



Review of Midlothian Public Toilets

Report by John Blair, Director, Corporate Resources

1 Purpose of Report

This review report has been prepared to provide Cabinet with information on alternative locations and premises options which would be available to the general public in the event that the Council considers closure of all five of the existing public toilets.

2 Background

The Council when setting the Revenue Budget for 2013/14 agreed to review the provision of all public toilets. This was approved at the Council meeting on 18 December 2012.

There are five public toilets within Midlothian situated in:-

- Penicuik, Bank Street, EH26 9BG
- Loanhead, Station Road, EH20 9RQ
- Bonnyrigg, Woods Court, EH19 3JR
- Gorebridge, Hunterfield Road, EH23 4TS
- Dalkeith, Eskdail Court, EH22 1AG

These toilets are open seven days per week between the hours of 9.00 am and 6.00 pm and are currently serviced and cleaned by four full time staff who work a 3 days and 4 days rota. There are two vehicles utilised to operate the mobile system covering the servicing and cleaning on a regular daily programme.

Petitions have been received from members of the public on the proposed review of the public toilets and these were considered by the Petitions Committee on 19 March 2013. The Committee agreed:-

“that the terms of the petitions be noted meantime and be taken into account when the Council considered the outcome of the review.”

3 Financial Savings

Council on 18 December 2012 approved a review of all Midlothian public toilets which would result in a targeted saving of £85,000 in 2013/14 and £117,000 per annum thereafter.

The historic cost of operating the public toilets in Midlothian is as follows:-

	Actual 2009/10	Actual 2010/11	Actual 2011/12	Actual 2012/13
Employee Costs	£95,000	£88,000	£105,000	£91,000
Premises Costs	£42,000	£37,000	£44,000	£46,000
Transports Costs	£0	£6,000	£8,000	£7,000
Supplies & Services	£2,000	£10,000	£13,000	£1,000
Total	£139,000	£141,000	£170,000	£145,000

The current and future years' approved budget is as follows:-

	2013/14 Original Budget	2013/14 Approved Saving	2013/14 Revised Budget	2014/15 Approved Budget
Employee Costs	£88,000	(£43,000)	£45,000	£0
Premises Costs	£54,000	(£38,000)	£16,000	£29,000
Transport Costs	£4,000	(£4,000)	£0	£0
Total	£146,000	(£85,000)	£61,000	£29,000

4 Alternative Locations

The location of each of the public toilets in relation to alternative locations is shown in the Appendices to this report.

The review has indicated that there are Council buildings available as an alternative in each of the five locations subject to surveys being carried out on the security aspects. Some minor works would also have to be undertaken to ensure that separate restricted access only to the public toilets is established.

Availability of baby changing facilities, which are currently available at each of the public toilets, is required at each alternative location and these facilities are currently available at all leisure centres and also at Penicuik Town Hall.

4.1 Penicuik Toilets (Appendix 1)

Average Daily Usage by Public Weekday- 138 persons
Average Daily Usage at Weekend – 49 persons

Alternative Council Buildings:-

- Penicuik Town Hall, distance 175m
- Penicuik Leisure Centre, distance 700m

Alternative Commercial Property:-

- Tesco, distance 1000m.

4.2 Loanhead Toilets (Appendix 2)

Average Daily Usage by Public Weekday - 76 persons
Average Daily Usage at Weekend – 14 persons

Alternative Council Buildings:-

- Loanhead Leisure Centre, distance 650m
- Loanhead Library HQ, distance 300m

Alternative Commercial Property:-

- Loanhead Miners Community Centre, distance 300m.

4.3 Bonnyrigg Toilets (Appendix 3)

Average Daily Usage by Public Weekday - 141 persons
Average Daily Usage at Weekend – 92 persons

Alternative Council Buildings:-

- Dundas Buildings, distance 260m
- New Lasswade Centre, distance 700m
- Midlothian Training Centre Offices, distance 370m

Alternative Commercial Property - None.

4.4 Gorebridge Toilets (Appendix 4)

Average Daily Usage by Public Weekday - 15 persons
Average Daily Usage at Weekend – 14 persons

Alternative Council Buildings:-

- Gorebridge Leisure Centre, distance 470m

Alternative Commercial Property - None.

