

# Changing Places Toilets



**Campaigns  
Pack**

## **INTRODUCTION**

We need people to campaign locally to get Changing Places Toilets installed throughout the UK. This campaign pack is meant to help you to campaign for Changing Places toilets in your local area.

It covers:

- 1. Background to the campaign**
- 2. Quick ways to get involved**
- 3. 6 step guide to starting a campaign**
- 4. Further sources of information**
- 5. How to contact us**
- 6. A template campaigns plan**
- 7. Questions to ask case studies**
- 8. A template press release**

We hope this pack will help you on your journey to become an active and confident Changing Places campaigner. On behalf of all of us at the Changing Places UK, thank you for your support!

## BACKGROUND TO THE CAMPAIGN

### Who are Changing Places UK?

Set up in 2005, Changing Places UK (formerly the 'Changing Places Consortium') is made up of a group of organisations and individuals with a shared commitment to promoting the rights of all people to access their community. Changing Places UK is responsible for running the Changing Places campaign.

### What is the Changing Places campaign working towards?

The law recognises that everyone has a right to live, move around and access all facilities in their community. Many public buildings, like hospitals, shops and cinemas, have standard accessible toilets. But, whilst these toilets meet the needs of some disabled people and their carers they lack the required equipment and space to meet everyone's needs. What these people need are Changing Places Toilets. The Changing Places Toilets campaign wants all large public spaces to have Changing Places Toilets available in addition to standard accessible toilets.

### What are Changing Places Toilets?

Changing Places Toilets are different from standard accessible toilets as they provide:

- 1. The right equipment:** an adult-sized, height adjustable bench and a ceiling track hoist.
- 2. Enough space:** a centrally placed toilet with grab rails and room either side, a screen or curtain to provide privacy and enough space.
- 3. A safe and clean environment:** wide roll tear-off paper to cover the bench, a large waste bin and a non-slip floor.



### Who needs Changing Places Toilets?

Changing Places Toilets are needed by adults or children who need support to get on or off the toilet or to be changed. Over a quarter of a million people in the UK require a Changing Places Toilet. This includes people with profound and multiple learning or physical disabilities, neuromuscular conditions, acquired brain injuries, those who have had a severe stroke, as well as members of the older generation.

## Why are Changing Places Toilets so important?

Every year, the number of Changing Places Toilets is increasing but there are still not enough toilets available to meet everyone's needs. In addition, the number of people with complex disabilities is growing and people are living longer. This means that the need for Changing Places Toilets is likely to increase in the future.



Without Changing Places Toilets, loved ones are often cared for on dirty toilet floors, in the backs of cars or using inappropriate and unsafe baby changing areas. All of these options are unhygienic, undignified and unacceptable. But the alternative is to stay at home.

When Changing Places Toilets are available, this doesn't have to be the case. They enable people to use the toilet comfortably and with dignity.

## QUICK WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

So you want to support the Changing Places Toilets campaign but don't have much time?

Here are some quick and easy ideas of ways that you can get involved!

1. Tell as many people as you can about the Changing Places Toilet campaign!
2. Send Changing Places Toilets leaflets to places you think need a Changing Places Toilet.
3. Write to your local councillor or Member of Parliament.
4. Share stories about people who need Changing Places Toilets.
5. Visit the Changing Places website and share what you find.
6. Keep an eye out for Changing Places Toilets when you are out and about.
7. Write an article and send it to your local newspaper.
8. Start a petition (online or offline) to get a Changing Places Toilet installed.
9. Hold a public meeting to talk about the importance of Changing Places Toilets.
10. Respond to planning consultations asking them to include a Changing Places Toilet.

# A 6 STEP GUIDE TO STARTING A CAMPAIGN

Whether you are an individual, a group or a charity, this guide is aimed at helping you to run your own local campaign for Changing Places Toilets in 6 simple steps!

## Step 1: Get a campaign group together

Campaigning in a group can make things easier as you can divide work. It will also help you demonstrate that many people want Changing Places Toilets to be installed. So, it is worthwhile finding out if other people share your interest in Changing Places Toilets.

There may already be a local campaigns group in your area so make sure you ask around. If you want to start a group from scratch, ask other people, charities, or groups if they want to be involved.

For inspiration of groups you could contact, visit our website: [http://www.changing-places.org/about\\_us/supporters.aspx](http://www.changing-places.org/about_us/supporters.aspx)

## Step 2: Decide on your campaign aims

In your group, there are a number of questions you should think about. These will form your campaigns plan. A template campaign plan is also included in **Appendix 1** (below).

### Who is going to do what in your campaign group?

You should look at people's strengths and given them suitable roles. For example, is one person good at organising? Is someone else good at writing letters or doing research? Dividing tasks will help you achieve more as a group.

