

B-4

Public Toilets in the 24 Hour City

Clara Greed

Professor of Inclusive Urban Planning,
School of Architecture and Planning,
Faculty of the Built Environment,
University of the West of England, UK
Frenchay Campus, Bristol BS16 1QY
Phone: (44) 01275 844448.
Fax: 0117 344 3002
ClaraGreed@aol.com
Clara.Greed@uwe.ac.uk

Abstract

This paper discusses the validity of including public toilets as an essential element in achieving urban renewal, effective town planning, economic regeneration and sustainable cities. An over-emphasis upon high-level cultural and other aspatial (social) priorities, plus a vast array of regenerative bodies and agencies, has taken resources from the provision of mundane, yet essential, physical facilities, such as public toilets. But these are essential to the social well being and practical operation of the 24 hour city for all, especially in the light of recent proposals for changes in the licensing laws and the development of the night time economy. This paper discusses the implications of toilet provision for sustainability, transportation, health, crime prevention, urban design and culture, and in relation to the cause of mainstreaming equality and diversity issues into town planning practice. Reference is given to current research being undertaken by the author and colleagues. It is concluded that toilet provision is the missing link in creating joined-up urban policy making, but that adequate sanitary provision cannot occur without both attitudinal and legislative change.

Keywords

toilets, evening economy, 24 hour city, accessibility, inclusive planning, urban design, town planning, urban policy, equality, diversity, crime prevention.

B-4

24 小時城市的公共廁所

Clara Greed

西英格蘭大學教授
英國廁所協會委員

摘要

本文討論將公共廁所作為都市更新、有效的市鎮計劃、經濟復甦及永續城市的基本元件的有效性。一個過分強調的高層次文化及其他社會優先順序，加上過多的重建機構，將資源由世俗的，但是必須的，實際設施，如公共廁所，取走。但是，這些是 24 小時城市的社會福祉及實際操作的基本面。特別是，最近提出的更改准許法規及開發夜間經濟。本文討論在有關永續經營、運輸、健康、防止犯罪、都市計劃及文化方面、以及有關都市計劃的主流平等及多元性的課題，提供廁所的涵義。參考作者及其同事目前的研究。結論是，廁所的提供是創造制定聯合都市政策中所缺少的一環。但是，如果，沒有適當的態度及法規改變，則無法提供適當的衛生處理。

關鍵字

廁所、夜間經濟、24 小時城市、易接近、包含的計劃、都市設計、城鎮計劃、都市政策、平等、多元性、防止犯罪。

1 Planning for Night and Day

1.1 The Problem

This paper discusses the value of public toilets as a vital spatial and social component in the operation of urban areas night and day, and as necessary element in making cities more equal, accessible and sustainable for all, drawing on ongoing research (Greed and Daniels,2002; Greed, 2003; Hanson and Greed,2003,a and b). With reference to current public toilet provision priorities, it is argued that the attention given to the problems of the night-time economy has actually reduced the resources available for creating a comfortable day-time urban environment for everyone. The impression is often given that regenerating an urban centre, and creating 24 hour cities of 'culture' and 'vivacity' will be good for all - in the long run - and somehow the effects will trickle down and 'solve' a wide range of other social problems. Many have argued that this does not follow, if the less glamorous but basic day-time social and spatial needs of its citizens are not recognised. A generic, 'good for all' approach if not socially-disaggregated results in the needs of large sectors of the population, not least women, the elderly, ethnic minorities, children and the disabled being unrecognised and rendered invisible (WTO,2002).

Emphasis upon the glamorous 'sexy' areas of regenerating urban culture and creating the 24 hour city has created a narrow policy perspective. This has arguably sidelined the more balanced, wider inclusive ambit of traditional town planning, where the emphasis is upon giving attention to the way in which the full range of urban land uses and activities are integrated within city centres. Yet, as will be explained in the following sections, modern town planning has limited powers to deal with the effects of the twenty four hour city. There have never been any direct planning powers over such necessities as public toilets and all the other essential back up facilities generated by large numbers of people within city centres (such as better public transport, lighting, seating, street cleaning, policing inter alia). Planners can only hope that their concerns will be taken up and acted upon by other regulatory and enabling authorities, public and private, that nowadays have control over urban space.

1.2 The Importance of Political Commitment to Toilets

If a local authority is well intentioned and has the political will to meet its citizen's need, and is committed to a corporate approach overarching and guiding all its departments an integrated approach, then toilet provision is likely to be one of its outputs. But it was found from the research that there was considerable opposition to continuing toilet provisions, and that fragmentation, lack of communication and even competition is common between those departments that each hold a piece of the jigsaw in respect of city centre policy. The continuing physical land-use emphasis within the statutory planning system has also proved a brake on dealing directly with the social dimensions

of urban development (Greed,2003, chapter 4). Thus the chances of providing meeting toilet needs are limited by attitudinal and organisational factors both within and outside of 'planning'.

One would expect some positive policy direction from central government, particularly since it goes on and on about equality, accessibility and sustainability. In fact central government seems to have a byzantine bureaucratic obsession with counting what toilets are there already (as if this will create new ones out of thin air) rather than investing in toilet re-armament and developing policies for improved provision. The Conservative Government of the early 1990s introduced the Citizens' Charter, which was meant to make the government more accountable in terms of the levels of provision of key public goods and services. In association with this initiative the Audit Commission has undertaken a national survey using 'performance indicators' as the level and quality of public toilets (Edwards,1998a) and an annual count of toilets was undertaken annually by the Audit Commission up until 2001 (Audit,1998; BTA,2000a). There has been considerable concern expressed that the length of opening hours, and the ratio of male to female facilities have not yet been included. Many were disappointed with the Commission's methodology, not least because of its apparent greater concern with quantity rather than quality and with 'efficiency' rather than 'equality'. It is widely held that a great deal of money has been wasted 'monitoring' facilities in an unrepresentative manner without providing new facilities or really getting to grips with 'the problem'. BTA was dismayed by the Audit Commission's deductions that 'proved' in areas, where according to their own surveys most facilities had been closed there was actually an increase shown in provision according to the auditors! Their calculations are based on a ratio between the number of residents and the number of toilets. This is misleading in areas where there is a large tourist or commuter clientele and few residents such as the London Borough of Westminster. Overall, the Commission simply counts what 'is' rather than what has been lost, and does not set its count against any national standards or benchmarks for minimal provision (BTA,2000a).

