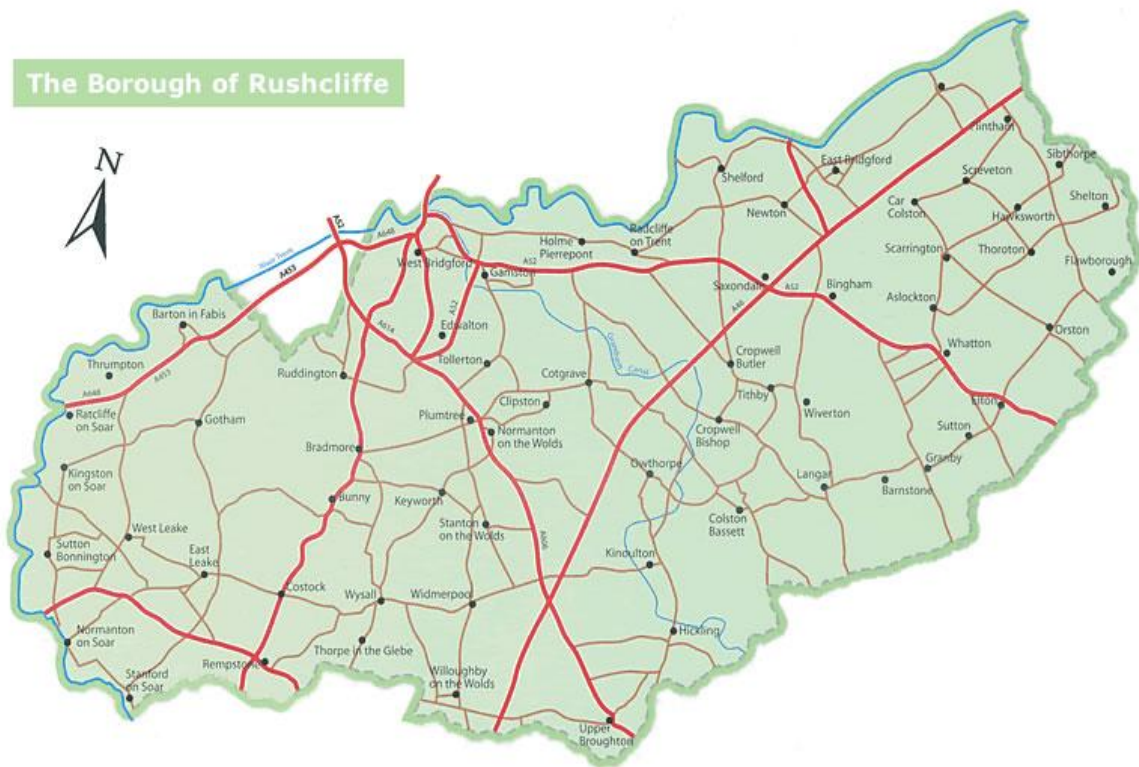





Health and Social Care Issues In Rushcliffe



Access to Toilets in West Bridgford



Source

Rushcliffe area has a population of 109,800. The shops and events in this area of Rushcliffe attract many residents from the area and visitors from Nottingham city and county. On a busy weekend many people are visiting and needing to use toilet facilities.

There is a park and grass area next to Central Avenue in West Bridgford. This land is used for family days and events at weekends throughout the summer months. All year there are various fetes and farmers markets.

This can put additional pressure on facilities. This can make it increasingly difficult for those with health concerns to find a vacant, clean and accessible toilet.


A priority issue was raised at a Rushcliffe workshop that there is difficulty accessing a toilet along the Central Avenue shops.

Nottinghamshire County Council also is looking to change the facilities and set out a consultation to Rushcliffe to influence local decisions. The LINK made contact with the council and have forwarded on the report to be a part of the consultation process.

LINK could voice residents concerns at the planning process of new toilet facilities before the implementation stage.

Residents at the workshop questioned the awareness of the 'Radar Key' and the 'Can't Wait Scheme'. These are important resources for people to use when needing to access a toilet urgently due to a long term medical condition.

LINK members researched and found that the issue had some attention in the area, and was already a concern to people who needed to use facilities at events but had returned home. This resulted in the issue being put forward for by the Issues Panel: a critical process to drive a LINK Task and Finish group to be successful.



