



BLoopprint - Edition 1

The Facilities Manager's Guide To Effective Washroom Management





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by

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A washroom by any other name would smell as sweet as a water closet (WC), ladies, gents, uni-sex, lavatory, powder room, potty, little girls' or boys' room, restroom, outhouse, necessary, dunny, bathroom, men's room, easy access, khazi, convenience, garderobe, place of easement, privy, john, the smallest room, the can, facilities, and throne room.





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FEATURED COLLABORATORS

"Toilets are
a touchstone
of a building."



MARTIN PICKARD

*Principal Consultant and Founder of
The FM Guru Consultancy*

"There is a huge
opportunity for
washroom
innovation."



BETH GOODYEAR

*Facilities Management Consultant,
Trainer, Speaker and Founder of FMHS
Consulting*

"I judge everything
by the toilet."



LIZ KENTISH

*Managing Director and Co-founder
of Kentish and Co Ltd*

INTRODUCTION

There is a huge
opportunity for
washroom
innovation.

BETH GOODYEAR



INTRODUCTION

Before we take the plunge (ahem) let us preface this guide with the wise words of FM consultant Beth Goodyear: “We are in one of the most dynamic and fast-moving periods in FM and are seeing an unprecedented level of change in the way that buildings and workplaces function so it’s essential that FM teams keep themselves up to date.”

Those are wise words indeed. So where does that leave me?

You might think there are more important factors than the washrooms, that client budgets are low and premium washrooms cost an arm and leg. We hear you. And those are some fair objections. But indulge us. We didn’t pull this out of a hat. Unless the hat holds tangible data and meticulously gathered insight from several industry experts. Then yes, we definitely pulled it out of a hat.



I'm more concerned with recognition right now.

And you should be. If only prospects knew how much business value and ROI you could bring to an organisation. If only they knew the impact of your efforts on workplace efficiency, workforce wellbeing and environmental sustainability. If only they didn't see you as a begrudging necessity. If only you had the time and resources to convince them otherwise.

“

We are in one of the most dynamic and fast-moving periods in FM and are seeing an unprecedented level of change in the way that buildings and workplaces function so it's essential that FM teams keep themselves up to date.

BETH GOODYEAR

”

I see where you're going with this.

There's more to life than washrooms, but it's a good place to start. The Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) research shows that facilities managers in the UK spend over 50% of their time dealing with operational issues like customer complaints.^[1] Another research report in Medical Construction and Design finds that almost three fourths (73 percent) of consumers believe that unkempt washrooms reflect poor management.^[2]

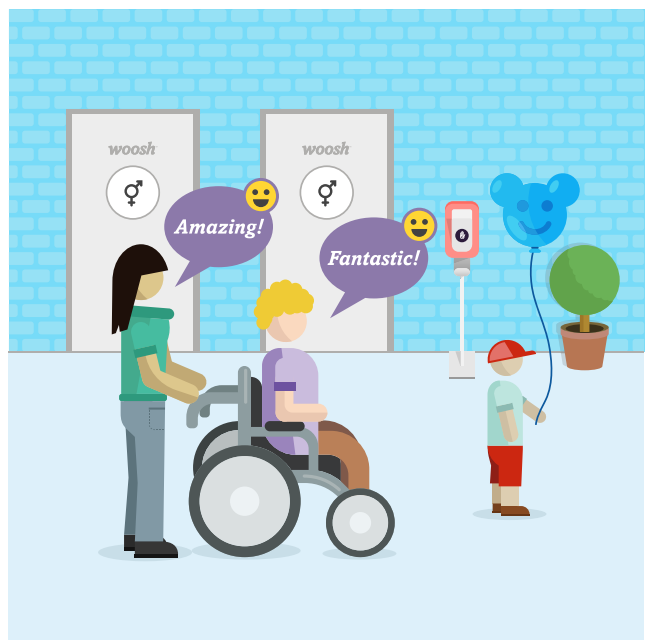
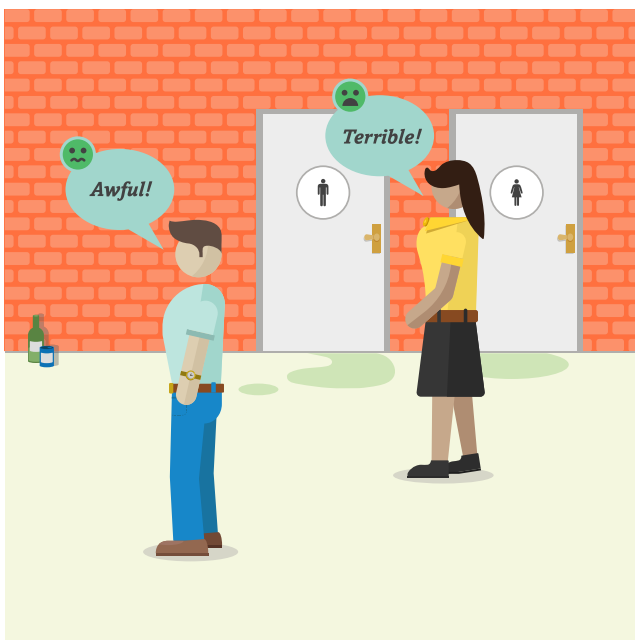
That's a high percentage, but how does that help me get recognised?

The typical office worker pops to the loo around three to four times a day. For an average-sized facility, that's over 1.1 million complaint opportunities per year. What if they were satisfaction opportunities?

It's the butterfly effect.

Effective washroom management → high-quality washroom services → easy-to-maintain facilities → reduced complaints → increased amount of "free" time to educate and spread the word → more opportunities for strategy and planning.

Washroom management, made simple.



Chapter 1

WHAT DO INDUSTRY EXPERTS THINK?

**I judge
everything
by the toilet.**

LIZ KENTISH



chapter 1

WHAT DO INDUSTRY EXPERTS THINK?

Often overlooked, the washroom is increasingly becoming a benchmark of quality in the workplace. Well-kept toilets have a clear impact on staff wellbeing and a great influence on how well an organisation is perceived.

But exactly how much impact can a space as small as the loo have on the bottom line of a business? According to FM guru, Martin Pickard, “a lot”.

Toilets are a touchstone of a building. If you want to know whether a building is being cared for or not, go in the loo, and you can just tell whether somebody’s got their handle on this place and are looking after it properly.

MARTIN PICKARD

"I think this topic is really, really important. Good washrooms set the tone for a building, they say something to visitors and staff. And bad washrooms do exactly the same thing and can get you in all kinds of trouble as well. They can manage your reputation, they can make people sick, you can lose staff. A healthy workforce is going to be more creative, more productive, happier. [...] A sick workforce is costing you money."

In 2016, an estimated 137 million working days were lost due to sickness or injury in the UK.^[3] Pickard highlights this obvious, yet decidedly ignored, connection between washroom hygiene and a company's profit margins.

But where do toilets rank in the facilities manager's "to-do list"? Is hygiene and washroom management covered enough in the FM space? FM coach and former deputy chair of the British Institute of Facilities Management (BIFM), Liz Kentish, doesn't reckon so.

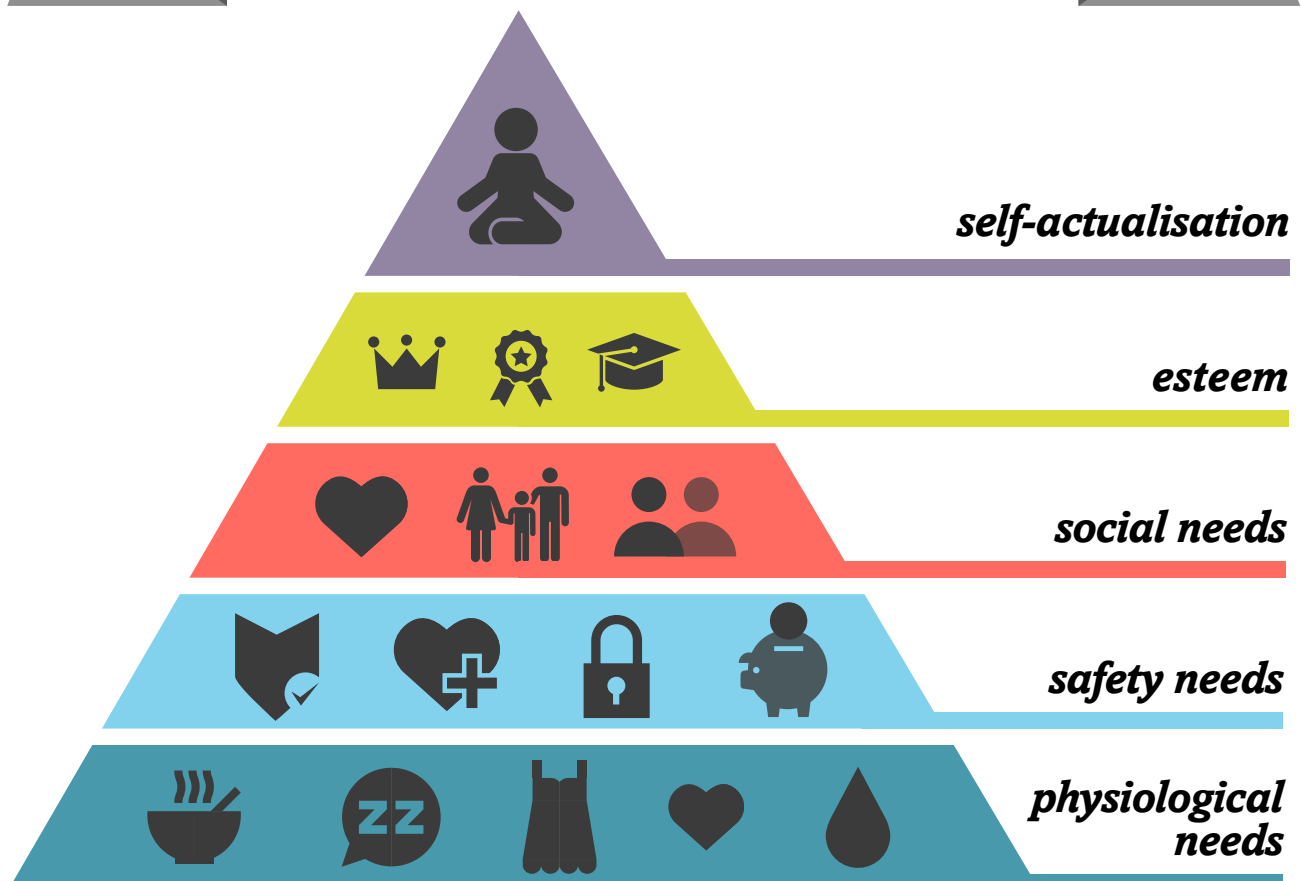
"And I think the reason for that is, as an industry, we got really frustrated a few years ago with people thinking that FM was 'bogs and boilers', and that was a term that was used so much, people would stand at conferences and go, "we're not just about bogs and boilers, we're so much more than that."

"But actually, I think because as an industry we have tried to become really strategic, [...] we have almost forgotten that basic things are so important."

“ We always joke that the very bottom layer of Maslow’s Hierarchy is wifi and power to charge your phone. But toilets and coffee may well be at the bottom of the pyramid, and **they’re critical, absolutely critical.** ”

LIZ KENTISH

MASLOW’S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS



Often displayed as a pyramid, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs depicts a wide spectrum of human needs going from the most basic (physiological needs such as food, water, sleep and warmth) to the most complex (psychological and social needs such as morality and acceptance.) If the loo is considered a basic need, a clean well-kept washroom should be a right, not a privilege. And companies ignoring that right tend to suffer the consequences.

“

If I go into a shopping centre, or service station on the motorway, I judge everything by the toilet. If I walk into the toilet and there's toilet paper on the floor, or no toilet paper, I won't fill up with petrol there.”

LIZ KENTISH

”

But what about innovations?

Ironically, getting the basics right is the cornerstone of innovation. Think about it for a second. Why would you renovate a house built on crumbling foundations?

“

I've been working in FM for 20 years and have never seen things change so fast. I think smart buildings will eventually change the face of FM as technology develops and automation increases and the Internet of Things is going to change our future ways of working. There is a huge opportunity for washroom innovation and FMs should be looking to their service partners and suppliers to be advising on best practice and greater efficiency.

BETH GOODYEAR
FM consultant

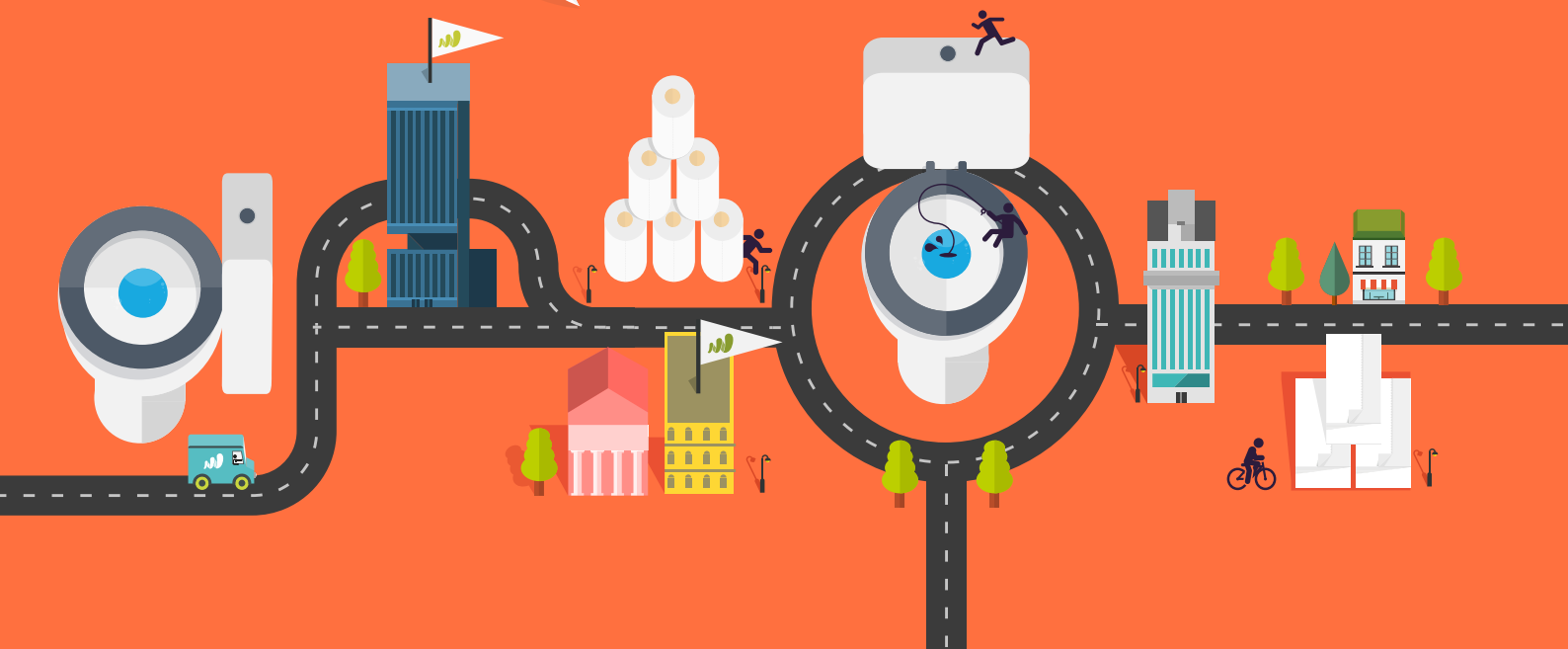
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chapter 2

EFFECTIVE WASHROOM MANAGEMENT

Toilets are a touchstone of a building.

