabled
 Baby Change
 Changing Places Toilet
 Kendal Key (Not Available On Request)

1 Terzo 7 Riverside Walk, K. Village Opening Hours Monday - Wednesday 9.30am - 3.00pm Thursday - Saturday 9.30am - 9.00pm Sunday 10.00am - 3.00pm	2 Abbott Hall The Bookstone Abbott Hall Art Gallery, Kirkcald Opening Hours Monday - Saturday 10.00am - 5.00pm 10.00am - 4.00pm November - February
3 The Brewery Arts Centre 122a Highgate Opening Hours Monday 12pm - 11.00pm Tuesday - Thursday 10.00am - 11.00pm Friday - Saturday 10.00am - 11.30am Sunday 11.00am - 12.30pm	4 Kendal Town Hall Highgate Opening Hours Monday - Friday 9.00am - 5.00pm
5 Quaker Tapistry Friends Meeting House, Stronmgate Opening Hours Monday - Friday 9.30am - 5.30pm Saturday 10.00am - 5.00pm	6 Bankes 37 - 38 Flock Street Opening Hours Monday - Saturday 9.00am - 5.30pm Sunday 11.00am - 4.00pm
7 Westmorland Shopping Centre Sheildsgate Opening Hours Monday - Saturday 8.00am - 8.00pm Sunday 10.00am - 4.30pm	8 Charles Cole Bar 95 Sheildsgate Opening Hours Monday - Saturday 9.00am - 5.00pm

9 The Wakefield Arms (Dable Table) Malsda Street Opening Hours Monday - Saturday 8.30am - 11.30pm Sunday 7.00am - 10.30pm	10 JD Wetherspoon - The Miles Thearps, Whitfoss Lane Opening Hours Sunday - Thursday 8.00am - 11.00pm Friday - Saturday 8.00am - 12.00am
11 Carnite Food 10 97 Highgate Opening Hours Wednesday 8.00pm - 6.00pm Thursday - Saturday 8.00am - 10.00pm Sunday 10.00am - 4.00pm	12 The Globe Market Place Opening Hours Monday - Sunday 11.00am - 11.00pm
13 Booths Waterwrights Yard Opening Hours Monday - Saturday 8.00am - 8.00pm Sunday 9.30am - 4.00pm	14 McDonald's Sheildsgate Opening Hours Sunday - Thursday 6.00am - 10.00pm Friday - Saturday 6.00am - 11.00pm
15 South Lakeland House Lonsdale Street Opening Hours Monday - Friday 8.30am - 5.00pm	16 Kendal Leisure Centre Bulfin Road Opening Hours Monday - Thursday 8.30am - 10.15am Friday 8.30am - 9.00pm Saturday 8.00am - 3.00pm Sunday 8.00am - 10.30am
17 Kendal Rugby Club Mainbridge, Shop Road Opening Hours Monday - Friday 7.00am - 9.00pm Weekends 8.00am - 8.00pm *Excluding some Saturdays for home games. See mainbridge-kendal.co.uk	18 Damner's 11 New Road Opening Hours Monday - Saturday 11.00am - 11.00pm
19 South Lakes Foyer York 95A, 95 Sheildsgate Opening Hours Monday - Friday 9.00am - 4.30pm Saturday 10.00am - 3.00pm	

KENDAL

Courtesy Toilet Scheme

Free guide & map



www.visit-kendal.co.uk



Carolyn Coleman & Mike Webb
 Secretary Chairman
 The aboutDereham Partnership,
 06 September 2021