Focus

A limited awareness in West Bridgford on where people with long term health conditions can use a toilet if needed when visiting Central Avenue.

To raise awareness amongst service providers, event organisers and shop owners the rights for people with long term medical incontinence issues.



Research

The study mapped the location of toilets in the West Bridgford area. Detailed where people may be able to access easily if needed. The research found that there are public toilets situated in Marks and Spencer, Co op, and in Bridgford Park. The library does not have toilets but the staff ones can be used by someone who presents library staff with a Cant Wait card.

Researched how to obtain a 'Radar' key or 'Can't wait card'.

CAN'T WAIT SCHEME

This is a scheme whereby people with certain medical conditions can ask various shops, restaurants to use the toilet on the premises, even when normally it is for staff use only.

The patients are given a card that states - "Please help, our member has a medical condition which is not infectious and means they need to use toilet facilities urgently. Your kindness and co-operation would be much appreciated".

The cards are available when you join NACC (National Association for Colitis and Crohns) or the Gut Trust (for irritable bowel syndrome).

Details can be found at the following website:

<http://www.nacc.org.uk/content/members.asp>.


NATIONAL KEY SCHEME OR RADAR KEY SCHEME

The National Key Scheme (NKS) offers independent access to disabled people to around 7,000 locked public toilets around the country.

Ideally, RADAR would like the toilets to be kept unlocked, but in most cases this is not possible as inevitably vandalism occurs.

The keys are available at a small charge of around £3.50 plus VAT . To order a key, telephone 0207 250322, or visit the website on www.radar.org.uk.

To obtain a key a person must register by phone or email with radar. Then make payment and provide proof of being registered disabled. Keys will



normally be sent out by two weeks. Full contact details can be found on:
<http://www.radar.org.uk/radarwebsite/tabid/15/default.aspx>.

There is a booklet called National Key Scheme Guide available at the same website detailing the sites of the toilets.

Some of these trusts charge a membership fee to join first before sending out a card. Membership rates can vary from £10 to £30.

The groups research found that it is vital people can obtain a key or card. GPs and nurses should offer information at the point of diagnosis with how to access these in an easy way.

Researched the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 for stance on continence problems.

A continence condition has to be substantial, long term and lasting at least 12 months.

There are special conditions and rules that apply covering recurring and fluctuating conditions.

Anyone wanting to know their rights regarding this area is free to contact Equality and Human Rights Commission.

Contacted council for an update for redevelopment plans for the toilet facilities in the area.

Council conducted a consultation into unisex public toilet facilities in West Bridgford. The current site near Bridgford Park is being looked to be replaced by a block of four unisex toilets.

There have been some concerns raised about the unisex sharing facilities, if there will be a charge for some toilets or security present and controlled open hours. These will continue to be looked into before finalising plans and commencing rebuilding in the autumn.



Outcomes

To increase awareness of 'Can't Wait card scheme' and Radar key, by encouraging medical centre staff to promote this within the area.

Rushcliffe residents are educated with what support is available when for long term incontinence health conditions.


To generate greater numbers of Can't Wait Card Scheme holders and Radar Keys in Rushcliffe.

To influence local policy decision making to ensure more toilet facilities are provided in West Bridgford by making the following recommendations:

- Toilets are situated in an open, visible and safe area. Increased resident safety and confidence.
- Clearly marked disabled only toilet. Those with long term medical conditions will be able to use a toilet quickly, even in very busy times without having to queue in cafes, bars or shops.
- Toilets to be separate for sexes and quick access for family changing facilities and toilets. This is to reduce wait time for those who need to use facilities the most.
- To provide extra clean and accessible toilets on event days. Ensure these facilities are kept clean throughout the day. Increase hygiene levels and clear access for those who need to use facilities regularly.
- To ensure public buildings such as the library comply within Disability Discrimination Act and provide toilets for the public to use in their facilities. Increase use of the library by providing the correct facilities. Decrease barriers faced by those with long term health conditions to not use facilities due to fear of incontinence and hygiene concerns.

To offer a choice in accessible toilet facilities in West Bridgford for people with long term health conditions.

The group have made contact with the council and given recommendations as they are still consulting for plans to redevelop toilet facilities in the area. Plans will need to be finalised by the autumn.



The group have made contact with Friends of Bridgford Park to influence planning for events once new toilet facilities have been finalised.