### How many venues are you going to target?

You might decide to target just one or two key venues in your local area, or you might want to target lots of different venues. This will depend on the time and resources of your group. Sometimes it can be better to focus your efforts on a few key venues (you can always target other venues at a later date!)

### Which venues will you target?

When you start your campaign, you should think about which local venues you want to target. Things you might want to consider include:

- a) Where would a Changing Places Toilet make the most difference?
- b) Which organisations or businesses are most likely to install a Changing Places Toilet?
- c) Are there any new buildings planned that could include a Changing Places Toilet?

### **How long will the campaign last?**

It is up to you and the group how long you want to campaign for, and it is okay if you do not know. But it is useful to think of a rough timetable to help you focus activities. You can easily change this during your campaign.

### **Step 3: Gather information to support your campaign**

Lots of people do not know about Changing Places Toilets, what they are or why they are needed. So, it's important to tell people exactly what a Changing Places Toilet is, including what equipment it includes and how big it should be. You need to make the argument that people want and need Changing Places Toilets.

Local authorities, organisations and media will be interested in information local to your area. So, it is important to find out local information and facts to support your campaign.

Some suggestions of things you might want to mention are:

#### **How many Changing Places Toilets are available already or where the nearest available Changing Places Toilet is**

You can explain what life is like for families who do not have access to suitable toilet facilities when out and about.

#### **How many local people would benefit from Changing Places Toilets**

You might want to gather case studies of local people who need Changing Places Toilets. These are real stories about real people and they can be really powerful. They can help demonstrate the positive difference Changing Places Toilets make to people's lives. For inspiration, check out the case studies we have on our website: [http://www.changing-places.org/real\\_life\\_stories.aspx](http://www.changing-places.org/real_life_stories.aspx)

#### **How much money could the toilet bring to the venue/community**

People with a disability, their families and carers have money to spend when they go out. For some, if they want to go somewhere, there needs to be a Changing Places Toilet. If there isn't one available, they might go somewhere else to spend their money. This means that without a Changing Places Toilet, a venue may miss out on potential business.

#### **What Government policy and legislation on equality says**

You could make the point that expectations about people with a disability have changed. It is now accepted and expected that all disabled people have a right to the same life chance and experiences as others. However, without access to Changing Places Toilets some people are denied this right. Therefore, venues should make efforts to remove barriers to access.

In order to gather local information, including key facts and figures relating to the need for Changing Places Toilets it is worth talking to:

- Local authorities and councils
- Schools
- Day centres
- Local charities
- Disability or carers' groups
- Local people

Some venues may ask for technical information about equipment and installation. If they do, you should direct them to our Changing Places 'Practical Guide' and our list of recommended installers and equipment suppliers. More information can be found at the end of the pack.

#### **Step 4: Approach the right people**

You are now ready to start approaching different people and groups to make your argument for why a Changing Places Toilet should be installed.

Some groups worth contacting are:

- Local businesses
- People who are planning new buildings, like architects
- Public sector organisations, like local councils or hospitals
- Private sector organisations, like supermarkets and train companies
- People or groups who can help your campaign, such as the local media or your local Member of Parliament
- Other local people

You can phone them and tell them about the campaign and send them printed information too. Then, you might want to try and set up a meeting with them to talk about the campaign in more detail. If you have a meeting, you might want to invite a family along who need Changing Places Toilets, so they can talk first-hand about their experiences.

#### **Step 5: Getting the Changing Places Toilet installed and registered**

By this stage, you will have met your target venues and told them about the need for Changing Places Toilets. Hopefully, this has resulted in some venues agreeing to install a Changing Places. Now it is key for you to make sure that a toilet is actually installed.

If they have questions about installing a toilet, point them to our website where there is lots of information about installation, from getting the right equipment to arranging signage and considering security and ongoing management of the facility.

Make sure you keep in contact with the venue throughout the installation process to remind them that the campaign is not over until the toilet is there. You should ask for regular updates to keep track of progress. It means you can also offer help if it is needed. For example, getting people to test out the toilet to make sure it meets their needs or offering advice on the design of the toilet.

### **A useful check list to use near completion:**

- Is there sufficient space for wheelchair users and carers? Is the floor non-slip?
- Has all the essential equipment been included? (ceiling track hoist system, adult-sized height adjustable bench, central toilet, grab rails, sink, privacy screen or curtain, waste bins, wide tear-off roll, red emergency pull cord)
- Is the Changing Places Toilet facility well signposted at the venue?
- Has the venue carefully considered the ongoing maintenance, management and security of the facility to ensure the equipment is kept charged, in full working order and that the room is kept clean and hygienic?

