



Background

1. Period poverty is rising in the UK, [according to ActionAid](#), with around **20% of people who menstruate struggling to afford essential menstrual products** in 2023.
2. The Department for Education [funds a scheme](#) enabling state schools to provide free menstrual products through Personnel Hygiene Services.
3. Scotland's world-leading [Period Products \(Free Provision\) Act 2021](#) places a statutory obligation on local authorities to provide services that offer **ease of access, dignity and reasonable choice** to those who menstruate across public buildings and community spaces.
4. In July 2025 Wychavon District Council [launched a trial](#) providing **free menstrual products in public toilets**, delivered in partnership with the charity [Hey Girls](#).
5. A pilot scheme is being run by a number of UK libraries, including Bradford-on-Avon Library, in partnership with the charity [All Yours](#) to [offer residents discreet period packs](#).

Period Dignity

Access to menstrual products is a matter of public health and social equality. No resident or visitor should be prevented from participating in work, education or community because they cannot access these products when they need them. While existing provisions are welcome, these schemes have the following issues:

- They do not provide products where they are needed most.
- They are not available outside of school/library times.
- They may not offer discretion and privacy.
- They are narrow in their target demographics.

A modest, targeted rollout of free menstrual products will strengthen Wiltshire's existing library scheme and draw on precedents from Wychavon District Council and the Scottish Government.

Community and Wellbeing committee meeting 19 May 2026

Agenda item 13 – Free Menstrual products in public toilets

Written by Councillor George Simmonds



Local Support

Local organisations already supporting residents endorse expanding access to menstrual products through the town's public toilets. Bradford-on-Avon Library hosts an All Yours collection point and provides discreet free period packs through the Wiltshire Libraries scheme. Although uptake varies during term time, staff report that access becomes essential during school holidays when other sources close. The Hub also supplies free menstrual products in its toilets and includes sanitary items in all its food parcels, distributing around 2,000 parcels each year. Both organisations highlight ongoing local need and agree that providing products in public toilets would remove barriers, increase discretion and complement existing provision across the town.

Reading

[The Guardian | Scotland becomes first nation to provide free period products for all](#)

[BBC News | Campaign group working to make period products free on Isle of Man](#)

[Droitwich Standard | Wychavon tackles period poverty with free menstrual products in toilets](#)

PROPOSAL: To introduce a twelve-month pilot scheme providing free menstrual products in selected public toilets, exploring donation systems and charity partnerships to keep costs low.