

North Lanarkshire Council Report

Communities Committee

Does this report require to be approved? Yes No

Ref SP/LP/GS Date 31/10/22

Access to Free Period Products (Period Dignity Initiative) update

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Executive Summary

This report provides an update on the activity relating to the delivery and further development of the Access to Free Period Product / Period Dignity initiative.

Members will be aware that since August 2018 all local authorities in Scotland were provided with funding to introduce access to free period products in schools. From January 2019 the Scottish Government provided additional funding to all local authorities to increase the number and range of places where period products are available free of charge to those who need them, with a focus on publicly accessible buildings.

The purpose of the funding for schools remains to support equality, dignity and rights for those who menstruate and to ensure that lack of access to products does not impact on an individual's ability to fully participate in education, at all levels.

The main intent of the wider roll out for community provision remains tackling poverty but also wider need and to address the overarching gender equality and dignity issues that affect all of those who menstruate regardless of income.

Currently, spending is split between school and community provision. This approach has been designed to reflect the needs of communities across the council area.

The Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 12th January 2021, became legislation on the 15th of August 2022 and will fully come into force by January 2023.

The goal is to build on the success of early work to set up local access points and to continue to improve the distribution and accessibility of free period products through

- strategically expanding the local network of access points to improve the coverage throughout North Lanarkshire

- increasing marketing and promotions to ensure local people are aware of how and where they can access free products
- Continuing to work with key partners to reduce the stigma of being unable to access period products as a result affordability and availability.

The council's intentions around period dignity for local people through increased access to free sanitary products and other supports will be outlined on the council website. This important work will continue to be informed by the findings from online consultation with residents and from professional dialogue with stakeholders.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Communities Committee acknowledge : -

(1) the significant work carried out to date across key council services and partner agencies;

(2) approve the outline of the planned developments for the next three-year period and;

(3) approve the publication of a Statement of Intent which will reinforce the council's commitment to period dignity in line with The Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Act.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority	All priorities
Ambition statement	(20) Improve the involvement of communities in the decisions, and development of services and supports, that affect them

1. Background

1.1 From August 2018, all local authorities in Scotland were allocated funding to provide access to free sanitary products in schools. The Scottish Government made a new commitment in the 2018 funding year to expand this provision beyond schools. In November 2018 COSLA Leaders agreed to this proposal and developed 'Guiding Principles' in partnership with Scottish Government. Since then North Lanarkshire Council has been allocated a share of funding annually to further develop the initiative.

1.2 The focus for this initiative is creating access to free period products, and by doing so tackling the impact of poverty or low income, which can often mean people are unable to afford the essential products needed while menstruating.

By ensuring access to free products, many local people have some relief from the high costs of purchasing period products and will be less self-conscious about not being able to afford them and the stigma attached to this.

- 1.3 Annual funding from the Scottish Government has enabled the council to continue to develop the network of public building access points, to work with local community partners to target support across priority communities and to develop a campaign to raise awareness of the offer available and encourage a more open dialogue around periods and period products.
- 1.4 The council has undertaken a community consultation to find out residents' views on the current offer, improvement ideas, and early experiences of the initiative. The findings from the consultation, along with feedback from other stakeholders, will be used to develop a 'Statement of Intent', which will confirm the council's commitment to supporting the new law and the continued wider access to products.

2. Report

2.1 Guiding Principles

The main objective for this initiative is to create access points where residents can access a range of free period products and in doing so support people experiencing poverty issues.

Consistent with the Plan for North Lanarkshire, the North Lanarkshire model has been developed with community planning partners to ensure wide reach and accessibility from public buildings and facilities, as well as distribution by local anchor organisations.

The approach reflects the principles of: -

- protecting people's dignity, avoiding anxiety, embarrassment and stigma;
- making a range of products visible in places that people use;
- reflecting community views and needs;
- an efficient and effective approach that demonstrates value for money;
- individuals being able to get sufficient products to meet their needs;
- gender equality ensuring anyone who menstruates can access products including transgender men/nonbinary individuals and that language is gender inclusive;
- awareness raising and education to both promote the 'offer' and attempt to change cultural norms

2.2 North Lanarkshire Council Funding Allocation (2018/19 – 2022/23)

The Scottish Government provides funding to every local authority to deliver the Access to Free Sanitary Products initiative.

Table 1 provides, and overview of the funding received since 2018.

Table 1: Funding received from Scottish Government

Financial Year	Amount of funding £
2018-2019	81,122
2019-2020	187,155
2020-2021	359,000
2021-2022	359,000
2022-2023	336,000

2.3 Post-pandemic – resumption of operations

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, local access points were mainly closed and alternative operations were established. Active and Creative Communities redistributed the stock previously available through their facilities to local community groups and organisations, and partnerships with third sector organisation were quickly developed. This included working with local community partners to deliver products direct to residents' homes; supply of products to food banks and other food aid organisations for distribution to people requesting products, and; occasional postal deliveries and home deliveries by project staff.

However, as restrictions were lifted plans were created to enable a transition back to the normal operation through public building access points. This involved stock ordering and distribution processes as well as the launch of a refreshed fresh marketing and promotion campaign and updating of the [interactive locator tool](#) on the council website.

2.4 Key highlights from 2021/22

2.4.1 Number of period products distributed

From 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 the numbers of period products distributed via schools, public buildings or community anchor organisations is as follows:

Single-use period products

(includes all single use sanitary products e.g., towels, tampons, liners):

1,096,616

Reusable period products

(includes all reusable sanitary products e.g., menstrual cups & reusable pad):

1,964

Total number of products distributed:

1,098,580

2.4.2 Community Projects

The council is currently working in partnership with five community anchor organisations to ensure effective targeting of support to priority communities within their area and to support individuals who are unable to attend local access points due to personal circumstances including

- mobility and health
- being unable to afford the cost of public transport
- distance from home to the nearest access point for example living further than 20-minute return journey, which will be more likely for those living in rural communities.

The anchor organisations currently involved in the programme include: -

1. Getting Better Together
2. Newmains Community Trust
3. Glenboig Development Trust
4. Cornerstone House
5. Kirkshaws Neighbourhood Trust

Additional information is contained within Appendix 1.

Over and above delivering against the main objectives for the period dignity initiative, all the organisations involved are committed to taking a sustainable approach to the project delivery. Most of the projects have an environmental focus and are delivered by local volunteers using bicycles and e-bikes in an attempt to reduce the carbon footprint of the projects. Each organisation also acts as a champion for the promotion of the use of sustainable environmentally friendly products.

2.4.2 Communication and awareness raising:

At the end of 2021 a new campaign with dedicated marketing materials was launched in a bid to promote and raise awareness of the initiative and the offer to local residents.