### **Signage**

This step is very important. Signs are a real help for users of Changing Places Toilets. The Changing Places symbol is increasingly recognised and should always be displayed at a venue which has a Changing Places Toilet facility. Signage is available from Changing Places UK once the Changing Places facility is registered. To access signage files for a registered Changing Places toilet please contact: [changingplaces@muscular dystrophyuk.org](mailto:changingplaces@muscular dystrophyuk.org)



### **Registration**

BEFORE opening the Changing Places Toilet it must be registered with Changing Places UK. The easiest way to do this is online at [www.changing-places.org](http://www.changing-places.org). However, if you need a printed registration form please contact us via email at: [changingplaces@muscular dystrophyuk.org](mailto:changingplaces@muscular dystrophyuk.org) or by telephone on 0207 803 2876. And don't forget to attach some lovely photos of the facility and the equipment for us to include on our website!

### **Step 6: Celebrating success!**

Once the Changing Places Toilet is installed, it is important to celebrate your campaigns success! This is important as a way of marking the victory of the campaign, thanking those responsible for installing the toilet and for raising awareness of the new toilet, to make sure it gets used!

Things you should think about doing include:

- ✓ Letting the Changing Places Consortium know the toilet has been installed so that we can get the toilet registered, added to our official map and publish a news story on

our website to promote your campaign win and the new facility!

- ✓ Update everyone who has helped you campaign for the toilet and thank them for their hard work.
- ✓ Thank the venue and everyone involved with getting the Changing Places toilet installed.
- ✓ Tell your local media so they can help you promote the toilet and also raise awareness of the need for installing Changing Places Toilets in other venues.
- ✓ Tell local schools, day centres and voluntary organisations about the new Changing Places Toilet to promote usage.
- ✓ And importantly, be proud that your campaign has helped make a positive difference to the lives of thousands of disabled people, their families and carers!

## FURTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The links below may be useful if you need to find additional information to help your campaign.

**About the campaign:** [http://changing-places.org/the\\_campaign.aspx](http://changing-places.org/the_campaign.aspx)

**Changing Places map:** <http://www.uktoiletmap.org/>

**Practical guide:** [http://www.pamis.org.uk/cms/files/publications/Changing% 20Places% 20a% 20Practic al% 20Guide.pdf](http://www.pamis.org.uk/cms/files/publications/Changing%20Places%20a%20Practical%20Guide.pdf)

**Real life stories:** [http://changing-places.org/real\\_life\\_stories.aspx](http://changing-places.org/real_life_stories.aspx)

**Installing a toilet:** [http://changing-places.org/install\\_a\\_toilet.aspx](http://changing-places.org/install_a_toilet.aspx)

## CONTACT US

### Changing Places UK

**Website:** [www.changing-places.org.uk](http://www.changing-places.org.uk)

**Twitter:** @CP\_Consortium

**In England, Wales and Northern Ireland contact us on:**

**Telephone:** 0207 803 2876

**Email:** [changingplaces@muscular dystrophyuk.org](mailto:changingplaces@muscular dystrophyuk.org)

**In Scotland, contact us on:**

**Telephone:** 01382 385 154

**Email:** [PamisChangingPlaces@dundee.ac.uk](mailto:PamisChangingPlaces@dundee.ac.uk)



# APPENDICIES

## Appendix 1: Campaign Plan Template

The following is a template campaign plan that you or your group can adapt and use. You don't need to follow it exactly – but it should help you think about the things you need to decide on at the beginning of your campaign.

**[Name of group/area]** Changing Places Toilets campaign plan

**Introduction:** Changing Places is a national campaign asking for Changing Places Toilets for people with profound and multiple learning disabilities and other disabilities. The campaign is being run by a consortium of organisations including Muscular Dystrophy UK and PAMIS. The ultimate aim of the campaign is to get a Changing Places Toilet installed at every major public place. To make this happen, the consortium is asking local organisations to run their own campaigns for Changing Places Toilets in their areas. This document sets out the campaign plan for the **[name of group/area]** Changing Places Toilets campaign group.

**Who:** [List members of your campaign group here and what their responsibilities are. Include their contact details.]

**Where:** We will campaign for Changing Places Toilets within the **[insert town or county name]** area. In particular, we will target **[insert name(s) of venue(s) here]**.

**When:** We will campaign for Changing Places Toilets to be installed in the venues listed above by the following dates: **[insert venue – date]**

**Other useful information:** [You can add in here anything else important that you and your group agreed at the beginning of your campaign.]

## **Appendix 2: Suggested Case Study Questions**

Here is a list of information you should try to find out when talking to people who are going to provide case studies. Obviously, the subjects of your case studies should only answer the questions they want to. You can adapt this list to the particular points you want to make in your case study.

