



“Solving the public bathroom access problem IS A MATTER OF URGENCY.”

Laura Piercey is a TUF supporter who speaks out about urology issues. Aged just 24 her bladder suddenly stopped working. This means that she will constantly need a catheter to empty it and has a suprapubic catheter, inserted directly into the bladder through the abdomen for this.

Laura uses Instagram (@diduseehercatheter) to share what life with a catheter is like and connect with others in a similar situation. She hopes that it will help to break down the stigma that she has encountered.

She wrote the following article on her Instagram account earlier this year about the impact that the lack of public toilets, a problem that is growing with more and more closures, has on the lives of people suffering with a urology condition.

With her kind permission we preproduce her article below.

If you want to write to your local councillor or MP on the issue, you can find a template letter on the Urology Awareness Month pages of the TUF website

“We have all been there, as we go about our day; shopping, roaming, running errands-when suddenly we become aware that we need to use the bathroom. For many, it’s a need that can be put on the back foot until a toilet is found, however for a large proportion of people who are living with continence conditions, the need to use a public toilet can be a matter of urgency.

The ongoing closures and lack of care of public toilets across the UK is continuing to have a serious impact on the overall wellbeing of those who suffer and thus resulting in public anxiety, isolation and at times, humiliation in the need to relieve in public.

I know –I’ve been there; in needing to empty my catheter drainage bag that had reached full capacity on the side streets of London due to being unable to access an open FREE public toilet. Ultimately the distress and frustration of public toilet closures has resulted in the anxiety and curtails of my daily movements and planning. No longer can I go out, without mapping where the nearest public bathroom is for those urgent moments. Few people appreciate the health issues that come with “holding it,” like incontinence, urinary tract infections, and diabetes

Moreover, with the recent lockdowns public toilets have been badly neglected leaving them both inaccessible and unsanitary to use.

We need to give a crap about public toilet closures. We need to apply pressure to the government to quickly adapt to the public's need for clean, sanitary, accessible, FREE OPEN public toilets. We need a mutual understanding that everyone going out and about their daily business is not as able bodied and continent. We need them to understand how the lockdown loo is discriminatory!

We need to dismantle the perception that having an urgency to go is only common in infancy. The closure of public toilets is a chronic issue that needs resolving urgently. We need understanding that whilst you place a sign on the bathroom door to say not every disability is visible- the government need to honour that message by opening the public toilets in the first place.

Solving the public bathroom access problem IS A MATTER OF URGENCY.”