This involved an extensive online and social media campaign with a focus on Google, YouTube, and Snapchat. Other activities within the campaign include

- use of large-format outdoor adverts
- posters on buses and banners on public service buses covering North Lanarkshire routes
- advertising on train carriages
- posters and leaflets in all public buildings and facilities
- online national newspapers articles
- promotions at local events.

Appendix 2 provides examples of some of the campaign materials.

Online and social media marketing and advertising has resulted in a greater awareness of the offer with an increase in hits on the information page on the council website. Further statistical information contained within Appendix 3

highlights the success of these, compared with the averages of other campaigns using the same media.

2.4.3 NLC interactive map

During the transition from the temporary arrangements put in place during the pandemic, many local access points started to reopen within centres and facilities. At the same time a revamp of the [interactive map](#) on the website was completed to allow residents to access the latest comprehensive list of local access points.

2.4.4 Support to local foodbanks

As an extra level of support throughout the pandemic, period products were provided to North Lanarkshire foodbanks and food aid charities, so that they could be offered to service users who were dealing with increased financial pressures because of the pandemic.

Lanarkshire Community Food and Health Partnership were the main agents for food aid organisations to ensure a consistent and coordinated approach. Utilising their company vehicles and extensive networks they were able to ensure supplies were delivered to local food banks who then distributed products to anyone who required them.

2.5 Partnership Working

Partnership working has been an important factor throughout this initiative. Liaising with community facilities, library service, Active and Creative Communities, Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire, NHS Lanarkshire, and local community delivery partners a coordinated approach has been established to the development and delivery of the initiative and ordering processes. Greater links have also been established with early years nurseries and family learning centres to promote awareness of the offer.

Through twice-yearly partnership meetings professional dialogue has taken place that has assisted in helping to monitor and review activity and identifying and considering options to improve and develop the service while providing updates on any of the project delivery that individual agencies may be leading on.

3. Statement of Exercise of Functions

As part of The Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Act 2021 local authorities are required to produce and communicate a Statement on the Exercise of Functions to summarise the arrangements in place to meet the legal duties, which includes carrying out one or more public consultations.

The information gained from the public consultation work has been used to inform the production of a North Lanarkshire Council Statement of Exercise of Functions. The statement is contained within Appendix 4 and sets out North Lanarkshire Council's commitment to free product provision details current and future provision in education establishments and the wider community.

4. Public Consultation

4.1 The North Lanarkshire public consultation took the form of an online questionnaire. This was launched in March 2022 and ran until the end of July 2022. The survey was designed to capture the views of the general public with a particular focus on views from those currently using sanitary products; those who will use sanitary products in the future and those who may collect sanitary products on behalf of others.

4.2 The consultation covered the following broad themes:

- General awareness of the availability of free period products and advertising campaigns
- Types of products currently used and views on accessing environmentally friendly products
- Locations of access points used and suggestions for new sites
- Availability of products and views on service received at access points

4.3 The survey was completed by 288 people and can be viewed in Appendix 5.

4.4 Response statistics

4.4.1 The survey was completed by people from all community board areas. The specific breakdowns are provided in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Response statistics per Community Board

Community Board	Number of returns	% share of returns
Airdrie	56	19.65
Bellshill	24	8.42
Coatbridge	55	19.30
Cumbernauld	37	12.98
Kilsyth	6	2.11
Motherwell	49	17.19
Northern Corridor	16	5.61
Shotts	16	5.61
Wishaw	25	8.77
Total	285	100
Note:	3 people skipped this question	

4.4.2 Table 3 below, provides the level of responses per age group. With the highest level of responses coming from 40–49-year-olds with 91 responses.

Table 3: Number of responses by age group

Age group	Number of returns	%
Under 16	23	7.99
16-20	24	8.33
21-29	43	14.93
30-39	70	24.31
40-49	91	31.60
50 and over	28	9.72
Prefer not to say	9	
Total	2	100

4.5 Key findings from consultation

4.5.1 The most popular place for people to access products were leisure centres (22.82%) and community centres (20.75%). Moving forward it will be important to better track the locations being used for collection of products. Currently the only way to monitor this is via stock control.

4.5.2 The highest volume of products accessed were press on regular towels with wings (42.81%) followed by press-on super towels with wings (29.82%) The lowest number of products accessed were tampon super without applicator. The percentage of environmentally friendly or lifestyle products requested was 7.02%.

Environmentally friendly and lifestyle products can only currently be accessed by submitting an enquiry. Products are then supplied by a local community partner anchor organisation or directly from the council's approved supplier (Hey Girls).

4.5.3 It is clear that, in the main, current access points are working effectively. However, the proportion of residents who had to ask for products at sites remains high at 44.13%. While this is not necessarily an issue for some residents, the proportion who then chose to leave without asking remains high, with 53 respondents indicating that they decide not to ask for free products. This is an area for improvement.

4.5.4 A high number of respondents indicated that there have been occasions when visiting access points that products were not available. This is another area for improvement.

4.5.5 Respondents have provided views on where free products could be accessed. This included doctors, local shops, community facilities, council buildings, foodbanks and other suggestions such as supermarkets.

While the main focus for wider community access is public buildings, the feedback provided enables consideration and testing of the use of other

options, especially in priority communities with high levels of deprivation and/or no access point.

- 4.5.6 Feedback from the survey indicates that more than a third of respondents were aware of the 2021/22 campaign, with the highest responses reported for the poster advertising in public buildings, followed by adverts on websites and social media platforms.
- 4.5.7 A high level of respondents (88.43%) indicated that the period dignity initiative and campaign has helped talking about periods and period products easier and more acceptable. This is a good indicator that, over time, stigma around menstruation and accessing free products can be reduced.
- 4.5.8 The consultation has identified that there is interest in finding out more about environmentally friendly period products (51.64%) This is significantly higher than the current level of requests being received. Options will be considered to build on this interest.

