

# Proposed Closure of Public Conveniences in Sefton Feedback on Consultation (Budget Option D1.32)



Consultation feedback from Mr BC, Formby

**YOUR SEFTON  
YOUR SAY**

Sefton Council



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## Executive Summary

At the Council's Cabinet meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2012, it considered a proposal to close all the public conveniences in Sefton. As a result, Street Scene Services was asked run a more extensive consultation on the proposal to close these facilities, and this ran from 19<sup>th</sup> December 2012 until 1<sup>st</sup> February 2013.

The consultation consisted of:

- An online questionnaire on e-Consult, the council's online consultation system
- Hard copy questionnaires for those who are unable to use the online system
- Meetings with stakeholder groups
- Posters displayed at each of the public conveniences, and in libraries, leisure centres, children's centres to raise awareness
- Letters to stakeholders, including
  - Arriva Merseyside
  - Community Empowerment Networks such as Sefton Access Forum and ABILITY
  - Friends of Parks groups
  - Local businesses

The consultation asked the public:

- Whether they agreed with closing public conveniences in Sefton
- If the answered no, why they felt that way
- Whether they would be prepared to pay more for the service
- Whether they would be prepared to use private sector facilities if the council negotiated this
- What other changes could be made to mitigate this proposal

The consultation results showed that:

- 93.37% of respondents were against the closure of all public toilets in Sefton
- 81.71% said they would be prepared to pay to use all of these facilities
  - 51.22% would pay up to 30p
  - 21.95% would be prepared to pay up to 50p
  - 8.54% would be prepared to pay up to 40p
- 18.29% would not be prepared to pay to use public toilets
- 68.52% would be prepared to use toilets in cafes, restaurants and other buildings

When asked about which sites they would prefer to see retained above others, nearly all sites were listed by stakeholders.

A range of suggestions were received from the public on mitigation. One of those was that there should be further analysis of the service to identify which toilets would be economically viable if the charges were increased, and which ones were uneconomic so that they could be closed to save money.

The results of this consultation will now be submitted for consideration by elected members to inform their decisions regarding this proposal.

## Background

Sefton Council has to make a saving of £50 million as part of the budget reductions required by the Government. This follows the £20 million saved this financial year and is a very difficult challenge as the council reduces in size and scope.

As part of these savings, it was proposed to close all public conveniences in Sefton.

Under Section 87 of the Public Health Act 1936, local authorities may provide sanitary conveniences (including lavatories) in proper and convenient locations; however this is a discretionary power and not a duty.

## Proposal

To save the council £52,000, it is proposed to close all public conveniences across the borough, and cease to provide the service.

Public toilets are provided at the following locations:

Southport:

- Eastbank Street (pay-to-use)
- Hill Street (pay-to-use)
- Promenade (pay-to-use)
- Hesketh Park (free-to-use)

Churchtown:

- Botanic Gardens (free-to-use)
- Preston New Road (free-to-use)

And at:

- Burbo Bank, Blundellsands (pay-to-use)
- Leighton Avenue, Maghull (free-to-use)
- Moor Lane, Crosby (free-to-use)
- Shore Road, Ainsdale (free-to-use)
- South Road, Waterloo (pay-to-use)

The toilets within Botanic Gardens were also included in the consultation process to identify any potential opportunity for additional savings which may contribute towards the re-engineering of the Parks and Greenspaces service.

As an alternative to the proposed closure, during the consultation the opinion of the public was sought on whether it would be acceptable to charge for the free to use toilets, and increase the charges at the pay to use facilities from 20p per use to between 30p and 50p per use.

The public was also asked if they would be prepared to use private sector toilets, such as those found in large shops or restaurants, if the council could agree this with local businesses.

## Summary of Feedback

The online consultation shows that:

- 93.37% of respondents were against the closure of all public toilets in Sefton
- 81.71% said they would be prepared to pay to use all of these facilities
  - 51.22% would pay up to 30p
  - 21.95% would be prepared to pay up to 50p
  - 8.54% would be prepared to pay up to 40p
- 18.29% would not be prepared to pay to use public toilets
- 68.52% would be prepared to use toilets in cafes, restaurants and other buildings

Some stakeholder groups would be adversely affected. These include:

- Older people
- Disabled people
- Families with young children
- Tourism
- Local businesses

Specific representations were received from:

- Southport Area Committee
- Southport Tourism Business Network (STBN)
- Arriva Merseyside
- Sefton Beach Management Forum
- Ainsdale Civic Society
- Botanic Gardens Community Association
- The concession holder who runs the cafes at both Botanic Gardens and Hesketh Park
- Hesketh Park Heritage Group

Southport Area Committee resolved:-

- *“That as a seaside resort looking to attract tourism and businesses to the town, the Council should ensure that Southport retains its provision of public toilets.”*

Southport Tourism Business Network objected to the proposals on the grounds of:

- Public toilets across the borough and particularly within Southport being “critical to the visitor economy”
- The effect these proposals may have on achieving quality awards
- A possible increase in street fouling
- The negative effect on the night time economy
- Potential negative impact on Business Improvement District negotiations

Arriva Merseyside expressed:

- “An objection to any changes in the toilet facilities in Crosby and The Plough, Crossens, Southport;” and that it:
- “provides a significant annual financial contribution towards the general up-keep of both these facilities and I consider we are legitimate stakeholders and our position should be taken into account during the decision making process;” and that:

- “The need for accessible toilets is essential for our staff and helps us provide a smooth efficient comprehensive bus network of services for the people in the North Sefton area.”

At the meeting of Sefton Beach Management Forum on 29<sup>th</sup> January, forum members noted that:

- There may be an increase in anti social behaviour on the beach with people relieving themselves in public
- Human waste fouling could affect bathing water quality
- It was likely to mean that Sefton could not go for beach quality awards if toilets were closed
- The facility at Shore Road was some distance from any other facility, therefore a long walk to any alternative

Ainsdale Civic Society was against the proposal to close public toilets because:

- They felt it was a tourist area, and these are essential facilities
- There were potential health risks of human excrement being deposited in secluded areas of beaches and parks
- The way forward was to increase charges to recover costs

Botanic Gardens Community Association opposed the proposal because of:

- The potential negative impact on numbers of visitors to Botanic Gardens
- The numbers of visitors who were either elderly or families with children, for whom the toilets at Botanic Gardens were the only suitable facility
- The potential negative impact on the local economy of Churchtown village
- The effect on any future Green Flag award for Botanic Gardens
- The possible impact on the Association’s plans to bid for Heritage Lottery funding

The concession holder for the cafes at Botanic Gardens and Hesketh Park said that:

- Botanic Gardens was heavily used by tourists
- Hesketh park was heavily used by local people
- There are currently no alternative toilets near Botanic Gardens or Hesketh Park for visitors or local people to use
- It was best to charge for toilets as it controls access and prevents anti social behaviour

In response to recommendations from Sefton Council’s Consultation Panel, a series of meetings were set up with older person’s groups facilitated by Sefton Pensioners Advocacy Centre (SPAC). There were three face-to-face meetings:

- Bootle – 15 consultees
- Maghull – 26 consultees
- Southport – 67 consultees

All of these groups were against the closures, saying that the following could be adversely affected:

- Older people, especially those with long term illnesses or receiving treatment that would require them to use toilets more frequently
- Disabled people, who would have less access to accessible toilet facilities
- Families with young children
  - There could be greater social exclusion for all of these groups. Many of the older people said that they would think twice about going out if public toilets were not available

- Tourists and visitors, especially in the Southport area
- Bus drivers, who needed to use these facilities whilst on duty

Most of the older people consulted would be prepared to pay to use public toilets, rather than see them close, to a level of 30p to 40p. However some, including 50% of those from Southport said that the current 20p is as much as they would be prepared to pay.

The group from Southport also differed from the other two groups in that:

- A small minority were in favour of closing toilets
- They would prefer to use private facilities if free access and cleanliness could be guaranteed

A number of local people and businesses also wrote in to give their views on the proposal. Most of them were against the proposed closures. They said that:

- Toilets were important for disabled people and older people
- There would be a negative impact on families with young children
- There would be a negative impact on tourism
- Most would be prepared to pay for them
- One business was interested in purchasing one of the toilets if it were to be closed

During face-to-face consultation meetings, and in verbatim feedback from questionnaire responses, the following sites were identified as being priority sites used by the public, which they would like to retain:

- Botanic Gardens
- Burbo Bank
- Eastbank Street
- Hesketh Park
- Leighton Avenue, Maghull
- Lord Street
- Moor Lane
- Shore Road, Ainsdale
- South Road, Crosby

Some people suggested further analysis of the use of public toilets to identify which should be closed, whilst others suggested that there should be a trial period where all of Sefton's toilets became chargeable, and then close those that were uneconomic.

Other suggestions were to reduce costs or mitigate the impact were:

- Have sponsorship of toilets
- Sell advertising in toilets
- Reduce the number of councillors
- Reduce councillors' allowances
- Cut the Chief Executive's and senior council officers' salaries
- Increase costs for football pitches
- Enforce parking and other fines more rigorously to increase income
- Reduce street lamp illumination times
- Open up the toilets in other council properties, such as Town Halls and The Atkinson
- Sell off toilets so that entrepreneurs can turn them in to profit making businesses
- Sell off more of the empty buildings in the council's property portfolio

## **Conclusion**

The majority of people are against the closure of public conveniences. Many support raising charges in order to offset expenditure on cleaning and maintenance.

A range of suggestions were received from the public on mitigation. One of those was that there should be further analysis of the service to identify which toilets would be economically viable if the charges were increased, and which ones were uneconomic so that they could be closed to save money. This may be worth further consideration.

The consultation has now ended and the results have been incorporated in to a Cabinet report to go before elected members, so that they can discuss whether they wish to adopt the proposal as part of the overall council savings package.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1 – Overview of Consultation

The overview of consultation table below shows which groups were contacted

Direct Services		Change Proposals 2013/14 – Overview of Consultation				Street Scene		
Key: Activity Completed ✓		Activity Cancelled ✗						
Version 1.5						Signposting to eConsult		
	Change Proposal	e-Consult	Forum /Meetings	Drop In Sessions	Hard to Reach Groups	Letter/email	Posters	Twitter/ Facebook/ Press release
	<i>Closure of Sefton's Public Conveniences</i>	Questionnaire loaded on e-consult 19/12/2012 ✓  (New) 100 paper questionnaires sent to Tourist Information Centre Southport 18/01/2013 ✓	Meeting with Botanic Gardens and Hesketh Park concession holder 16/01/2013 ✓  Meeting with Botanic Gardens Community Association 16/01/2013 ✓  Beach Management Forum 29/01/2013 ✓	None	<b>All via CVS</b>  ABILITY 04/01/2013 – eConsult link sent to group 04/01/2013 ✓  Sefton Access Forum 04/01/2013 – eConsult link sent to group ✓  Parent's groups 04/01/2013 – eConsult link sent to group 04/01/2013 ✓  (New) SPOC/SPAC older persons Meetings 22/01/2013 – Bootle ✓ 29/01/2013 – Maghull ✓ 30/01/2013 – Southport ✓	Sefton Chamber of Commerce (Also use of their Facebook page to promote consultation?)  Councillors ✗ <i>Informed via internal council systems</i>  Email to tourist businesses via Economy and Tourism Department 09/01/2013 ✓  Email to other businesses via Economy and Tourism Department 11/01/2013 ✓  Email to Sefton CVS	Notices on public toilets 20/12/2012 ✓  Poster in Hesketh Park ✗  Poster in Botanic Gardens ✗  Poster at ADC and toilets at Ainsdale ✗  (New) Children's Centres 21/01/2013 ✓  (New) Libraries 18/01/2013 ✓	Council Twitter account to raise awareness?

Direct Services		Change Proposals 2013/14 – Overview of Consultation				Street Scene		
<b>Key:</b> Activity Completed ✓ Activity Cancelled ✕								
Version 1.5						Signposting to eConsult		
	Change Proposal	e-Consult	Forum /Meetings	Drop In Sessions	Hard to Reach Groups	Letter/email	Posters	Twitter/ Facebook/ Press release
						community groups 07/01/2013 ✓  Email to Friends of Parks Groups 11/01/2013 ✓  Email to Beach Management Forum members15/01/2013 ✓	(New) Leisure Centres 21/01/2013 ✓  (New) Tourist Information Centre Southport 21/01/2013 ✓	

## **Appendix 2 – Consultation Questionnaire Responses**

	<b>Online</b>	<b>Offline (paper)</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Proposed Closure of Sefton's Public Conveniences</b>			
Number of users who have completed the questionnaire	161	5	166
Number of users who have partially completed the questionnaire	44	0	44
Number of users who have responded (partially & fully completed the questionnaire)	205	5	210

In addition to the online and paper questionnaire responses, a further 15 responses were received from the public via email telephone contact through Sefton's Customer Contact Centre or by letter.

There were also four meetings with community groups, attended by a total of 113 people.

Details of the feedback from the questionnaire and other responses are shown below.