- a) Contact details including best times of day to contact.**
- b) Details of the disabled person such as the things they like to do and their support needs.**
- c) Questions about Changing Places Toilets:**
  - What features of a Changing Places toilet are needed?
  - What restrictions does the lack of suitable public changing facilities place on the daily routine of the disabled person, their family and their carer(s)?
  - Have they had any negative experiences of trying to use unsuitable facilities and what do they do when facilities are not available?
- d) What difference do Changing Places make to their lives?**

## Appendix 3: Press Release Template

**Contact:** [enter name], [enter phone number and enter email address]

**Date:** [enter date]

**[Enter headline.** For example, *“Don’t flush people’s rights down the loo! Come to a toilet teaparty instead!”*]

**[Enter town and name of organisation]** is holding a **[enter name of event]** on **[enter date]** at **[enter location]**, to launch its involvement in the national Changing Places Toilet campaign. The **[enter name of event]** is from **[enter time]** and it is open to all.

The Changing Places Toilet campaign aims to highlight the desperate need for accessible Changing Places Toilets in the UK. The campaign is being led by a consortium including Muscular Dystrophy UK and PAMIS.

The Changing Places Toilet campaign was officially launched on 19 July 2006 at Tate Modern in London. Over a ¼ million people in the UK require the use of adult changing facilities. This includes people with profound and multiple learning disabilities, some frail elderly people, and some people with spinal injuries.

A Changing Places Toilet is fitted with a height-adjustable changing bench, a hoist and enough space for two carers to assist. Without these facilities many people’s lives are restricted as they cannot leave home to go shopping for long periods, visit attractions or travel long distances.

**[Enter name of person]**, spokesperson for **[enter name of organisation]** explained:

**[Enter quote.** For example: *“I care for my daughter 24 hours a day. She was born with complex health needs and uses a wheelchair. Because of the lack of toilet facilities, I cannot leave the house with her for long. My daughter has the same rights as everyone else. This should include being able to go shopping knowing she can be changed in a clean and safe environment and not have to sit in soiled clothes until I can get her home.”*]

As part of the campaign, **[enter name of organisation]** is asking people to write to their local councillor – as well as large companies – asking them to include a Changing Places Toilet in all their further designs and buildings. For those wishing to attend the **[enter name of event]** please call **[enter contact details]** for more information or visit **[enter website]**. - Ends-

## Notes to Editors

### Changing Places Toilets – [enter name of town]

For more information call [enter contact details]

[Enter information on event. For example, “The LDG party will be at County Hall on 12 August 2021 from 4.30pm – 6.30pm in the Gamble Room. Journalists and photographers are welcome. Please call [insert details] for more information.”]

- [Enter name and description of organisation. For instance, “We Care is the leading parents and carers group for people with a learning disability in Wiltshire. We help and support over 300 families.”]

### Changing Places – National

#### About Changing Places Toilets

1. A Changing Places Toilet is a fully accessible toilet with the following additional equipment: a height-adjustable changing bench, an overhead track or mobile hoist; a peninsular toilet, privacy screen and enough space for up to two carers as detailed in British Standard BS800: 2009. These toilets should be provided in addition to standard accessible toilets.
2. [Research](#) highlights that 230,000 people in the UK need assistance to toilet and/or change continence pads. Users include people with profound and multiple learning disabilities and people with a range of other disabilities including Cerebral Palsy, Motor Neurone disease, Multiple Sclerosis, stroke, some older people and other specific disabilities. Our estimation of up to a quarter of a million users will increase in the future. For some groups the prevalence of individuals will increase, e.g. people with intellectual disabilities and people of advanced age, increasing the need for and relevance of Changing Places toilets.
3. Changing Places UK comprises Muscular Dystrophy UK, PAMIS, Centre for Accessible Environments, the Scottish Government and founding member and advisor/campaigner Martin Jackaman. The Changing Places campaign supports the rights of people with profound and multiple learning, and/or other physical disabilities, to access their community. Without Changing Places Toilets, carers are forced to change their loved ones on toilet floors or have to stay at home. For information and advice on changing places facilities in England, Wales and Northern Ireland email, [changingplaces@muscular dystrophyuk.org](mailto:changingplaces@muscular dystrophyuk.org), for Scotland email, [pamischangingplaces@dundee.ac.uk](mailto:pamischangingplaces@dundee.ac.uk)

#### About Muscular Dystrophy UK

Muscular Dystrophy UK is the charity for 70,000 children and adults living with muscle-wasting conditions. We provide vital information, advice and support to help people live as independently as possible. We accelerate progress in research and drive the campaign for access to emerging treatments.

**About muscle-wasting conditions**

Muscle-wasting conditions cause muscles to weaken and waste over time, leading to increasingly severe disability. Some affect the heart and muscles vital for breathing, cutting lives short.