1.3 The Issues that need Considering

Firstly the problem of lack of adequate provision is discussed, illustrating the situation with reference to the effects of the 24 hour city concept on city centre toileting provision. The reasons for underprovision are then explained with reference to the legal and cultural context. The resulting toilet policy lacuna within current planning agendas is exposed which inconveniences many people. Throughout, since women, who compose over half the population, experience a deficiency in toilet provision relative to men, attention is given to gender considerations as they intersect across all other user, minority group and policy categories (Greed (ed) 2003). The wider economic and social benefits of a more socially inclusive approach are discussed. Ways and means of achieving better provision are presented with reference to other promising areas of public policy, beyond urban planning, that might result in better toilets, including public and personal health, crime control, accessibility, equality programmes, town centre

management and law and order. In conclusion it is argued that public toilets are a social good - community capital - that must be provided whose utility value far exceeds mere financial considerations (Saunders,1979), and which will have an supportive enhancing effect on all other aspects of urban policy and regeneration and which are essential to creating comfortable cities for all.

2 THE PROBLEM

2.1 Declining Facilities in Britain

Toilet provision is a matter of great concern in Britain, because of poor, and declining levels of provision. Over the last 10 years more than 40% of all public toilets have closed, and in some areas there are none available. Daily facilities are being shut because of vandalism, lack of funding for maintenance and supervision, and more fundamentally because of an under-estimation of their importance. This is particularly so in downtown and central city areas where public toilets are seen as easy option for cutbacks (Greed,2002). This is an issue of concern particularly for women, who are likely to be the ones who are out more in the daytime [economy] in the city, doing the shopping and travelling around on public transport, on essential food gathering, home making, and caring related trips, but without access to their own central area 'base' in an office with facilities. Women are the ones likely to be responsible for babies and children, and also women compose the majority of the elderly and the disabled. In the course of my research on the social aspects of planning (Greed,1994, 1999; Greed and Daniels, 2002) comments were frequently made by respondents to the effect, *'it all comes down to toilets in the final analysis'*.

Of course the problem affects men too, especially the elderly, where there is under-provision for both sexes. Over 1 in 3 men over 50 are likely to experience urinary dysfunction. Lack of provision is an issue that is likely to affect everyone at some stage in their lives, especially as old age arrives (60% of the population of the UK are over 40 years of age). But, contrary to public assumptions 'toilets' is not a planning issue. There is no statutory requirement that public toilet provision should be shown in a development plan, nor is the issue seen as having any official place within the vast range of urban regeneration and renewal programmes. 'Toilets' are likely to be seen - like many really useful social facilities that people want - as *ultra vires*, that is not a land use matter, and the responsibility is shifted to other agencies who are not interested either (Greed,1996a and b; 1999). Rather than seeing public toilets as additional expensive 'special' facilities for women and the disabled (and men) it is argued that public toilets should be included as part of the planning agenda as 'toilets' is a land-use matter that affects, and may limit, the way in which people use cities.

Lack of toilet provision discourages a wide range of people from accessing the built environment, particularly women, the elderly, the disabled and those with small children.

Increased use of public transport, cycling and walking, as promoted by sustainability policy requires provision of public toilets. Trying to make cities more sustainable by encouraging people to use public transport is impractical if there are no loos at bus and train stations or along the streets for women struggling to get to work and to get their children to childminders or school. Greater participation of women in the workforce, changing patterns, timings and lengths of 'the journey to work' require better back-up facilities. But many local authorities say they can no longer afford to provide public toilets, and they scarcely figure on the regeneration agencies' agenda either. There is little alternative to 'public toilets' in most British Towns when looking for 'away from home toilets' (BTA, 2001, 2000b, Danfo, 2000). For example toilets are freely available to the public in cafés (whether or not they buy anything) in some European countries. In many English towns, women are wary of the personal safety implications of using toilets in strange pubs away from home, and if they are accompanied by small children their entrance is legally barred (and even nowadays within the 24 hour city pubs generally do not open until 11.00am as they have to recover from the night before).

2.2 Neglect and Poor Management

The removal of attendants from public toilets (and conductors from buses and keepers from parks) has reduced the level of accessibility by creating a 'fortress mentality' to counter vandalism and set up a vicious cycle of misuse giving local authorities 'reasonable' cause to close them. This has a knock on effect of making the local area in question less welcoming. In turn this reduces both its social attractiveness and eventually its economic viability and social attraction thus leading the area into further decline, and even undermining any regeneration policies established in the area. Alternatively, as with bus services, in some areas public toilets are being privatised, automated, and franchised, resulting in less toilets, at high prices concentrated in areas where there is an economic return not in areas of social need.

Public toilets are a soft target for cutbacks and privatisation because their provision is not mandatory, and they are often seen as a drain on resources rather than an economic asset. On the contrary this paper will substantiate the view that improved public toilet provision can actually save money, make areas more attractive and facilitate regeneration, increase tourism, raise surrounding property values, improve urban design and contribute to sustainability - and meet many equality and equality objectives too. Public toilet policy-making would benefit from 'joined up thinking' and in the process the goals of social inclusion, environmental sustainability and economic regeneration would be advanced. First impressions count, 'one can judge a city by its toilets'. The condition of local public toilets may be seen as an indication of the economic and social state of an area and its government. Well-cared for toilets project a sense of civic pride, and increase confidence to invest in the area. Truly 'all human life is here' as the issue of toilets touches upon all aspects of urban policy and upon the agendas of transport, health, gender, sustainability, crime prevention, privatisation, best value, safety, accessibility, and urban governance and regeneration - but curiously not town planning

as will be explained.

