

Toilets at council owned venues could open to public

Toilets at Edinburgh Leisure and council-owned venues including the Edinburgh International Conference Centre could be opened to the public in a bid to tackle a lack of public facilities in the city.

Green councillor Dan Heap put forward a motion to open toilets at Edinburgh Leisure facilities, the Edinburgh International Conference Centre and other council-owned companies to the public.

Heap, who represents the Sighthill/Gorgie ward, said: "There are areas of the city where we don't have any public toilets.

"This came through my own experience with Gorgie. We don't have any public toilets, so you have to go to Saughton Park or Princes Street.

"But in the area, we do have Gorgie Farm, we have an Edinburgh Leisure pool, where people could use those – but Edinburgh Leisure's policy is that you can't use their toilets if you're not a member.

"We're trying to make sure that any council building that's appropriate with public toilets has a default right of access."

At present, toilets at Edinburgh libraries are open to the public, but those at other council properties are usually restricted.

The motion said that despite efforts by the council in recent times, the under-provision of public toilets in some areas of the city is an issue.

Things have recently come to a head in Portobello, where councillors have refused to approve funding for temporary or new permanent toilets ahead of the summer.

The lack of toilet facilities has disgusted locals and causes local businesses to face up against hundreds of drunken revellers looking to relieve themselves on many summer nights.

Only two sets of public toilets exist near the beach, one on Pipe Lane and one on Bath Street about a quarter mile from the foreshore.

The motion also said that research should be done on how to better advertise public toilets in the council, such as through an online map.

At present, the council publishes a list of public toilets and their opening times, as well as a map showing the locations of Changing Places toilets in the city.

But it said that toilets in some council buildings, such as schools, should remain closed to the public for safeguarding reasons.

By Joseph Sullivan Local Democracy Reporter