5. Developments being planned for 2022/23 - 2024/25 period

Using intelligence from our consultation work as well as other feedback from partners and stakeholders, a number of key developments are currently underway. Completion of which will assist with a further targeted expansion and the implementation of improvements aimed to improve processes, service deliver and the overall offer for residents: -

1. Completion of gap analysis and mapping to identify new access sites. The principle of a 20-minute neighbourhood is being used for this, with the aim to have access points within a short walk or cycle lasting no longer than 20 minutes for the return journey.
2. Review of existing access points to reduce clustering. Work is underway with NHS Lanarkshire to ensure health centre / clinic sites do not duplicate where there are access points available in nearby public buildings. The better used site, with longer opening hours will be preferred. However, where there is a demonstrated need for multiple sites within an area, then this will be retained.
3. Discussions are underway to explore council provision of a central store, stock management and distribution service.
4. Recruitment of additional anchor organisations for areas where a third sector delivery partner would be beneficial will focus on priority communities within Motherwell, Bellshill, Airdrie and Kilsyth.
5. Opening of new access points in accident and emergency units within University Hospital Wishaw and University Hospital Monklands.
6. Plan and deliver a peer-led youth project to deliver period dignity workshops and information sessions in local youth groups and projects.
7. Launch of a new campaign focusing on general awareness raising, promotion of environmentally friendly products and the interactive mapping tool.
8. Improved data collection and analysis to better inform future developments and improvements. This will include improving the data on the locations being used for accessing free products. To help this a QR scanning system will be introduced.

9. Further community engagement on the use of environmentally friendly period products.
10. Consider options to improve the accessibility of products over weekends, public holidays, and extended holiday period when schools and public building may be closed.
11. Review the set-up of access points to ensure products can be easily accessed preferably by self-selection or other formats that are viewed as less embarrassing for residents, for example by using a discrete card to request products.
12. Produce a short training module and guidance note for staff and volunteers involved in running collection points, specifically ensuring products are regularly replenished and at ways to reduce stigma associated with requesting and collecting products.
13. Develop a community resilience / contingency plan to deal with any event of future civil incident or national emergency.

6. Further information

Additional information, including the information pages on the NLC website, the NLC interactive mapping tool and the My Period App can be accessed using the links below:

[North Lanarkshire interactive map](#)

North Lanarkshire Council website – [Free Period Products](#)

Scottish Government 'Pick up my period' app enables someone to put in a town, city or post code and find out where to access products

<https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/pickupmyperiod/id1500403938>


<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.myperiodapp>

3. Measure of success

- number of products distributed
- number of individuals accessing free products
- number of distribution points
- Number of environmentally friendly products accessed

4. Supporting documentation

- 4.1: Appendix 1: Details of community anchor organisations supporting the initiative
- 4.2 Appendix 2: Example campaign materials
- 4.3 Appendix 3: Statistics from online/social media campaign
- 4.4 Appendix 4: Statement of Exercise of Function
- 4.5 Appendix 5: Public consultation - survey
- 4.6 Appendix 6: Full consultation responses



Stephen Penman
Head of Strategic Communication

5. Impacts

5.1 Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty

Does the report contain information that has an impact as a result of the Public Sector Equality Duty and/or Fairer Scotland Duty?

Yes No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

Fairer Scotland duty will be considered on an ongoing basis as part of the development and implementation of the North Lanarkshire approach to the provision of free period products.

An integrated equality impact / Fairer Scotland assessment has been completed during the initial planning of the delivery approach. This will be further informed by our ongoing monitoring, reviews and public consultations and community engagement activity.

If Yes, has an assessment been carried out and published on the council's website? <https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/equality-and-fairer-scotland-duty-impact-assessments>

Yes No

5.2 Financial impact

Does the report contain any financial impacts?

Yes No

If Yes, have all relevant financial impacts have been discussed and agreed with Financial Solutions?

Yes No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

The period dignity / access to free period products is expected to cost the council circa £320,000 to operate. This is for both existing operations and new developments. However, funding for the initiative is provided through an additional grant from the Scottish Government.

5.3 HR policy impact

Does the report contain any HR policy or procedure impacts?

Yes No

If Yes, have all relevant HR impacts have been discussed and agreed with People and Organisational Development?

Yes No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

5.4 Legal impact

Does the report contain any legal impacts (such as general legal matters, statutory considerations (including employment law considerations), or new legislation)?

Yes No

If Yes, have all relevant legal impacts have been discussed and agreed with Legal and Democratic Solutions?

Yes No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

5.5 Data protection impact

Does the report / project / practice contain or involve the processing of personal data?

Yes No

If Yes, is the processing of this personal data likely to result in a high risk to the data subject?

Yes No

If Yes, has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) been carried out and e-mailed to dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk

Yes No

5.6 Technology / Digital impact

Does the report contain information that has an impact on either technology, digital transformation, service redesign / business change processes, data management, or connectivity / broadband / Wi-Fi?

Yes No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

Where the impact identifies a requirement for technology, has an assessment been carried out (or scheduled) by the Enterprise Architecture Governance Group (EAGG)?

Yes No

5.7 Environmental / Carbon impact

Does the report / project / practice contain information that has an impact on any environmental or carbon matters?

Yes No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

Wider use of environmentally friendly products and delivery products is encouraged. This includes looking at testing approaches to increasing access to environmentally friendly products and piloting low carbon delivery mechanisms with local voluntary organisations

5.8 Communications impact

Does the report contain any information that has an impact on the council's communications activities?

Yes No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

A communication campaign is outlined in this report

5.9 Risk impact

Is there a risk impact?

Yes No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the key risks and potential impacts, highlighting where the risk(s) are assessed and recorded (e.g. Corporate or Service or Project Risk Registers), and how they are managed?

Details of community anchor organisations supporting the initiative

Community Projects	Location	Description
Glenboig Development Trust <i>Period Dignity Project</i>	Glenboig	The programme aims to promote access to period products, promote environmentally friendly period products and ensure dignity to menstruating persons living in Glenboig and surrounding areas whilst respectful of our carbon footprint and the local environment. To provide menstruating persons with dignified environmentally friendly access to period products by means of providing three trained volunteers access to two Electric Cycles and one Electric Cargo Bike, with back up support from two Electric Cars from our Community Transport fleet to deliver direct to homes as required.
Kirkshaws Neighbourhood Trust <i>NLC Period Dignity Project (Coatbridge)</i>	Coatbridge	Products provided by North Lanarkshire Council will be distributed freely and delivered to local women, girls, groups and organisations by Kirkshaws Neighbourhood Centre on Electric Bike (to reduce carbon and supporting North Lanarkshire Council to achieve #Act2021). Will purchase one Electric Cargo Bike and one Electric Bike with panniers to ensure we are as carbon neutral as we can be. We will encourage women and girls to consider the more sustainable environmental products such as Hey Girls environmentally friendly products by providing information and opportunities for them to try these products, which for many would be unaffordable.
Newmains Community Trust <i>Flo & Go Dignity in Menstruation Project</i>	Newmains	Newmains Community Trust will undertake a Period Product Delivery Scheme within Newmains and Surrounding Areas. The scheme will involve a team of trained volunteers taking orders and delivering re-usable and environmentally friendly Period Products to those who need it in the community. It is the aim of this project to ensure that access to Period Products does not become another source of deprivation to those living in Newmains and that anyone who needs them, can access them in person or through the delivery scheme. To this end we are proposing to train up to 6 volunteers to take order off and deliver Period Products to anyone in the area who requires them.
Getting Better Together - Healthy Living Centre <i>The Cycle</i>	Shotts	Develop a delivery service by training staff and volunteers to use Electric Bikes to transport orders of Hey Girls environmentally friendly and lifestyle products to people in rural communities. This links in with the council commitment to ACT2021- Action on Climate Together 2021. The project will require volunteer support to help with deliveries and will offer training such as cycling leader qualifications and awareness raising around menstruation and Period Dignity.