4.5 Dalkeith Toilets (Appendix 5)

Average Daily Usage by Public Weekday – 279 persons
Average Daily Usage at Weekend – 185 persons

Alternative Council Buildings:-

- Buccleuch House, distance 80m
- Dalkeith Art Centre, distance 100m
- Midlothian House, distance 155m
- Fairfield House, distance 295m
- Dalkeith Social Work Offices, distance 185m

Alternative Commercial Property - None.

- 4.6** The average daily usage figures in sections 4.1 – 4.5 were the results of a survey, carried out over a period of 4 weeks split between February 2013 and April 2013, using an electronic footfall counter.

5 Conclusions on Alternative Locations

- 5.1** Each Public Toilet was assessed regarding its location and on the availability of other Council buildings in the vicinity of existing premises. Facility Management staff also reviewed commercial properties and buildings which could be possible potential alternatives.
- 5.2** Licensed premises were discounted as toilet access in these locations meant that the public had to in some cases enter via the bar area. This criteria also applied to the local cafes and restaurants where the toilets were situated at the rear of the premises and Food Hygiene regulations required to be considered.
- 5.3** Betting premises were assessed for public use but were discounted due to limited facilities and entry restrictions for those under 18 years of age.
- 5.4** After reviewing the alternative private premises the following concerns remain:-
- 1) Toilets are mostly situated at the rear of the premises.
 - 2) Toilet facilities generally were too small with only one or two cubicles.
 - 3) Age restriction on licensed and betting premises.
 - 4) Limited disabled access for the toilet in most premises.
 - 5) Foot Hygiene Safety Regulations.
 - 6) Public liability concerns, Health and Safety.
 - 7) Closed on Sundays, some are closed half day on a Saturday.

6 Other Council's Approach

Contact was made with East Lothian, West Lothian and Dumfries and Galloway Councils on their Public Toilets and information obtained as to the management and operating arrangements. Whilst all of the three Councils were reviewing the operational costs of providing this service as part of their efficiency savings, none were contemplating closure of any facilities however some councils were intending to reduce the specification and/or reducing the personnel.

7 Options

7.1 Charging

This option involves the installation of revolving turnstile barriers with a charge to use the facility. Cost of barriers is estimated at £3,000 per location. Current usage is estimated at approximately 211,000 users per annum. Based on an estimated drop in usage of 30% following the introduction of a charge income is estimated at:-

Annual Projected Users	Charge	Projected Income 2013/14	Projected Income 2014/15
148,000	20p	£15,000	£30,000

To meet with the public's expectation associated with paying for the service, a capital improvement programme may be required. Costs for this upgrade have not been included in this report.

If barriers are installed this could potentially cause difficulties for wheelchair access to the facility.

It is also considered that there may be potential operational difficulties associated with the introduction of standard turnstile barriers at unmanned facilities and it would most likely to be necessary to staff facilities where a charge is made.

7.2 Reduced Specification

Continuing the service but with two cleaning operatives and one vehicle.

The cost implications of this option are as follows:-

	Approved Budget 2013/14	Required Budget 2013/14	Additional Budget Required	Approved Budget 2014/15	Required Budget 2014/15	Additional Budget Required 2014/15
Employee Costs	£45,000	£66,000	£21,000	£0	£44,000	£44,000
Premises	£16,000	£53,000	£37,000	£29,000	£53,000	£24,000
Transport	£0	£6,000	£6,000	£0	£4,000	£4,000
Supplies	£0	£1,000	£1,000	£0	£1,000	£1,000
Total Cost	£61,000	£126,000	£65,000	£29,000	£102,000	£73,000

This option would leave the Council with a forecast overspend of £65,000 in 2013/14 and £73,000 in 2014/15. This assumes a start date of 1 October 2013.

7.3 Reduced Specification and Close Gorebridge and Loanhead Facilities

The Public Toilets at Penicuik, Bonnyrigg and Dalkeith are well used throughout the day by members of the public. To keep these three toilets open as an alternative would result in the Monday to Friday clean being maintained by one member of the existing Facility Staff and a part time 16 hour post for the weekend service.

The cost implications of this option are as follows:-

	Approved Budget 2013/14	Required Budget 2013/14	Additional Budget Required	Approved Budget 2014/15	Required Budget 2014/15	Additional Budget Required 2014/15
Employee Costs	£45,000	£61,000	£16,000	£0	£33,000	£33,000
Premises	£16,000	£49,000	£33,000	£29,000	£45,000	£16,000
Transport	£0,000	£6,000	£6,000	£0	£4,000	£4,000
Supplies	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Total Cost	£61,000	£116,000	£55,000	£29,000	£82,000	£53,000

This option would leave the Council with a forecast overspend of £55,000 in 2013/14 and £ 53,000 in 2014/15. This assumes a start date of 1 October 2013.