MARTIN PICKARD



chapter 2

EFFECTIVE WASHROOM MANAGEMENT

Washroom management is one thing, effective washroom management is another. To understand the difference, we talked to the one and only FM guru, Martin Pickard, who quickly confessed to his unabashed fixation with toilets. “There’s a standing joke in my family that I’m toilet-obsessed,” he said. “If you want to know whether a building is being cared for or not, go in to the loo and you can just tell whether somebody’s got a hand on the place (their washrooms) and are looking after it properly.”

“

There’s a standing joke in my family that I’m toilet obsessed

MARTIN PICKARD

”

Like it or not, a daily refill of the hand soap and a quick wipe, however fancy the mop, does not qualify as proper and it certainly does not qualify as effective. What you need is a strategy.

So, how do you gauge effective washroom management?

You’ll find washroom management can be approached in two distinct ways. The first focuses on the numbers, the second taps into the minds of your customers.





The Quantitative Approach

This approach focuses on the frequency of cleaning. A commercial washroom is likely to see a much higher level of use than your average washroom. High footfall means that fixtures and fittings will come into contact with myriad pairs of hands and floors will get dirty at record speeds.

Below is a checklist to keep in mind when you devise your cleaning routine.



cleaning routine checklist



every day

- ☐ Wipe the exterior surfaces of toilets and toilet seats with a toilet seat sanitiser, urinals and sinks with a sterilisation spray
- ☐ Restock consumables (hand towels, toilet paper and hand soap) morning and evening, according to usage
- ☐ Pick up and throw all waste in the bin
- ☐ Mop the floor
- ☐ Scrub wall tiles and clean mirrors (no one likes a streaked mirror so be sure to use a designated glass cleaner, complete with a flat-weave microfibre cloth)
- ☐ Empty bins and replace full bin liners
- ☐ Scrub the interior surfaces of toilets and urinals and treat both with a toilet bowl cleaner

once a week

- ☐ Clean sink basins and handles with a disinfecting multi-surface cleaner
- ☐ Wipe down door handles (the hygienic door handles, too, because you never know), light switches, countertops, soap and hand towel dispensers

once a month

- ☐ Dust all those areas that are harder to reach: door tops, air vents and shelves
- ☐ Check and treat drains with drain cleaner
- ☐ Replace any air fresheners and urinal blocks, if necessary





The Qualitative Approach

This approach highlights the correlation between listening to your customer and delivering excellent service. It's a simple cause and effect relationship: the more you listen, the better you understand, the more you can help. And as Martin Pickard puts it "Developing solutions begins with listening. Two ears, one mouth. Use them in that proportion."

That's what we call active listening. "Everyone will tell you what they want, that's easy," he further argued, "the trick lies in working out what your customers actually need."

Understanding your client, gathering their insight is one of the key secrets to effective washroom and facilities management.

“

Developing solutions begins with listening.

MARTIN PICKARD

”

That's all well and good, but how do I gather this insight?

Ask yourself ***“How do you measure up?”*** every single day. To get your answers, try the following:

- Seek feedback from your end-user

In other words, engage with your clients. Nurture a dialogue. Have them come up with ideas without even knowing it.

“

It's about knowing your customer.

MARTIN PICKARD

”

“That’s what great FMs do, they don’t just order out of a catalogue, they’re crafting a bespoke solution to meet their clients’ needs.”

- Measure washroom traffic with door counters (this will give you a hint of the average footfall).
- Circulate ‘Happy or Not and Why’ client satisfaction surveys to collect data about the user experience of the washroom.
- Use the back of every washroom door to engage with end-users. You can install a notice board for messages or include your details, should they want to contact you.

Incidentally, this last tip is one of Martin Pickard’s favourite FM successes: “One of facilities managers’ difficult things is always communicating with your customers. [...] In a big pharmaceutical place, we were struggling with that, so we came up with this. In the gents at a motorway services, above every urinal, they always have an advert, at eye height. It’s an A4 size, a great place to advertise anything [...] because you cannot miss it while you’re stood there. We put those up throughout the building and we used those to tell people about what was going on in FM. And it went down really well.”

If you have a building with lifts, consider installing posters in the lift to communicate FM messages.

These methods will not only help you to pinpoint problems and gather suggestions as to how to improve them, it will also help your client feel valued.

- Request internal and external audits



Understanding what clients, customers and visitors see and experience when they visit a building is invaluable information for every business.

BETH GOODYEAR

To better understand the potential of external audits, we reached out to facilities management consultant Beth Goodyear who specialises in improving first impressions and customer experience, and asked her what she looks out for when carrying out a First Impressions Audit in the workplace.

“Understanding what clients, customers and visitors see and experience when they visit a building is invaluable information for every business,” she said.

“And the FMHS First Impression and Customer Experience Audits identify areas for improvement and recommend possible solutions.”

When asked if she follows a certain checklist, Goodyear shared the following: "The areas audited are agreed with the client but generally cover the whole building from the external appearance and car park to all internal areas a customer would see and scores are awarded on;

- Cleaning and maintenance standards
- Tidiness / organisation
- Effectiveness of any wayfinding / instructional signage (meeting rooms, kitchenettes, directional etc)
- Standard of temporary signage and notices
- Friendliness / helpfulness / efficiency and presentation of reception / security staff



As for the washroom, she highlighted the importance of detail: “We feed back on the visual appearance of fixtures and fittings, decoration, cleaning standards and any maintenance issues,” she argued. “We check each cubicle, ensuring that the backs of cubicle doors are checked as it’s not uncommon to find a rogue notice stuck up by irate customers that the FM team hadn’t spotted!”

We feed back on the visual appearance of fixtures and fittings, decoration, cleaning standards and any maintenance issues.

BETH GOODYEAR

So, what’s the lesson here?

Although each tactic has its own merit, this is not an either-or situation; quite the opposite. The wholesome approach is to allow for the client’s feedback to complement the data. Analyse the end-user survey, learn from the audit, go back to the drawing board, revise your cleaning routine, and make better use of your resources.

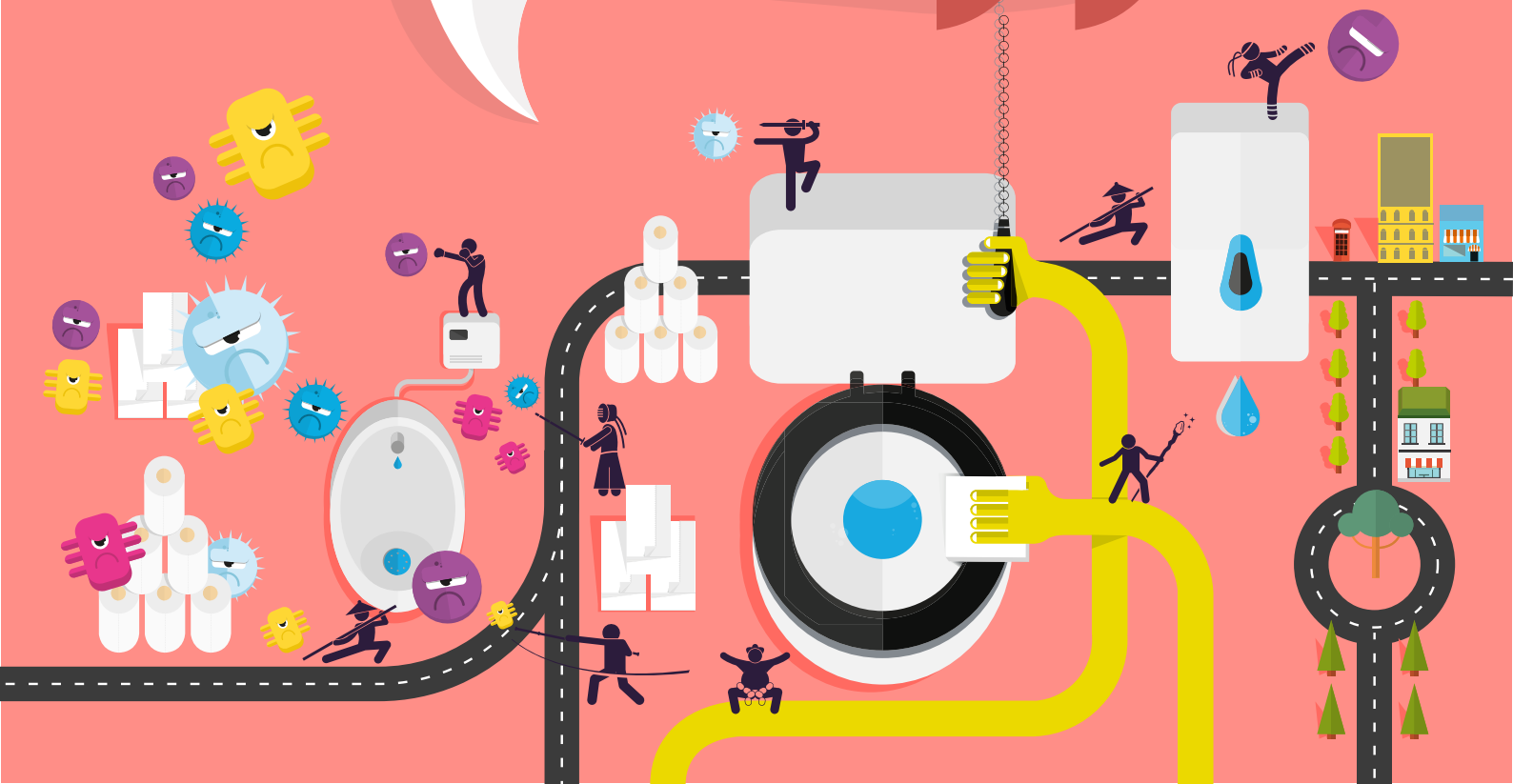
In Martin Pickard’s words: “Facilities management is looking after buildings and services. Successful facilities management is about developing an approach to looking after buildings and services that makes people’s lives better. So, it has an impact on the organisation, it has an impact on the workforce, it has an impact on the user of that facility.”

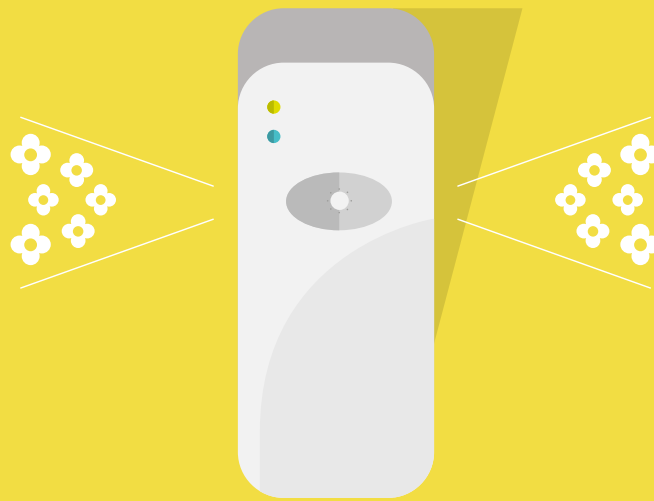
chapter 3

HYGIENIC WASHROOMS

It's all about matching
the facilities to the
culture of the business.

LIZ KENTISH





AIR FRESHENERS



Did you know the first ever air freshener was a pomegranate studded with cloves? The pomander made its first appearance in the Middle Ages, but air freshener design has evolved quite a bit since.

I take it not all fresheners are good, though.

Afraid not.

But here's a brief checklist to keep you on the right track:

- Effective coverage
- Quiet
- Unobtrusive
- Continuous odour control throughout the day: fragrance release at preset intervals

- Reliable performance
- CFC-free, low-VOC formula
- Elegant and discreet design

Worth noting that air fresheners vary in style, budget and, most importantly, quality.

Pros & cons on various air fresheners:

AEROSOL CANS IN AUTO DISPENSERS

Pros:



Affordable.



Cons:



Scent doesn't last as long as other fresheners, not ideal for the 'green' customer.

REED DIFFUSERS

Pros:



High-end scent, sophisticated look and subtle design.

Works best for smaller executive spaces.



Cons:



Tend to be a more costly as they use more essential oil.

Kit-style reed diffusers usually come with synthetic fragrances and unsafe chemicals.



A little tip:

Heavier oils (e.g. patchouli and sandalwood essential oil) might diffuse slower than the lighter oils (bergamot, grapefruit, or lemon essential oil).

COLD AIR DIFFUSERS

Pros:



Some cold air diffusers use pure fragrance oil, others use water to dilute it.

Nebuliser diffusers atomise the oils that dissipate throughout the room (i.e. they break the oil into tiny molecules before dispersing them into the room.)

No pollutants.



Cons:



Can be noisy unless it was specifically designed to be silent. Look out for "whisper quiet," or "silent" models.

Use a lot of essential oil.



A little tip:

If you want to impress, this one's a winner.



A few more tips because we're generous like that:



Place your diffuser as high up in the room as possible.
Because of that pesky force called gravity, mist will only travel downward.



Avoid mixing too many different oils - your senses will thank you. Two to three oils at a time is what you want.

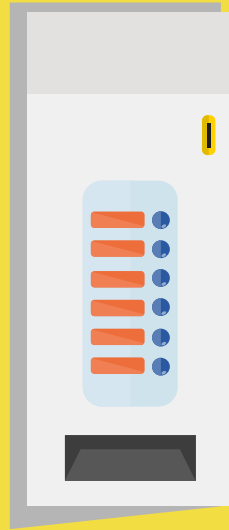


Nebulisers and diffusers are best used with a timer system.
10-15 minutes every couple of hours is the way to go; otherwise, your clients might start frequenting the washroom for its intoxicating qualities (whether that is a pro or a con, we leave it up to you to decide). Using a timer will also help you save on essential oil as it will only be used during short intervals.