### Appendix 3 – Feedback from Consultation

Respondent	For the Proposal	Against the Proposal	Comments Received
Public feedback via website (210 responses)		x	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 93.37% of respondents were against the closure of all public toilets in Sefton</li> <li>• 81.71% said they would be prepared to pay to use all of these facilities               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 51.22% would pay up to 30p</li> <li>○ 21.95% would be prepared to pay up to 50p</li> <li>○ 8.54% would be prepared to pay up to 40p</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 18.29% would not be prepared to pay to use public toilets</li> <li>• 68.52% would be prepared to use toilets in cafes, restaurants and other buildings</li> </ul> <p>Feedback on the proposal included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I use them on a regular basis and prefer not to have to go into a shop etc to use toilets as I feel I should make a purchase. Businesses in Sefton pay various rents to Sefton without also having the extra expense of running public toilets I think it is unfair to ask this of them. Even if they agree I would feel uncomfortable using them without making a purchase. Now due to ill health toilet facilities are even more important to me and I need to use disabled toilets would shops etc be able to provide this at every venue??</li> <li>• As a longstanding Cafe Bar on Lord Street in Southport we are quite dismayed at the lack of support for local business and the lack of vision or imagination in addressing the difficult budgetary cuts the Council are facing. Particularly as (in Southport at least) we are so dependent on tourists and visitors as we have very little other industry to rely upon. It is clear that Councils all over the country are facing savage budget cuts and very tough challenges. Local businesses particularly those on the high street are also facing large increases in costs and reduced revenue. This is causing real pressure on margin with the result of increased closure which is all too prevalent and also results in a loss of revenue to the Local Council. Whilst I can see that all savings have to be explored I feel the detrimental impact this proposal has far out ways any saving of £50k. Surely the cost of closure and securing the buildings let alone vandalism would be more than £50k. A reasonable charge would obviously be preferable to total closure, however increased costs inevitably transfers the public to cafes bars and restaurants which simply transfers the problem and the cost onto local businesses.</li> <li>• I would be unable to go out and about. I'm older now</li> </ul>

Respondent	For the Proposal	Against the Proposal	Comments Received
			<p>and need to be assured of the use of a public toilet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Burbo bank is very popular during summer and winter. I noticed when I went there today (by the way both car parks were full even though it's Christmas Day) I needed the loo before leaving and saw your notice on the wall. There is nowhere else for people to go to the loo, no nearby cafe's or pubs etc and this area is full of families and very popular. PLEASE DON'T CLOSE THIS LOO - thanks (and happy Christmas)</li> <li>• We have many old people and visitors during the day and many club goers late evening. We should provide clean, regularly maintained toilets in the town centre for which there should be a reasonable charge. We should not rely upon shops etc to provide these facilities.</li> <li>• My husband is disabled following a stroke and we use the conveniences on a regular basis. These conveniences are of great importance to people of all ages who cannot for whatever reason hold on. It is very distressing for someone with a weak bladder to feel that they may lose control of the bladder just because there was nowhere to go conveniently. The toilets located at the parks are of particular need especially for those with young children.</li> <li>• As an operator of bus services in Sefton our drivers do not have access to toilets other than those on the bus route. In Southport there is no bus station and therefore no toilets available other than Preston New Rd and Hesketh Park. If you are to close the toilets could we please negotiate for the private use of Hesketh Park. With regard to the general principal of closing the toilets it seems to me it should be a non starter. To remove the toilets would be a considerable expense and to re-build them later even more so. To have them permanently closed just advertises the impoverishment of the area and the seemingly incompetence of its officers</li> <li>• Eventually the only conveniences open will be in shops or theatres. Extremely inconvenient to the stores. What happens in the evening? Just another nail in the coffin</li> <li>• No because we pay 20p for most of them anyway. However, it is embarrassing to use them and we can always use restaurants. It depends how much money it would save and if all the toilets would close e.g. keep the most popular used?</li> <li>• Southport is full of elderly and people with disabilities who need the toilets, especially those at parks and by Tourist Info. I think toilets are an ESSENTIAL service that a Council should provide.</li> <li>• Some of these toilets are situated in areas where</li> </ul>

Respondent	For the Proposal	Against the Proposal	Comments Received
			<p>there is no local facility. As an older person this would cause me a problem as I often need to go urgently. I feel that this would lead to soiling of areas which would not be healthy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As an older person I value being able to use a public toilet when necessary. This applies even more so to people who have conditions or disabilities which mean they frequently need to use the loo. As a grandparent I REALLY value being able to take children to the toilet when out and about.</li> <li>• The amount of 52k savings is derisory. Sefton has never exploited its potential for tourism - it has always amazed me that it is unwilling to provide the most basic facilities to encourage people to visit and shop in Sefton</li> <li>• [No] especially the toilets in the Botanic and Hesketh Park, there are no private toilets near them so you will have people not using the parks and worse people having to use the parks as toilets – as there are cafes in both which I believe are owned by the council, isn't it law to provide toilet facilities where food and drinks are sold? Do we want the whole of Sefton to turn into one big open air toilet?</li> <li>• People need to be able to go for a pee and what about the disabled? As it is one of the most natural things in life, there would be people peeing in shop doorways and many other places plus the need to use the toilet to [censored] into, would you like to step in a load of that, it's bad enough with dog poo and it would also prevent visitors to Sefton, no toilets no children's A&amp;E expensive car parking. Will the last person leaving Sefton please close the door after them. We pay enough rates already for these conveniences, grow some balls and tell the government where to get off.</li> <li>• Southport is a tourist and retail destination in which public conveniences are needed. It also has an elderly population who often need public toilets. As someone who has to take diuretics, I can sympathise with people who need convenient conveniences. As someone who works in the town centre I have noticed that the toilets in Hill Street are well used.</li> <li>• Public spaces needs loos to encourage visitors. I would not consider taken children anywhere without use of a loo. Also more people caught short will just use behind the closed loos to go.</li> <li>• For disabled, older people and families with younger children this would be a huge problem. Also as a tourist town we should have these facilities. Especially when the markets and other events that attract high levels of visitors are on. Honestly you can tell Sefton is run from Bootle, Southport is a seaside</li> </ul>

Respondent	For the Proposal	Against the Proposal	Comments Received
			<p>tourist and a retirement town. Remember that when you come up with these ridiculous ideas. If you want to save £92,000 cut the salaries of a few higher level council officers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a real need for toilets in public spaces such as the parks so that the parks can be fully utilised. You can't take a toddler to the park unless you know there is a toilet nearby that you can use or go for a picnic unless you know you can wash your hands etc</li> <li>• Sefton and in particular Southport rely on tourism as a main source of income. Closing the toilets along with the cuts already made in services such as maintenance of the boroughs verges/gardens etc. will lead to people not wanting to visit. Certain bank holidays last year were disgusting walking round Kings Gardens etc. due to bins not being emptied, overgrown plants/weeds/borders etc. Why would people want to come when it is unsightly and with the nettles, unsafe?!</li> <li>• It will impact on tourism and make it more difficult for families to enjoy places like Southport and Ainsdale. It will also promote antisocial behaviour, as more people will go to doorways, alleyways and parks to go to the toilet. I often visit both Southport and Ainsdale and would find it a real problem if there were no public toilets available.</li> <li>• Southport is a holiday resort for the sake of your preferred God. To do this is like putting the final nails in any future this town has. It is ludicrous, ridiculous, totally against any sense of comprehension and will inevitably reduce dramatically the number of visitors to this town. The very first thing that every pensioner looks for after a 3 hour coach ride is a toilet. If there aren't any, they are very unlikely ever to want to come here again.</li> <li>• What is the alternative proposal? Are people expected to go in the street?</li> <li>• I am blind and I would have to walk into a shop and then have to take someone away from their work to guide me. There are few user friendly toilets for disabled people around. A lot of people feel it is not the done thing unless you're paying for food, drink etc.</li> <li>• Many people rely on local facilities especially those with RADAR keys, and disabled. If we lose these facilities, some people will be reluctant to do out. This doesn't comply with Sefton's aim of reducing social exclusion</li> <li>• Close them completely, they are a waste of time.</li> <li>• We live next door to the shoppers toilets in Leighton Avenue Maghull. From previous experience before the toilets were built we were frequently asked by</li> </ul>

Respondent	For the Proposal	Against the Proposal	Comments Received
			<p>members of the public to use our private toilet. Also our boundary fence was frequently used as a public urinal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If this are closed it may put people off coming into Southport - keep them open but increase charge.</li> <li>• Would it not be better to shave the executive salaries in order to save what is a small amount for what you are proposing to remove. Where does all this end. Southport is on route for a train crash!</li> <li>• The 'jewel in the crown' of Sefton is Southport. This resort attracts numerous people to its attractions and shops every year. Removing the public toilets completely does not stop human nature - we all need to take 'comfort breaks'. Is it fair on the public to remove these facilities? It puts an onus on private businesses (pubs, restaurants, shops &amp; cafes) to allow people access to private facilities usually there for paying customers). Whilst there may be some gains for businesses (pubs perhaps?) I believe most business owners will NOT welcome the public using conveniences reserved for customers and staff. NO SEFTON I DO NOT AGREE WITH ANY CLOSURES!!!!</li> <li>• I am horrified at this proposal. My wife, like many other people, suffers a medical problem where it is vital that she has access to public toilets as soon as she needs one. There are many people who suffer with IBS (and other bowel illnesses), which in many cases means they cannot leave the house due to the fear of needing the toilet in an emergency and there not being enough public conveniences available as it is already.</li> <li>• They are handy also kept in the most in good condition I personally avoid them but if needs be wouldn't mind paying 50p maybe they could be franchised out</li> <li>• Besides the problems this would cause for residents, Southport and Crosby in particular are promoted as tourist destinations and it would be contrary to close public conveniences. In the summer coach loads of visitors would be massively deterred if there were no public toilets. Most cafes, restaurants, pubs, etc operate a strict 'customer only' policy and families with elderly or child members would be in real difficulty.</li> <li>• Charge 50p per visit @ 35 visits a day x 365 = £6387.50 any toilet that has less visits close.</li> <li>• Public conveniences are a necessary, or do we use the parks and fields. They should not be free they should be chargeable if the Council is short of money, Then Charity shops should be charged service/rateable charges like everybody else.</li> </ul>

Respondent	For the Proposal	Against the Proposal	Comments Received
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is ridiculous to close toilets at sites which are tourist attractions. Already there are not enough toilets along the Crosby coast. Closing the toilets at Burbo Bank means there will be nowhere at all for people to go. The council should be opening more toilets NOT closing them.</li> <li>• The borough will lack essential facilities for tourists and visitors. People with disabilities will also be disadvantaged, as toilets can make the difference between going out or staying at home. The loss of toilets in Crosby would also be a further blow for a desperately struggling town centre.</li> <li>• I am in favour of public conveniences being available so that people can access toilet facilities without having to go into cafes, pubs etc. This is especially important during the current recession when people will have less money. If public conveniences are closed we will see an increase in people urinating in the streets which I find unacceptable.</li> <li>• It's a very important facility and not really negotiable is it? In town it's not so bad, where there are alternatives, but when visiting Hesketh Park with children, what alternative choice is there?</li> <li>• The public conveniences are essential, I can't believe that it has even been considered. People will gladly pay to use clean and well maintained toilets. Liverpool One must cover its outgoings, they are always busy, and nobody complains at paying. To remove public toilets, you will also be taking away passing trade for the smaller local shops, especially Crosby village, where we have no big department store to nip into, to use their facilities. This is ridiculous, not only for the elderly, but for all age groups. However I would not want to see one of those porta toilet blocks that look like a telephone box. That just attracts the wrong people.</li> <li>• It would stop visitor trade in all areas mentioned. Eastbank Street square is where many tourist coaches drop and pick up their passengers. The presence of the public toilet facility there is vital for these visitors to the town both before and after their journeys. Facilities at Beach and Promenade sites are also vital, to keep areas clean. The young and elderly especially need toilet facilities to be open and 'handy'.</li> <li>• For goodness sake we are a Holiday Resort (Victorian) and we do have an aging population and I'd imagine the visitor segment is plus 60 and therefore have a greater need for such facilities.</li> <li>• As a sufferer of IBS having public toilets in Maghull makes it possible for me to shop there. Without public toilets I would have to shop elsewhere</li> </ul>

Respondent	For the Proposal	Against the Proposal	Comments Received
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In some areas there is no suitable provision of accessible toilets in shops etc</li> <li>• Using toilets in other facilities is fine so long as the facility is open. I do not think there is a way round this one. If you need the toilet you need the toilet!</li> </ul> <p>Ways of reducing impact/mitigation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charge for use and seek sponsorship or advertising on the toilets.</li> <li>• Possibly to only close limited number of conveniences</li> <li>• Cut Council salaries, particularly those at the top. Stop wastage and expenses and Councillors 'jollies'.</li> <li>• Maybe shut the toilets in the towns where there are plenty of facilities in shops but in parks keep them open and at worse charge a minimal fee to use. Come on Sefton have some sense, we all need to go to the loo!</li> <li>• By clearly sign posting agreements with local shops - many will not let their loos be used unless you are a customer. if libraries are shut and loos are closed you are forcing people out of Sefton</li> <li>• I think there should be a reasonable charge levied on all public conveniences, this is standard practice for public conveniences on train/bus stations and I think generally the public are accepting of this as such facilities are usually presented and maintained to a good standard, the LA would have to consider the standard of the facilities in relation to any charge applied.</li> <li>• I think the best compromise would be that proposed above whereby the council negotiate a deal with local businesses. It would need clear signage though to work.</li> <li>• CHALLENGE THE GOVERNMENT ON THE NECESSITY FOR COUNCIL BUDGET CUTS AS THEY ARE DOWN TO CORPORATE TAX EVASION AND BANK FRAUD.</li> <li>• If you have to charge that would be better than nothing though I would expect a certain level of cleanliness which would obviously increase costs to the council.</li> <li>• Reduce the number of councillors by 30%. Have less senior managers and back office staff.</li> <li>• Reduce the number of Councillors - exactly as promised by the leaders of each party 2 years ago at Christ Church.. That saves FOUR TIMES the desired amount. Reduce Councillor Allowances by 25%. That also would save several times the amount. Reduce the number of senior officers - each one given redundancy would save the required amount. You get</li> </ul>