7.4 Closure of All Public Toilets

As detailed in Section 3 of this report an annual budget saving of £85,000 in year one (2013/14) and £117,000 thereafter would be achieved. This option assumes closure from July 2013 and staff are redeployed to suitable vacancies in line with the MiFuture Policy.

8.0 Report Implications

8.1 Resource Summary

The following table summarises the options outlined

2013/14 – Financial Year - Part Year Impact

	Approved budget 2013/14	Option 7.1 Introduce Charge	Option 7.2 Reduced Spec	Option 7.3 Reduced Spec/close 2 Toilets	Option 7.4 Close all Facilities
Employee Costs	£45,000	£88,000	£66,000	£61,000	£45,000
Premises Costs	£16,000	£54,000	£53,000	£49,000	£16,000
Transports Costs	£0,000	£4,000	£6,000	£6,000	£0,000
Supplies and Services (note a)	£0	£15,000	£1,000	£0	£0
Income	£0	(£15,000)	£0	£0	£0
Total	£61,000	£146,000	£126,000	£116,000	£61,000
Financial Shortfall		£85,000	£65,000	£55,000	£0

Notes

(a) Supplies and Services includes a one of provision for the installation of barriers as part of option 7.1 (introduce a charge).

2014/15 Financial Year - Full Year Impact

		Option 7.1	Option 7.2	Option 7.3	Option 7.4
	Approved budget 2013/14	Introduce Charge	Reduced Spec	Reduced Spec/ close 2 Toilets	Close all Facilities
Employee Costs	£0,000	£88,000	£44,000	£33,000	£0
Premises Costs	£29,000	£54,000	£53,000	£45,000	£29,000
Transports Costs	£0,000	£4,000	£4,000	£4,000	£0
Supplies and Services	£0	£0	£1,000	£0	£0
Income	£0	(£30,000)	£0	£0	£0
Total	£29,000	£116,000	£102,000	£82,000	£29,000
Financial Shortfall		£87,000	£73,000	£53,000	£0

Accordingly, if Cabinet were minded to support any option other than closure of all facilities it would require to be funded as there is no budgetary provision in 2013/14 and would require either a supplementary estimate or identification of savings elsewhere from within the Property and Facilities Management Revenue Budget. This early in the financial year it is extremely difficult to form a view on the financial performance of Council Services.

The Council's General Reserve, of which the uncommitted element of Reserves is projected to be £5.042 million, was reported to Council on 5 February 2013. The Head of Finance and Human Resources advised a prudent level of uncommitted reserves is seen to be 2% of net expenditure which equates to approximately £4 million.

The projected overspend on General Fund Services in the year is anticipated to be £2.554 million and the final outturn to be reported to June Council will determine the available General Fund balance as at 31 March 2013.

8.2 Risk

Closure of all Public Toilets will contribute to addressing the significant funding difficulty facing the Council. However implementing this option in full will most likely attract significant negative feedback from the community and visitors to Midlothian.

8.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:-

- ☐ Community safety
- ☐ Adult health, care and housing
- ☐ Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- ☐ Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- ☐ Sustainable growth
- ☐ Business transformation and Best Value
- ☒ None of the above

8.4 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

This report presents a range of options for achieving financial targets to providing a reduced service targeting the most used facilities.

8.5 Adopting a Preventative Approach

The provision of public toilets promotes Midlothian and provides facilities for residents, visitors and employers.

8.6 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

Neighbouring local authorities have been consulted together with trade union and staff during the compilation of this report. This report follows from the Petitions Committee of the Council which was held on 19 March 2013.

8.7 Ensuring Equalities

Equalities issues would be of concern should all toilets be closed due to access difficulties for wheelchair/disabled persons and suitable fully accessible alternatives not being provided in the main town centres of Midlothian.

8.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

There are no sustainability issues relating to this report.

8.9 IT Issues

There are no IT issues arising from this report.

9 Recommendations

Cabinet is invited to:-

- a) Consider options as set out in Section 4 which are also and summarised in Section 8; and
- b) Note that any option which does not achieve the targeted saving of £85,000 in 2013/14 and £117,000 thereafter would require to be reported to a future Council meeting owing to the anticipated budget shortfall.

