



Dear Councillor Caan,

Re-Coventry Older Voices - Public Toilet Survey.

Following correspondence with you earlier this year on the above issue, a meeting was arranged between 3 members of COV and 3 officers of the City Council, representing Peoples directorate and planning department. This meeting took place on 14th September 2017.

It has to be said that from a COV point of view that the meeting and the outcome of this was one of extreme disappointment. From the outset it was made clear that any idea of re-opening the toilets that had been closed was not on the agenda. We were advised that the best way forward may be to work with the Age Friendly Coventry theme group, as to how best COV could liaise with local businesses etc, as to how they could help with provision of their facilities by use of the general public. An offer was also made that one of the officers could attend a future meeting of COV, to advise on the possibility of seeking funding for this project.

It was noted by COV delegates at the meeting that the council representatives did not appear to have copies of the documentation submitted in relation to the survey at hand. We would have thought it would have been important that they had these at hand, given the business we were discussing. Indeed when we raised the point that 97% of people surveyed agreed that the closure of the toilets/lack of provision, could lead to further isolation of older people, the response was that this was because of the way the question was posed! We would hope that the issue of social isolation would be taken as a serious issue by councillors and officers alike.

Since this meeting there has been a major event in Coventry, in the way of the Coventry Life event at the Fargo Village in October 2017, which you attended and took part in a Q and A session on the second day. It was noted by COV members, that in this session, when the issue of public toilets was raised, that you accepted that the council had not done enough to get local business etc, involved in provision of toilets facilities. It also has to be said that our members have also expressed concern about the poor standard of maintenance of those toilets that remain open.

At the COV AGM on 10th October 2017, Councillor Abbott stressed the importance that should be placed around social isolation and older people. We believe that the above issues are interlinked and cannot be solved purely by COV members working in isolation with local business etc, and that the city council at all levels should be willing to hold meaningful discussions, meetings with all COV members on this serious issue.

COV supports the AFC initiative; we also note the bid for City of Culture, Coventry-a top ten city, Coventry- a city of tourism.

We believe that we should have another aspiration, Coventry - a city of comfort, whereby people can travel all over our city, with the comfort of knowing they have access to public toilet provision in all areas.

Norman Hendry,
On behalf of Coventry Older Voices.

C C. All Coventry City Councillors.