<p>Cornerstone House Centre</p> <p><i>Period Products Project</i></p>	<p>Cumbernauld</p>	<p>Promotion of the 'pickup point' using Cornerstone House Centre's marketing materials and social platforms, website and in-house information points. Cornerstone House Centre will raise awareness of the 'app' 'Pickup My Period' which allows users to identify locations across Scotland where Free Period Products will be available. Developed by Hey Girls and funded by the Scottish Government through their education arm 'My Period'. Hey Girls products are all sustainably sourced, reusable and plastic free. Inform local partners and key organisations of the service being provided at Cornerstone House Centre within the Health & Wellbeing focus already in place.</p> <p>Ensure 'anyone who needs them' has access to different types of Period Products 'reasonably easily' and with 'reasonably dignity'. Provide environmentally suitable products provided by an authorised provider. Support other areas, identified if relevant by users of the service as financial or other issues may need support/help.</p>
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Example Campaign Materials

- Billboard Adverts/Rear Bus Adverts/Railway Station Adverts/Plasma Screen Adverts/Pull up Banners/Posters/Flyers



Free Period Products
For whoever needs them

Find out more, including collection points:
northlanarkshire.gov.uk/free-period-products

NORTH LANARKSHIRE

LIVE HERE

Taking the pain out of paying

COSLA Scottish Government Rìoghachas na h-Alba gov.scot

Free Period Products

This billboard advertisement features a green background. On the left, there is a circular logo composed of white and yellow pill-like shapes arranged in a sunburst pattern. The text 'Free Period Products' is written in a large, yellow, sans-serif font. Below it, 'For whoever needs them' is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. The website URL 'northlanarkshire.gov.uk/free-period-products' is displayed in white. In the top right corner, the 'NORTH LANARKSHIRE' logo is present. At the bottom right, there are logos for COSLA, the Scottish Government (Rìoghachas na h-Alba gov.scot), and 'LIVE HERE'.



Free Period Products
For whoever needs them

Find out more, including collection points:
northlanarkshire.gov.uk/free-period-products

NORTH LANARKSHIRE

LIVE HERE

Taking the pain out of paying

COSLA Scottish Government Rìoghachas na h-Alba gov.scot

Free Period Products

This billboard advertisement features a purple background. It contains the same circular logo of white and yellow pill-like shapes as the green version. The text 'Free Period Products' is in a large, yellow, sans-serif font, with 'For whoever needs them' in white below it. The website URL 'northlanarkshire.gov.uk/free-period-products' is in white. The 'NORTH LANARKSHIRE' logo is in the top right, and 'LIVE HERE' is at the bottom right. Logos for COSLA and the Scottish Government (Rìoghachas na h-Alba gov.scot) are also present.

**GOT
YOUR
PERIOD?
WE'VE
GOT YOU!**



**PICK UP FREE SANITARY
PRODUCTS HERE**



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot



**Free Period
Products**
For whoever needs them



Find out more, including collection points:
northlanarkshire.gov.uk/free-period-products



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot



LIVE HERE



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Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot



LIVE HERE

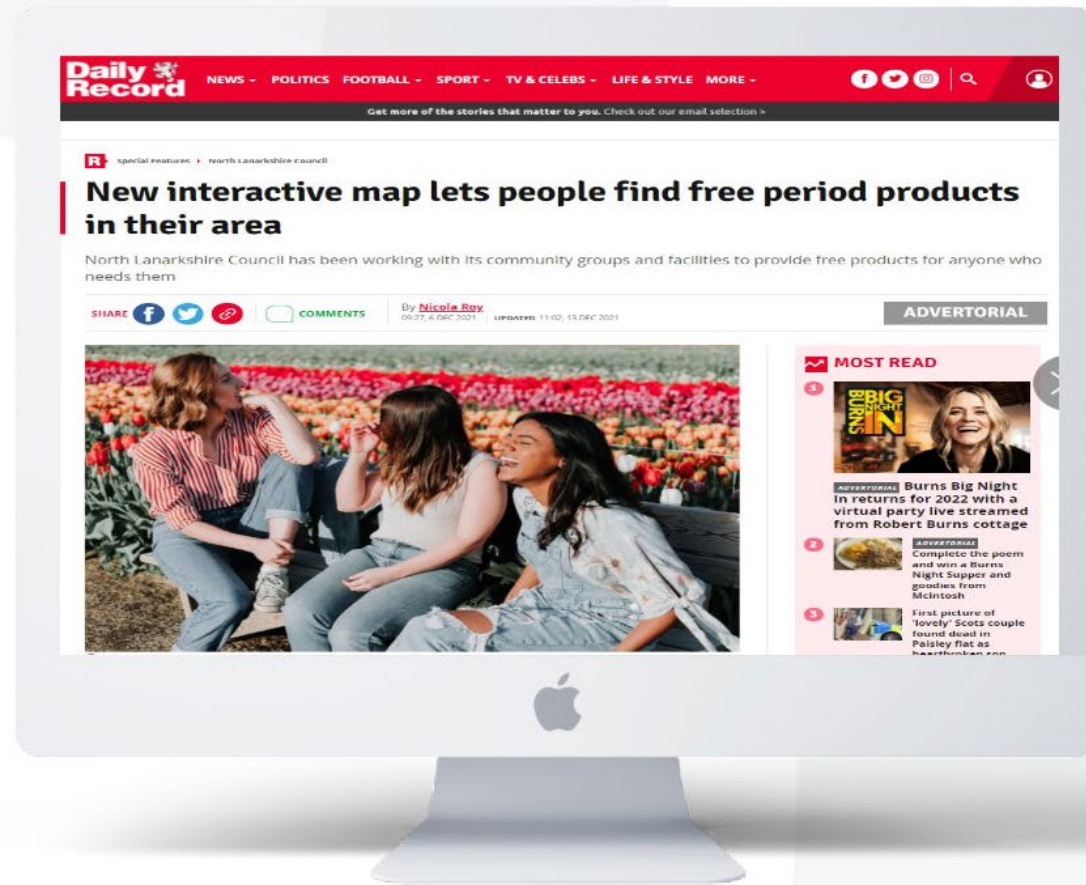
North Lanarkshire Council
Daily Record
6th December 2021