21 May 2013

Report Contact: John Blair Tel No 0131 271 3101

E-mail john.blair@midlothian.gov.uk

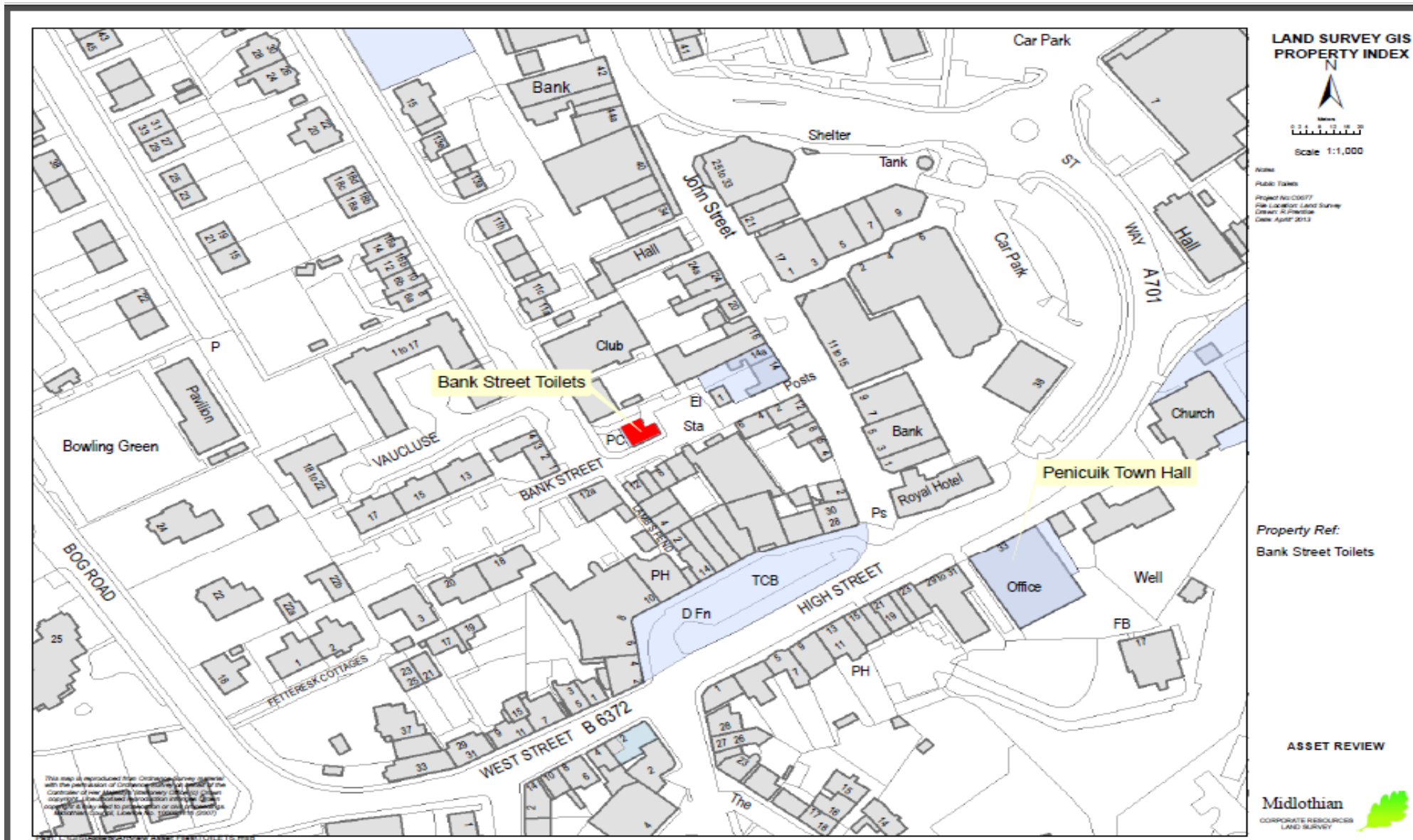
Background Papers:

PENICUIK PUBLIC TOILET

Other Council Locations in Area	Distance from P/T to other Location	Restricted Access	Disabled Access	Male Toilet Accessible	Female Toilet Accessible	Disabled Toilet Accessible	Accessible at Weekends	Opening Times	Closing Times
Penicuik Town Hall	175m	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	09.00	Mon to Thurs 17.00; Fri 15.30
Penicuik Leisure Centre	700m	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Mon 09.00; Tue 07.00; Wed 09.00; Thur 07.00; Fri to Sun 09.00	Mon to Fri 22.00; Sat & Sun 20.00