Consider getting particular scents for certain office environments that can assist in productivity (such as rosemary) and relieve stress or have a calming affect on staff or customers (such as lemon or lavender).^[4]





WASHROOM VENDING

“

The ladies toilet isn't just a place you go to, to go to the toilet. You do your hair, you do your makeup, you often get changed. Conversations happen in the ladies toilet. It's still a really important part of a company.

LIZ KENTISH

”



Let's start with the often forgotten obvious; the ladies room is also a changing room, a makeup stand, a hair salon and a private conversation pit where secrets spill, and emergencies must be solved with the assistance of your trusty vending machine.

Whether it be a ladder in your tights, a bout of hay fever, an unsettled stomach, or an unexpected visit from Aunt Flo, you never know what the day has in store, so best be prepared.

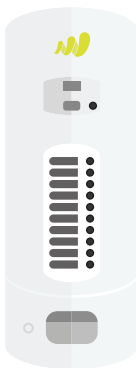
“Be prepared” – got it.

So what should my vending machine include?

You have two main vending options:

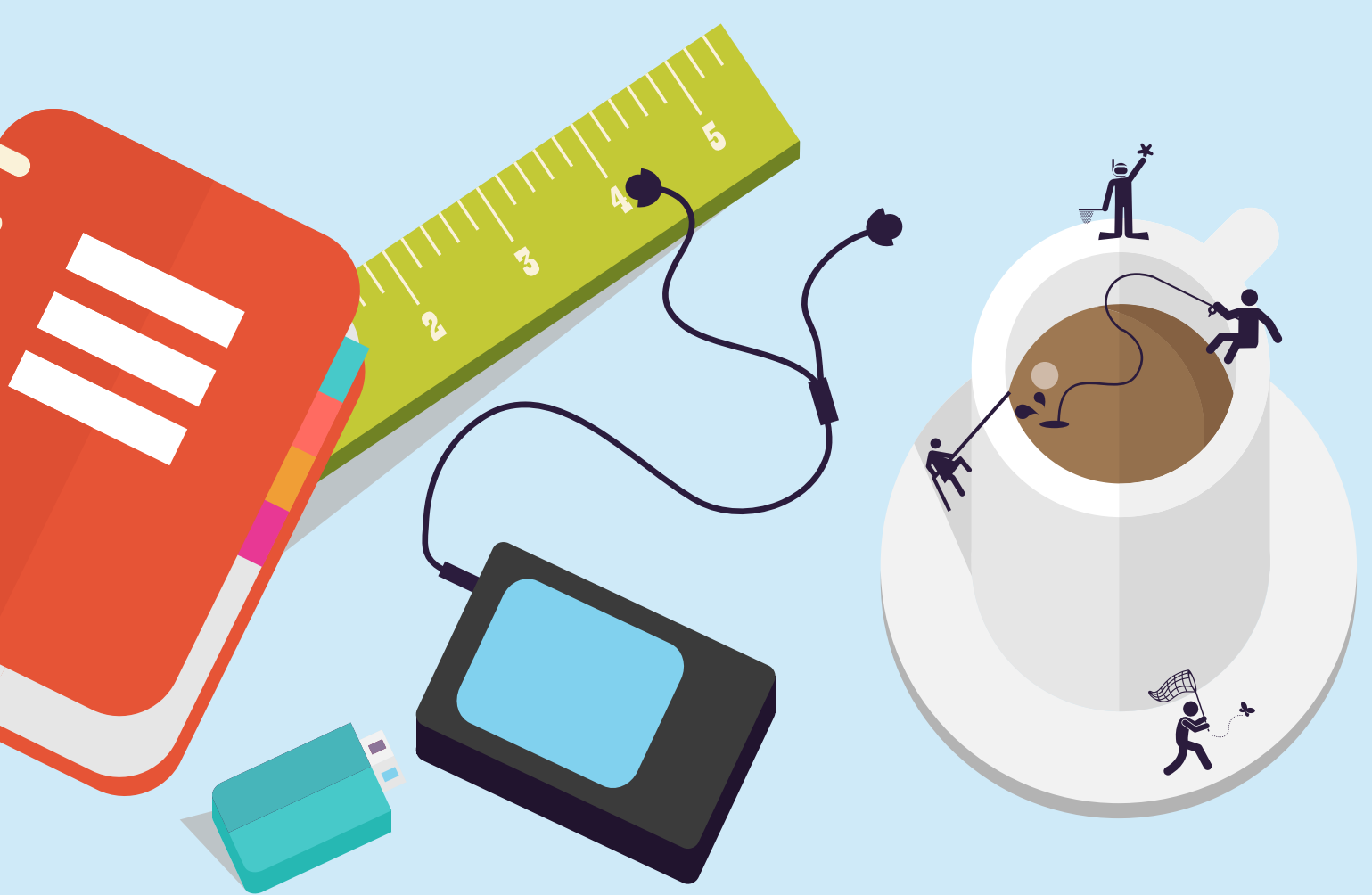


01. Dual vending machines for the usual feminine care products (sanitary towels and tampons)



02. Multi-vends, which offer a lot more variety. Products may include tights, tissues, stomach settlers, painkillers, etc. Offering your clients access to emergency supplies beyond the obvious will make your business seem that little bit more caring. That’s why we think your vending machine should be like Mary Poppins’ ever-plentiful magic bag.

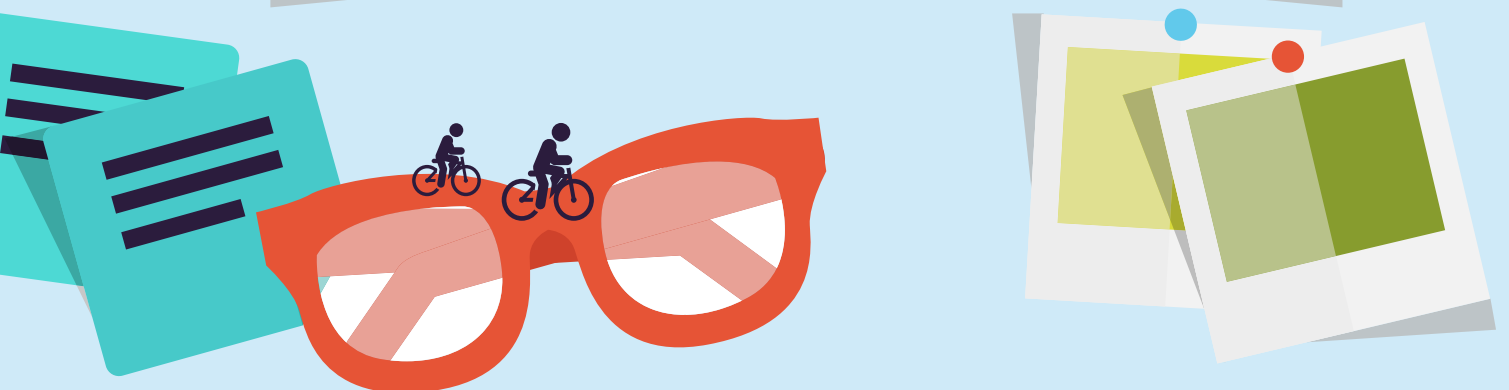
Once you have settled on the contents of your vending machine, you may also want to choose a finishing that is suitable for the chosen washroom. Finishes may vary from brushed stainless steel and white metal to chrome.



a little tip!

To get most out of
your vending machine,
we recommend
installing it in disabled
toilets and unisex
areas so the gents can

also benefit from the
multivend products.
Men get headaches
too!





SANITARY BINS

Are you about to lecture me on feminine hygiene?



No lectures, we just want to share some wisdom on sanitary waste. And make sure you're a law abiding facilities manager/company not breaking the law.

The facts?

Sanitary bins are a legal requirement in the UK workplace:

- **The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992**

All business must ensure all ladies toilets are equipped with an appropriate sanitary bin for disposing of feminine hygiene products. This is valid for all commercial properties, even in premises where only one female is employed.

- **The Water Industries Act 1991**

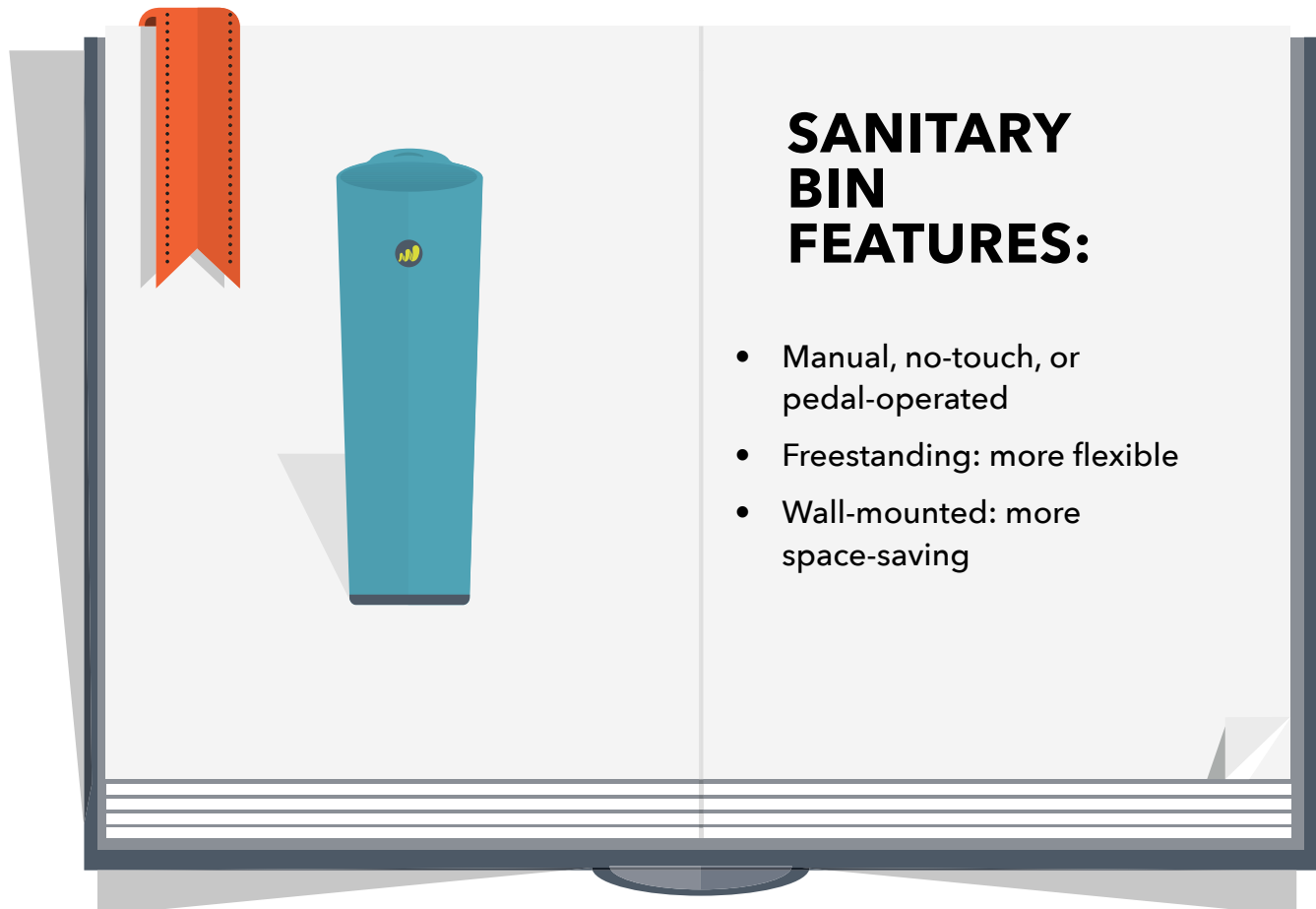
No sanitary waste should be flushed that could lead to buildup or blockage in the sewer system or drains.

- **The Environmental Protection Act 1990**

Businesses have a legal Duty of Care to safely manage waste on their premises and dispose of it correctly.

Noted. But what's Duty of Care?

With regards to sanitary waste, the 'Duty of Care' Act states that it is an organisation's duty to manage and dispose of sanitary waste. In other words: employees can't be made responsible since all sanitary waste must be handled by an external contractor who can provide collection, sanitisation and restocking of sanitary bags.



Are all sanitary bins the same?

As it is with everything, there's the good, there's the bad, then there's the ugly. (Hint: stay away from the ugly.)

Liner exchange:

As the name suggests... liner exchanges involve replacing the liner only.

Bin exchange:

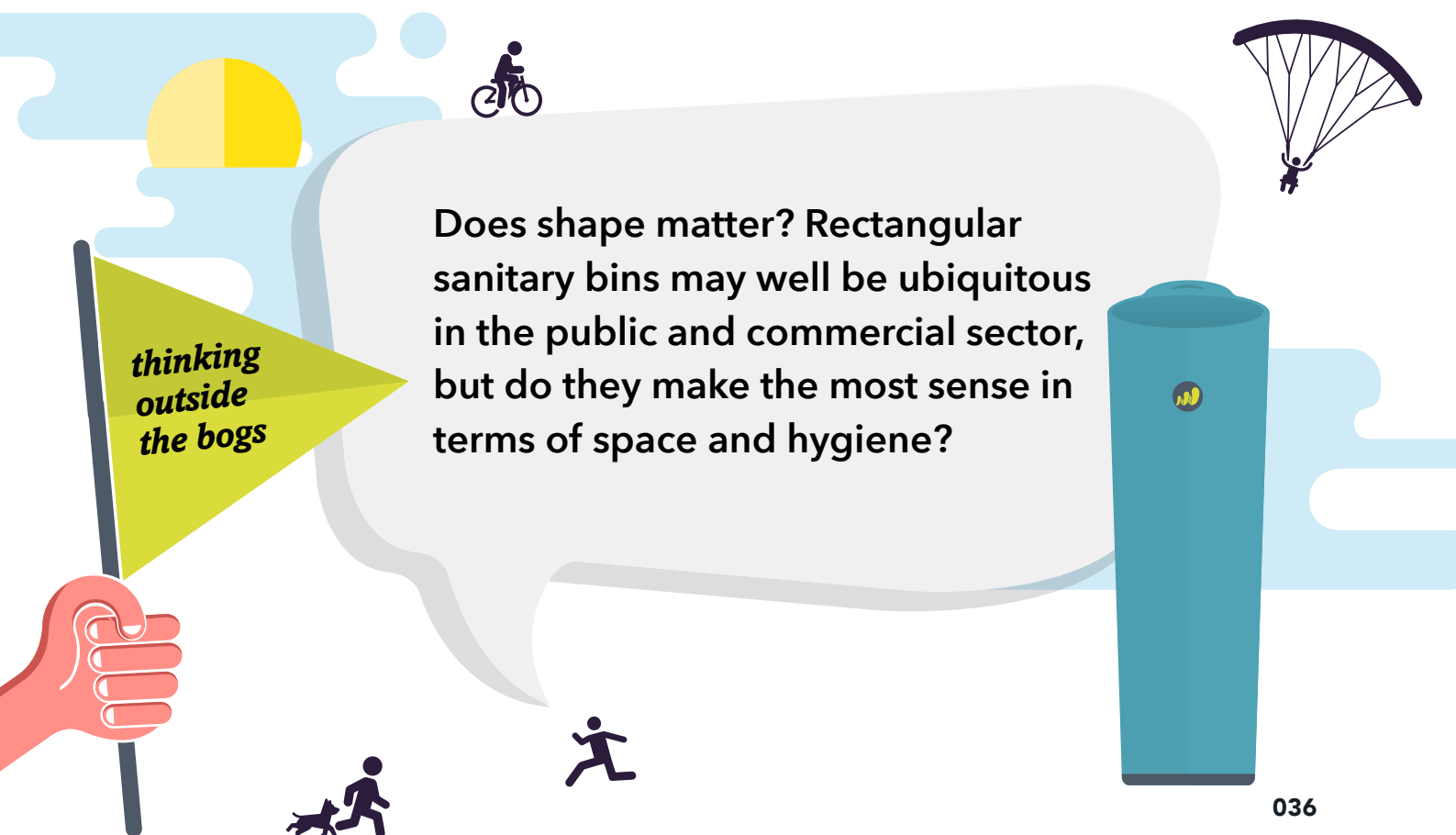
A new bin is put in place every time. This is classed as more superior in terms of hygiene.