Objectives

New interactive map lets people find free period products in their area

Solutions

Content Marketing
Social Media



**Statistics from Online / Social Media Campaign
December 2021**

CTR = Click through rate

Google Display

85,859 impressions and 436 clicks – 0.51% Click through rate (average CTR for Google is 0.2%)

YouTube ads

98,613 impressions and 366 clicks – 0.37% CTR (the average CTR for YouTube is 0.25%)

Snapchat ads

133,636 impressions and 1,240 clicks – 0.93% CTR (the average CTR for Snapchat is 0.7%)

North Lanarkshire Council

Period Products (Free Provision) Scotland Act 2021

Statement on Exercise of Functions

1. Introduction

The Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Act 2021 was passed by the Scottish Parliament on 24th November 2020 and gained royal assent on 12th January 2021. The Act requires local authorities as a responsible body to provide period products free of charge to anyone who needs them, by making products reasonably easy to obtain.

Additionally, as a responsible body – this should be done mindful of respecting dignity and by offering a reasonable choice of types of period products.

Local Authorities are required to produce a Statement on Exercise of Functions to summarise the arrangements that will be put in place to meet the duty, which includes carrying out one or more public consultations.

This statement has been produced in accordance with our statutory duties and outlines North Lanarkshire Council's commitment to free product provision and details current and future provision within education establishments and the wider community.

2. Our commitment

North Lanarkshire Council is committed to providing free period products for those who need them. Our approach involves children and young people having access to products within their school setting and for residents and visitors through a network of local access points within public buildings and community facilities within North Lanarkshire.

Individuals unable to attend a local access point can contact the council so that alternative arrangements can be made, which may include postal delivery or delivery by our local community partner organisations. Funding has been made available by the Scottish government to enable this.

In providing this free service, it is our aim to ensure that:

- A range of period products, including single use items and re-usable environmentally friendly products are available to those who need them via all secondary schools and a network of local access points
- Our local access network is kept under review and developed further where appropriate. It is our commitment to do this in conjunction with community planning partners and third sector organisations, mindful of geographically gaps in provision and also of the 20-minute neighbourhood model

- Barriers to access are minimised and removed and that people can access products with dignity and without stigma
- Consideration is given to additional support for those who may require it
- Product demand is regularly monitored so that public buildings and community facilities do not run out of stock
- Residents and visitors are aware of our free provision. This will involve a range of advertising and promotional campaigns. Information will also be available on the council website; through social media platforms and through other communications such as posters and informational flyers.
- Regular feedback is sought from service users so that improvements can be identified
- Public consultations and community engagement is carried out to inform our provision

3. **Public Consultation**

The North Lanarkshire public consultation took the form of an online questionnaire. This was launched in March 2022 and ran until the end of July 2022.

The survey was designed to capture the views of the general public with a particular focus on views from those currently using sanitary products; those who will use sanitary products in the future and those who may collect sanitary products on behalf of others.

The consultation covered the following broad themes:

- General awareness of the availability of free period products and advertising campaigns
- Types of products currently used and views on
- accessing environmentally friendly products
- Locations of access points used and suggestions for new sites
- Availability of products and views on service received at access points

The survey was completed by 288 people and the findings from the consultation will be used to inform the provision within North Lanarkshire.

Full details of the findings are contained within the 2022 update report which can be accessed on our website.

4. **Community Based Provision**

North Lanarkshire Council has developed a large network of community access points. The access points are in all 9 towns and many local communities within public buildings, and community facilities. To date we have 90 local access points throughout North Lanarkshire which we will continue to monitor, review, grow and update accordingly. The access points have been established in public buildings and community facilities.

North Lanarkshire Council have also partnered with five local community anchor organisations who will provide local services within a cluster of priority communities. This also includes a fast free local delivery service for those who cannot attend our centres and access to environmentally friendly period products.

Local food banks and organisations providing emergency food aid are also part of our network and on request can provide products to vulnerable individuals and families.

Additionally, residents can contact the council directly by email to request products. In doing so the quickest method of delivery will be selected.

Products available within our community access points include single use pads (with and without wings, regular, super and long) and tampons (regular and super) the various sizes/ absorbencies provided allow us to accommodate individual needs and preferences. The type of products available will be regularly reviewed to meet the needs and wants of the community. Environmentally friendly products are available on request.

Products are available for collection by anyone who needs them, or by anyone collecting on behalf of another person. Products will normally be available within toilet facilities of a building, unless otherwise stated. Those who wish to access products can do so without having to ask a member of staff and in a way that respects their dignity. A person may access as many products as required.

Information on stocked venues can be accessed via the PickUpMyPeriod App and North Lanarkshire Council Directory website. This allows users to enter a postcode or location to see where free period products are available in their area.

5. Provision within Education

North Lanarkshire Council provide free products in all secondary school establishments and on request will be made available to primary schools.

Products will be available in a way which respects the dignity of the pupil and can be accessed without having to ask a teacher.

Products will be available during term time in at least one part of the school, normally the toilet facilities or from the school reception. Some schools may have products available in multiple locations.

North Lanarkshire Council will provide ongoing support to its education establishments to ensure every pupil who requires products is able to obtain them easily.

6. Communication

Information on our free period product initiative is available on the North Lanarkshire Council website. Details are provided on how, where and when people can obtain free products via our own easy to use app and also the official Period Products Locator app.

Enquiries can also be submitted at any time and will be dealt with by our Community Partnership Team.

It is our intention to regularly promote and raise awareness of the free access to period products. This will involve advertising and marketing campaigns using digital and traditional methods. Information posters are also posted on notice and information boards in all of our public buildings and community facilities.

7. Future Provision and Improvements

North Lanarkshire Council recognises the importance of securing period dignity for all and will commit to using intelligence from our consultation work as well as other feedback from partners and stakeholders, to continue to develop our approach to providing free period products within North Lanarkshire.

From our recent consultation and engagement work a number of key developments are currently underway. Completion of which will assist with a further targeted expansion and the implementation of improvements aimed to improve processes, service deliver and the overall offer for residents and visitors. Further details are provided within the 2022 update report which can be accessed on our website.