Respondent	For the Proposal	Against the Proposal	Comments Received
			<p>the idea - too many chiefs and very few remaining Indians.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perhaps they could be sponsored by business like roundabouts are.</li> <li>• Increase the costs for football pitches. Get the council's enforcement team to remove advertising boards from outside shops and then fine them if they put them out again as they cause an obstruction for blind people and prams, pushchairs etc. Fine those who breach street cafe regulations.</li> <li>• Firstly I would point out I pay council tax to this borough and would not be happy paying to use a toilet in my own town. Spend the year monitoring usage, if this falls below a certain level close them, but only if it is justified. Also the toilets in the park should remain open. It is a great place to spend the day with the family, it would be no good if you needed to leave after an hour</li> <li>• Reduce street lamp times. Stall future development programmes and consultancies until we can afford them. Better to stand still with what we have than loose more and then not be able to implement development changes through lack of funds.</li> <li>• Keep them open but charge an economic figure.</li> <li>• 50p is a fair price</li> <li>• Public toilets should be chargeable. It is an insult to ask cafes and restaurant to allow their toilets to be used as a public convenience. Would you allow your home to be used as a public convenience, well I would not</li> <li>• Scrap the proposal and make all public toilets pay to use. Note that the option of using toilets in cafes is useless at somewhere like Burbo Bank!!</li> <li>• Why not make it a key holder toilet so you pay an annual fee for the use of the toilet</li> <li>• Increase the charge to cover running costs. Close only those toilets where other facilities are available.</li> <li>• Making facilities free for Radar key holders would be a small concession. Could community or voluntary organisations take over the management of the public toilets?</li> <li>• Allowing the public to use toilets in other council properties such as town halls, council offices, leisure centres.</li> <li>• There are toilets in most major stores/shopping centres that people can use so don't think there is any need to mitigate against it. I have never seen anybody using the paid for public toilets in Southport and have never noticed that they are engaged at any time when I have passed them. Perhaps you could justify savings by carrying out some sort of survey as to their use so that you can say to those who object -</li> </ul>

Respondent	For the Proposal	Against the Proposal	Comments Received
			<p>well they were only used xx times in period of xxx</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If Radar toilets are also going to close, then that is discrimination against the disabled</li> <li>• Could the toilets be sold off for people to buy the facilities to run as their own businesses or franchises from the council? Could the old toilets at the Marina not be sold off/refurbished? There is a desperate need for toilets at the Marina - it's a great area but with nowhere to 'go' when you need to (without having to go up South Road) - so many visitors go there now and as a resident of Sefton I find it quite embarrassing to say there are no public conveniences. I know if I owned my own business I would not be happy at having my WCs 'open to the public' even if I was getting paid for it.</li> <li>• Shutting some but not all like those in parks. Charging as although people may moan if they need it they will pay.</li> <li>• Ensure the alternatives are in place and monitor their availability over the first year.</li> <li>• Give discounts on incontinence pads. Make walking round with legs crossed an Olympic sport.</li> <li>• Keep the tourist areas open however in areas that are mainly for local residents replace these with negotiating with local businesses. Personally I never feel safe using the Crosby toilets when I have had to but would welcome being able to use a toilet in a local business.</li> <li>• Don't do it - save money elsewhere - get rid of one of your very highly paid executives.</li> <li>• Reduce the salary of the chief executive and the other executive directors of Sefton MBC to the combined tune of £52,000 so that no change needs to be made to the current arrangement. Everyone wins. We get to keep our public toilets and the Board gets some unprecedented positive media covered highlighting the sacrifice they've made for the common public good AND we won't wake up in the morning with shop keepers sluicing out their shop fronts because they've been used as an Armitage Shanks the night before.</li> <li>• Make all toilets fee-paying</li> </ul>
Southport Area Committee		x	<p>At the Southport Area Committee on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2013, Southport Tourism Business Network submitted a letter asking about the proposal.</p> <p>Upon consideration of the question, the Area Committee resolved:-</p> <p><i>"That as a seaside resort looking to attract tourism and businesses to the town, the Council should ensure that</i></p>

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			<p data-bbox="715 264 1326 297"><i>Southport retains its provision of public toilets.</i></p> <p data-bbox="715 331 1209 365">The details of the letter are as follows:</p> <ul data-bbox="715 405 1461 2018" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="715 405 1461 533">• “I am writing on behalf of the Southport Tourism Business Network (STBN), a representative group of some 100 businesses, mainly but not exclusively, Southport based.</li> <li data-bbox="715 573 1461 801">• We note with concern that there is a public consultation on, according to the Council’s public announcement, two options: the closure of all paid for and free public toilet provision across Sefton, or the increase in the price paid (at some or all public toilets?). We wish to raise strong objection to the first proposal</li> <li data-bbox="715 813 1461 1104">• because of what we believe will be the intended and unintended, direct and indirect, consequences and damage done as a result, to the visitor economy and employment prospects for Southport and the wider Borough. A wider Borough from which many of those employed in tourism, retail, the night time economy come from and a Borough where many of the service and supply industries supplying the visitor economy are based.</li> <li data-bbox="715 1144 1461 1910">• Over the last 10 to 15 years there has been considerable investment made by both the public and private sector and major improvements made in the look and feel of Southport as a destination or resort town. It seems a desperate measure to encourage investment of well in excess of £150m of both public and private sector money in to major new facilities and the public realm within Southport, only then to withdraw a fairly basic public service that directly supports that investment, and all for the want of £52k per year. Moreover, it sends a very negative message to other external private sector investors and existing businesses that might be considering investing in the creation of jobs and prosperity within Southport and Sefton. In order to respond properly to the consultation, which closes on 1 February, we need to seek clarification on a number of issues, one means of doing that is to raise those questions with the Southport Area Committee. In doing so we also hope to alert the Area Committee, and through them, the Council to our concerns, in parallel to any comments we may subsequently make via the public consultation.</li> <li data-bbox="715 1951 1461 2018">• These questions are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="810 1989 1461 2018">○ If increasing the fee is an option why it is not</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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			<p>mentioned in the supporting consultation paper, or in the recommendation that paper contains. Is an increase in pricing and, therefore, the retention of some or all provision a serious option or has it already been largely ruled out? We assume not but that may be the inadvertent impression given, principally by the lack of any reference to higher charges in the public consultation document which, for ease of reference, is reproduced below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What are the options and impacts of increased pricing? Has there been any modelling done to understand those impacts and, if so, can the resulting information be shared with us (and the rest of the public) so we can better understand where charges can be levied, what the practical implications are and what the increased price would need to be in order to generate the required compensating income. (Sefton know what the volume of usage is now, we don't, nor do we fully understand the intricacies of such issues as toilet price resistance).</li> <li>○ We are told the total cost of the service has been reduced to £92k and that going forward cessation would save £52k, there is an obvious disparity in the figures but the reasons for that are not explained. Does that mean that the service now costs £52k not £92k, or are there residual and other costs that will have to be paid, regardless of whether public toilets are provided? If so what are those residual costs, are they £40k or some other higher or lower figure and what broadly do those costs include and cover and for how long do these residual costs continue?</li> <li>○ A number of new toilet facilities have been provided in Southport as part of the recent regeneration programme. When were these facilities built, at what cost, to whom and what are residual financial implications, if any, or the lost investment resulting from closure? What will happen to those relatively new facilities in Southport once closed?</li> <li>○ Southport has a strong visitor economy on which it is, to a large degree, reliant. We believe that local residents and the visiting public, both day and staying visitors, across both business and leisure markets have an expectation of quality public toilet provision in</li> </ul>

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			<p>any town purporting to be a destination of any consequence. What analysis of the direct and indirect impact on the visitor economy in Southport has been done and what view did that reach on the impact upon such things as: visitor satisfaction, visitor volumes and visitor spend? What are the likely impacts that these (negative?) changes to satisfaction, visitor numbers and value might have upon the direct employment in the visitor service industries and indirect impact on the suppliers and service sectors supporting them?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ We note that several of the facilities to be closed are located at other attractions in the Borough and, in particular, at some of the popular beaches and other amenity areas. What if any consideration has been given to the requirements of quality award bodies for public facilities at these locations, for example Keep Britain Tidy UK and EU beach and environmental awards?</li> <li>○ Some of the locations earmarked for closure service amenities that have had or about to have significant EU, Lottery and other grant monies. Are there any liabilities to provide public conveniences connected with the grants received to date, if so what are they? Are there potential impacts on future or on-going public and other funding applications? For example, do the existing plans and funding streams for Kings Gardens assume that the existing public provision on the promenade will be in place?</li> <li>○ Whilst it may be argued that the private sector should, could and would take some of the strain, say in central Southport (although that isn't a given nor is it always practical at all times of the day) there aren't necessarily private sector alternatives in many of these other locations. What analysis of alternative provision has been undertaken, what are the perceived alternatives? Have the views of the potential alternative, private sector providers been sought and what was their reactions, particularly in the more remote locations?</li> <li>○ What is the assessed, likely consequences and likely environmental and cleansing costs associated with closing all public toilets in parks and rural beach areas?</li> <li>○ What are the assessed likely consequences and likely additional environmental cleansing, public order and public decency</li> </ul>

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			<p>consequences associated with closing toilets in urban areas and, specifically, within Southport, and especially those connected with the night-time economy?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Are the closures viewed as a temporary or permanent measure? If there is any aspiration to reopen toilets in the short to medium term and if so what are the assumed costs of re-commissioning the toilets and the service necessary to support them?</li> <li>○ Private sector interests in Southport, including STBN, are actively considering proposals to initiate a Business Improvement District (BID) for the wider Southport area. One of the fundamental principles of the BID process is that the funding raised from the levy of local businesses should only be used to provide additional or enhanced services, not to replace or fund those already provided by the Council. Given the early and delicate stage of the BID discussions and negotiations, has any consideration been given to the intended and unintended impact upon relationships with, and attitudes towards the Council, among active private sector partners and all those who will need to become active partners if the BID is to succeed?</li> <li>○ Many among the business community view the provision of accessible public toilets in a, “resort town”, to be a basic public service and a service both traditionally and almost certainly best provided by or through the Council. Do the Council have any views on any practical alternatives other than either total closure or simply increasing the charges made to the public?</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● We hope that the area committee will be able to help us better understand and evaluate what we perceive to be the serious negative impacts of the proposed closure of all public toilet provision in Sefton. We also hope that the area committee may share some of our concerns and ensure that those concerns are aired within the Council in addition to any concerns raised by us and others via the public consultation.”</li> </ul> <p>A separate response has been sent by Street Scene Services to STBN answering these questions.</p>
Southport Tourism Business		<b>x</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● I am chairman of the Southport Tourism Business Network (STBN). As you might imagine the tourism businesses in the partnership as somewhat</li> </ul>

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Network (100 businesses)			<p>concerned by the proposal to cease provision of public toilets across the borough and in particular within Southport and at various other locations that are deemed critical the visitor economy. I have tried call a couple of time to ask some questions without success so have decided to email in an attempt to open dialogue and help me better understand the proposals and therefore be better able to comment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The report says that following savings last year the cost was reduced to £92k and that the proposal is to cease all provision saving £52k. Does that mean that the service now cost the Council £52k and that is what will be saved by not providing toilets. Or is the report saying that the service currently cost £92k, there is a saving of £52k to be made if the public toilets are closed but for the privilege of having no toilets there will still be a residual cost of c£40k? The latter case would be entirely understandable but clearly the cost v benefit equation is considerably different between the two scenarios and or the million and one grey areas in between.</li> <li>• The consultation announcement suggests that there are two options close the toilets or put up prices but the recommendations and the paper itself make no mention of the option to increase revenue by increased charges. With my British Destination hat on I actual gave evidence on the provision of public toilet to a Select Committee a few years ago so I am fully aware that the dynamics of charging are complex and that turning a profit isn't as simple as the average lay person might imagine. Know that I still begs the question what if any modelling has been done on this and what were the outcomes?</li> <li>• Equally there is not statement of direct or indirect impact on the public, on businesses the economy or on any other associated activities. For example, in my professional duties I work closely with the likes of Keep Britain Tidy and am very aware that beach and other award schemes almost always have a requirement for toilet provision in order to be compliant with minimum standards. There a raft of considerations around the promotion of Southport and in particular Lord Street as a visitor destination (local, day and staying visitor both business and leisure) and a whole raft of issues around night time economy street fowling, public decency etc. Are you able to share what cost benefit analysis has been undertaken with us so we can make a more informed view of what Sefton issues are and what the solutions might be, other than simply closing the entire service down.</li> </ul>

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Arriva Merseyside		x	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I write in response to the Sefton proposal/consultation procedure to close public toilets in areas of North Sefton. On behalf of Arriva North West, I would express an objection to any changes in the toilet facilities in Crosby and The Plough, Crossens, Southport.</li> <li>As you may be aware Arriva NW provides a significant annual financial contribution towards the general up-keep of both these facilities and I consider we are legitimate stakeholders and our position should be taken into account during the decision making process.</li> <li>The need for accessible toilets is essential for our staff and helps us provide a smooth efficient comprehensive bus network of services for the people in the North Sefton area. Accordingly I would respectfully ask you consider our objection as part of your consultation and decision making process.</li> </ul>
Sefton Beach Management Forum	?	?	<p>Comments at the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shore Road is a long way from shops – therefore a long way for visitors/families to walk</li> <li>May increase anti social behaviour on the beach through people relieving themselves in public</li> <li>Human waste fouling would affect water quality</li> <li>Likely to mean that Sefton cannot go for beach quality awards</li> <li>May affect tourism</li> <li>Doesn't seem like a lot of money saved given the impact</li> <li>May be a negative impact on businesses with people trying to use private facilities, and may transfer anti social behaviour, such as drug use, to these facilities</li> <li>Shore Road, Ainsdale, is a priority location for toilets</li> </ul> <p>Ideas to mitigate the effects of the proposal were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can we add value to the Shore Road site? Put information boards or advertising in public conveniences</li> <li>Use people on vocational courses to carry out site maintenance as part of their training to reduce</li> </ul>