Hybrid:

In a lid and liner exchange, your client would be able to keep the same bin base. This is particularly practical for customised bin bases, since bin exchanges tend to be done in bulk.

Woosh 360 Auto:

Woosh has designed a no-touch hand sensor version of the 360 sanitary bin. This is designed to minimise the spread of contamination and makes the experience of disposal that extra bit safer and easier to use.





MEDICAL AND FIRST AID BINS

Do I really need one of these?

Can't I just have one bin for all my waste?



We hear you, and we wish we could tell you bins are like a pack of Nescafé 3 in 1, but let's be honest, those are nasty, and a bit of a glorified compromise. Now, you might be thinking, my client's first aid room (or disabled loo) is so small I'm willing to compromise and get rid of a bin I don't need if it means gaining more space...

I'm sensing a but...

Right. But, there are a few regulations you should be aware of.

What are those regulations?

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, all organisations need to have a clear strategy for how they separate, store, transport and dispose of clinical waste, medical bins and sharps bins. If your workplace deals with tissue and body fluids and the likes of syringes and needles, you can't just bin them anywhere - you need somewhere safe to dispose of your clinical waste.

Great, so what exactly is classed as clinical waste?

Good question. Defined in the **Controlled Waste Regulations** (under the Environmental Protection Act), clinical waste is referred to:

a) **"... any waste which consists wholly or partly of human or animal tissue,**

blood or other body fluids, excretions, drugs or other pharmaceutical products, swabs or dressings, syringes, needles or other sharp instruments, being waste which unless rendered safe may prove hazardous to any person coming into contact with it; and

b) **any other waste arising from medical, nursing, dental, veterinary,**

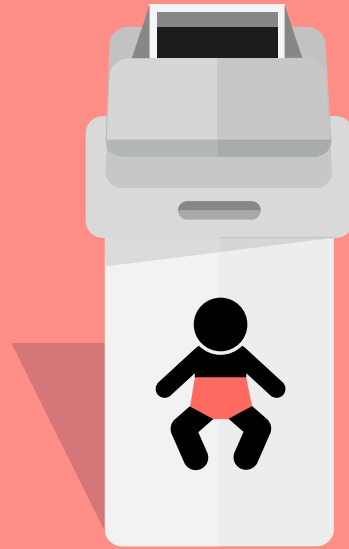
pharmaceutical or similar practice, investigation, treatment, care, teaching or research, or the collection of blood for transfusion, being waste which may cause infection to any person coming into contact with it."^[5]

Worth noting that 'clinical waste = hazardous waste' unless it is:

- segregated non-cytotoxic and
- non-cytostatic medicines, i.e. from human (18 01 09) or animal healthcare (18 02 08)

So, this is just for hospitals?

Hospitals might be the first place you think of, but clinical waste can come from several other sources: dentists and vets are well acquainted with it; so is your company's first aid room. Hence the frequent need for a medical bin (also known as a first aid bin).



NAPPY BINS



The old saying “when you’ve got to go, you’ve got to go” has never been truer than it is for babies.

Now let’s be honest, changing nappies away from home is not every parent’s dream. But when it happens, you can make sure the nappy swap can be as smooth as a baby’s bottom, and leaves the washroom smelling like a rose.

So let me get this straight - I need a special bin for nappies too?

Affirmative. Sanitary protection like nappies and incontinence pads are considered offensive waste and although they can be disposed of in the general waste in a household environment, it is certainly not advised in a commercial setting, where large quantities are produced. Not if you want to comply with the Environment Protection Act 1990.



SHARPS BINS



The term 'sharps' refers to sharp objects such as needles, syringes with needles, blades, disposable scissors, broken glass, and any other sharp items that can cause a penetrating injury if not handled safely.

Sure, it sounds like we've pulled this from a medical lexicon, and FMs working in healthcare should pay particular attention, but even if your workplace environment doesn't involve frequent use of sharps as defined above, it is always recommended to equip your medical room (or washroom) with a sharps disposal bin.

You must ensure that your sharps bins are appropriately labelled and compliant with sharps legislation and best practice. They need to be UN-approved and colour-coded to ensure accurate segregation.

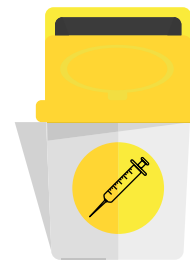
I'm a little confused about waste colour codes.

The Department of Health Safe Management of Healthcare Waste Memorandum defines a best practice waste segregation colour coding scheme, but here's a breakdown:



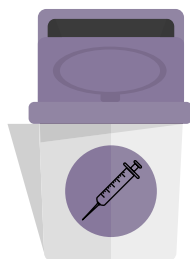
ORANGE LID

For the storage and disposal of sharps that do not contain and are not contaminated with medicines (i.e. sharps used for blood samples and acupuncture).



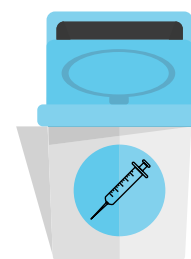
YELLOW LID

For the storage and disposal of sharps that are contaminated with, or contain, medicines or anaesthetics.



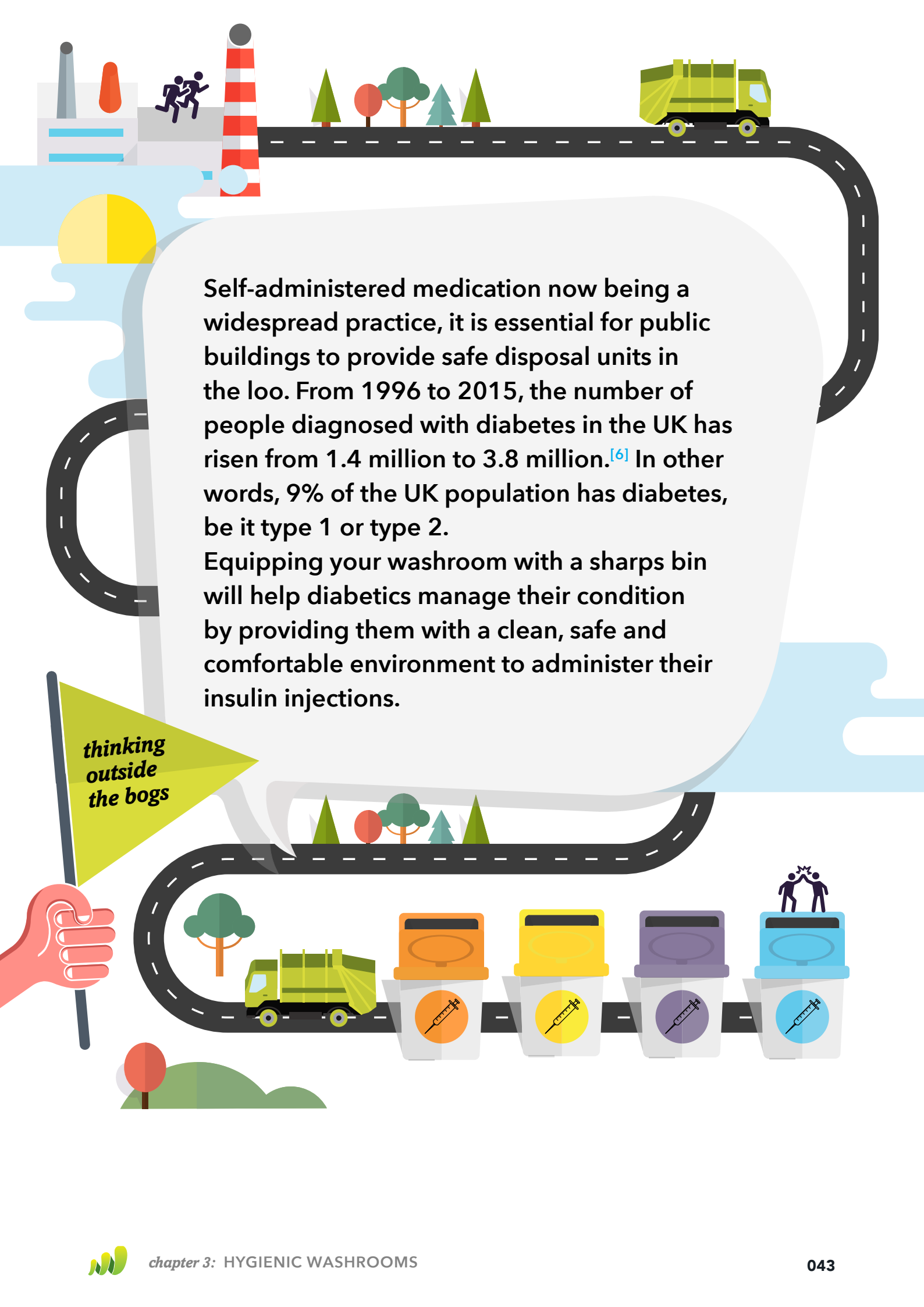
PURPLE LID

For the disposal of hazardous waste such as sharps and medicines with cytotoxic or cytostatic contents (i.e. blister packs, unopened medicine vials, patches).



BLUE LID

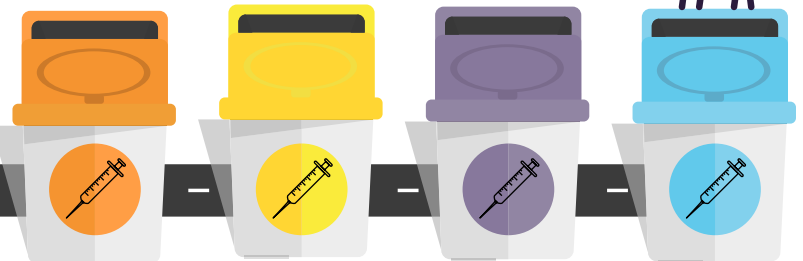
For the disposal of non-hazardous waste (i.e. waste medicines, out of date medicines, gloves, masks, connecting tubes, syringe bodies and drug vials).



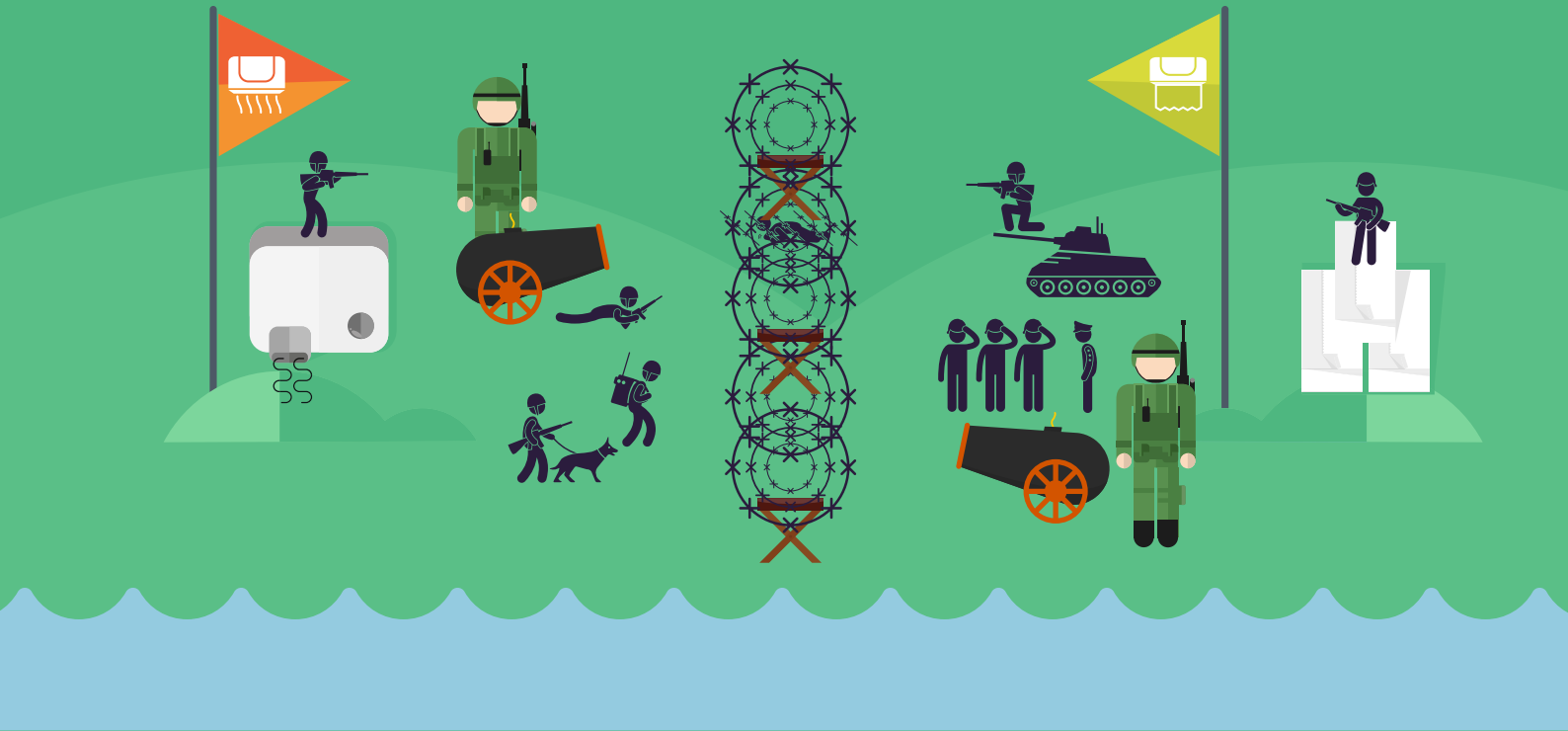
Self-administered medication now being a widespread practice, it is essential for public buildings to provide safe disposal units in the loo. From 1996 to 2015, the number of people diagnosed with diabetes in the UK has risen from 1.4 million to 3.8 million.^[6] In other words, 9% of the UK population has diabetes, be it type 1 or type 2.