2.3 The Demands of the 24 Hour City

Enthusiasm for the 24 hour city, and in particular the evening economy (especially the late evening economy) has arguably led to a deterioration in the day-time economy of cities, and especially in the level of public toilet provision. The trend towards boosting the evening economy and creating an exciting night life, has resulted, in reality, to yet more pubs, bars and clubs in city centres, mainly aimed at young, and predominantly young male, city revellers (Tallon and Bromley,2002). For example in Bristol there are 280 bars and pubs in a 2 mile radius of the centre, which attract nearly 40,000 people on a busy Friday night (cf Greed and Daniels,2002). The trend is likely to accelerate with the further liberalisation of licensing laws (CCI,2002, Roberts,2003). To deal with the flow of fluid generated male-only street urinals are springing up (literally in the case of the Urilift, a popular Dutch brand of urinal, which hydraulically rises out of the pavement when night falls) in many city centres to meet the late night needs of a relatively small male sector of the population (for example 40,000 is only 10% of the wider Bristol population). Meanwhile many traditional day-time city centre toilets which met the day-time and evening needs of the general public, providing facilities for women and men, and for the disabled too, are being closed. So resources are being shifted to meet the night-time needs of drinkers whilst cutting back by closing day-time toilets which are used by a far wider range of people including commuters, workers, shoppers, and tourists (and needless to say there is a strong gender dimension to all of this as to who are the users of night-time as against day-time facilities).

It is argued that attention to the details in providing facilities for everyday life are for more sustainable and effective than planning 'grands projets' to stimulate an area's recovery. For example increasing economic, or for that matter cultural, activity in erstwhile residential areas increases the flow of people, and the levels of social activity in an area, but it increases other sorts of flow too if no public toilets are available. Large public events in central areas and attempts to create a 24 hour city exacerbate the problem unless there is adequate public toilet provision. Most of the public toilets in central London are closed, for example, at the time of New Year's Eve celebrations, and existing toilets can barely cope with the large numbers of people generated by huge marches and demonstrations. Lack of provision results in increased levels of human excrement on pavements, alleyways and shop doorways. Within regenerating inner city areas house prices and the whole future fate of an area's housing can be shifted downwards if residents get fed up with people peeing in their front gardens and side alleyways during that hour when people are chucked out of pubs and clubs and their bladders are hit by the cold night air.

Clearly a more comprehensive policy is needed that takes into account the various toilet needs of all groups within society, in each area, and at different times in the 24 hour city, rather than adopting what is basically a 'fire-fighting' approach which tends to focus

upon the most visible problems that upset the business community (shops, stores (M&S for example) and offices are fed up with their doorways being wee-ed upon). Since they are the biggest rate payers this results in a rapid response to deal with complaints about male street urination in the city streets. 'Solving' this problem by the installation of street urinals may be taking much needed toilet resources away from other equally needy, but less visible groups. For example people who travel into the city centre in the day-time for work, shopping and tourism search in vain in the same city centres for available public toilets only to find they have been closed because of cost-cutting exercises. In contrast, ordinary public toilets are seen as a waste of money and as one local authority officer told us, 'the only good public toilet is a closed public toilet'.

3 THE LEGAL CONTEXT

3.1 Lack of Strong Legislation

Public toilets provision is an area covered by fixed standards and legal regulation rather than by flexible responsive policy. Undoubtedly the cultural attitudes and gender composition of those responsible for setting these standards is a key factor explaining the lack of progress. Many of the regulations and standards governing toilet provision are the result of the deliberations of nominated, unrepresentative committees. For example the British Standards committee (for BS Standard 6465) consisted entirely of men until the early 1990s when one woman was included. Currently Standard 6465 Part I (which sets the level and ratios of provision for toilets in a range of locations and building types, BS1,1996) is being revised and this time around, there are now several women on the committee (including the author) thanks, in part, to the growth in the number of women in the built environment professions (Greed,2000). Nevertheless the lack of women particularly in senior positions is an enduring issue in the world of town planning and urban governance but the problem is even more extreme in the world of sanitary engineering, especially at local authority level where those officers responsible for toilet provision have a considerable degree of autonomy and discretion where and whether to provide facilities, with no requirement for public participation in this process.

3.2 British Standards and Building Regulations

The statutory guidance documents British Standard BS6465 (Parts I and II), and the linked Approved Document G of the Building Regulations have provided the national guideline standards for toilet provision since 1985 (BSI,1996). These documents make it a legal requirement for men to be provided with approximately a third more provision per set of toilets than women. This is because men are given about the same number of cubicles as in the 'Ladies' plus urinal provision. Men have more facilities overall as in some localities and premises only a 'Gents' is provided, or more facilities are

provided for male customers such as in public houses and sports facilities (Robinson,2001). Yet, women, on average, for biological reasons, take twice as long to urinate compared with the average man (Kira, 1975, Asano,2002). If one walks around a shopping centre and does a mental count women are likely to outnumber men 80:20. Yet, the level of provision of toilets for women in town centres at 'best' (in rare instances) is likely to be on 'equal' 50:50 levels, and more typically, on a 70:30 ratio in favour of men. No wonder there are queues for the Ladies: what a burden on individual women's time budgets. There are also queues for baby changing cubicles and for disabled facilities in busy shopping malls. (In contrast in sports stadia the accepted standard is 20:80 in favour of men.)

