

Changing Places Ireland

“Imagine being in permanent lockdown. This is the reality for thousands of children and adults with disabilities who are restricted in where they can go and what they can do because they will not find a toilet with the equipment they need. They often have to go through the indignity of being changed on the floor of a public toilet or stay isolated from their communities at home. Imagine not being able to find a toilet when you need to.” [Changing Places Ireland](#)

Objective

We seek installation of Changing Places in suitable locations across Kildare to ultimately provide facilities across the County,
We ask that such facilities meet Changing Places criteria in order to be fully accessible and registered with [Changing Places Ireland](#) with clear public information and signage, so facilities are easily found.



Changing Place at Min Ryan Park and Playground, Wexford.

In Ireland there are only 17 Changing Places Toilet Facilities. There are over 1,600 in England, in Northern Ireland there are approximately 40. The Irish Government is currently examining a change to the Irish Building Regulations to make such toilets mandatory in public buildings.

National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017 – 2021

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What is a Changing Place?

Changing Places Facilities are different from standard accessible toilets. The standard accessible toilets that we are familiar with are designed to facilitate access by a standard wheelchair and support independent use. Standard disabled accessible toilets do not meet the needs of all people with complex disabilities. For example, individuals with conditions such as cerebral palsy, spina bifida, multiple sclerosis, and older people with physical disabilities may need extra equipment facilities to enable them to use the toilet, maximising independence and comfort.

Standard disabled accessible toilets are unlikely to accommodate a powered wheelchair or those fitted with additional leg or head supports or equipment, or allow the space needed when personal assistance is required.

Sadly, many people with disabilities have to go through the indignity and unhygienic option of being changed on the floor of a public toilet as the correct facilities are not available in public places.



A Changing Place is a facility which allows for assisted use. They have extra space and many features and additional equipment that make them even more accessible than the standard accessible toilets.

Changing Places facilities provide 12m² of floor space (3 metres x 4 metres minimum) and include a full room coverage ceiling track hoist, a centrally located toilet bowl with space either side for transfers or assistants, and a height-adjustable adult sized changing bench. Changing Places facilities are designed to enhance the health, safety, comfort and dignity of someone who may need extra support and additional equipment during personal care tasks. Changing

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Places facilities also offer added safety and support features for assistants.

Conclusion

A Changing Place is a necessary and very welcome addition to many Irish people with disabilities and their families.

Without Changing Places Toilet Facilities available in our county people with disabilities are denied a basic human right and continue to be excluded from everyday life.

Additional information

Changing Places - Space, equipment and layout requirements

*A fully accessible registered Changing Place Facility must meet the requirements of **BS8300 18.6 Changing Places Toilets** and further guidance is provided in the [Changing Places UK Consortium Practical Guide](#). Please refer to the BS8300 standards and [Changing Places UK guide](#) for further information and clarification on dimensions, equipment, and standards.*

Changing Places Ireland registration requirements

Based on BS8300 standards, Changing Places UK Guide and National Disability Authority (NDA) Standards - Please see the [CPI Planning, Design, Layout and Equipment Checklist 2021](#) for planning, design, layout and equipment requirements. The [Changing Places UK Guide](#) provides further information and clarification on dimensions, equipment, and standards.

Finance – indicative cost of a Changing Place Facility

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The Changing Places for Drogheda and Beyond Campaign Group submission to Louth Development plan 2021 – 2027 includes a recent costing of a Changing Place Facility – see page 5/7. Their estimated cost to equip an existing space is c.€19,000.

<https://www.louthcoco.ie/en/publications/development-plans/draft-louth-county-development-plan-2021-2027/154-submission-web.pdf>

Disabled People in Ireland

16% of the population of Ireland have at least one disability, based on Census 2016 data from www.cso.ie

Changing Places in Dublin and Wexford - 12 of Ireland's 17 Changing Places are in these 2 counties.



Changing Place at the National Gallery of Ireland



Changing Place at Connolly Station, Dublin



Changing Place at National Heritage Park, Wexford



Changing Place at Dundrum Shopping Centre

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