

Specialist Change Facilities Policy - Background Information for Review of Policy

Introduction

1. A specialist change facility is a dedicated area where people with multiple or complex disabilities can be changed or toileted by their caregiver in a safe and clean environment. The facility requires specialist equipment including a change table and a lifting/lowering hoist and therefore has greater requirements than the standard accessible toilet.
2. The Council's first specialist change facility was Te Huri and is located at Liz Davidson Place. This facility includes a specialist change table, hand basin, lifting hoist, bins and cleaning materials and a fob door entry. The set-up of the facility had input from the Differently Abled Children of Marlborough Trust. Entry fobs have been issued to Marlborough families, to CCS Disability Action and to schools with an additional fob available from the Council's front desk on request.
3. The Council has also made provision for a facility at Te Kahu o Waipuna – Marlborough's Library and Art Gallery. This is not a dedicated specialist change facility however, as it is also used as an accessible toilet and has a baby changing facility.

Development of current policy

4. A draft policy on the provision of specialist change facilities was first considered by the Assets and Services Committee in January 2020. The policy was required as a consequence of a decision by the Council during the 2019-20 Annual Plan process. That decision allocated \$100,000 from the Forestry and Land Development Reserve in the 2019-20 financial year for a specialist change facility at Pollard Park, subject to the completion of policy development on such facilities.
5. A policy was developed and notified for feedback in March 2020. A minor change was made to the notified policy as a result of a submission and the policy was adopted by the Council in June 2020.

Changing Places model

6. A Changing Places facility is a fully accessible bathroom for people with multiple or complex disabilities. It includes provision for toileting, showering, and changing for adults or children who might have more than one caregiver with them.
7. Changing Places New Zealand is based on a UK model for accessible bathrooms and was formed in 2017. The Changing Places name and logo are registered trademarks of Changing Places New Zealand (Changing Places NZ). A bathroom must be accredited by Changing Places NZ before it can be called a Changing Places bathroom or display the Changing Places logo.
8. Currently there are seven such facilities in New Zealand. There are minimum area requirements for a new build Changing Places bathroom and a list of required fixtures and fittings that must be present in every bathroom. These minimum requirements are more extensive than this Council's current specialist change facilities.¹
9. The Council has been asked to consider using the Changing Places model as the benchmark for Marlborough's specialist changing facilities.

Legislative requirements for specialist change facilities

10. NZS 4121:2001 Design for Access and Mobility – Buildings and Associated Facilities sets out, amongst other things, the requirements for the design of buildings and facilities within buildings for use by people with disabilities as required by the Building Act 1991 – sections 117 to 120. However, there

¹ See <https://www.changingplaces.org.nz/file/changing-places-nz-general-information-july-2023-1/open> for more information.

are no requirements in the Building Act or regulations requiring buildings to include specialist change facilities.

Current Policy

11. The table below sets out the current situation for each policy.

Policy	Current situation
<p>Policy 4.1 sets out the features for specialist change facilities in Marlborough.</p>	<p>The existing facility at Te Huri was installed prior to development of the policy and was within an existing space that was retrofitted to accommodate basic features. This facility does not include all the features listed in 4.1.</p> <p>The facility at the new library and art gallery in Blenheim has taken into consideration the features listed in 4.1.</p> <p>The features listed in the policy are seen as a minimum for any facility to be installed in Marlborough. They are appropriate whether the Council does decide to adopt at some point the Changing Places model or in a situation where the location does not lend itself to have all the Changing Places features.</p>
<p>Policy 4.2 requires that at least one Council provided facility will remain open 24/7.</p>	<p>Te Huri is open 24/7.</p> <p>Depending on the location of the facility it may not always be practical for it to be opened 24/7. The facility within the library for example does not have external access so is not able to be open 24/7.</p> <p>The policy identifies that at a minimum there will be at least one facility that is available 24/7. If in the future other facilities are developed, then consideration can be given at the time as to whether 24/7 access is achievable.</p>
<p>Policy 4.3 provides that there will be two specialist change facilities located in Council buildings in Blenheim.</p>	<p>At the time the policy was developed there was only one facility within a Council building. With the opening of the library and art gallery there are now two facilities within existing Council buildings so to that extent the policy has been achieved.</p> <p>The policy doesn't prevent further facilities in Blenheim as these could be standalone facilities rather than being within a Council building. When read in conjunction with Policy 4.4. it is clear there is no prohibition on additional facilities being considered.</p>
<p>Policy 4.4 lists matters to be considered in assessing additional facilities in Blenheim.</p>	<p>The criteria were developed to ensure there was a consistent approach in assessing proposals for additional facilities.</p> <p>It is considered that determining need and with evidence is an appropriate consideration when making decisions to allocate funding for additional facilities or services – regardless of type.</p>
<p>Policy 4.5. is relevant to providing a facility in Picton.</p>	<p>The policy was included in recognition of the high use of the Picton foreshore area, including by local families and the large number of visitors arriving and leaving on the interisland ferries.</p> <p>There is no space within existing Council facilities or land available in Picton to accommodate this presently.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to a facility being located within Picton. Whether the opportunity is for a Changing Places facility will depend on both location and funding.</p>