Not only do women have less facilities they are more likely to have to pay for them. The 1936 Public Health Act, Section 87, sub Section 3 gave local authorities the right to build and run on street 'public conveniences' and to charge such fees as they think fit 'other than for urinals'. This is still the main legislation governing toilet provision. **Significantly this legislation is permissive not mandatory which is the crux of the problem.** The charging system also meant that women could be charged and men not, and condoned a lower level of provision for women which was often viewed as an additional expense. After a heated campaign turnstiles were eventually outlawed under the 1963 Public Lavatories (Turnstiles) Act. The rules outlawing turnstiles never did apply to 'private' conveniences, only 'public' ones, and they never applied to railway stations, hence the installation of turnstiles at most central London railway termini stations, much to the inconvenience of travellers especially those carry suitcases. Such attitudes and barriers are yet another wearisome burden on the travelling public discouraging them from going by train: indeed making it virtually impossible for those with pushchairs, luggage, or pregnant bodies to use the facilities. Attempts to overturn such legally condoned inequality, inaccessibility and the general level of underprovision resulting from such outdated toilet law have so far failed, as have several private members's bills, and efforts of a series of dedicated individual MPs (comprising an interesting cross-party mixture) over the years.

4 THE TOWN PLANNING CONTEXT: DEAD LOSS OR NEW HOPE?

4.1 The Need for Enlightened Policy

Whilst many enlightened planners, and progressive planning authorities would accept all the arguments about the importance of public toilets to create more sustainable, accessible, equal cities, their powers are limited. A major problem, as indicated above, is that demands for toilet provision are seen to be outside the remit of planning law. There is no requirement that public toilets should be shown in any development plan, included in any planning policy document or taken into account in the development control process with the exception that public toilets may be provided by the local planning

authority in national parks under the 1968 Countryside Act (Section 12 (1) and (2)); and local authorities may provide toilets in country parks 7 (2), and on or near common land (Section 9 (3)). Not much use for urban areas!

However some local planning authorities use a range of planning gain, S.106 agreements, negotiation and bargaining methods to achieve toilet provision in new developments, and it has been found that public toilets are more likely to be provided by the developers if they can be made an integral part of a development proposal rather than an after thought. But, the initial cost of building public toilets only represents about 30% of their total cost over a 10 year period as ongoing maintenance and management have to be paid for too. At present public funding of toilet provision is very limited, dropping and not ringfenced. Planners can also have some reactive powers, in liaison with other local authority departments, on influencing the extent of male street urination, including when and where it might occur, by means of having some say on the opening hours of city centre facilities, the land use mix, urban design measures, street lighting, and proximity of car parking and public transport. But they have no mandatory powers to insist upon public toilet provision for all. Private developers know that customers need toilets and paradoxically better provision standards are to be found in shopping malls than in many a town centre. But access is limited by opening times, and many a shopping mall can only be reached by car, hardly solving the problem of city centre pedestrians and public transport users.

4.2 The Need to Mainstream Toilets into Strategic Policy

Some local authorities have chosen to incorporate more proactive toilet policies into their planning policy documents although implementation has often been difficult and thus unfulfilled. However, two areas of equality legislation are potentially giving more power to demands for equal and adequate provision to be taken more seriously for the disabled and for women. With the progressive enactment of all parts of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) under Part III of the Act, from December 1996 it has been illegal to treat disabled people less favorably. From October 1999 service providers have been required to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people. From October 2004 more fundamental adjustments will be required under the Code of Practice for Part III of the act. However, we are already finding from the Nuffield and EPSRC research studies that some local authorities would rather close public toilets altogether than bring them up to DDA standards. In contrast some local authorities have greatly improved disabled facilities and access, but in the process created an even greater divide between abled and disabled provision, resulting in some locations where there are good disabled toilets but nothing for the abled population. It is argued that a more inclusive universalist approach is needed, with compensatory greater provision for women (Goldsmith,2001), especially in respect of on-street public toilet facilities. The trick is to meet a diversity of needs within the 'same' facilities. A universal approach softens the divide between abled and disabled, thus accommodating the needs of the 'missing millions' those disenabled by current facilities, by designing everything to a

higher specification, without steps, narrow entrances and restrictive cubicle sizes. As to solving the vexed problem of underprovision of women's toilets the effects of new directive guidance from the European Union is seen as having potential, but the changes are yet to be tested in law. Article 2 and 3, section E, Clause 2, of the Amsterdam Treaty 1997 requires Europe-wide horizontal priority to integrate equality objectives throughout all programming process, with particular emphasis upon gender. The Treaty requires **all** public services to be implemented with full regard to equal opportunities in all local authority areas in respect of all policy issues, presumably including public toilet provision. This directive is part of a wider move towards mainstreaming gender equality into all aspects of policy making with the European Union (Greed (ed), 2003). The European Commission defines gender mainstreaming as the 're-organisation of the improvement, development, and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages by actors normally involved in policy making' (Council of Europe, 1998). 'Gender-proofing' of policies is also a current requirement within EU regional and economic policy initiatives and funding such as under Objective I and 2, and increasingly a central government departmental priority (Booth et al 1996, Booth, 2001; Braithwaite, 1998). In theory therefore any public facilities, such as leisure and entertainment premises, or tourist facilities provided as a result of such funding should provide equal toilet provision for women as well as men, thus over-riding current unequal UK standards for such buildings.

5 THE URBAN REGENERATION CONTEXT

5.1 Urban Renewal Initiatives

Nowadays in many areas urban renewal and regeneration, rather than plain old fashioned town planning, have become the main arbiters of urban development and ersatz 'planning' so it is important to look at the toiletscape from an urban regeneration perspective too. In fact looking at the journals and job advertisements one would be forgiven for thinking that town planning was dead and the world had been taken over by urban regeneration whizz kids. But does this mean progress or does the new agenda bring with it all the same old problems that characterised traditional town planning? It has been argued extensively that urban regeneration policy has over-emphasised economic priorities, and not given adequate attention to the importance of social capital and infrastructural provision and to the basic necessities of daily life. But it has been assumed that the effects of property development and related economic growth will 'trickle down' and benefit everyone and somehow 'solve' social problems, without giving additional priority to the need for back up social infrastructural provision, such as public provision of toilets (Angresano, 1997).