Other Locations in Area	Distance from P/T to other Location	Restricted Access	Disabled Access	Male Toilet Accessible	Female Toilet Accessible	Disabled Toilet Accessible	Accessible at Weekends	Opening Times	Closing Times
William Hills	125m	Y no under 18's	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Mon to Fri 09.30; Sat 08.30; Sun 09.30;	Mon to Sat 22.00; Sun 20.00
Ladbroke's	700m	Y no under 18's	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Mon to Sat 09.00; Sun 10.00	Mon to Sat 22.00; Sun 20.00
Tesco	1000m	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Mon to Sat 06.00; Sun 09.00	Mon to Sat Midnight; Sun 20.00

- Penicuik Town Hall, there is a side door into the Town Hall that the public can use to gain access to the toilets.
- The door into the hall can be locked so the public would only have access to the toilet area.
- Facilities Management Services have cleaning staff on duty in the morning, Sport and Leisure have a janitor/caretaker on duty during the day so cleaning the toilets during the day should not be an issue.

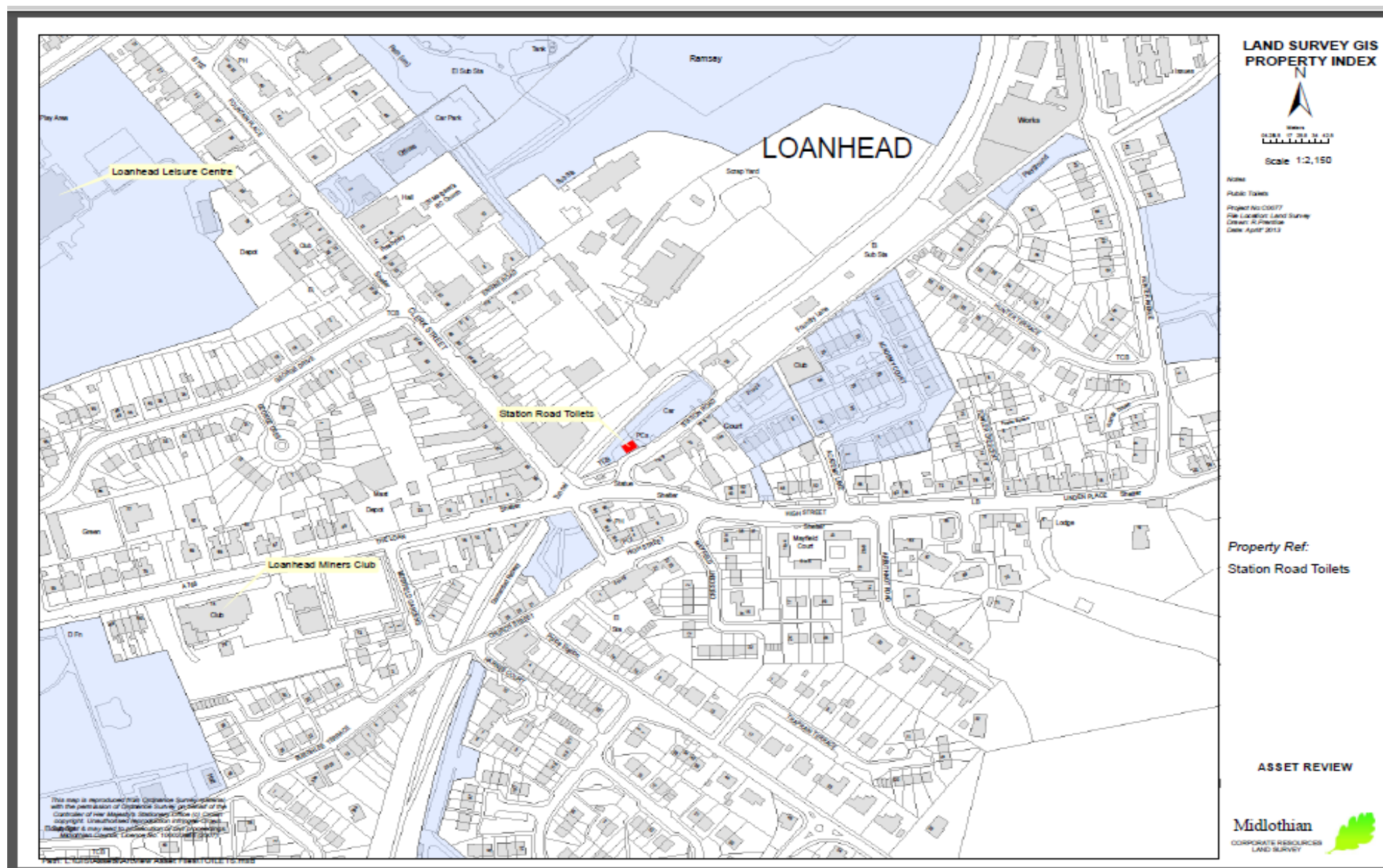


LOANHEAD PUBLIC TOILET

Other Council Locations in Area	Distance from P/T to other Location	Restricted Access	Disabled Access	Male Toilet Accessible	Female Toilet Accessible	Disabled Toilet Accessible	Accessible at Weekends	Opening Times	Closing Times
Loanhead Leisure Centre	650m	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	09.00	Mon to Thur 22.00; Fri & Sat 20.00; Sun 21.00
Loanhead Library HQ	300m	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	09.00	Mon to Thurs 17.00; Fri 15.45
Loanhead SWC	350m	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	09.00	Mon to Thurs 17.00; Fri 15.30

Other Locations in Area	Distance from P/T to other Location	Restricted Access	Disabled Access	Male Toilet Accessible	Female Toilet Accessible	Disabled Toilet Accessible	Accessible at Weekends	Opening Times	Closing Times
Scotbet	75m	Y no under 18's	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	No times available	No times available
Loanhead Miners Community Centre	300m	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	No times available	No times available

- Sport and Leisure have staff on throughout the day at the Leisure Centre.