Equipping your washroom with a sharps bin will help diabetics manage their condition by providing them with a clean, safe and comfortable environment to administer their insulin injections.

*thinking
outside
the bogs*



HAND DRYER VS PAPER TOWEL



Ah, the age-old debate... I've heard this before.

No doubt you have. But have you heard that as many as 14 consecutive people can get contaminated by the mere touch of a bacteria-laden door handle?

Yikes.

Indeed. The workplace is a potential hotbed of infections. As previously mentioned, in 2016, an estimated 137 million working days were lost due to sickness or injury in the UK.^[7] Now, this may seem exorbitant already, but you'll find it was the lowest level of sickness absence since records began almost 25 years ago.

Also worth noting, employees tend to have a higher rate of sickness absence than the self-employed – in 2016 it was 2.1% for employees and 1.4% for the self-employed.^[8]

That's why a hygienic washroom, along with good hand washing and drying facilities, can play a major role in reducing sickness. In other words: less sick days, more productivity, more profitability.

And making the right choice between hand dryers and paper towels will help reduce sick days?

According to a 2012 Mayo Clinic Study, "the transmission of bacteria is more likely to occur from wet skin than from dry skin; therefore, the proper drying of hands after washing should be an integral part of the hand hygiene process in healthcare."^[9] So choosing the right option for your organisation may well help reduce sick days, yes.

Well, which is better?

Here's what studies have shown over the years:



DRYING EFFICIENCY

Patrick et al compared the drying efficiency of cloth towels and hot air dryers. The results indicated that residual water was more efficiently removed from the hands by cloth towels. After 10 seconds of drying with a single-serve cloth towel, the residual water on the hands was reduced to 4%. With 15 seconds of drying, the residual water was reduced to 1% ^[10]

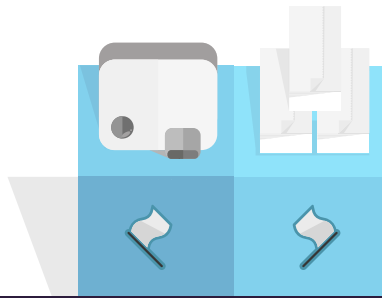
"Residual water [is] more efficiently removed from the hands by cloth towels" ^[11]



REMOVAL OF BACTERIA

"The study found that drying with hot air dryers produced the highest reduction and drying with cloth towels produced the lowest reduction in the number of both microorganisms. [...] Whether friction can result in a further reduction of contamination during hand drying remains to be determined." ^[10]

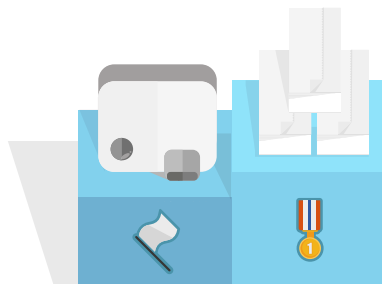
"Single-use towels are the most hygienic way to dry hands after visiting the wash-room." ^[12]



EFFECT ON CROSS CONTAMINATION

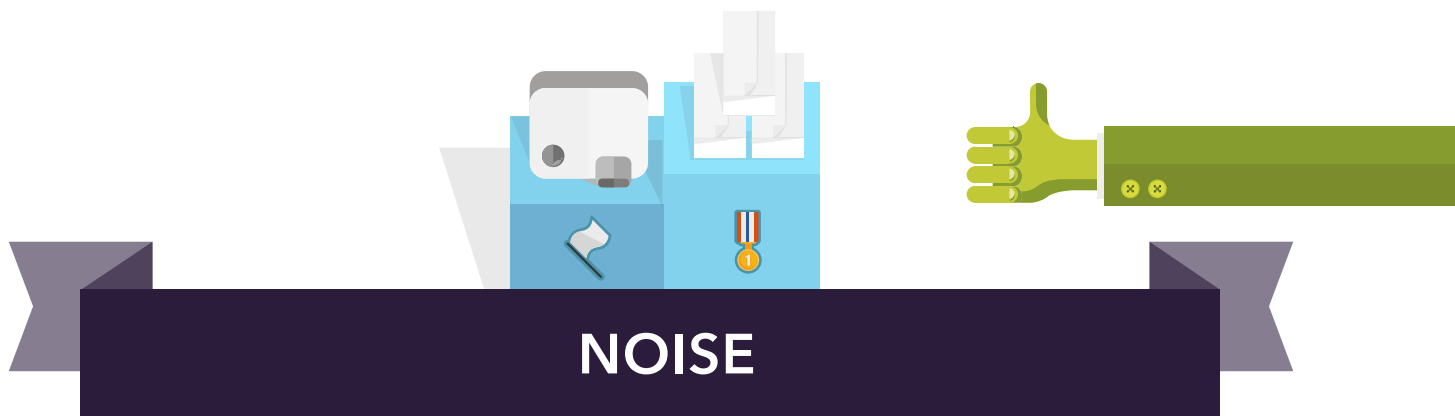
"Once in the washroom, bacteria in the air and contamination from previous users can be picked up by paper towels ... Up to 88% of unused paper towels contain bacteria." ^[13]

"Air blade produces more ballistic droplets which are spread further and may carry microorganisms, than drying with paper towels. Assessment of the environmental microbiological cross contamination following hand drying with paper hand towels or an air blade dryer..." ^[14]



USER PREFERENCE

A survey of 2000 citizens in Europe was conducted in 2008 to explore user preferences regarding different hand-drying methods. The survey revealed that 62% of users chose paper towels as their preferred hand-drying method, followed by hot air dryers (28%) and cloth roller towels (10%). ^[15]

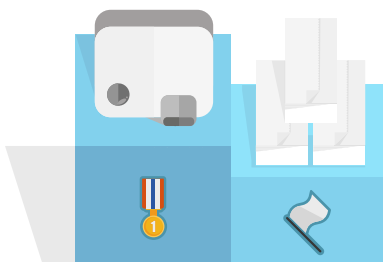


"It is evident, even from this initial study, that there is a major issue when considering the impact on sensitive hearers to high-speed hand dryers, which in the most extreme case could result in exclusion from public space, the workplace and education."

"Dryers studied in this investigation produced more intense sound than predicted by the manufacturers, [...] People who work in maintenance positions, judged to be within compliance for noise exposure, may find themselves with an additional source of noise when bathrooms are installed with hand dryers rather than the earlier use of paper towels." Hand dryer noise in public restrooms exceeds 80 dBA at 10 ft (3 m) ^[16]



"Use of air dryers may cause hands to become excessively dry, rough, and red." ^[17]

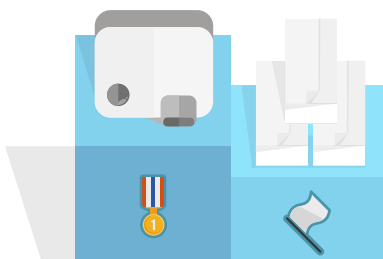


ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECT

"Blade dryers have the lowest environmental impact compared with all other possible hand drying systems." ^[18]

"As electrical grids become less greenhouse intensive the environmental benefits of high speed electrical dryers over paper towels may even increase...

Only once we take into account the whole system can we make informed decisions that can secure better environmental outcomes now and into the future." ^[18]



COST

"Using paper towels is costlier than using air dryers. Paper towels must be replaced frequently, whereas air dryers usually require little maintenance. However, air dryers can be costly to purchase and install. Therefore, those responsible for facility management should perform a careful cost analysis to determine whether they are cost-effective in their building." ^[19]

What's the bottom line, then?

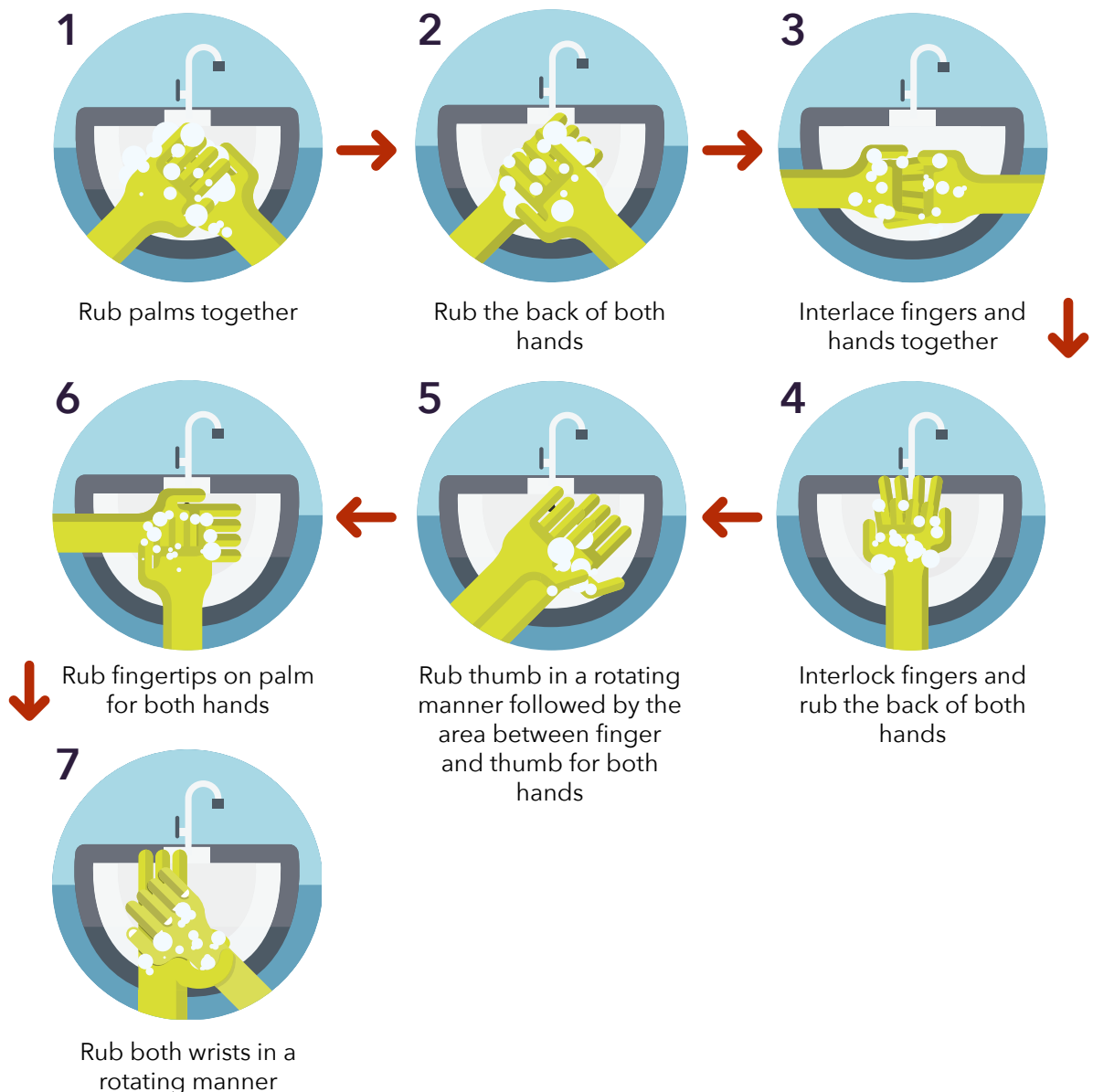
Judging from the above, paper towels come out on top. That said, hand dryers are certainly not viral bombs... as long as you hand wash correctly. And that's what we've been trying to get to.

So it's all about how you wash up?

Bingo. The best weapon against bacteria is neither the hand dryer nor the paper towel. It is hand soap. And friction. Lots of it.

In other words, what matters most for hygiene is how you wash up, not how you dry off. You may give your clients the choice - stock up your washroom with paper towels and have a hand dryer installed and make sure to never let the hand soap run out! Educate your clients on the importance of washing up. (Hint: A little infographic never hurt anyone.)

7 STEPS TO HANDWASHING





SOAP DISPENSERS



Winning Germ War I starts with choosing the right kind of soap. But let's look at the stats for a second:

- An average of 137 million working days were lost due to sickness in 2016. That's 4.4 days per year. Whereas figures show that employees took an average of 4.1 sickness absence days in 2017.
- That's an average of £648 per employer, per year.
- Handwashing education alone reduces respiratory illnesses, like colds, in the general population by 16-21%.

That's a lot of wonga saved if people would just wash their hands properly!

Come on, is it really because people don't wash up properly? Well, the ONS report ^[3] highlights that minor illnesses like coughs and colds were the most common reason for sickness absence in 2016. Now, how do you catch and spread a virus like the cold again?

Touché. But can we go back to the soap dispensers?

Certainly. In fact, we're going all in. Foam, soap, no touch, you name it.

FOAM SOAP DISPENSERS

Pros:

- Enhanced user experience: look for foam soaps that contain added moisturizers and emollients like Vitamin E or aloe vera.
- Soft and silky texture due to formulas with added oxygen.
- Cost-effective: if the foam soap is high-quality, a single application is enough.

Cons:

- Pricier than liquid soap.

LIQUID SOAP DISPENSERS

Pros:

- More luxurious and executive, more intense in fragrance, skincare benefits.

Cons:

- More expensive than foam.



LUXURY HAND SOAP

Pros:



- Exquisite fragrances and essential oils.
- Free of SLS, parabene and Cocamide DEA / MEA.

Cons:



In this category, there are two contenders and one clear winner. Let's start with the sore loser.

1. Bulk Fill:

- Due to the open nature of the container, bulk fill dispensers are a breeding ground for bacteria.
- Often improperly cleaned and refilled.
- Continual refilling means that new soap is tainted by the old soap it is poured on.

2. Closed cartridge system:

- More hygienic than bulk fill systems as air doesn't enter the system at all, thus reducing the risk of contamination.
- Most closed cartridges collapse, which allows all of the product to be evacuated.
- Even though bulk fill systems are the cheapest option, the possibility to dispense a measured dose of soap makes cartridges cost-effective too
- No mess: No drips or clogging of pumps.

Should I always expect a full soap service from my washroom provider?

Service isn't always included, but most washroom service providers offer both alternatives.





HAND LOTION



Providing a high-grade hand lotion for your client can help metamorphose the utilitarian loo into an upscale washroom serviced with the end-user in mind. It's about taking washroom management that one step further.

What are my options?