Where 'social' facilities are included they are often construed in terms of 'exciting' cultural elements such as public art, leisure, sport and entertainment facilities, rather

than in providing basic social amenities and public services for the needs of everyday life, and such facilities themselves generally have inadequate toilet provision for the visiting public. People are dismayed to find that there is money available for what many of ordinary people see as wasteful public projects such as public art installations, and expensive cultural buildings (not forgetting the Dome and dreading the Olympics). But there appears to be no money available to keep public toilets open, to build new ones, or simply to mend broken pavements, or to improve refuse collection and street cleaning, and it is only extremely dedicated local authorities which still manage to maintain toilet standards against all odds (BTA,2000b).

Some women planners have challenged established priorities, which have often precluded childcare, and baby-changing facilities, as well as toilets, within the city of man, and argued for 'regeneration' rather than just regeneration (Sheffield,2000). It has been concluded by them that much of the current regeneration agenda is male-dominated albeit masquerading as generic neutral policy. For example, Brownill (2000) critiques current urban regen(d)eration policy (sic) and concludes the very fact that the members of the decision-making committees and boards involved are predominantly male, being drawn from male-dominated property professions, marginalised women's viewpoint and 'other' solutions. This is echoed in my own qualitative research on the composition and culture of the property and construction professions (Greed,2000). Brave is the woman who raises the topic of lack of public toilets in such a setting. Quantitatively data on the participation of women is given in case studies of the situation in Sheffield which has undergone a series of regeneration programmes where it was found that women tend to be clustered in the lower levels of the regeneration hierarchy at the interface with community groups but are few and far between at the lower levels. Women's issues are more likely to come into play at the later stages and rounds of the programme in question, as an add-on after much lobbying, and therefore they lose out to other more male-dominated objectives which are embedded within the structure of the programme from its inception (Cotter and Grant,2000). In fact many women believe the whole regeneration agenda is pitched at the wrong level, too high, and needs to come 'down' to the level of user needs and the experiences of ordinary people seeking to live, work and walk within the regenerated city.

The male-domination of regeneration has resulted in an over-emphasis upon the 'public' realm issues of economic development and employment rather than upon the 'private' realms social and cultural factors that really regenerate an area. Many women are disillusioned with the ways in which apparently gender-neutral topics such as social inclusion, sustainability, regeneration, and even joined-up-thinking have been interpreted effectively to exclude women's lives and realities. Lack of public toilet provision is a sure way to exclude many people from coming into city centres. But social exclusion has often been interpreted to mean 'unemployment' which has been taken as the main cause of poverty and deprivation, a concept inappropriate to full-time carers, the elderly and the disabled, and irrelevant to all the cultural and racial factors that can result in people being excluded whether or not they are in employment. For

example, 'public toilets' is hardly a topic that might appear to generate either employment or wealth-creation and it is certainly not 'trendy'. Therefore toilets are likely to be dismissed as irrelevant within the current regeneration agenda, or seen as 'too small' in the great scheme of things: but as will be explained they might in fact be catalysts in bringing prosperity back to rundown areas.

5.2 Social and Physical Planning Considerations

Historically, the emphasis within urban regeneration has been upon physical and economic upgrading, but over the years it has shifted to include a wider range of social issues too. Presumably by means of continuing bottom-up campaigning (Hall and Pfeiffer, 2000:236) as against top-down regulation and prescription. Presumably it can be shifted again to include public toilets. For example, the original urban regeneration grant was concerned sic with 'to promote the economic and physical regeneration of inner urban areas by levering private sector investment into such areas' (Cullingworth and Nadin,1997: 241). One has to ask 'for whom?' and 'what use was all this to we campaigning toileteers?'. Such programmes have proved unhelpful in meeting women's needs.

Some renewal programmes such as English Partnerships, City Challenge, inter alia (Cullingworth and Nadin, 1997:244) gradually moved more towards meeting the needs of local communities from the early 1990s. Greater emphasis was put upon increasing 'opportunities' for disadvantaged residents, but not necessarily upon improving 'amenities' for such people within the equalities agenda of the time. Significantly City Challenge did allow for competitive bidding for housing and training programmes but also for environmental improvements, social programmes relating to crime, and equal opportunities too. One could imagine that public toilets might have been latched in there somewhere, but as many a feminist researcher has pointed out equal opportunities was generally taken to mean 'ethnicity' (and male ethnicity at that) which drowned out gender issues, and environmental issues tended to be construed to include 'new' sustainability issues rather than boring old public toilets. But the attention on 'sustainability' appears to be set at the wrong level, and not to impact on the realities of urban services. Toilet provision, for example, is likely to be dealt with by the Parks, Cemeteries and Public Works Department or some other unregenerate local government department. It was found from the gender mainstreaming research, that it is very difficult to 'gender proof' the work of such departments where a technical rather than a policy ethos reigns, and where they may be no written policies to examine. In such such toilet departments were found there were no maps, no policy documents and usually no women managers either. But to allay our fears we were likely to be told, 'you can go around with Bert in his van, he's been here for years and he knows where all the toilets are'. Clearly, the requirements of the Amsterdam Treaty are going to be difficult to implement in such situations, but, as stated, the unthinking, socially unaware actions of such departments can totally scupper the sustainability policies of the planners by, for example, closing strategically important public toilets by bus stations thus discouraging people even more from using public transport.