8. Further information

Additional information can be found on the NLC website [free period products \(northlanarkshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk)

The NLC interactive mapping tool can be accessed using the following link: [Directory records | North Lanarkshire Council](#)

Scottish Government 'Pick up my period' app enables individuals to put in a town, city or post code and find out where to access products

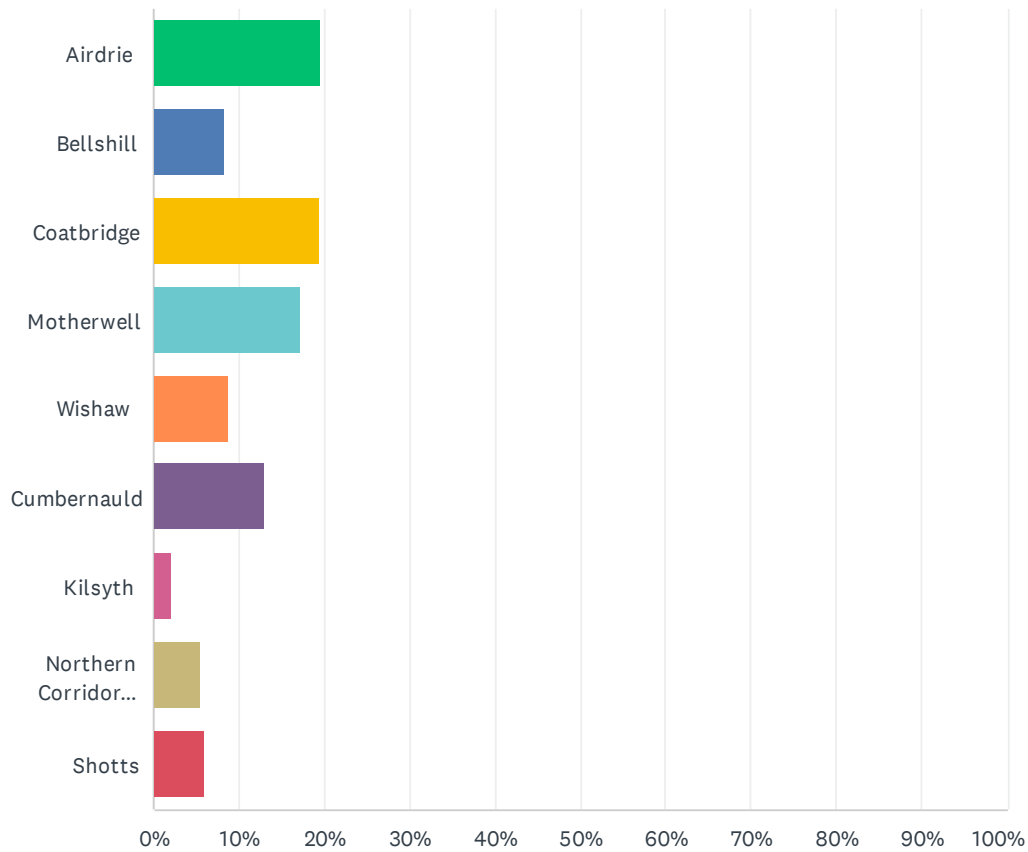
[PickupMyPeriod on the App Store \(apple.com\)](#)

[PickupMyPeriod - Apps on Google Play](#)

[Index - MyPeriod \(myperiodlive.azurewebsites.net\)](#)

Q1 What area do you live in?

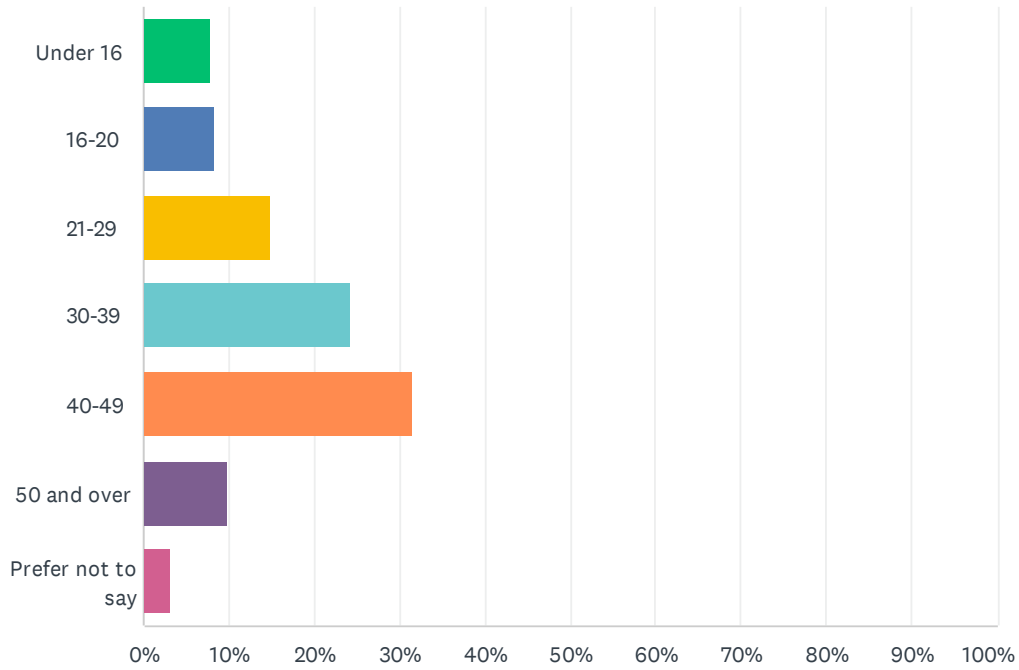
Answered: 285 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Airdrie	19.65%	56
Bellshill	8.42%	24
Coatbridge	19.30%	55
Motherwell	17.19%	49
Wishaw	8.77%	25
Cumbernauld	12.98%	37
Kilsyth	2.11%	6
Northern Corridor (Moodiesburn, Stepps, Gartcosh, Chryston, Glenboig, Muirhead, Mount Ellen, Mollisburn, Auchinloch, Cardowan)	5.61%	16
Shotts	5.96%	17
TOTAL		285

Q2 What is your age band?

