

## **Health domain group– suggestions for action by London boroughs**

### **A. Toilets – a public health issue**

An adequate supply of freely available and easily accessed private or municipal toilets based throughout local communities is vital. Research has highlighted two serious problems. Older people may be reluctant to venture out for fear of not finding a toilet in time – the ‘loo leash effect’ - or resort to risky behaviours by not taking medication or reducing fluid intake in order to do so. Such behaviour can affect our health and wellbeing and is likely to become more common as London’s population ages and the numbers of oldest old increase.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) imposes a duty on local authorities and other publicly-funded bodies to ensure that vulnerable groups are protected in their access to vital services. While older people are entitled to this protection in general our need may also overlap with other ‘protected characteristics’ – not just those arising from age-related sensory impairments, compromised mobility and chronic health conditions, but also on the grounds of Faith or Race. Such experiences of disablement reinforce difficulties in accessing toilet facilities and restrict the ability of many of us to fully participate in the community and go about our business.

Adequate toilet provision is therefore a key component of healthy ageing that needs to be embedded within any Age-Friendly long-term strategy or action plan.

Suggested action for spring 2021:

**Map all existing public and community toilets and make locations known on street signs, printed maps and online.**

The online version could be created simply by adding local toilets to [The Great British Public Toilet Map](#) and provide a link from your council website.

For further information please see the [Five Point Toilet Manifesto for London](#)

This action will also contribute to the Recovery Mission ‘High Streets for All’ and to both the Outdoor Spaces and the Transport Domains.

Through the Toilet Manifesto for London Group, PAiL can host webinars based on good practice in developing a local toilet strategy or on Community Toilet Schemes.

### **B. Trees for healthy air**

Urban trees can help reduce air pollution as well as capture carbon. Air pollution particularly affects young children and those with respiratory problems many of whom are older people.

Suggested action for National Tree Week 27 Nov-5 Dec 2021:

### **Plant a tree for every baby born in your borough in a year**

National Tree Week heralds the start of the tree planting season. Trees can be planted by local volunteers including older people.

This action will also contribute to achieving the aims of the Recovery Mission 'A Green New Deal' and to the Social Inclusion Domain especially if volunteers of all ages work on this together.

Useful contacts:

[Trees for Cities](#) and your [local Friends of the Earth](#) for the practicalities and [The Tree Council](#) for grants.