Nonetheless SRB (Single Regeneration Budget) and all its many children of subsequent initiatives (there are now too many initiatives to mention within the word length of this paper) set the precedent of seeking to promote economic, social and physical regeneration through flexible funding. Regeneration initiatives ostensibly encourage empowerment and self-help but appear to ignore the vast class, gender and power differentials at work maintaining inequality and inertia. The language and approach of the programmes seemed so broad and high level that the 'little' nitty gritty issues that women are concerned with (like loos) sit uneasily in this vast swirly regeneration agenda.

6 BETTER SOLUTIONS

6.1 International Comparisons

In some other countries, particularly in the advancing countries of the Far East public toilet provision is given higher priority nowadays and is integrated into the sustainability, urban design, transport and health agendas. But such facilities are generally heavily subsidised by government. But toilet provision can contribute vastly to local economic development, and in Japan they are seen as essential public investments bringing in tourists and providing an opportunity to show off the latest technology, *'like airports'* according the Mayor of Toyama (JTA,1996). Policies on public toilet provision are fully mainstreamed into the Toyama development plan and integrated into all aspects of forward planning policy documentation (Miyaniishi,1996). In Britain successive governments, of both the New Right and New Labour variety devalue necessary 'social capital' and public infrastructural investment in general (Saunders, 1979). Great value is put upon individualised wealth and possessions and on-street facilities are declining. Mobile phones are replacing telephone boxes, but there is no such thing as a mobile personal toilet (well apart from bottles and not for women in any case), although APCs (Automatic Public Toilets) are replacing traditional blocks dating from a bygone age of public investment and civic pride.

Public toilets are never going to pay their way and so they do not fit into the continuing entrepreneurial culture of today. Once a provider has paid for the turnstiles or penny in the slot equipment, increased security and paid for someone to go around and collect the money, plus a man in a white van to go around to check on the installation and repair it, some contract cleaner to go around and clean several blocks. However this will increase local employment. Indeed many women would prefer to see the return of attendants. It has been calculated that it is cheaper in the long run to do so because of the savings of reduced vandalism and misuse and the reduction of the need to control entrance by pay to pee systems. Providing attendants is a key to improving facilities.

But, it has been shown that the provision of good public toilets has a halo effect on

surrounding houseprices, property values and regeneration. There is a need to create 'Great Toilet Architecture' again. Westbourne Park, near to Notting Hill, in the Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, London is a rare example of this. Built in 1993 and designed by the architect Piers Gough these public toilets consist of a triangular structure which has received much critical acclaim and it has been found that property values actually increased in the surrounding vicinity after they were built. Unfortunately they are also notorious for being closed on Sundays, and during the Notting Hill Carnival, and have been damned as 'sexist' by because there are 20p in the slot contraptions on the doors to the Ladies cubicles (commented upon in *The Independent*, 1994). Similar halo effects have been observed in New York, Rio de Janeiro and Paris where erstwhile declining areas have been revitalised by toilet installation. 'Bathrooms mean business', and benefit all aspects of the urban situation, according to North American colleagues who drawing on examples in rundown New York districts have shown that local people see the building of new public toilets as a sign of government faith in the future of the area in question, which in turn increases property values in the surrounding area (BTA,2001). In Britain too, toilet developments can be a positive factor. In Britain the policy areas of health, crime prevention, urban design and sustainability would all be ameliorated by public toilet provision both at local and national level. Each of these aspects will be discussed briefly stressing the economic benefits.

6.2 Wider Health Considerations

The population is ageing and the NHS is pouring more money into incontinence services. Edwards (1998b) argues that it is more a matter of incompetence than incontinence that we are dealing with here. Certain urinary conditions and infections are exacerbated by lack of toilet facilities, bad design, and poor hygiene within existing facilities. But there is no joined up thinking between government departments in terms of realising the need for preventative medicine by making more public toilets available nationally. The Continence Foundation argues for more local area community based initiatives, and liaison between providing agencies possibly under the auspices of the DHO. The original concept of 'sustainability' (Brundtland,1987) incorporated three aspects, namely, environmental sustainability, economic sufficiency and social equity which includes health equality. Public toilets has ramifications for achieving all three objectives.

6.3 Crime and Design Factors

Preventative measures to cut crime and misuse have created a fortress mentality rather than a fully accessible toilet service (Cockfield,1998). Local authorities are also worried about their liabilities under Section 17 of the 1999 Crime and Disorder Act (in inducing crime) so it is easier to close facilities than incur problems. Section 17 states, 'without prejudice to any other obligation imposed on it, it shall be the duty of each authority to

which this section applies to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to to all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area'. Thus 'male' crime sets the agenda whereas for women the problems are quite different, and revolve around lack of provision to start with, problems with access, small cubicles, queues, lack of baby and child facilities and discriminatory charging systems. Rather than closing the toilets providing accessible design and making the locations more visible would all reduce these problems. It is suggested (Cavanagh,1999) that rather than hide the toilets away in some bushes it is much safer to put them in the middle of the streetscene and make them a beautiful and valuable urban design feature, not something to be ashamed about. In Japan an annual prestigious toilet design competition is held for graduate architectural students and public toilets have become an integral component of good urban design.

The creation of a 'quality townscape' in Britain may entail the clearing away of what is seen as unsightly 'clutter', such as bus shelters, newspaper kiosks, street vendors, public toilets, advertisement hoarding, and other evidence of messy human life (especially working class life). This is particularly the case in tourist areas where the combination of enthusiastic city centre management programmes, and heritage-orientated, urban conservation policy may create a beautiful urban stage set at which one may passively gaze, the very embodiment of current urban design guide principles. In an ideal world emphasis would be put upon designing decent car parking with toilets, and architect-designed, pedestrian and cyclist toilets, each combined with a comprehensive range of user facilities such as left-luggage facilities, under-cover bicycle parking, disabled access facilities, and perhaps a creche and café - thus putting such facilities at the hub, rather than the edge, of urban environments.