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			<p>running costs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact Lake District National Park and learn from their experience of toilet closure and charging</li> <li>• Introduce parking fees in and around Cambridge Road/Crosby Lakeside to increase income</li> </ul> <p>Comments about the consultation process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation has not been well advertised and should include more people</li> <li>• Is it possible to extend the public consultation period and use free social media to contact people?</li> <li>• Have you sent letters to all Council Tax payers to inform them of the consultation? Not doing so is unacceptable.</li> </ul>
<p>SPOC/SPAC older persons Meeting 22/01/2013 – Bootle (15 consultees)</p>		<p>x</p>	<p>Comments from the meeting were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The group was unanimous in its opposition to close all public conveniences in Sefton</li> <li>• It is an appalling idea</li> <li>• It is a step backwards</li> <li>• The population is getting older – to meet their needs you should be building more</li> <li>• There are no public toilets in Bootle – obviously people in Bootle “don’t need public toilets!”</li> <li>• Public toilets are a necessity</li> <li>• Older people are often on medication such as water tablets and need access to toilets – if there are no toilets, what will they do?</li> <li>• There is a growing older population – lack of public toilets may discourage older people from going out and it will increase their social isolation</li> <li>• How will Arriva drivers be able to cope with toilet closures</li> </ul> <p>Priority toilet sites identified were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Burbo Bank – the group goes on day trips to this area</li> </ul>

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Southport depends on tourism – if you've been on a bus or coach for 3-4 hours, you need a public toilet</li> <li>• Wherever you are, if you need a toilet then you need a toilet – they are all priority locations</li> </ul> <p>About paying for public toilets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some people would be prepared to pay up to 40p to use a public toilet</li> <li>• Would not pay 50p to use a toilet</li> <li>• Don't see why we should have to pay to use public toilets – we pay rates for that</li> </ul> <p>About using private sector toilets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group was unaware of existing arrangements in Bootle for the public to be able to use certain private sector facilities in Bootle Strand, Whetherspoons, McDonalds, etc.</li> <li>• Will use private toilets but don't like to</li> <li>• Often told by staff that toilets are not for public use – they are for paying customers only</li> <li>• Tourists will have to drag their bags around Southport in search of a toilet to use</li> <li>• Not nice for a lady to go in to a pub on their own – older ladies feel it is degrading to go in to a pub to use the toilet</li> <li>• McDonalds in Bootle has toilets upstairs – difficult to access for older people</li> </ul> <p>Suggestions made to mitigate any impact were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use dog fouling fines to pay for toilets</li> <li>• Re-publish "At Your Convenience" details of where arrangements have been made for the public to use private facilities in Bootle</li> </ul>
SPOC/SPAC older persons Meeting 29/01/2013 – Maghull (26 consultees)		x	<p>Comments from the meeting were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The group was unanimous in its opposition to close all public conveniences in Sefton</li> <li>• Owners of the shopping centre gave land to Sefton for the purpose of building public toilets and supplying attendants – it has reneged on this</li> </ul>

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			<p>agreement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People used to compliment the town on the standard of its public toilets</li> <li>• Facilities are limited in Maghull – only one public toilet</li> <li>• Lots of coaches leave from the town square</li> <li>• Frank Hornby Festival will bring in a large number of visitors to the Town Hall – public toilets will be needed</li> </ul> <p>Priority toilet sites identified were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maghull town centre toilets</li> <li>• Moor Lane toilets</li> </ul> <p>About paying for public toilets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Birmingham and Liverpool Lime Street toilets both charge 30p and are attended by a member of staff</li> <li>• Would pay up to 40p</li> <li>• People will pay if desperate</li> </ul> <p>About using private sector toilets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are no shops in Maghull with toilets available</li> <li>• Only toilet is in the Horse and Hounds public house</li> <li>• Usually got to buy something – spend £1 – to use a toilet</li> </ul> <p>Suggestions made to mitigate any impact were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could Maghull Group take responsibility? Maghull Group owns the town square, ask them to take over the toilets</li> <li>• Go back and find out where else you can find the money from – council has a large empty land/property portfolio it could dispose of</li> <li>• Use volunteers to clean toilets</li> <li>• Could close some of the Southport toilets and people</li> </ul>

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			<p>could use hotels instead</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase rates by 1-2% to save services</li> </ul>
<p>SPOC/SPAC older persons Meeting 30/01/2013 – Southport (67 consultees)</p>		<p>x</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 63 members of the group disagree with closing public toilets in Southport</li> <li>• Four were in favour of closure</li> <li>• 30% of the group would consider not going out if there were no public toilets available</li> </ul> <p>Comments from the meeting were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you decided to write yourself off as a tourist resort?</li> <li>• Families with children will be affected</li> <li>• Can't go in to public houses if you are a lady or you have small children</li> <li>• Might as well put wheelchair users in the attic – private sector facilities are not always accessible</li> <li>• It is a basic human need</li> <li>• Only around 20% of the group actually use public toilets</li> </ul> <p>About paying for public toilets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Around 50% of the group were happy with the current 20p charge</li> <li>• Ten of the group were in favour of a 30p charge</li> <li>• Two were in favour of a 40p or 50p charge</li> </ul> <p>Priority toilet sites identified were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need toilets at Ainsdale</li> <li>• Eastbank Street</li> </ul> <p>About using private sector toilets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50% of the group said they would use private sector facilities</li> <li>• Prefer to use private sector facilities if cleanliness and free access can be guaranteed</li> </ul> <p>Suggestions made to mitigate any impact were:</p>

Respondent	For the Proposal	Against the Proposal	Comments Received
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Atkinson toilets can be used for the public when it opens</li> <li>• Get rid of street sweeping machines</li> <li>• Sell the council's empty building portfolio off</li> <li>• Reduce the number of councillors to one or two per ward</li> <li>• Ensure that the council collects all the money owed to it from debtors</li> </ul>
Sefton Access Forum	?	?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No group response received – individual members were invited to submit responses via the Chair of SAF</li> </ul>
Hesketh Park Heritage Group (Letter to Cllr Dowd)		x	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I am responding to the request in the newspaper in respect of toilet closures throughout Sefton.</li> <li>• Whilst appreciating that the debt in Sefton is enormous and that cuts have to be made in order to reduce this, I must however make a strong plea to retain those outside Hesketh Park on Park Crescent - the only toilets available for park users and others to use.</li> <li>• Over each year there are thousands of people, 40% children, visit the park and youngsters needs for toilet facilities, could be greater than adult needs!</li> <li>• The resulting scenario I can only foresee in emergency or otherwise is the park itself being used as an open toilet with its resultant consequences – this does not even bear thinking about.</li> <li>• As Chairman of the Hesketh Park Heritage Group I know I have the support of all our members in this.</li> <li>• We have, having had the park refurbished with Lottery money over the last 13 years and the very reason I started this Group in order to obtain this money, as a final plan, to establish an Education/Visitor Centre in the park within which there will be toilets for the schoolchildren, managed by the café owner. At present we are having difficulty getting the necessary funding together, but I am trying to obtain private resources, we have some, to offset the cost.</li> <li>• If you close the current toilets, the park will essentially become a health hazard.</li> <li>• One or two other points I wish to stress for your deliberations is the fact that 1) surrounding Hesketh Park is a deprived area and officially recognised as such in other words bedsit land with many single mothers with children, no gardens to play in and whose only recreation is usage of the park. 2) Taxi drivers along with bus drivers also use these toilets.</li> </ul>

Respondent	For the Proposal	Against the Proposal	Comments Received
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before taking this drastic step have you thought about coin operated toilets in the essential areas to offset some of the cost? I understand at one time the ruling was that one cubicle had to remain free – that applied to the old toilets certainly but like everything else this ruling could have changed.</li> <li>• Seriously, as far as Hesketh Park toilets are concerned, which is mine and my group’s main concern for all the reasons given I urge you to think again about closing them down.</li> </ul>
Ainsdale Civic Society		x	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thank you for your email sent to our Chairman, TB, regarding the proposed closure of public toilets.</li> <li>• The members of our Society are opposed to this proposal, particularly in regard to the toilets in Southport and Ainsdale, as they feel that as a tourist area, it is essential that the public have access to toilet facilities.</li> <li>• This is particularly important in the beach areas and the public parks. If these facilities are not available, not only is this an inconvenience to visitors, but there is the risk of human excrement being deposited in secluded areas, causing extreme health risks.</li> <li>• We feel that the way forward it to ensure the facilities are well maintained and an increased charge is made which will cover their ongoing costs. We will be completing the survey but wish our views to be registered with you.</li> </ul>
Botanic Gardens Community Association (Meeting 16/01/2013 and letter 28/01/2013)  (5 consultees)		x	<p>Letter 28/01/2013:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On behalf of the Botanic Gardens Community Association we wish to comment on the public toilet closure proposals.</li> <li>• We realise savings have to be made, but as a general comment we would not like to see the closure of the toilet blocks in tourist areas as this would act as a deterrent to visitors planning to visit or return once they have encountered the discomfort and inconvenience experienced; this would definitely deter coach operators from bringing passengers to this situation and harm the economy.</li> <li>• As regards the “<i>Jewel in the Crown</i>” Botanic Gardens toilets, we feel they should be improved as part of the visitor experience rather than closed, for the following reasons:</li> <li>• The Botanic Gardens toilets serve the busy café as well as the park.</li> </ul>

Respondent	For the Proposal	Against the Proposal	Comments Received
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coaches visit daily from far away with many elderly and disabled passengers; they also contribute greatly to the whole village economy.</li> <li>• There are no alternative facilities in the small cottage shops of Churchtown heritage village.</li> <li>• Closure would jeopardise any future funding bids for the Gardens and the Museum Building and Green Flag accreditation awards.</li> <li>• The toilets are off the highway and behind locked gates out of daylight hours (this could be reduced to 9am until dusk).</li> <li>• Good toilets can be an asset to a public park (and tourist town).</li> <li>• The BGCA have consulted with over 600 park users who would like to retain the toilets and see them improved; they would have no objection to paying for decent well managed facilities which are opened at sensible, cost-effective hours.</li> <li>• We, of course, agree - and would also like an attendant paid from contributions to clean and oversee and to welcome visitors.</li> <li>• We are working to obtain funding for the Botanic which would include the toilets refurbishment.</li> <li>• We are sure, with Sefton Council's help, we can make a success of this because we know what the public want to see in our park.</li> <li>• We are the "jewel in the crown" and want everyone to be proud of the Gardens.</li> </ul> <p>Meeting 16/01/2013:</p> <p>About the toilets at Botanic Gardens, The Community Association said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People won't come to Botanic Gardens if the toilets are not open</li> <li>• The park is a tourist attraction, and there will be an economic impact in the area if the toilets are not there.</li> <li>• Part of the Green Flag criteria is about providing a</li> </ul>

Respondent	For the Proposal	Against the Proposal	Comments Received
			<p>welcoming place – can't be welcoming for visiting coach parties, elderly, or disabled if there are no toilets. It is the number one facility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a high volume of visitors from coach trips</li> <li>• Visitors to the park usually stay for at least an hour</li> <li>• People won't travel to the park if there are no toilets</li> <li>• Only other facilities in the area are in the pub opposite, which is not suitable for young children to visit</li> <li>• People will feel safer if the toilets are pay to use</li> <li>• Everywhere is charging for public toilets now – but they are often better quality</li> <li>• Biggest complaint is about the standard of the toilets at Botanic Gardens</li> <li>• Botanic Gardens Community Association are applying for Heritage Lottery Funding for the park – this will include an upgrade of the toilets. May be an investment of up to £3.2 million</li> <li>• Looking after the toilets would have to be a paid job for someone – not a volunteer job</li> <li>• Botanic Gardens “is not ours,” so taking on the toilets on a volunteer basis would not be a possibility</li> </ul> <p>About the toilets in the Southport area, they said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need public toilets for the resort</li> <li>• Southport is promoted as a “Classic Resort” – people won't have time to see the resort if they have to be bussed to the toilets at the Eco Centre</li> <li>• There is likely to be problems with Kings Gardens if there are no toilets – toilet facilities at the Kings Gardens café are small and won't cope with visitor numbers that may be attracted after the Heritage Lottery Funding investment that is being made now</li> <li>• Association members have had to buy something from a shop if they have wanted to use their toilet – Southport Visiter reported a family being charged £1 for a child to use private facilities in a café despite the adults paying for their drinks</li> <li>• Council should consider a trial option of putting</li> </ul>