- Hand lotions often come paired with a matching hand soap - a nice touch if you want to provide a cohesive range of consumables.
- Scent is a key factor, of course, and a subjective one at that. We'll leave that one up to you.

- A non-greasy formula is recommended for a hand lotion that is easily absorbed into the skin, which is ideal for the rushed and the impatient.
- Always choose a hand lotion free of parabens and chemicals (Tip: If it looks like gibberish, you don't want it).

With fragrance trends moving towards unisex perfumes, why not opt for hand lotions with a gender-neutral scent that would appeal to both the gents and ladies?



HAND SANITISER

“

A healthy workforce is going to be more creative, more productive, happier, better morale. A sick workforce is costing you money.

MARTIN PICKARD

”



So you washed your hands and you think you're safe from these annoying little critters? Cute. In high-traffic areas of the office, be it reception areas, lift lobbies, washrooms or breakout spaces, germs like living the life, especially during flu season.

Studies have also shown that microorganisms also like to boogie-woogie on your phone receiver, your keyboard, your desktop and your phone. According to the NHS, “Flu viruses capable of being transferred to hands and causing an infection can survive on hard surfaces for 24 hours.” [\[20\]](#)

Well, that's not very reassuring.

Not in the slightest, but don't you fret, meet your saviour instead. Assiduous facilities manager, this is ruthless hand sanitiser; ruthless hand sanitiser, this is assiduous facilities manager. You two will get along.

ALCOHOL BASED

Some facts:

- In order to kill microbes effectively, an alcohol-based hand sanitiser has to contain over 60% of ethyl alcohol, ethanol, isopropanol or similar. Read the label, know your stuff and you're ready to impress.
- Quantity matters: opt for hand sanitiser dispensers that are designed to squeeze out just the right amount of germ-fighting goodness.
- We know you have more common-sense than that, but... friendly reminder to avoid fire.

Cons:

- Dries the skin.
- Can cause irritation.

NON ALCOHOL BASED

Pros:



- More effective consistency.
- No eye irritation (hurray for contact lens wearers).
- Unlike alcohol versions, alcohol-free hand sanitisers preserves the skin's natural boundary film.

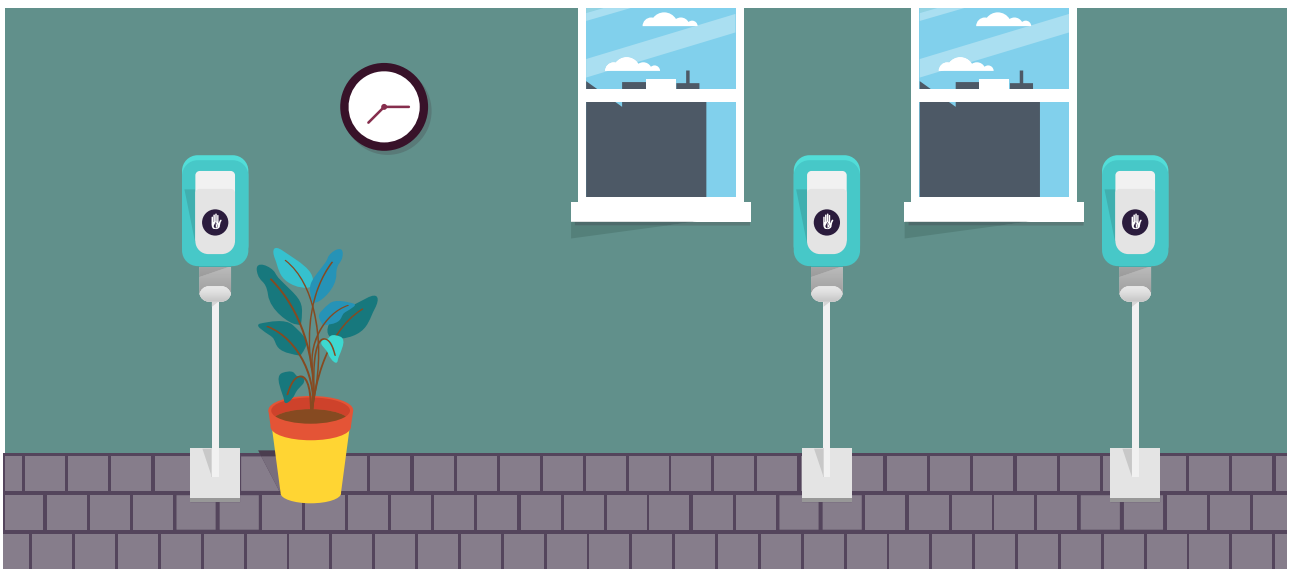
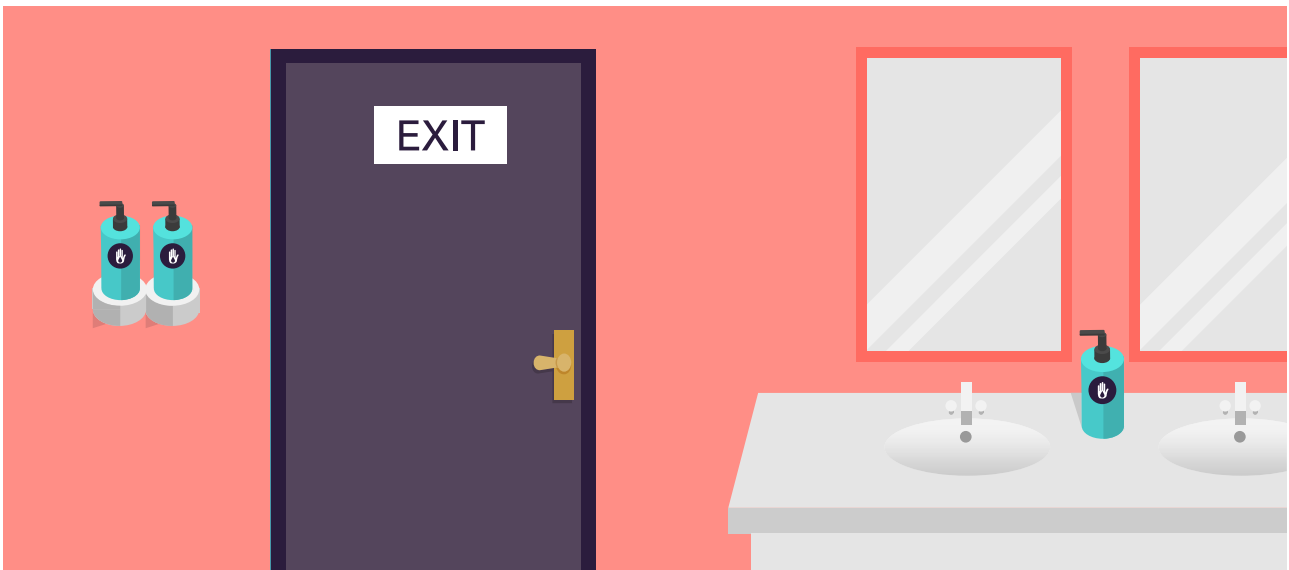
Cons:



- More expensive.
- As it is liquid, it may require a foaming dispenser to increase the surface area of the product.

Great! So, where would the hand sanitiser go?

Depending on the size and type of the washroom, your options vary from freestanding to wall-mounted dispensers, both of which can be automatic or manual. Another consideration is to provide your clients with hand/desktop sanitisers to help maintain a hygienic working environment.





TOILET SEAT SANITISER



Let's kick it off with a bang. When your skin meets the toilet seat (cue grimaces), it also meets germs and bacteria that can include strep, staph, the rotavirus, parasites and parasitic worms, crabs; even gonorrhoea and STIs such as herpes aren't entirely strangers to the toilet seat. Now the last two are unlikely, but would you risk it?



Was that really necessary?

Necessary? Yes. Irreparable? No. A squirt of the good stuff is all it takes to make sure your clients never catch any of the nasties above. Now, the good stuff can mean a lot of things, but to us, it is synonymous with a trusty, bacteria-crushing toilet seat sanitiser.

Tempting as it may seem, toilet paper isn't the safest of seat cushions and snagging it by the metre won't help. Save the toilet paper! Make the office loo as inviting as it is at home!

OK, I'm convinced. Tell me more.

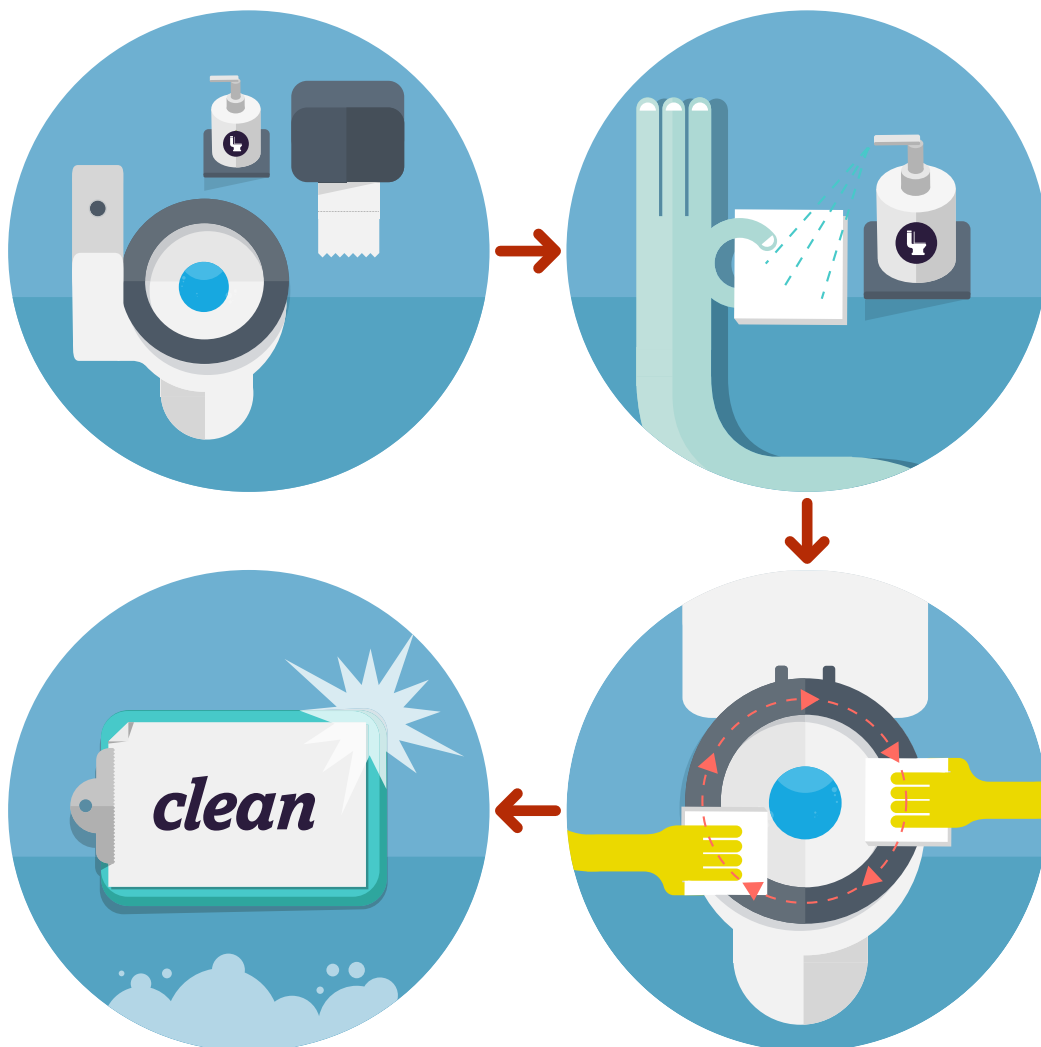
Always place toilet seat sanitiser near the toilet roll dispenser. Users can squirt a controlled amount onto a sheet of paper and give the seat a quick wipe. And since one can never be too clean, the surface sanitiser can also be used on other contact points like the flush and door handle. Germs, be gone!

How do I choose a toilet seat sanitiser?

- Quick drying, alcohol-based sanitiser.
- Can be mildly perfumed for an extra layer of hygiene reassurance and luxury.

What about the dispenser?

- Seamless design with no nooks and crannies where dirt and bacteria would build up.
- Compact to accommodate even smaller cubicle sizes.





URINAL SANITISER



Happy urinals don't have bacteria, nor do they have uric acid buildup that blocks the urinal pipework and fills the washroom with terrible odours.

How do urinal sanitisers work?

There are several solutions available.

1. THE CISTERN SANITISER

A dispenser is mounted on the wall near the urinal. The system then dispenses a measured dose of sanitising fluid that feeds into the water cistern and pipework and whooshes away any bacteria and limescale build-up, thus reducing costs of regular deep cleaning.

2. THE URINAL DEODORISER BLOCK

Also known as a urinal cake, a para block, a urinal pee-on/biscuit/cookie or, our favourite, a urinal doughnut. So many names for a simple, cylindrical block designed to be placed above the urinal drain in order to disinfect and reduce bad odours.



Watch out!

Some urinal blocks still contain para-dichlorobenzene (pDCB), a nasty chemical you wouldn't want to inhale. To keep it safe, opt for the nasty-free urinal blocks, great against bad odours, too.

3. THE URINAL CAP

Urinal caps slot into the drain and release bacterial cultures in the pipes, which in turn, clean and deodorise.

Pros:



- Reduced flushing frequency results in water savings.
- Easy to replace with no tools required
- Reduces blockage substantially.