In addition it is vital to reinstate the lavatory attendant and to improve maintenance and management, as a public toilet is a municipal metaphor (sacrament). Their condition is an outward manifestation of the inward state of the government and society in that area. According to 'broken window theory' which derives from the world of North American crime prevention theory (Wilson and Kelling, 1982; Miller,1999: 87) 'image' is everything, the authors suggest that what people most fear is disorder, not crime, as disorder has a profound effect on quality of life. To counter disorder rather than put emphasis on crimefighting, instead attention to nuisances such as drunks, drugs, broken windows, street urination, vandalism, graffiti, 'panhandlers' (beggars) etc, all of which are signs of disorder, 'the incivilities model' signs of physical disorder include abandoned buildings, broken windows litter, and social disorder, drunkenness, drug use, prostitution etc. This inattention leads to community's inability to control itself through confronting residents shared concerns as communal obligations break down crime flourishes. According to Greene and Taylor (1991:198-199) as social incivilities become widespread residents make fewer efforts to control standards, resulting in further expansion of incivility, so residents use the streets less, so less eyes on the street, so more crime.

Therefore the solution is to make the public toilets shining examples of

in-neighbourhood examples of good social control and organisation, rather than outward symbols of the rot that has set in within central government. This is a powerful argument which is couched in the language of a government that seems more concerned with 'image' and 'spin' than it is with the perfectly legitimate, and rational arguments of ordinary tax payers. Thus it is a valid 'economic' (money saving) argument that might be more acceptable within the male-dominated culture of urban regeneration than cries from distressed women seeking to relieve themselves, or take their toddler and pushchair down inaccessible urine-soaked steps to the vandalised, unsalubrious 'Ladies'. The attendant then becomes the guardian and promoter of civic values, and, as in Japan, they might also provide tourist information and left luggage facilities, and should be honoured each year in public award ceremonies.

7 CONCLUSION

Traditional town planning and modern urban regeneration have both failed to address the toilet issue, which is why other solutions are being sought in the realms of health, crime prevention and generic social policy. If the political will is there planners can get good new public toilets out of developers, and if they team up with dedicated town centre managers who put toilet renewal proposals in with the overall scheme they can work wonders in upgrading facilities in older areas too (Danfo,2000). But mandatory provision would be much better rather than local authorities having to negotiate and bargain with developers to get provision. Like much permissive legislation, where no mandatory requirements exist, 'anything' can be achieved if the will is after all the restrictive letter of the law does not fall so harshly on those who want expensive paving stones, flower beds, fountains and public art creations included in urban design programmes. In the future the impact of European regulation such as the need for gender-proofing of planning policies in Objective 1 areas may well lead to public toilet provision and other 'women's' issues being taken more seriously. Disability legislation is also pushing the toilet agenda forwards, albeit the question of separate or universal provision has not yet been resolved. As a result of all these factors we may yet see the city of everyday life emerge in which the needs of the majority are fully embodied in urban design and public amenity provision. There is a need to include the requirements, time taken, and chances of achievement of the performance of bodily functions within the criteria for evaluating the success of urban regeneration within an area. In the final analysis if the present government expects people to leave their cars behind and use public transport then there is a need for commensurate infrastructural provision of facilities such as public toilets at every main bus station, train station and terminus, particularly with the number of cancelled trains, delays and waits passengers regularly encounter nowadays.

8. REFERENCES

- Angresano, James (1997) The Political Economy of Gunnar Myrdal New York: Edward Elgar Publishers (re 'trickle down effect' as propounded by Myrdal and Schumpeter)
- Asano, Yoshiharu (2002) Number of Sanitary Fixtures: Mathematical Models for Toilet Queuing Theory Faculty of Architecture and Building Engineering, Shinshu University, Nagano, Japan.
- Audit Commission (1998 and annual till 2001) Statistical Summary of Public Toilet Provision by Local Authority, London: The Stationery Office.
- Booth, C (2001) 'Managing Diversity in the Planning Process', Journal of the Planning Inspectorate, Autumn 2001, Issue 23, Autumn 2001, pp 9-13
- Booth, C, Darke, J and Yeandle, S (1996) Changing Places: Women's Lives in the City, London: Paul Chapman.
- Braithwaite, M (1998) Manual for Integrating Gender Equality Into Local and Regional Development, Brussels: INBAS.
- Brownill, Sue (2000) 'Regeneration: women and urban policy in Britain' in Darke, J, Ledwith, S and Woods, R (2000) Women and the City: Visibility and Voice in Urban Space, London: Palgrave.
- Brundtland Report (1987) Our Common Future, World Commission on Environment and Development, Oxford University Press.
- BSI (1996) BS 6465: Sanitary Installations: Part I London: British Standards Institute.
- BTA (2000a) Best Value Guide for Public Toilets Winchester: BTA.
- BTA (2000b) 50 of the Best Toilets in Britain Winchester: BTA
- BTA (2001) Better Public Toilets: A providers' guide to the provision and management of 'away from home' toilets, Winchester: British Toilet Association, edited by Ray Fowler
- Cavanagh, Sue (1999) 'Women and the urban environment' in Greed, C and Roberts, M (1998) Introducing Urban Design: Interventions and Responses
- CCI (2002) Licensing Reform: A Cross-cultural comparison of rights, responsibilities and regulation London: University of Westminster, M. Roberts with C. Turner, S. Greenfield, G. Osborn, N. Bailey, and T. Edmundson.
- Cockfield, Colin (1998) Public Conveniences. Problem Reduction Guide, Stafford: Staffordshire Police, Architectural Liaison Department.
- Cotter, Val and Grant, Celia (2000) 'Regendering the City: more to learn?' Gender and the Built Environment: policy-making and everyday life Sheffield: Sheffield Hallam University, ESRC Seminar 6, 22.9.2000.
- Council of Europe (1998) Gender Mainstreaming: Conceptual framework, methodology

and presentation of good practices, Strasbourg: Council of Europe, Ref: EG-S-MS (98) 2.