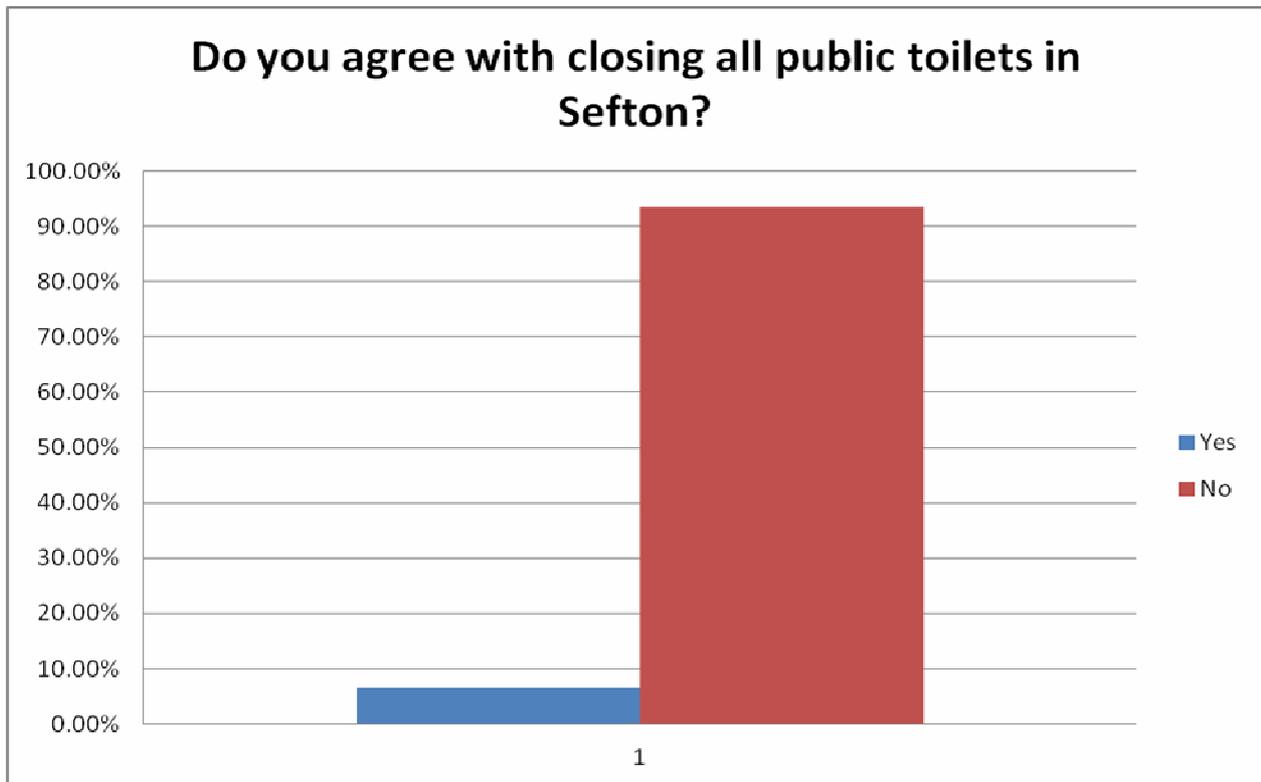
Respondent	For the Proposal	Against the Proposal	Comments Received
			<p>charges up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited public convenience opening hours but of a good quality is better than having no facilities or poor facilities – keep toilets open on certain days</li> <li>• Possibly open 8am to 8pm or open for late night shopping</li> <li>• Nightclub and pub toilets should be able to cope with their clientele</li> <li>• Big shops know that having toilets will attract shoppers</li> <li>• Lord Street, Eastbank Street and Hesketh Park are crucial areas for public toilets</li> <li>• Preston New Road is a lesser priority – not sure about Hill Street</li> </ul>
<p>Concession holder at Botanic Gardens and Hesketh Park (Meeting 16/01/2013)</p>		<p>x</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• His concessions at Botanic Gardens and Hesketh Park are open 7 days a week every day except Christmas Day</li> <li>• Opening hours at Botanic are 9.00am-4.30pm during the week and 9.00am-5.00pm or 6.00pm at weekends</li> <li>• It was important to improve the facilities at Botanic Gardens</li> <li>• Must keep toilets in Hesketh Park – there are no other facilities nearby</li> <li>• The parks will never grow if the toilets are taken away – Botanic Gardens is used heavily by tourists, Hesketh Park is used heavily by local people</li> <li>• It was best to charge for using toilets as it controls access and prevents anti social behaviour</li> </ul>
<p>e-mail from Mr BC, Formby</p>		<p>x</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I have just responded to the online consultation regarding the proposal to close all public conveniences in Sefton.</li> <li>• In Formby we had a Public Convenience in what was a free car park. The car park has for several years now been a privately run concern. During this time the public convenience was closed and has been allowed to fall into a bad state of repair.</li> <li>• I have no idea who is responsible for this building but I do know that the residents of Formby and the visitors, from whom many of the businesses in the</li> </ul>

Respondent	For the Proposal	Against the Proposal	Comments Received
			<p>village depend are being deprived of a facility that they once had. Strange as it might seem people are still needing to visit a toilet from time to time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In short, closing toilets is a <b>public inconvenience!</b></li> <li>• Please see attached photo showing my painting which I think illustrates the problem (see front cover).</li> </ul>
e-mail from Mr RF		x	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please find below my response to the public toilet closure proposal consultation.</li> <li>• Please note that the engagespace system seems to be down as I have tried several times but on each occasion it has failed when I try to click into the second page.</li> <li>• 1. No</li> <li>• 2. Public toilets are an important front-line service - particularly where they facilitate tourism (beaches and out-of-town areas). They are also important to older and disabled people (I have ulcerative colitis and without loos the beach is a no-go area). £52,000 represents a small sum in terms of the value they provide to citizens, and it would be a great shame to lose them.</li> <li>• 3. yes - up to 50p</li> <li>• 4. Yes</li> <li>• 5. Perhaps look at removing public toilets in villages/towns (where there are other options) but maintain them in rural/coastal areas.</li> </ul>
Telephone call from Mrs JH to Sefton Contact Centre	?	?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• STATES IS POSTER ASKING WOULD PEOPLE PAY FOR USE OF TOILETS AND CALLER WOULD PAY FOR THIS SERVICE.</li> </ul>
Telephone call from Mrs VC to Sefton Contact Centre		x	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WOULD LIKE TO OBJECT TO PROPOSAL TO CLOSING PUBLIC TOILETS. NOT HAPPY WITH THIS SUGGESTION</li> </ul>
Letter from Mrs MH Crosby		x	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I am putting pen to paper as I have tried to phone for over a week in regards to the fact that Sefton is looking to close <u>all</u> public toilets in area.</li> <li>• As far as I'm concerned, "and plenty more like me," think it is a disgusting idea, as these facilities (Moor Lane) are used by loads of people, even the bus drivers stop to use them.</li> <li>• If mums and dads take their children to the parks, there is nowhere for them to go to the loo, same at the marina S Rd, you have to come away from the parks to use loo; if you can find one – not allow you in unless you spend money – can you not put a money lock on doors that you already have. Few and far between or close libraries instead, of which I don't really want to see, it's a case of the devil and the</li> </ul>

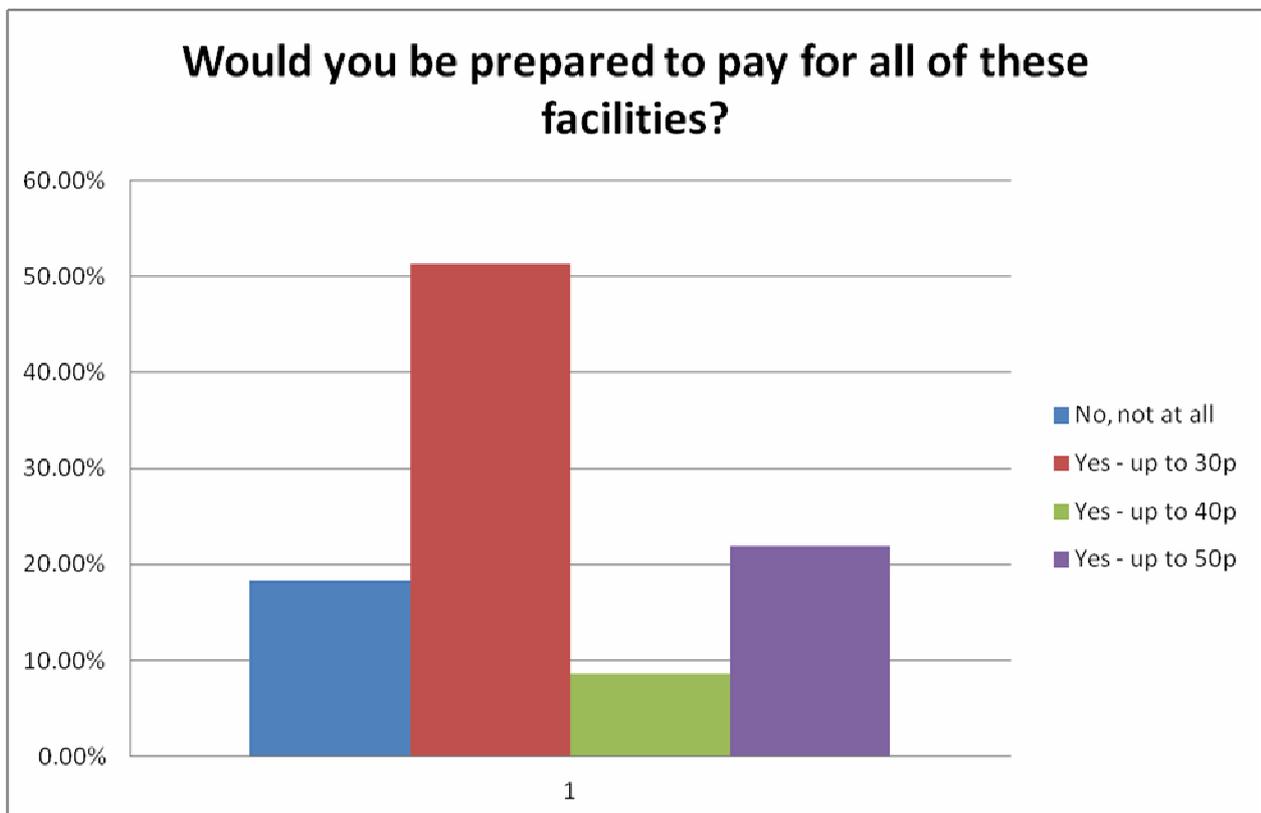
Respondent	For the Proposal	Against the Proposal	Comments Received
			<p>deep blue sea</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I think it is a real disgrace, and hope that you and all concerned will think again</li> </ul>
e-mail from Ms DR		x	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This proposal is ridiculous; we will be going back to the dark ages next. We are trying to woo people back to the area not send them away.</li> <li>I am totally against this proposal, what will pregnant mothers/the elderly do. NoNONo a hundred times NO.</li> <li>Send me details of how we reduce the number of councillors that we really don't need, this is a much better option.</li> </ul>
Seaview Guest House		x	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We were completely aghast that Sefton councillors were proposing to close Public conveniences in the major parts of tourist sites in Southport.</li> <li>For a local authority to consider this as a viable option to consider in a major tourist location is beyond sound business or community reasoning.</li> <li>This closure proposal will affect the elderly alighting from bus on day trips to Southport, families with young children and citizens who suffer disabilities.</li> <li>I cannot understand the reasoning for this proposal when the Council is spending £5.5 million of grant money to revamp Kings Gardens to attract, not only people from the local population, but tourists and school day trips.</li> <li>If the council is committed to developing the local economy this proposal may be a bit like the "killing the goose that lays the golden egg". I would ask each councillor to consider if they, and members of their family were on holiday in a British resort would they expect to see Public Conveniences provided by local authorities if needs must?</li> <li>I would ask councillors to rethink their proposals for the closure of valuable but often unrecognised public services.</li> <li>Can I ask if shoppers and tourists will be accommodated for their toileting needs in the new Art Complex due to be re-opened later in the year?</li> <li>There are numerous businesses in Southport that work in partnership with the local authority who are all contributing to sustaining a vibrant local economy. Please recognise this and ask our elected members to reject these proposals.</li> <li>Unfortunately I have tried to fill in your on-line form for response, Unfortunately at the time of "penning" this response the facility does not appear to function!</li> </ul>
Mr CC	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I would be I interested in buying the one on Hill Street subject to a change of use if you could pass on my interest to the relevant person.</li> </ul>



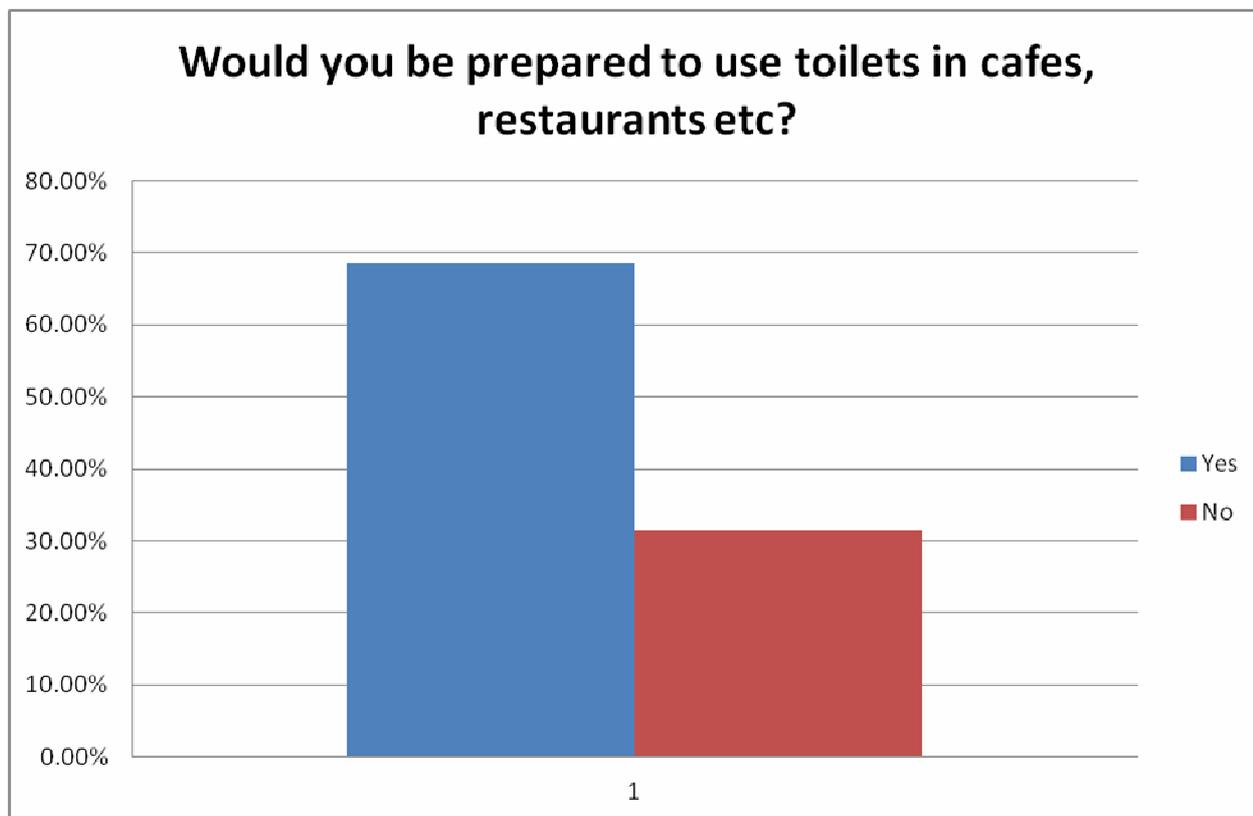
## Appendix 4 – Analysis of Questionnaire Results in Detail