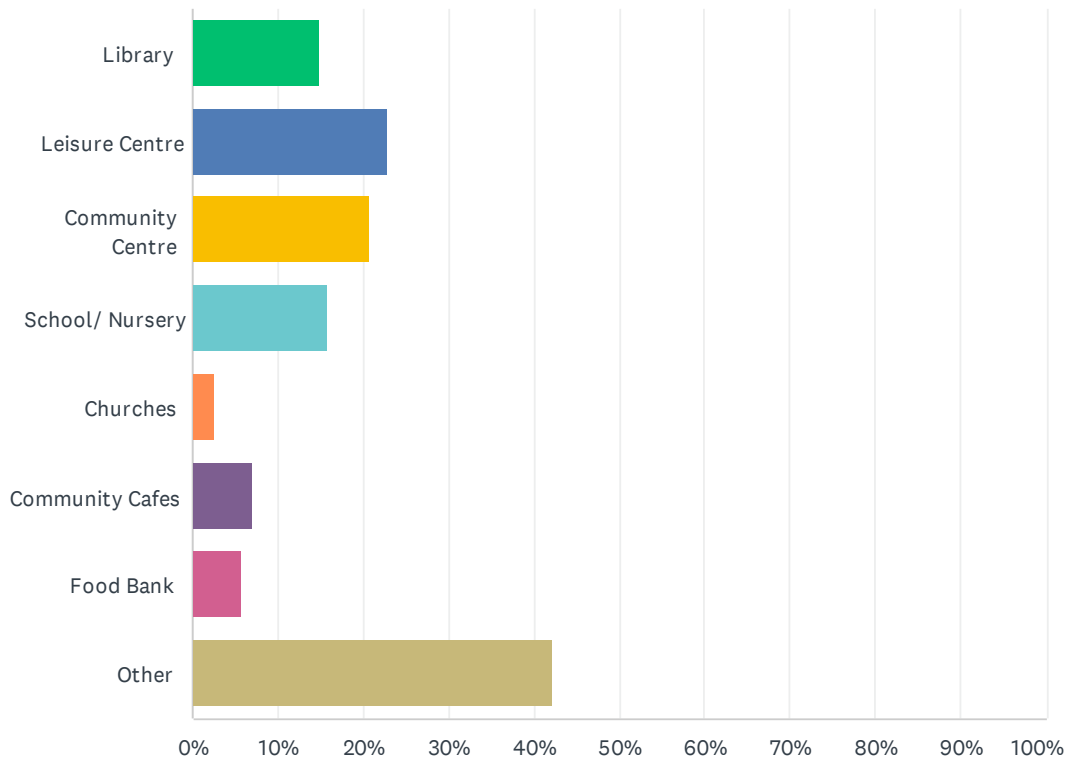
Answered: 288 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 16	7.99%	23
16-20	8.33%	24
21-29	14.93%	43
30-39	24.31%	70
40-49	31.60%	91
50 and over	9.72%	28
Prefer not to say	3.13%	9
TOTAL		288

Q3 Where do you access period products from? (Tick all that apply)

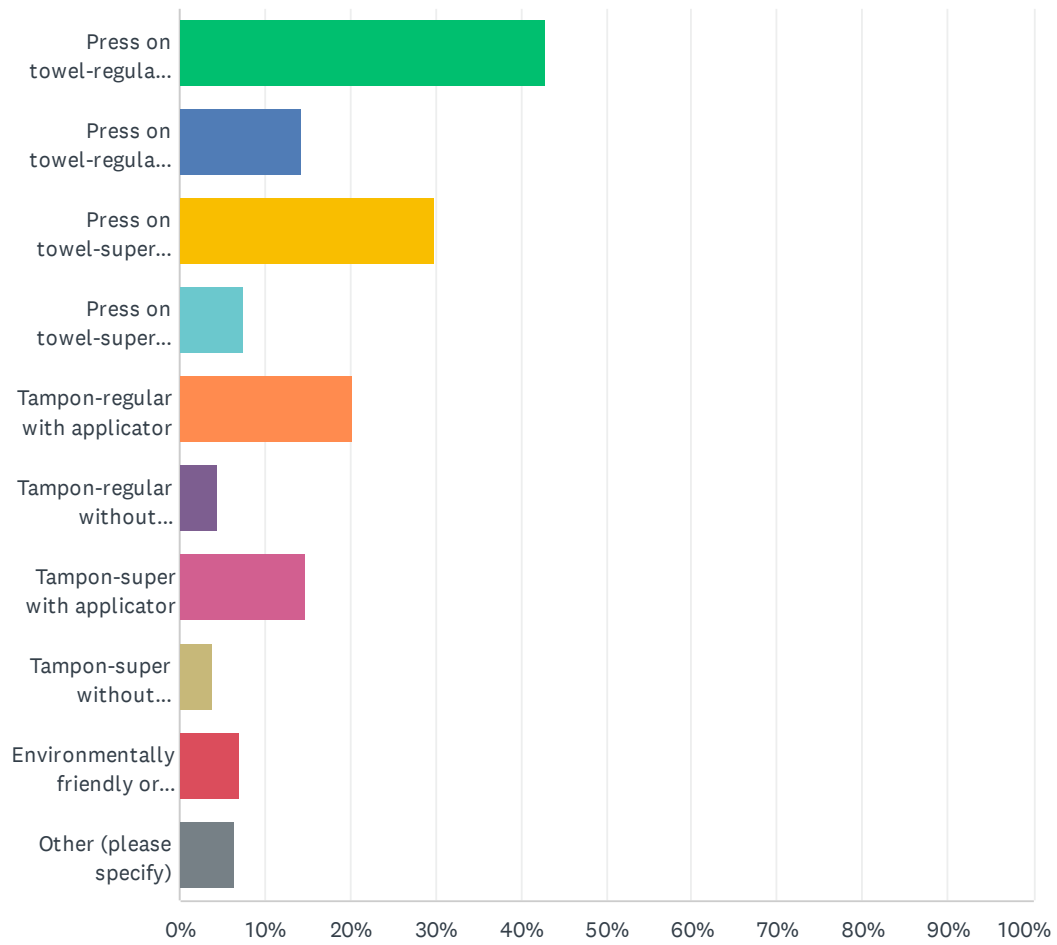
Answered: 241 Skipped: 47



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Library	14.94% 36
Leisure Centre	22.82% 55
Community Centre	20.75% 50
School/ Nursery	15.77% 38
Churches	2.49% 6
Community Cafes	7.05% 17
Food Bank	5.81% 14
Other	42.32% 102
Total Respondents: 241	

Q4 What product do you use the most?