Cullingworth, J. Barry and Nadin, Vincent. (quoted from 1997 edition, now 2002)

Town and Country Planning in Britain, London: Routledge.

Danfo (2000) Design and Management of Public Toilets Uxbridge: Danfo International, Proceedings of Conference at Banbury 3.10.2000.

Edwards, Julia (1998a) 'Local authority performance indicators: dousing the fire of campaigning consumers' Local Government Studies Vol 24, No.4, pp 26-45. Edwards,

Julia (1998b) 'Policy making as organised irresponsibility: the case of public conveniences' Policy and Politics Vol.26, No.3, pp 307-320.

Goldsmith, Selwyn (2001) Universal Design, London: Architectural Press.

Greed, Clara (1994) Women and Planning: Creating Gendered Realities London: Routledge.

Greed, C (1996a) 'Planning for Women and other Disenabled Groups', Environment and Planning A, Volume 28, pages 573-588, March 1996.

Greed, C (1996,b) 'Planning and Toilets provision: a Cistern's view of planning', Planning Practice and Research Vol.11, No.1, pp 99-106

Greed, C (1999) Social Town Planning London: Routledge.

Greed, C (2000) The Changing Composition of the Construction Industry, Bristol:

Faculty of the Built Environment, University of the West of England, Occasional Paper.

Greed, C and Daniels, I (2002) User and Provider Perspectives on Public Toilet Provision Based on Nuffield Trust funded research of the same title, Occasional Paper, Faculty of the Built Environment, University of the West of England, Bristol.

Greed, C (2002) 'Downtown toilets: inclusive urban design, paper presented at World Toilet Organisation conference, New Beginnings in the 21st Century, Conference proceedings, World Toilet Summit, Seoul, Korea, 31 October -November 3, 2002.

www.worldrestroom.org

Greed, C (ed) (2003) Gender Mainstreaming Planning Toolkit and Accompanying Research Report, with Linda Davies, Caroline Brown and Stephanie Dühr, published by Royal Town Planning Institute, London, steering group chaired by D. Reeves, found on the web and hard copy at www.rtpi.org.uk

Greed, C. (2003) Public Toilets: Inclusive Urban Design Oxford: Architectural Press, Elsevier Publications.

Greene, Jack and Taylor, Ralph (1991) 'Community based policing and foot patrol: issues of theory and evaluation', in J. Greene and S. Mastrofski, Community Policing: Rhetoric or Reality?, New York: Praeger.

Hall, Peter and Pfeiffer, Ulrich (2000) Urban Future 21: A Global Agenda for

Twenty-First Century Cities London: Spon.

Hanson,Julienne and Greed,Clara (2003a) 'Accessible public toilets in city centres' in Access by Design, Issue 95, pp 24-27, London: Centre for Accessible Environments, 60 Gainsford Road, SE1 2NY.

Hanson,J and Greed,C (2003b) 'Inclusive design of public toilets in city centres' Workpackage 9, comprising one component of the EPSRC Research Project Vivacity: Sustainable Urban Environments - Urban Sustainability for the Twenty-Four Hour City. London: EPSRC (Engineering and Physical Science Research Council).

JTA (1996) International Toilet Conference: Conference Proceedings, Toyama: Japan Toilet Association.

Kira, Alexander (1975) The Bathroom, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Miller,Susan (1999) Gender and Community Policing, Boston: North Eastern University Press.

Miyaniishi, Yutaka (1996) Comfortable Public Toilets: Design and Maintenance Manual, Toyama: City Planning Department

Plymouth (2001) Gender Audit of the Local Plan Review 2001 for the City of Plymouth. Plymouth: University of Plymouth in association with City of Plymouth Council.

Roberts,M and Greed,C (2001) Approaching Urban Design Harlow: Pearson.

Roberts,M (2003) 'Civilising city centres?' Town and Country Planning March/April, Vol.7, No,3, pp 78-79.

Robinson, Steve (2001) Public Conveniences: Policy, Planning and Provision London: Institute of Wastes Management (IWM).

Saunders, Peter (1979) Urban Politics: A Sociological Interpretation, Harmondsworth: Penguin

Sheffield (2000) The Interface between Public Policy and Gender Equality Proceedings of ESRC Seminar Series, Sheffield Hallam University.

Tallon, Andrew and Bromley, Rosemary (2002) 'Living in the 24 hour city' Town and Country Planning, November, 2002, pp 282-285.

Wilson, James, and Kelling, George (1982) 'The police and neighbourhood safety: broken windows', Atlantic Monthly, 12 (7): 29-38.

WTO (2002) World Toilet Summit: New Beginnings for the 21st Century Conference Proceedings, 31st October,2002, Seoul, Korea.

9.PRESENTATION of AUTHOR

Dr Clara Greed, MRTPI, MRICS, FCIQB

Professor of Inclusive Urban Planning,
School of Architecture and Planning,
Faculty of the Built Environment,
University of the West of England, UK
Frenchay Campus, Bristol BS16 1QY
Phone: (44) 01275 844448.
Fax: 0117 344 3002
ClaraGreed@aol.com
Clara.Greed@uwe.ac.uk



Dr. Clara Greed is Professor of Inclusive Urban Planning at the University of the West of England, Bristol, UK. Her main fields of research are the social aspects of planning, planning for equal opportunities, access, and women and planning issues: and of course toilets which are such a key component of urban planning. She is a committee member of the British Toilet Association, a founder member of the World Toilet Organisation and a member of the British Standards Institute BS6565 Part I Sanitary Installations [toilets] revision committee. Her book Public Toilets: Inclusive Urban Design (Architectural Press) was published in July 2003.