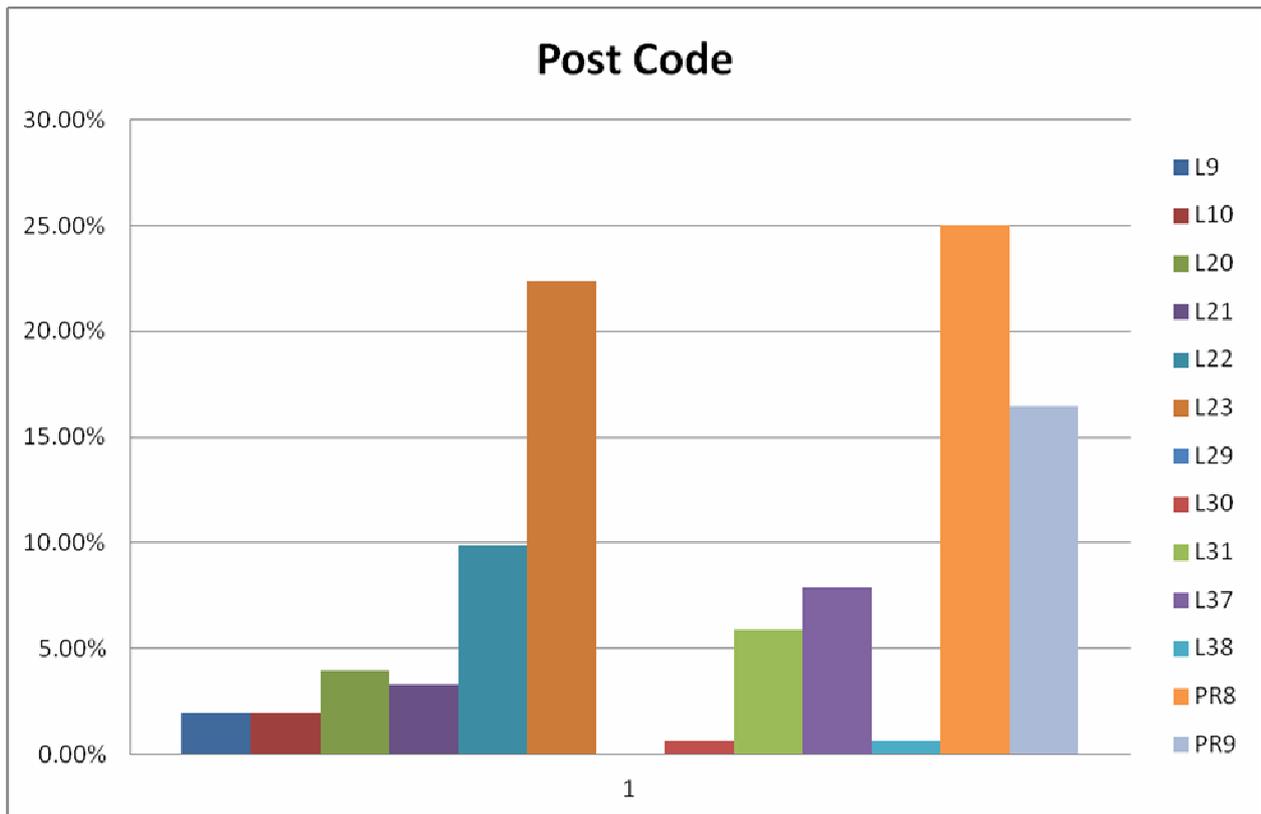
93.37% of respondents stated that they did not agree with closing public toilets in Sefton.



When asked about whether they would be prepared to pay to use public toilets, 81.71% said that they would be prepared to to pay, whilst 18.29% said they would not. Of those that would be prepared to pay, 51.22% would pay up to 30p and 21.95% would be prepared to pay up to 50p. 8.54% would be prepared to pay up to 40p. The support for the 50p limit may be down to a personal wish to only use one coin for payment.

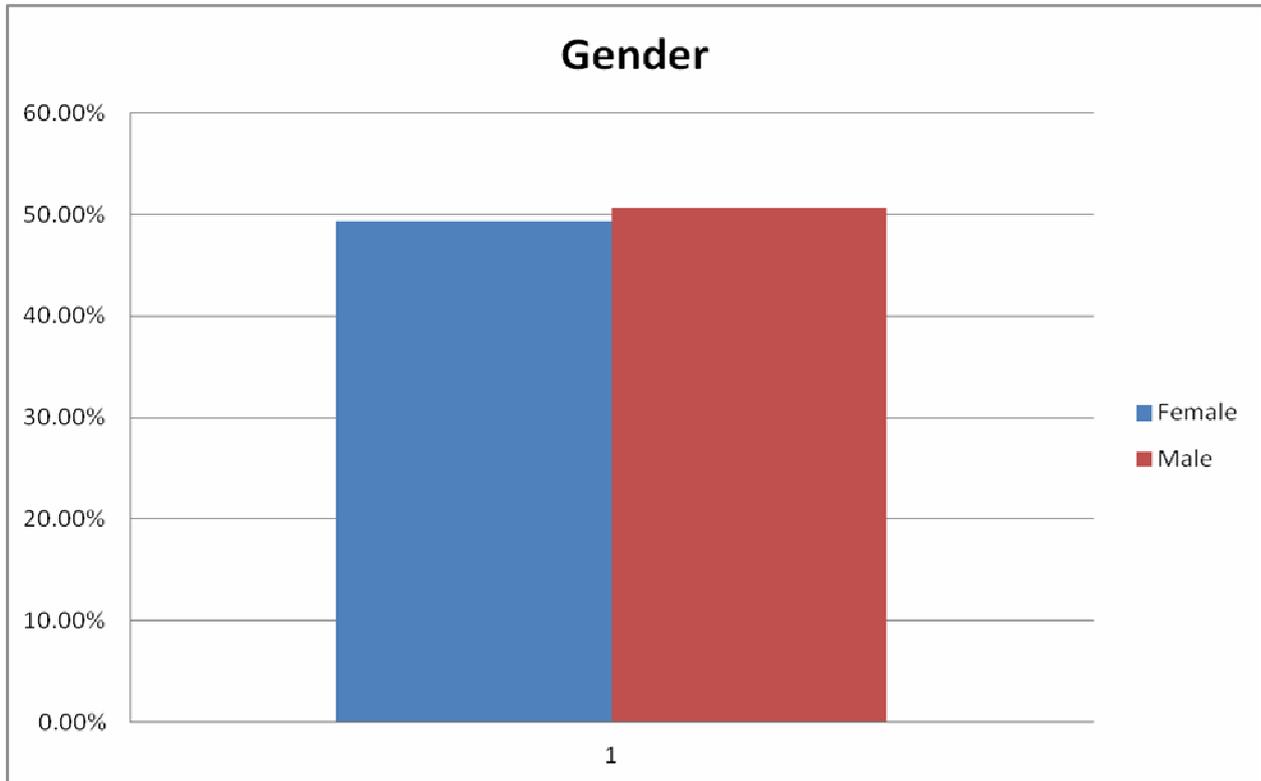


Respondents stated that they would be prepared to use toilets in cafes, restaurants – 68.52% supported this idea, whilst 31.48% were against it.

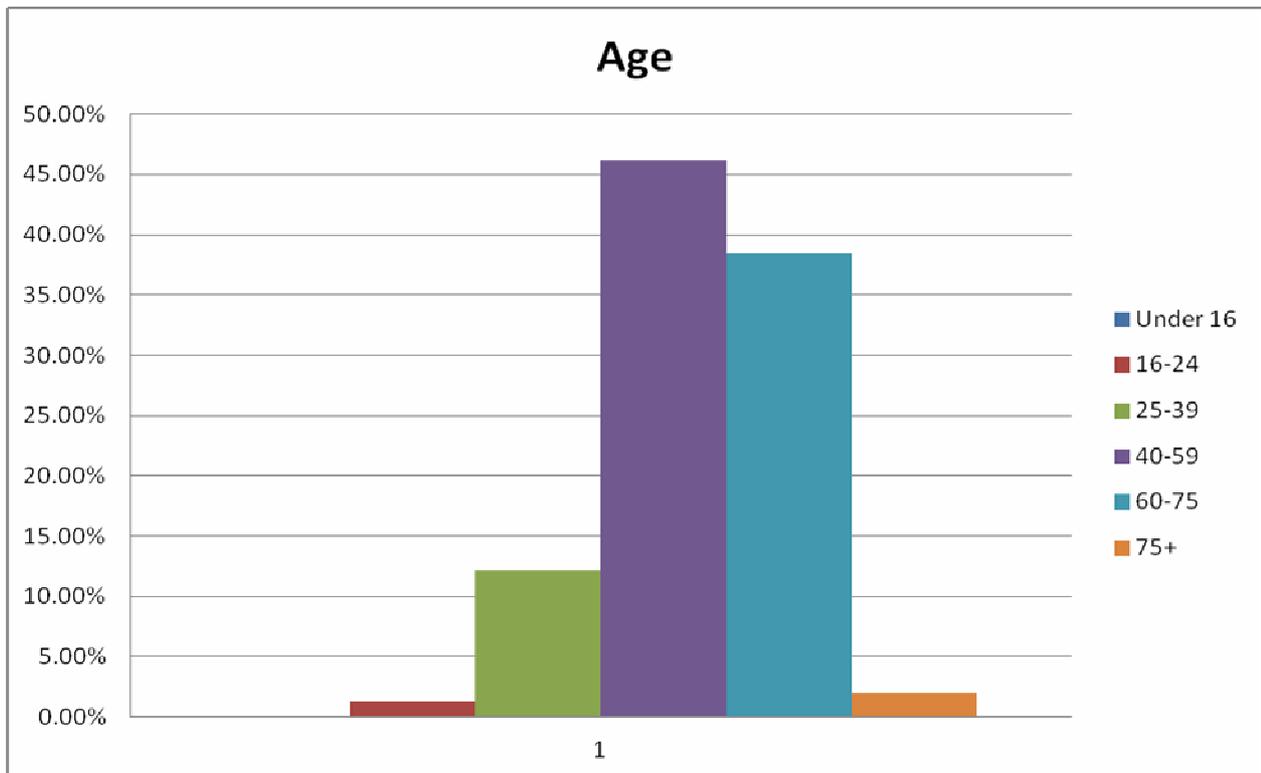


Of those that responded to the consultation, most came from the PR8 post code with 25% of total respondents from this area completing the questionnaire. The second highest percentage is from the L23 area, at 22.37%. These are the Southport and Crosby areas, and are probably the highest because of their reliance on tourism, creating a high level of public interest. There were no responses from the L23 area. This is Lunt, where there is a relatively small local population.