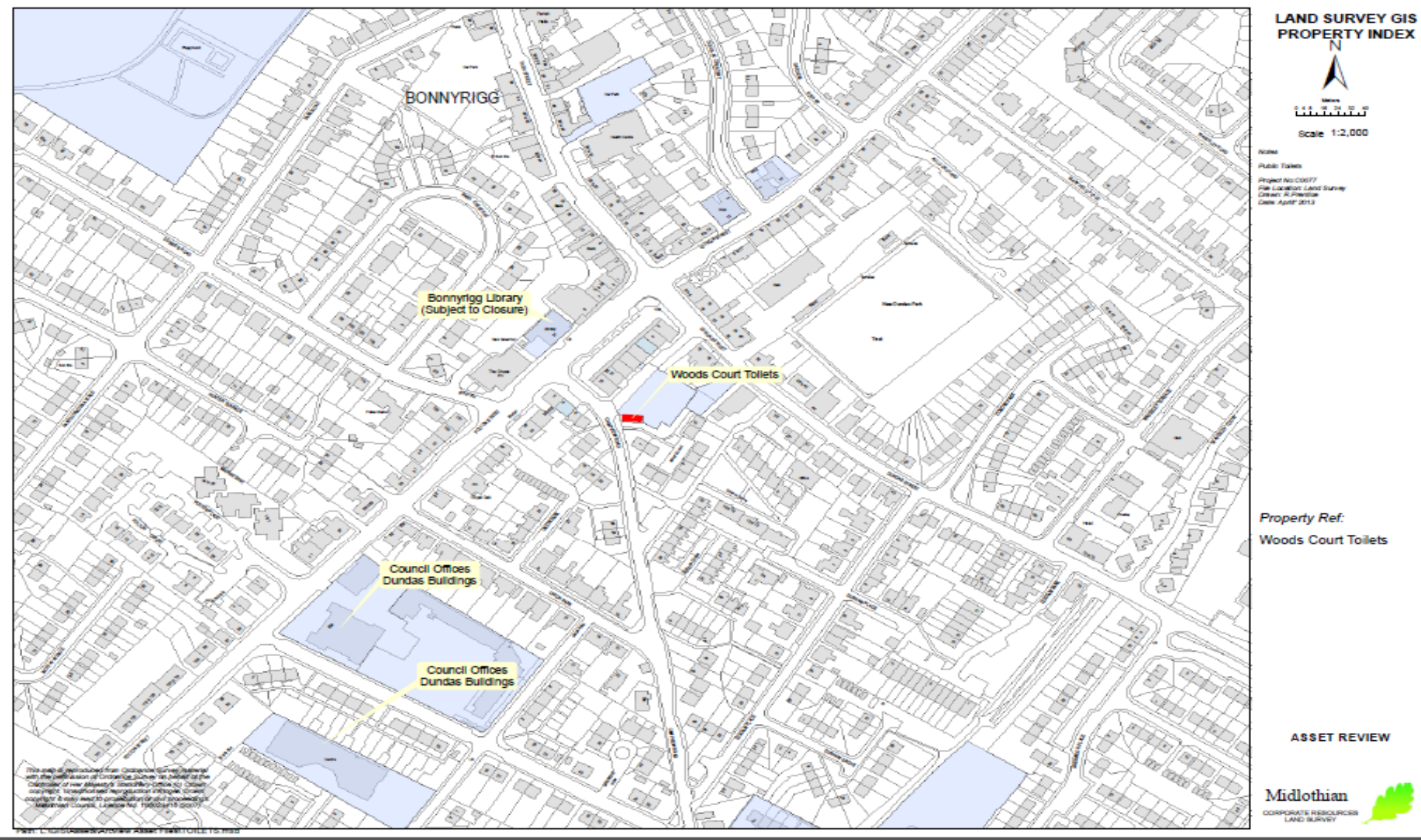


BONNYRIGG PUBLIC TOILET

Other Council Locations in Area	Distance from P/T to other Location	Restricted Access	Disabled Access	Male Toilet Accessible	Female Toilet Accessible	Disabled Toilet Accessible	Accessible at Weekends	Opening Times	Closing Times
Bonnyrigg Library (being closed)	75m	Y	Y	N	N	N	Sat only	Mon 09.30; Tue 13.00; Wed to Sat 09.30	Mon & Tue 20.15; Wed 13.00; Thur 20.15; Fri 17.00; Sat 13.00
Bonnyrigg Leisure Centre (being closed)	490m	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	09.00	Mon to Thur 22.00; Fri to sun 20.00
Dundas Buildings	260m	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	09.00	Mon to Thur 17.00; Fri 15.30
MTS Bonnyrigg	370m	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	09.00	Mon to Thurs 16.30; Fri 15.30
Cherry Road	410m	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	09.00	16.00
New LHS Centre (opening July 2013)	700m								

Other Locations in Area	Distance from P/T to other Location	Restricted Access	Disabled Access	Male Toilet Accessible	Female Toilet Accessible	Disabled Toilet Accessible	Accessible at Weekends	Opening Times	Closing Times
Ladbroses	60m	Y no under 18's	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Mon to Sat 09.00; Sun 10.00	Mon to Sat 22.00; Sun 20.00
William Hills	95m	Y no under 18's	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Mon to Fri 09.30; Sat 08.30; Sun 09.30	Mon to Sat 22.00; Sun 20.00

