

43 - JUST CAN'T WAIT CARD

At the previous Council meeting I referred to the scheme whereby individuals can seek assistance from shopkeepers if they require toilet facilities urgently.

The service is called "Just can't wait" and is promoted by two organisations in particular. These are the Bladder and Bowel Community, www.bladderandbowel.org and Crohn's and Colitis Organisation, www.crohnsandcolitis.org.uk

The original toilet access card can be ordered from the Bladder and Bowel Community. They use the universally acknowledged W.C. signage, giving an individual the benefit of discrete and clear communication for those moments where they just can't wait to use the toilet.

The Just Can't Wait card is now completely free of charge when ordered online. By filling in a few details a high quality, durable Just Can't Wait card will be posted to the applicant's home.

The Crohn's and Colitis Organisation have the following information on their website:-

- Assists with access to your closest toilet
- Helps explain and avoid a potentially embarrassing situation quickly
- Universally recognised symbols – take your card anywhere
- Durable plastic material – just like your other essential cards
- Completely free of charge for online orders
- No membership necessary – simply fill out the form
- Cards delivered within 5 working days

Due to popular demand, they have also released the Just Can't Wait card as a FREE practical phone app. Not only will applicants receive a digital version of the card, there are a number of other benefits within the app, such as a map to find the nearest toilet, quick and easy access to the Community, and much more.

Accessibility on the phone means that the benefits of the original Just Can't Wait card are immediately available when someone is out and about. As the card is displayed on the phone screen, people will have even more discretion in communicating their need for the toilet. The App is currently only available on iOS devices.

All of their 40,000 members have their own Can't Wait Card.

Designed to be discreetly tucked away in a purse or wallet, the Can't Wait Card is available in 30 different languages for travelling abroad. The Card makes it easier for members to ask to use toilets in shops, restaurants and other buildings (which may not be public facing), without having to give a long explanation about their condition.

Urgent diarrhoea is one of the most common and debilitating symptoms of Crohn's and Colitis. A major anxiety for people living with the condition is being refused access to toilets or being confronted about using a 'disabled' toilet. Whilst someone may appear to look 'okay' on the outside, they may be in a daily battle with the condition and urgently need to use a toilet whilst out in public.

Where accessible toilet signs are shown on toilets, showing the Can't Wait Card to staff allows people to use the toilets.

Some companies are working with the Organisation to raise awareness of Crohn's Disease and Ulcerative Colitis, and recognition of the Can't Wait Card include the following:-

Retail
B&Q
Co-op - 240 Midcounties stores
M&S
Starbucks - Northern Ireland

Superdrug
Waitrose
White Stuff
Zara

Travel hubs
Birmingham Airport
City of London Airport
Gatwick Airport
Luton Airport
Newcastle Airport

In terms of the various shops in Shevington I suggest that a letter is sent to each of them highlighting this scheme and seeking their willingness to participate if they don't already allow the use of their toilets.

The next newsletter could also include details of this scheme that would hopefully promote greater take up by individuals who urgently require toilet facilities.

Although we cannot provide separate toilet facilities in the village, this would go some way to answering the issues raised by the lady who contacted us.

Mike Grimes