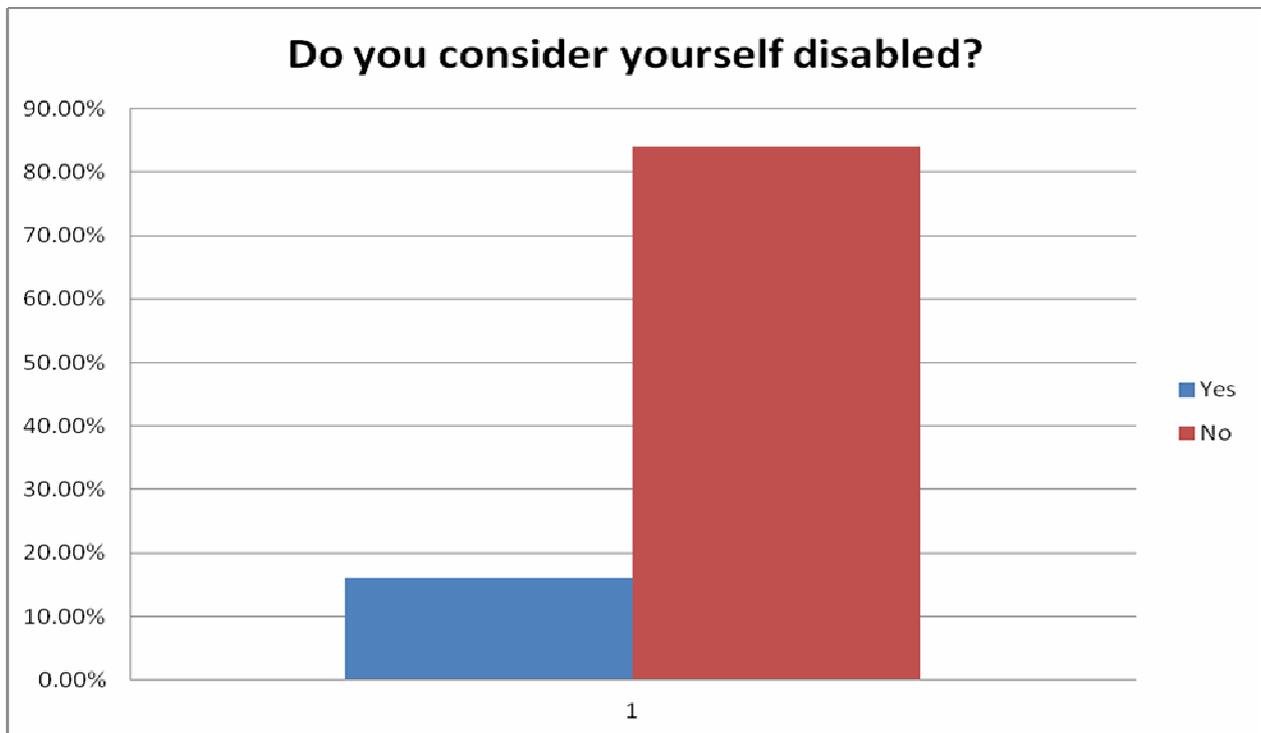
## Appendix 5 – Equality Data



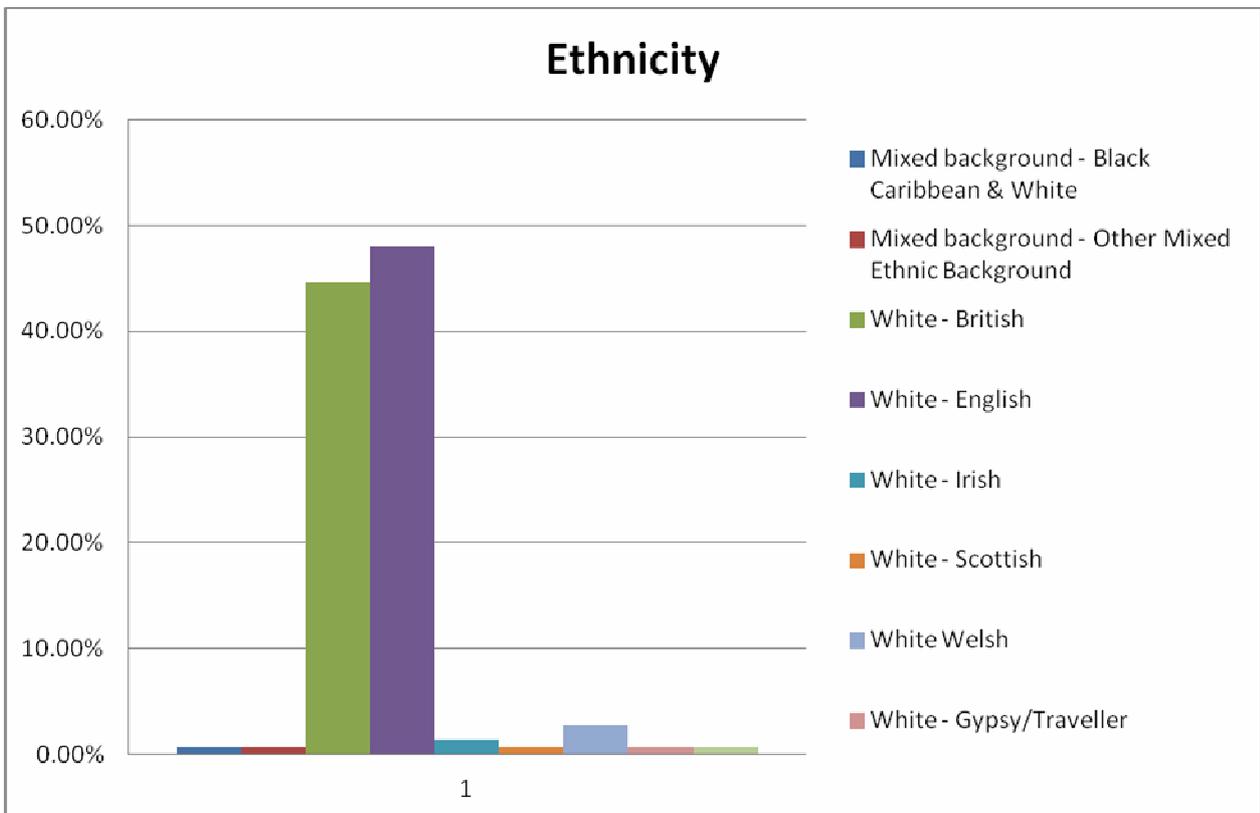
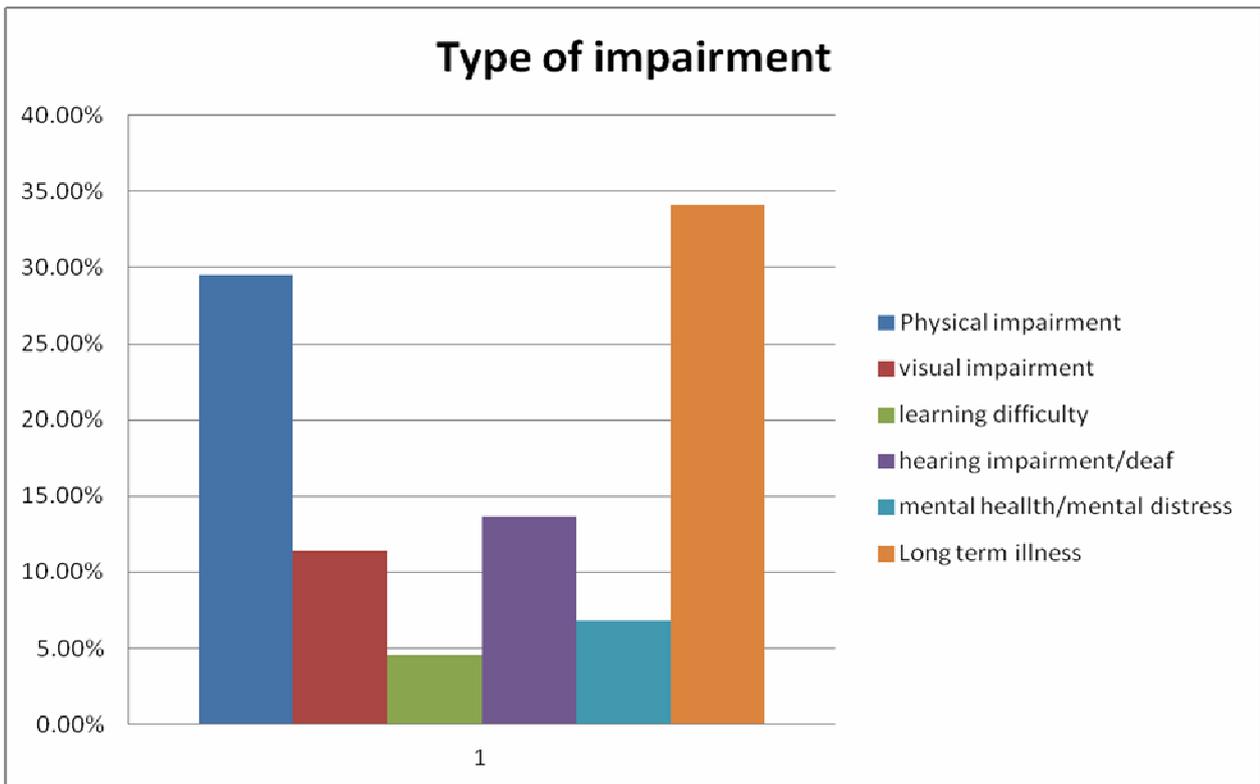
The ratio of male to female respondents was almost even, with 49.37% being female and 50.63% being male.



Most people who responded to the consultation were aged between 40-59. 46.15% were in this age group, and 38.46% were aged 60-75.

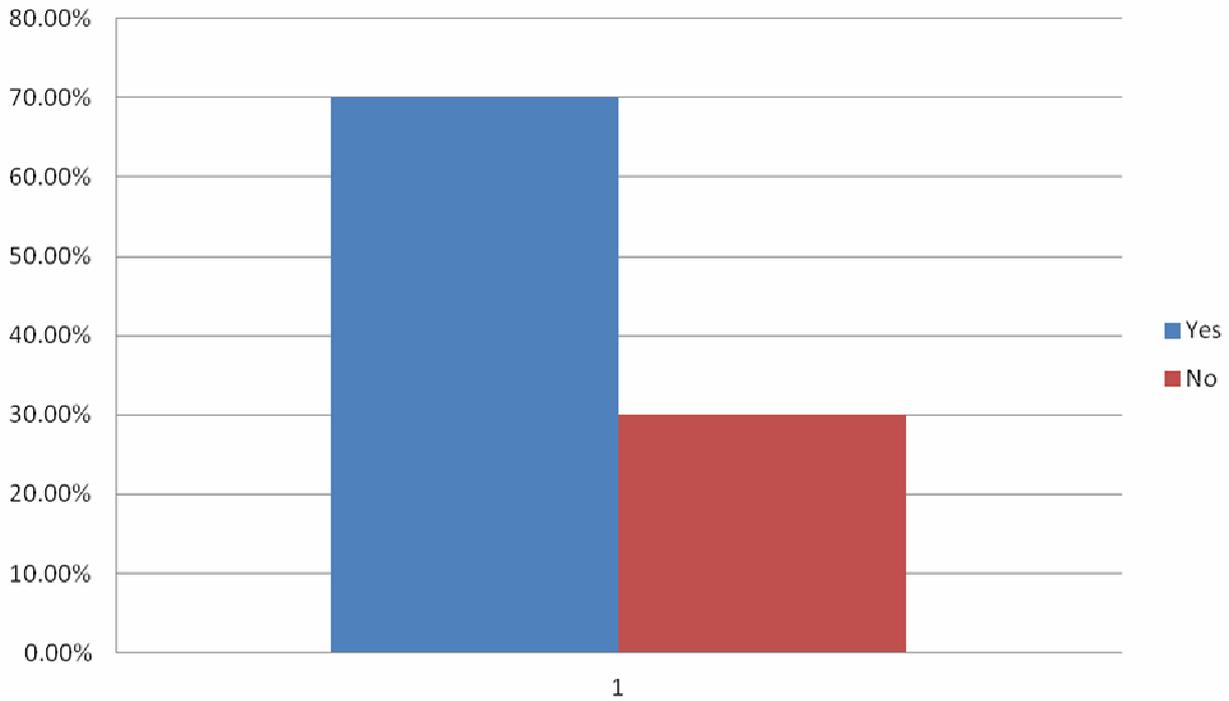


Of those that responded to this question, 16.06% considered themselves to be disabled. The most common type of impairment was a long term limiting illness at 34.09%, followed by physical impairment at 29.55%. Comparing this with the previous age profile, this may be because of the higher prevalence of long term limiting illness in older people.



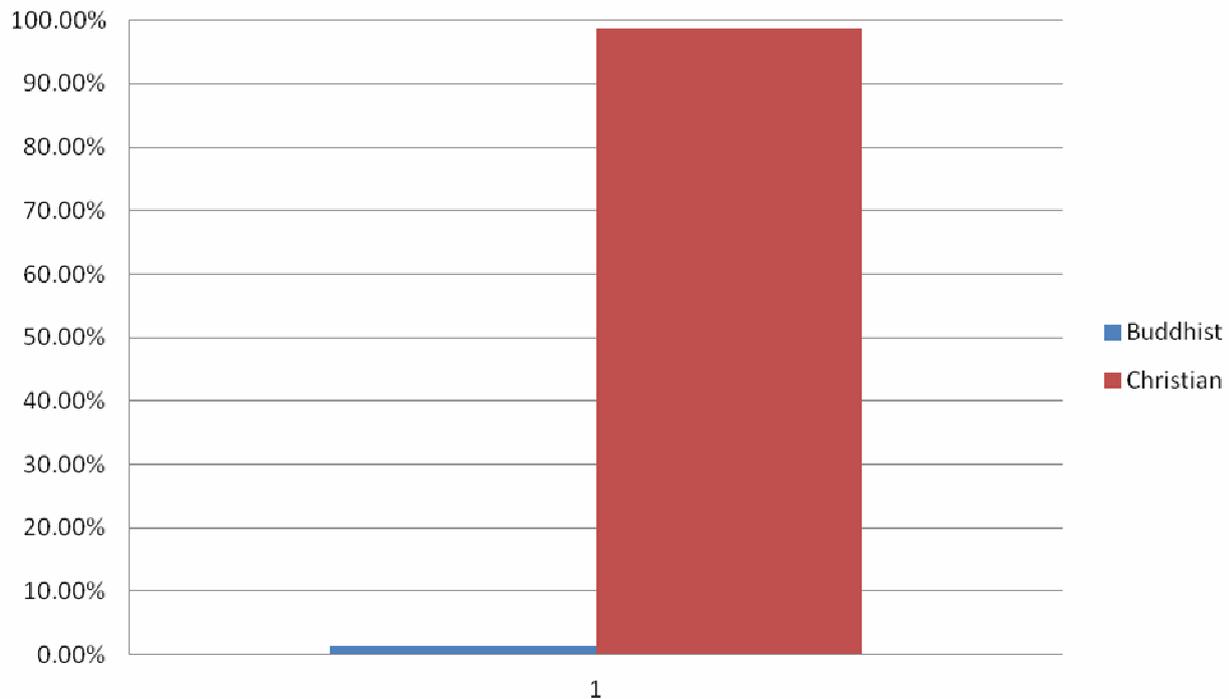
Some 92.56% of respondents were of either White British (44.59%) or White English (47.97%) descent. 2.70% considered themselves to be Welsh.