Cons:

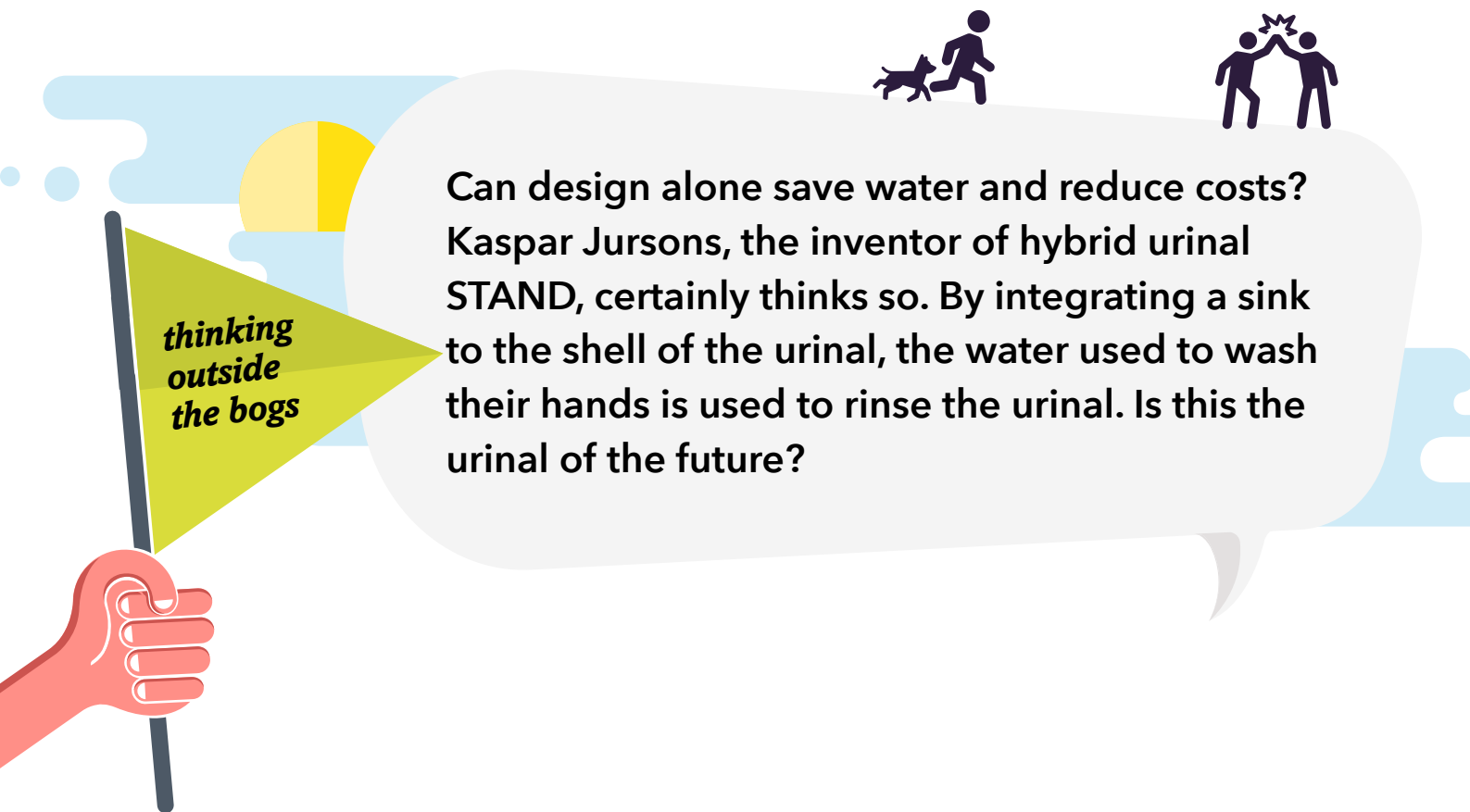


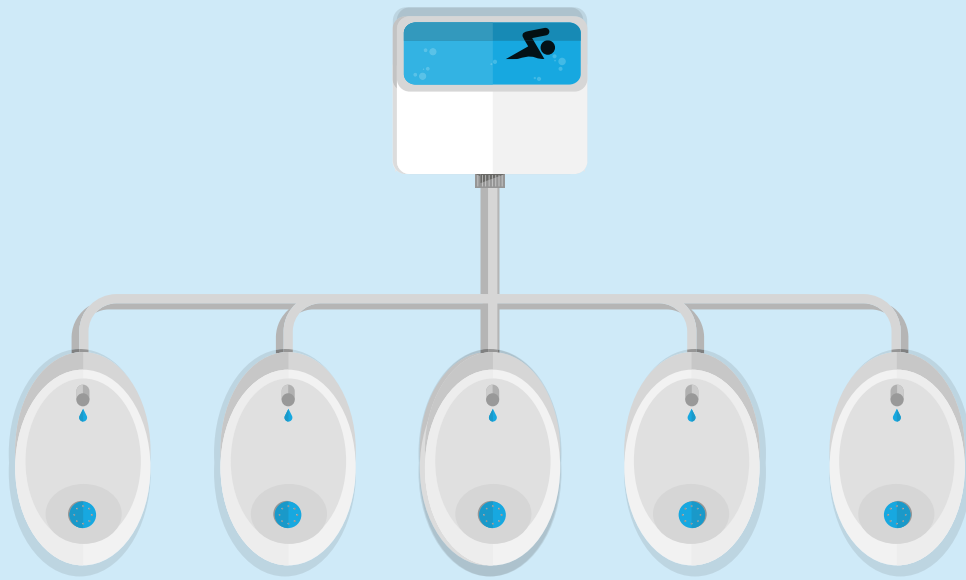
- Has to be replaced every 1-3 months depending on manufacturer.



4. THE URINAL SCREEN

A more modern alternative to the urinal block is the urinal screen which is installed over the drain to capture odours and release.





WATER MANAGEMENT

..or how to make a bucketful of savings.



Improving efficiencies and reducing costs without compromising quality is every facilities managers dream. Taking control of your water management is one way to hit all these marks, and it all starts with water management system.

How does that work?

Water management systems can be:

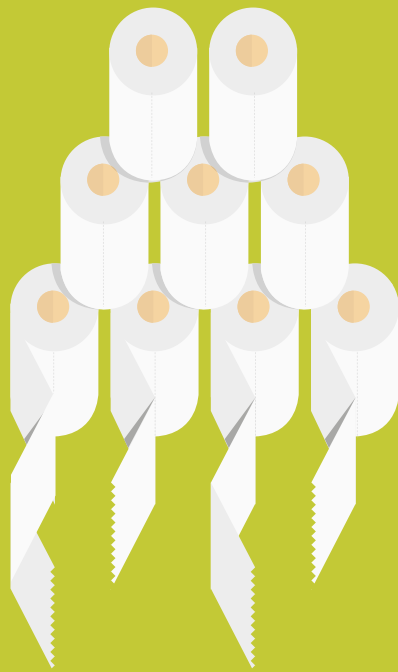
- Mechanical: flow valves designed to control water supply to your urinal cistern.
- Electronic: battery operated, automatic direct flushing valves.



Watch out!

Think twice before you opt for the electronic option. Sensors can be troublesome and often break, thus adding frequent maintenance costs. For hassle-free savings, opt for a mechanical water management system.





CONSUMABLES

No matter how involved we get in the strategic contribution to a business, you've still got to have toilet paper in the loo.

MARTIN PICKARD



We've all been there. The uh-oh moment, the terrible realisation you should've checked for toilet paper before doing your business. It's happened to you, it's happened to your clients, and it'll keep happening unless you read on.

I'll read on. But do you have any practical solutions?

Is the sky blue? We have nothing but practical solutions. Now, safe to say your toilet paper, along with all other consumables, should be restocked at regular intervals during the day. But that's just common-sense.

Here are some effective remedies to the 'no toilet paper disaster':

- Jumbo-roll or multi-roll dispensers are the best option for high-traffic washrooms.
- Moderate-traffic washrooms where single roll dispensers are preferred, opt for coreless toilet paper.
- Single sheet toilet paper dispensers mean rolls last longer and refills are required less often. Bonus: this also helps to reduce waste toilet paper.
- Number of plies matters. 1 ply may be more economical but rarely as absorbent as 2 ply, let alone 3 ply. Is it luxury or comfort you're after? Choose the number of plies accordingly.

You'll notice many of the solutions above address the issue at its core: if there is more toilet paper, or control over how it is used, it is less likely to run out. Simple as that.



Watch out!

How thick a roll are you ordering? What's the overall length? Some washroom service providers quote for less meterage and fewer plies, so check both quality and quantity when comparing quotes.

How about paper towels?

If you want to reduce waste, litter and maintenance, always use a high capacity towel system that provides users with a controlled amount, instead of a folded towel system that often releases more towel than necessary.

As for paper towels themselves, you have several options:

FLUSHABLE PAPER TOWELS

Pros:



- Normal paper towels aren't designed to be flushed as their fibres are too thick to dissolve in water. This leads to blocked drains and astronomical bills to unclog them. Flushable paper towels, on the other hand, break down quickly and reduce drain blockages.
- Reduced frequency of trash removal: less paper waste means less need to empty your bins.

Cons:



- More costly.

BUDGET PAPER TOWELS

Pros:



- Cost effective.
- Get the job done.

Cons:



- Low absorbency.
- Rough on the skin.

PREMIUM PAPER TOWELS

Pros:



- Upscale atmosphere, suitable for A class facilities.
- Reduced waste as luxury towels are thicker and more absorbent, thus reducing overall usage.
- Reduced washroom maintenance as there are fewer towels to clean up.

Cons:



- Pricier than their low-end counterparts.
- Cleaner bills and more frequent orders!

chapter 4

WASTE DISPOSAL: LAWS, REGULATIONS & BEST PRACTICE





DUTY OF CARE



Commercial waste is part and parcel of every active business. And with great waste comes great responsibility. Specified in the Environmental Protection Act 1990,^[21] Duty of Care is a legal requirement for those concerned with controlled waste.

Wait - what do you mean by controlled waste?

Simply put, controlled waste is waste that is subject to legislative control. This legislation applies to household, industrial and commercial waste. So if you produce, collect, transport, keep, treat, dispose of, or have any control of waste, you are responsible for managing it correctly.

Got it. So, what is Duty of Care exactly?

As previously mentioned, 'Duty of Care' means that it is an organisation's duty to manage and dispose of their waste.

In other words: when a company enlists your help to manage their waste, you become responsible for this waste from cradle to grave. This may sound a bit macabre but all it means is that you are held accountable for the safe disposal of your waste, even after it has been collected by another party (i.e. the registered waste carrier you hired.)

At this point, you shouldn't be surprised that breach of the duty of care is an offence liable to a penalty and unlimited fine if convicted. In 2016, a national survey^[22] of local SMEs showed that over half (56%) of the 1,000 UK firms surveyed don't know where their waste goes when it leaves the premises.

Bottom line: read on and spread the word.

So, what are my responsibilities?

- To the best of your ability, keep waste to a minimum. This includes preventing, reusing, recycling and recovering waste where possible, before disposing of it.
- Waste must be sorted and stored correctly until it is collected.
- Make sure your waste carrier is registered to dispose of waste.
- Each load of waste that leaves your premises must come with a complete waste transfer note. Alternatively, waste carriers can provide a yearly Waste Transfer Note.



WASTE CLASSIFICATION



Before you can dispose of your waste, you must know what type of waste it is. So let's recap.

OFFENSIVE WASTE:

- Any non-clinical waste that is not infectious and doesn't contain pharmaceutical or chemical substances. Examples include hygiene waste and sanitary protection such as nappies and incontinence pads.

CLINICAL WASTE:

- Used syringes, drugs or pharmaceutical products and surgical waste.

HAZARDOUS WASTE:

- Any material or substance that is harmful to humans or the environment, whether it be immediately or over a longer period of time. Examples include: fluorescent light tubes, aerosols, batteries, paints and inks, solvents and chemicals, asbestos, pesticides, healthcare waste (clinical, pharmaceutical and dental).









WASTE COLOUR SEGREGATION



Hazardous or non-hazardous, healthcare waste must be stored, transported and disposed of correctly. To that end, each waste type must be discarded following a colour coding system. Our colour coding guide below highlights everything you need to know about healthcare waste colour codes.

waste colour segregation

WASTE TYPE	CLASSIFICATION	COLOUR CODING	DESCRIPTION
INFECTIOUS CLINICAL WASTE	<i>hazardous</i>		Poses a known or potential risk of infection including anatomical waste, diagnostic specimens, reagent or test vials.
INFECTIOUS CLINICAL WASTE	<i>hazardous</i>		Potentially infectious waste, autoclave and laboratory waste.
OFFENSIVE/NON INFECTIOUS WASTE	<i>non-hazardous</i>		Healthcare waste which is classed as non-infectious, including nappy, incontinence, sanitary waste and other waste produced by human hygiene.

WASTE TYPE	CLASSIFICATION	COLOUR CODING	DESCRIPTION
PHARMACEUTICAL WASTE	<i>non-hazardous</i>		Includes expired, unused, contaminated and spilt pharmaceutical drugs, products and vaccines. Including bottles, boxes or vials with residues. Also including products contaminated from the use of handling pharmaceuticals including gloves, masks, connecting tubes, syringe bodies and drug vials.
CYTOTOXIC AND CYTOSTATIC DRUGS	<i>hazardous</i>		Hormone and cancer treatment medicinal waste must be separated from other medicinal waste as they are classed as hazardous. Located list can be found in BNF or NIOSH list of medicines. Failure to segregate from non-hazardous medicines will mean that the waste must be treated as hazardous and incur associated hazardous waste charges
CONTROLLED DRUGS	<i>non-hazardous</i>		Controlled drugs must be denatured to render them safe and without value and then disposed of with other non-hazardous waste medicines.

*Waste bin icons are for illustration purposes only and are not reflective of current Waste Segregation Colour Coding.



WASTE TRANSFER NOTES



Every transfer of waste must be accompanied by relevant documentation. For non-hazardous waste, look for a Waste Transfer Note (WTN). Those dealing with hazardous waste should request a Consignment Note. These are a legal requirement and must include the following:

- Description of the waste being transferred.
- Correct European Waste Catalogue (EWC) code for the waste.
- Method of containment (loose, in a sack, etc).
- Amount of waste being passed on (number of containers, volume or weight).
- Name and identity of the producer of the waste.
- Name of the person who the receiver of the waste (registered waste carriers must include their registration number).
- Place, date and time of the waste transfer.
- A Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) Code.
- Signatures from both parties.
- Waste hierarchy statement: the following words are recommended by Defra guidance:
"By signing in Section D below I confirm that I have fulfilled my duty to apply the waste hierarchy as required by Regulation 12 of the Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011." (see below)

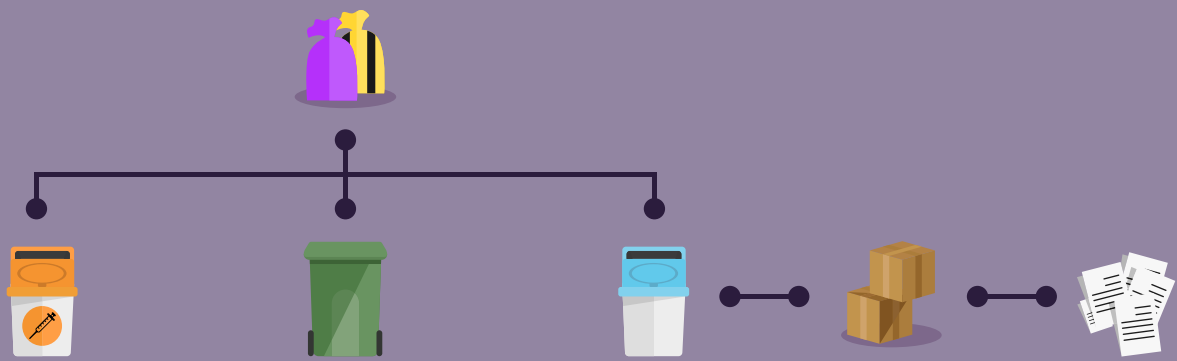
**Watch out!**

Waste Transfer documents must be kept for a minimum of two years. This is to ensure there is a clear audit trail from the moment the waste is collected to the moment it is safely disposed of. If you are unable to produce them to your environmental regulator or local council, you could be fined.