- Sport and Leisure have staff on throughout the day at the Leisure Centre

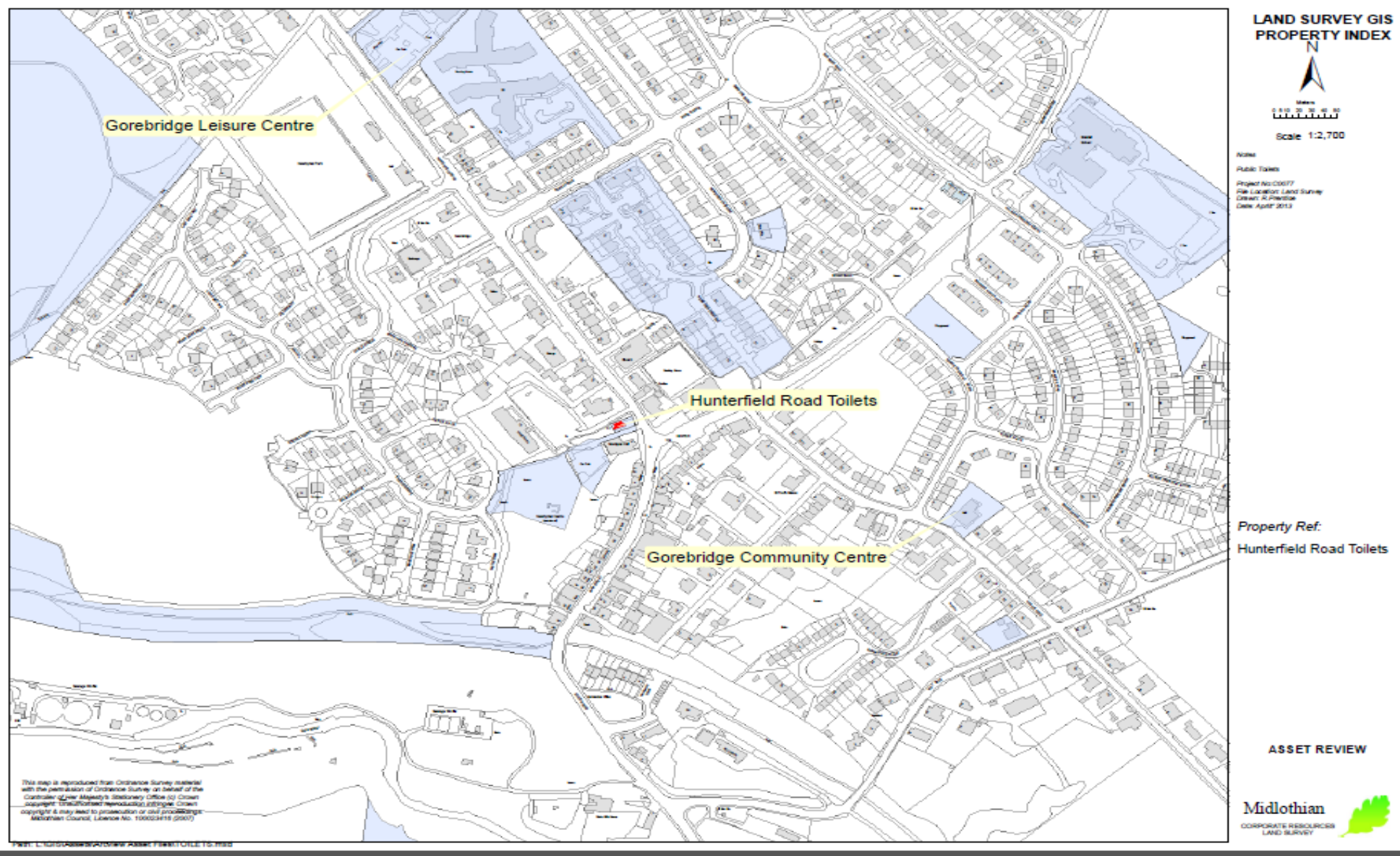


GOREBRIDGE PUBLIC TOILETS

Other Council Locations in Area	Distance from P/T to other Location	Restricted Access	Disabled Access	Male Toilet Accessible	Female Toilet Accessible	Disabled Toilet Accessible	Accessible at Weekends	Opening Times	Closing Times
Gorebridge Leisure Centre	470M	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Mon to Sat 09.00; Sun 12.00	Mon to Thur 22.00; Fri 20.00; Sat 18.00; Sun 20.00

Other Locations in Area	Distance from P/T to other Location	Restricted Access	Disabled Access	Male Toilet Accessible	Female Toilet Accessible	Disabled Toilet Accessible	Accessible at Weekends	Opening Times	Closing Times
Scotbet	625m	Y no under 18's	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	No times available	No times available

- Sport and Leisure have staff on throughout the day at the Leisure Centre



DALKEITH PUBLIC TOILETS

Other Council Locations in Area	Distance from P/T to other Location	Restricted Access	Disabled Access	Male Toilet Accessible	Female Toilet Accessible	Disabled Toilet Accessible	Accessible at Weekends	Opening Times	Closing Times
Buccleuch House	80m	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	09.00	Mon to Thur 17.00; Fri 15.30
Dalkeith Library/Art Centre	100m	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Sat only	Mon 09.30; Tue 13.00; Wed to Sat 09.30	Mon & Tue 20.15; Wed 13.00; Thur 20.15; Fri 17.00; Sat 13.00
Midlothian House	155m	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	09.00	Mon to Thur 17.00; Fri 15.30
Fairfield House	295m	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	09.00	Mon to Thur 17.00; Fri 15.30
Dalkeith SWC	185m	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	09.00	Mon to Thur 17.00; Fri 15.30

Other Locations in Area	Distance from P/T to other Location	Restricted Access	Disabled Access	Male Toilet Accessible	Female Toilet Accessible	Disabled Toilet Accessible	Accessible at Weekends	Opening Times	Closing Times
Ladbrokes	100m	Y no under 18's	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Mon to Sat 09.00; Sun 10.00	Mon to Sat 22.00; Sun 20.00
Scotbet	160m	Y no under 18's	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	No times available	No times available