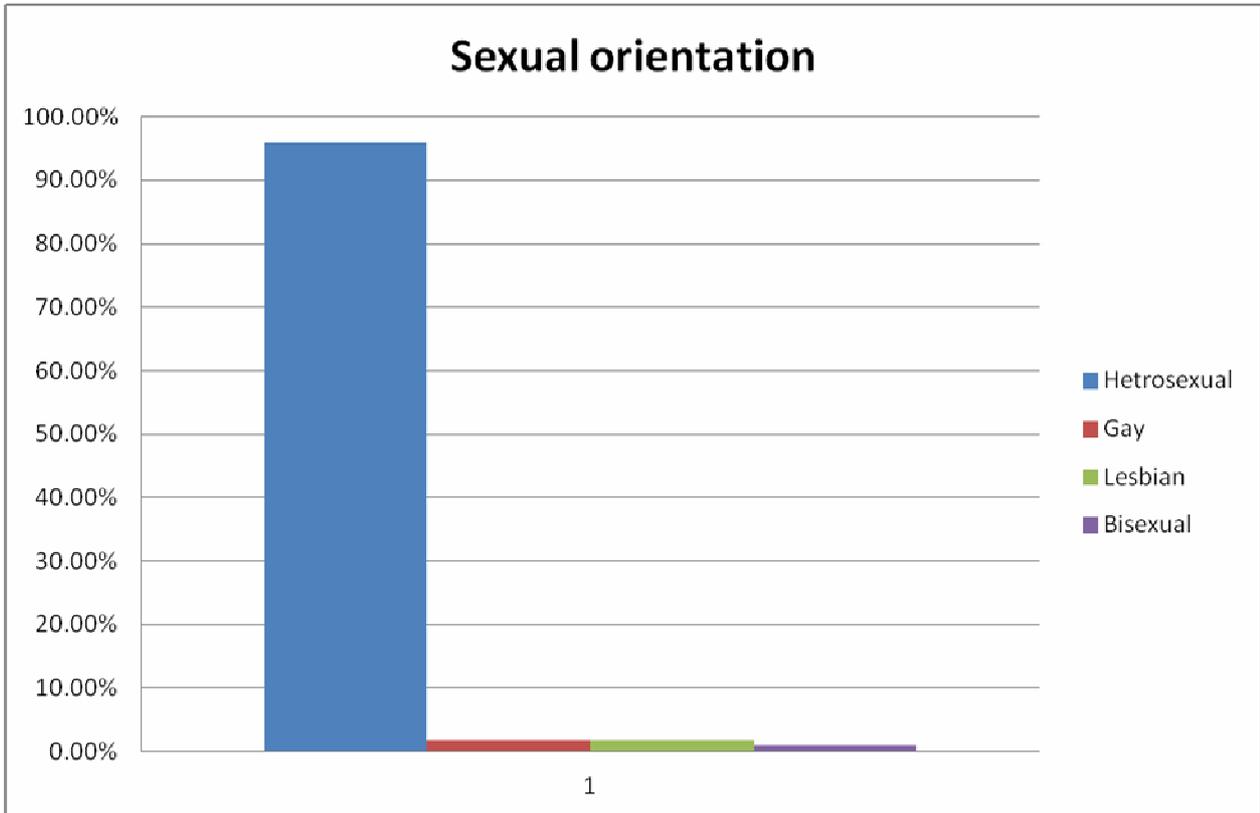
## Do you have a religion or belief?



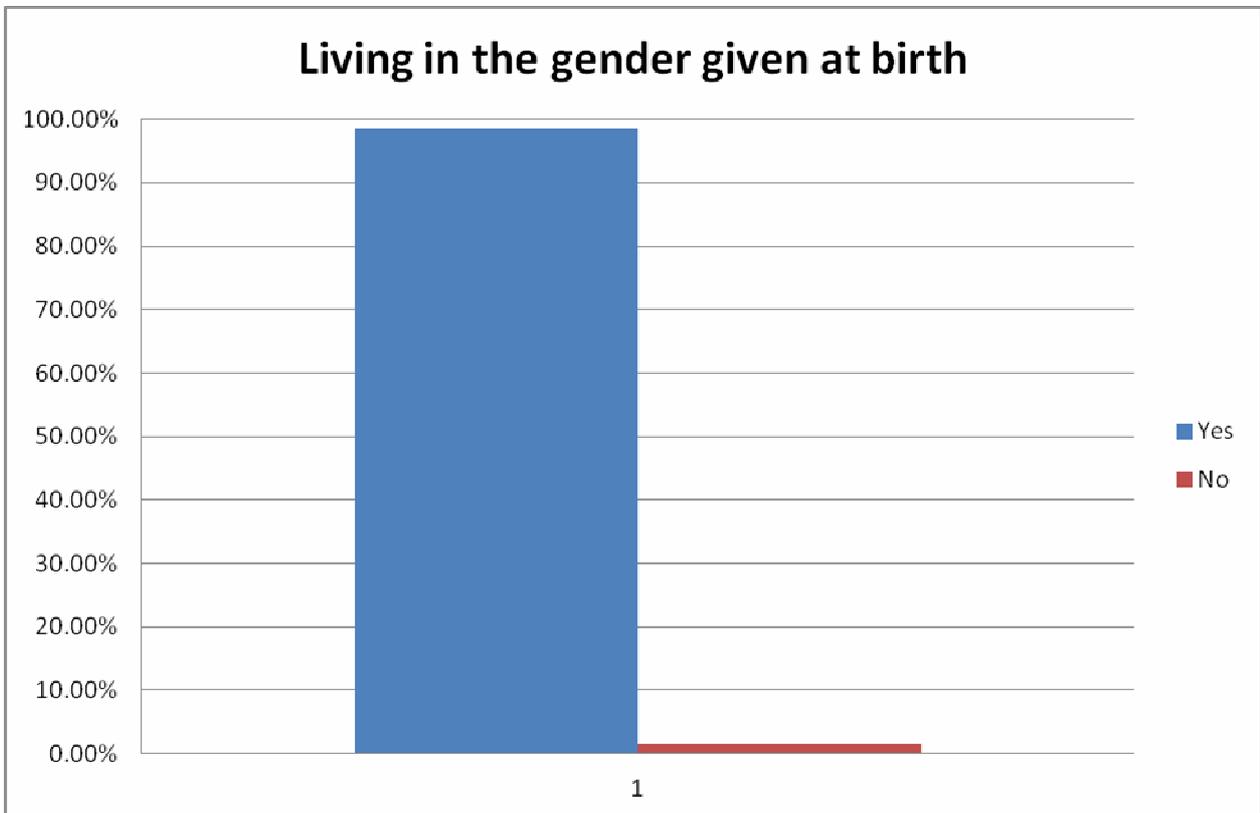
Exactly 70% of respondents said that they followed a religion or belief system. Christianity was the most prevalent religion at 98.77%, with Buddhism accounting for 1.23%.

## Religion or belief type





Most people responding to the consultation consider themselves to be hetrosexual. 95.83% said they were heterosexual, whilst 1.63% said they gay or lesbian, and 0.835 said they were bisexual.



98.45% said that they currently live in the gender they were given at birth.

## **Appendix 6 – Methodology**

An online questionnaire was created using e-Consult, the council's online consultation software, to collect public views about the proposal to close public conveniences. A paper questionnaire was also created for those who were unable to use the online system.

The questionnaire asked:

1. Do you agree with closing all public conveniences within the borough to save money?
2. If you answered no, please explain why?
3. Would you be prepared to pay to use all of these facilities? If so, how much?
  - a. Not at all
  - b. Up to 30p
  - c. Up to 40p
  - d. Up to 50p
4. Would you be prepared to use toilets in cafes, restaurants and other buildings if the council can negotiate this with local businesses?
5. What ways do you think the council can reduce the impact of this proposed change?

Letters or emails were sent to key stakeholders asking them for their views, and giving a link to eConsult. Key stakeholders included:

- Tourism businesses that form part of the Southport Tourist Business Network
- Businesses in Sefton that were on Business and Tourism's database
- Friends of Parks groups, where potential toilet closures could impact upon a park use
- Volunteers, voluntary groups and organisations on the Sefton CVS e-newsletter database
- Facilitators of the Sefton Community Empowerment Networks, for forwarding on to these groups (because of the short notice it was not possible to present the proposal at any of the planned CEN meetings)

Following feedback from previous consultations, members of the Sefton Access Forum and ABILITY were also offered the option of being able to book a time with a member of staff so that the proposal could be discussed and the questionnaire could be completed over the telephone.

Three meetings were held with older person's groups in Southport, Maghull and Bootle, where the proposals were discussed and opinions sought. Meetings also took place with the Botanic Gardens Community Association, the concession holder that runs cafes at both Botanic Gardens and Hesketh Park, and the Beach Management Forum.

Posters were displayed in all public conveniences affected by this proposal. Posters were also displayed in all libraries and leisure centres in Sefton, in order to raise awareness, and one was displayed in the Tourist Information Centre in Southport to collect the views of visitors. One hundred paper questionnaires were also provided for the TIC so that these could be given out and returned by visitors.

The Sefton Council Contact Centre was also advised that they may receive telephone calls and that they should take any feedback given and send it on to the department for inclusion in this report.

Sefton Council 

Consultation on the Proposed Closure of Public Toilets in Sefton

# HAVE YOUR SAY

**YOUR SEFTON  
YOUR SAY**

12 February 2012

[www.sefton.gov.uk](http://www.sefton.gov.uk)

## Consultation on the Proposed Closure of Public Toilets in Sefton

### Tell us what you think

#### Introduction

Sefton Council currently operates several public toilets across the borough. These are located at:

Southport:

- Eastbank Street (pay-to-use)
- Hill Street (pay-to-use)
- Promenade (pay-to-use)
- Hesketh Park (free-to-use)

Churchtown:

- Botanic Gardens (free-to-use)
- Preston New Road (free-to-use)

And at:

- Burbo Bank, Blundellsands (pay-to-use)
- Leighton Avenue, Maghull (free-to-use)
- Moor Lane, Crosby (free-to-use)
- Shore Road, Ainsdale (free-to-use)
- South Road, Waterloo (pay-to-use)

To save the council £52,000, it is proposed to close all public conveniences across the borough, and cease to provide the service.

### How to get involved

To give us your views go to <https://www.engagespace.co.uk/sefton> and fill in the on-line questionnaire or telephone Gary Berwick on 0151 934 6134 or email [gary.berwick@sefton.gov.uk](mailto:gary.berwick@sefton.gov.uk) for more information.

Copies of this consultation document are available in large print and other formats on request. To request this service please call 0151 934 6134.

### What we will do with your feedback

The information you provide will be treated confidentially and used solely by Sefton Council.

Your views and the information provided will be analysed and will form part of a report to the Council to make a decision on the final budget for Sefton.

## Questionnaire

**1** Do you agree with closing all public conveniences within the borough to save money:

**YES;** or,

**NO**

**2** If you answered no, please explain why?

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**3** Would you be prepared to pay to use all of these facilities:

No, not at all

Yes – up to 30p

Yes – up to 40p

Yes – up to 50p

**4** Would you be prepared to use toilets in cafes, restaurants and other buildings if the council can negotiate this with local businesses?

**YES;** or,

**NO**

**5** What ways do you think the council can reduce the impact of this proposed change?

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## Get involved

Please let us know if you would like to be involved in further consultation in this area ...

Please tick all that apply

I would like to be involved in further consultation on this area such as focus groups, workshops, etc.

I would like to become part of Sefton's E-Panel  
(An on line consultation panel, email address required)

If you have said you want to get involved leave your contact details here:

Name

Email:

telephone number/s

## Please fill out your on-line questionnaire by Friday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2013

We thank you for participating in this consultation and we value your contribution. We do however recognise that the data you provide is private and confidential. Any personal information that you provide to the Council as part of this consultation will be handled and used in compliance with the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998. Regardless of whether you provide this electronically or on paper it will be stored and processed securely, and deleted once it is no longer required.

Sefton Council will not share your personal data. However, we will share the overall anonymised results of the consultation with partners with whom we work to improve the delivery of local services. The information you give us in response to surveys will form part of a final report but you will never be personally identified in any such report

## Diversity Monitoring (optional)

Answer as much or as little as you want. Sefton Council will not share your personal data. However, we will share the anonymised results of the consultation with partners who we work with to deliver local services. Your contributions will be anonymised on receipt and your comments will then be used for research and consultation purposes. Your identity will not be published by us at any stage without your consent unless we are obliged to do so by law

Please enter the first part of your postcode (i.e. the first 3 or 4 characters)

Are you: Male

Female

What is your age

Under 16

16-24

25-39

40-59

60-75

75+

**Disability: Do you have any of the following (please tick all that apply):**

- |                               |                          |  |                          |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Physical Impairment           | <input type="checkbox"/> | Visual Impairment                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Learning difficulty           | <input type="checkbox"/> | Hearing Impairment/Deaf                            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mental Health/Mental distress | <input type="checkbox"/> | Long term illness that affects your daily activity | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Other (Please specify)

**Please read the following statement ...**

If you have ticked any of the boxes above, or you have cancer, diabetes or HIV this would be classed as 'disability' under the legislation. Do you consider yourself to be 'disabled'?

Yes  No

**Ethnicity – do you identify as ....**

**Asian:**

Bangladeshi  Indian  Pakistani

Other Asian background (please specify if you wish)

**Black:**

African  Caribbean

Other black background (please specify if you wish)

**Chinese:**

**Ethnicity – do you identify as ....**

**Mixed Ethnic Background:-**

Asian & White  Black African & White  Black Caribbean & White

Other mixed background (please specify if you wish)

**White**

British  English  Irish  Scottish   
Welsh  Polish  Latvian  Gypsy/Traveller

Other white background (please specify if you wish)

*The following questions are a little more personal and you can choose to stop here if you wish, however it would be really helpful if you would consent to complete ...*

Do you have a religion or belief? Yes  No

If yes, please tick one of the below ...

Buddhist  Christian  Hindu

Jewish  Muslim  Sikh

Other (Please specify)

**How would you describe your sexual orientation?**

Heterosexual  Gay  Lesbian  Bisexual

Do you currently live in the gender you were given at birth? Yes  No