Waste Transfer documents can follow a given template (downloadable from the Environmental Agency) but the Waste Regulations (England and Wales) 2014 also permits you to use alternative documentation such as a generic form, an invoice or an email, provided they include all information listed above.

As previously mentioned, any registered carriers use season tickets that act as a single Waste Transfer Note. These can cover multiple transfers over a period of up to a year, provided there is no change in:

- The waste producer and the waste carrier.
- The description of the waste.
- The place of the waste transfer.



WASTE HIERARCHY



We are all aware of how waste impacts the environment and the bottom line of your business. With demand for materials growing and rising input costs, every company should adopt, or at least be aware of, the waste hierarchy.^[23]

WASTE HIERARCHY

<i>avoid</i>	01	<i>Maximum conservation of resources.</i>
<i>reuse</i>	02	<i>Reusing materials.</i>
<i>recycle</i>	03	<i>Recycling & reprocessing materials.</i>
<i>waste to energy</i>	04	<i>Energy recovery prior to disposal.</i>
<i>disposal of waste</i>	05	<i>Zero conservation of resources.</i>

Unsurprisingly, prevention comes first, followed by preparing for re-use, recycling, other recovery and disposal.

To put things into context, the UK generates an estimated one million tons of absorbent hygiene waste (nappies, adult incontinence and feminine hygiene products) every year.^[24] That is 1m tons of waste being incinerated or dumped in landfills, instead of being recycled.

In 2011, the UK's first waste treatment company opened a facility in the Midlands. Knowaste Ltd specialises in the recycling of absorbent hygiene products (AHPs) and diverts an average of 36,000 tonnes of waste from landfill every year.

What are the benefits for commercial properties?

- Landfill diversion resulting in long-term avoidance of increasing landfill taxes.
- Reduced CO2.
- Helping meet Zero Waste targets.
- Competitive edge.



LANDFILL VS INCINERATION

As per the Waste Hierarchy Pyramid above, when prevention, re-use and recycling aren't feasible options, waste must be disposed of.

So which is better? Landfill or incineration?

There are many reasons why landfill has been losing the battle against incineration, but let's go over the facts.



LANDFILL

Pros:



- **Convenient:** due to their proximity to cities, landfills help to reduce costs otherwise associated with waste transportation.
- **Energy:** When waste decomposes, it exudes carbon dioxide and methane, which can then be harnessed to generate power.

Cons:



- **Toxic waste:** Despite the possibility to generate power from it, toxic gas remains a concern, particularly when blended with rain or snow, which causes the toxins to seep into the ground, contaminate water and crops, and cause serious health problems. Methane is also significantly damaging to our ecosystem. A flammable gas, it can present a fire hazard.
- **Finite space:** if all waste is disposed of in landfills, Wall-E's dystopia might soon become reality. Pixar tapped in to a very serious emerging issue via their depiction of a robot concerned about our attitude to waste management.
- **Rising costs:** Starting April 2018, UK landfill taxes will be set at £88.96 per tonne, that is a 3.3% increase from 2017.



INCINERATION

Pros:



- **Better waste management:** unlike landfills where waste piles up and decomposes, incineration can burn up to 90% of the chosen waste.
- **Reduced dependence on landfills:** since virtually all waste is burnt, the need to find zones for landfills is reduced. This is particularly relevant in urban areas where waste generation is too high and land availability too low.
- **Waste-to-energy:** by burning waste, incinerators can generate energy that is then used to provide heat for municipal heating systems or steam for electricity. As for the ash produced, it can be used by the construction industry.

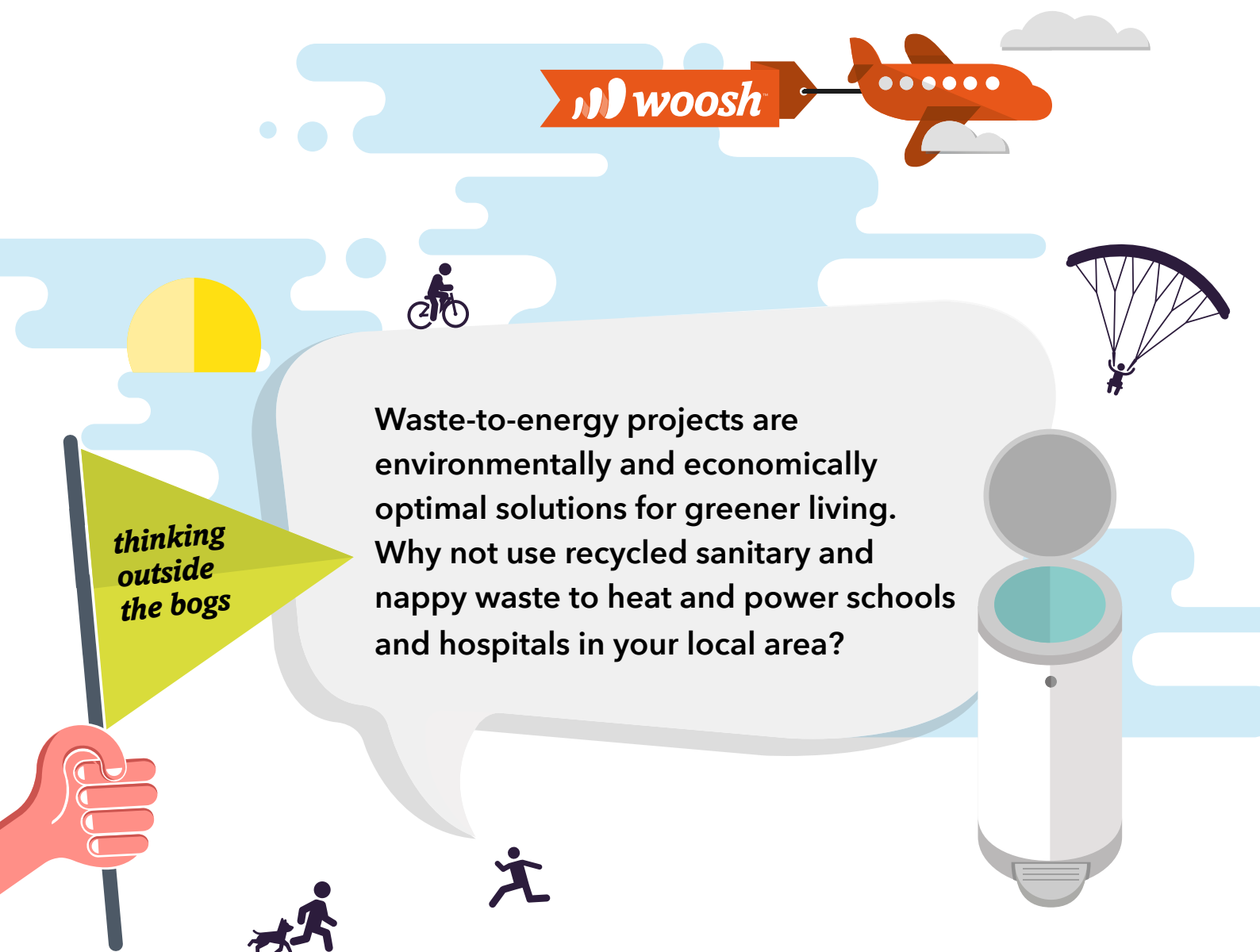
Cons:



- **Harmful to the environment:** the smoke generated by incinerators includes nitrogen oxide, particulates, heavy metals, acid gases and dioxin - a carcinogenic chemical. ^[25]

The way I see it, incineration still wins.

Without a doubt. In 2015, landfills disposed of around half of the UK's rubbish. But with incineration and the steady rise of landfill taxes, the volume of waste sent to landfills is estimated to drop to a promising 10%, by 2020.^[24]





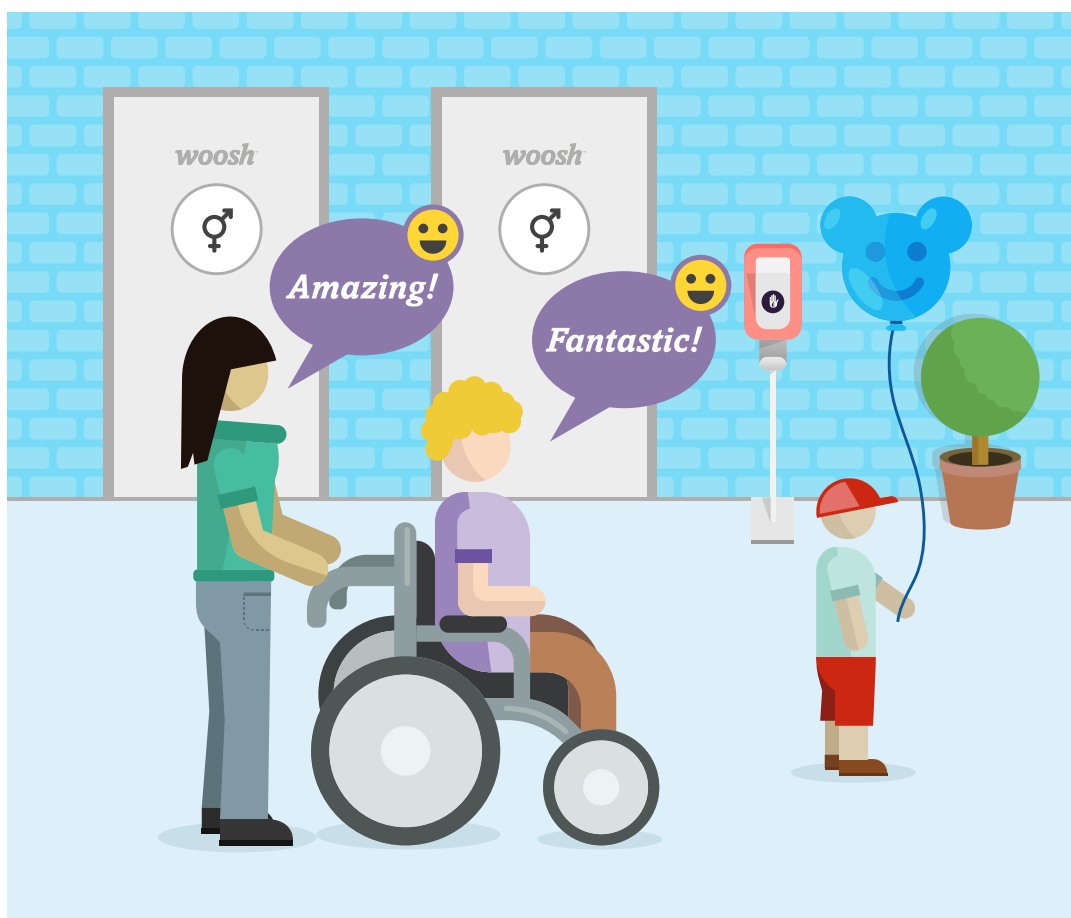
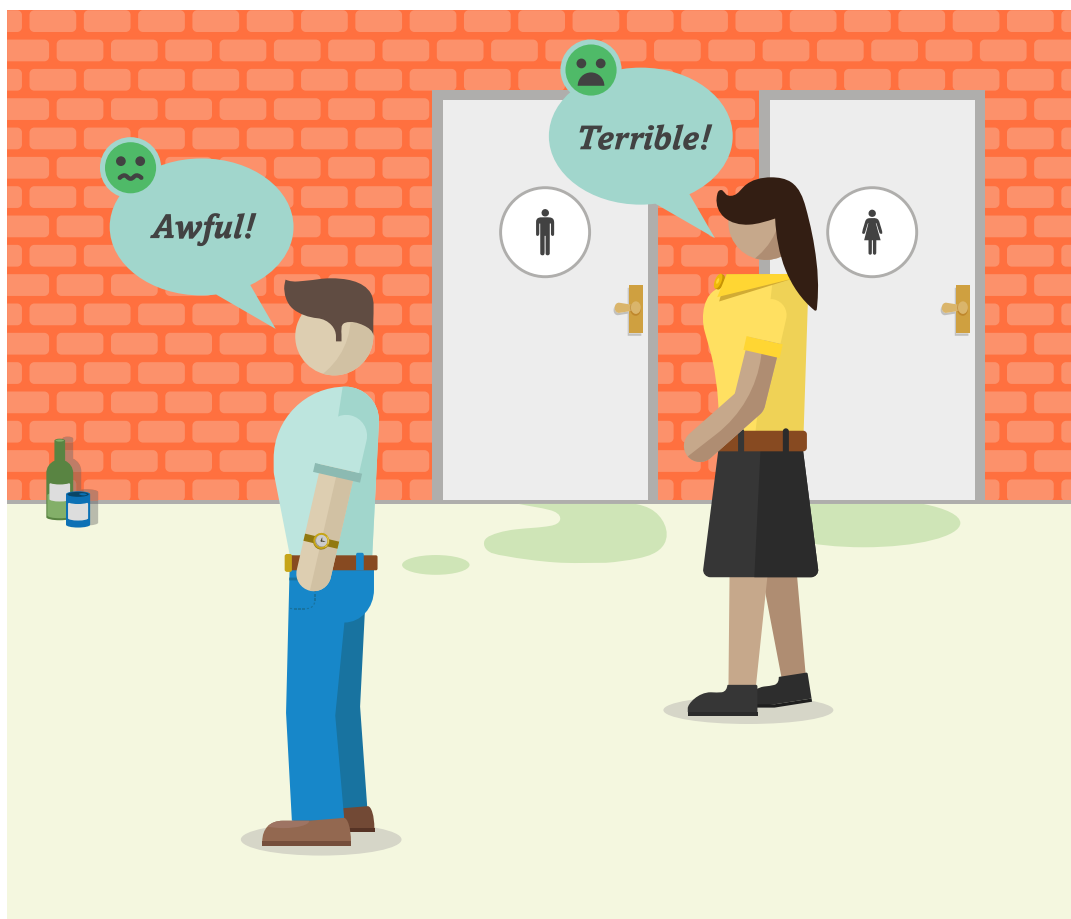
CONCLUSION

So, what have we learnt from this?



Washrooms are becoming benchmarks of quality in an organisation. A good washroom can make or break your client's reputation, we doubt you'd like to be at the receiving end of the second outcome.

The good news is, there is a way to end the outraged "Oh dear, have you seen the state of the loo?" remarks. It starts, of course, with effective washroom management. Without further ado, we leave you with a mantra and an infographic so crucial it features in these pages twice! Pin it on the walls of your office, make it your screensaver, print it on a t-shirt if you will, for it is why this guide exists. 'Effective washroom management: High-quality washroom services → easy-to-maintain facilities → reduced complaints → increased amount of "free" time to educate and spread the word → higher opportunities for strategy and planning...'



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