Answered: 285 Skipped: 3

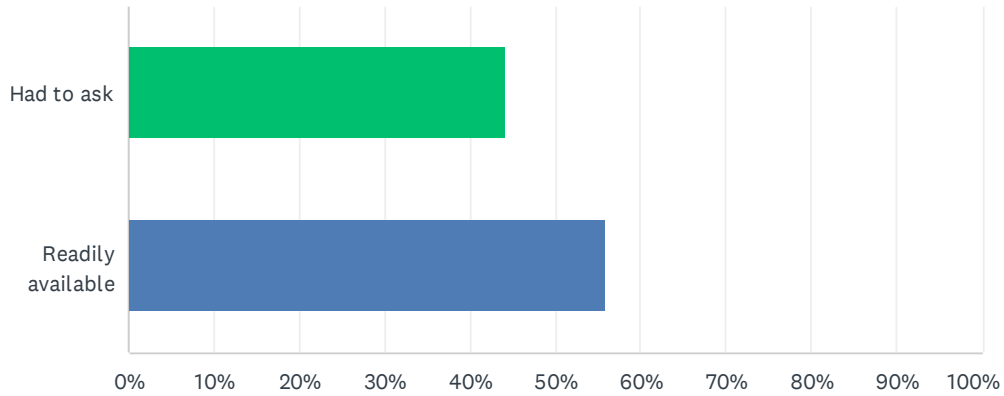


Access to Free Period Products in North Lanarkshire

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Press on towel-regular with wings	42.81%	122
Press on towel-regular without wings	14.39%	41
Press on towel-super with wings	29.82%	85
Press on towel-super without wings	7.37%	21
Tampon-regular with applicator	20.35%	58
Tampon-regular without applicator	4.56%	13
Tampon-super with applicator	14.74%	42
Tampon-super without applicator	3.86%	11
Environmentally friendly or lifestyle products	7.02%	20
Other (please specify)	6.32%	18
Total Respondents: 285		

Q5 When accessing products did you have to ask or were they readily available?

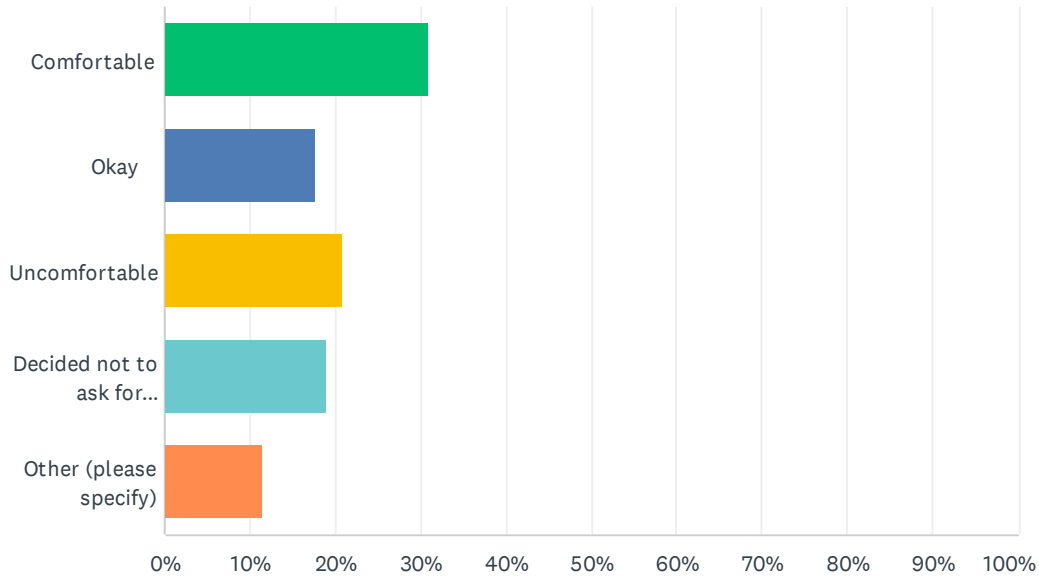
Answered: 247 Skipped: 41



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Had to ask	44.13%	109
Readily available	55.87%	138
TOTAL		247

Q6 Based on your experience how comfortable did you feel when trying to access products

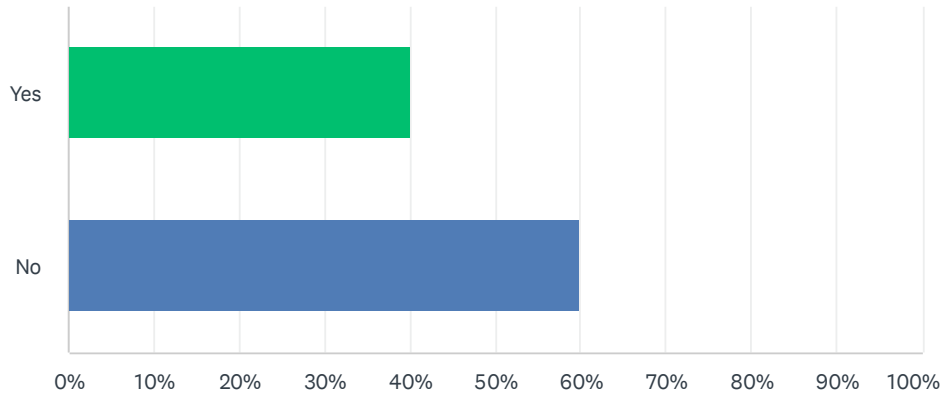
Answered: 278 Skipped: 10



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Comfortable	30.94%	86
Okay	17.63%	49
Uncomfortable	20.86%	58
Decided not to ask for products	19.06%	53
Other (please specify)	11.51%	32
TOTAL		278

Q7 Has there been a time when the free period products were not available?

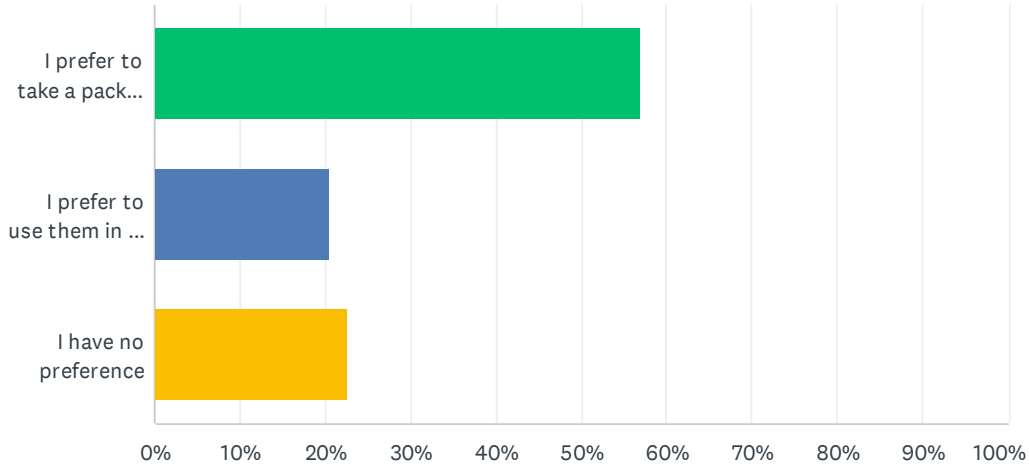
Answered: 239 Skipped: 49



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	40.17%	96
No	59.83%	143
TOTAL		239

Q8 Do you prefer to take a full pack of period products home or use what you need at the time?

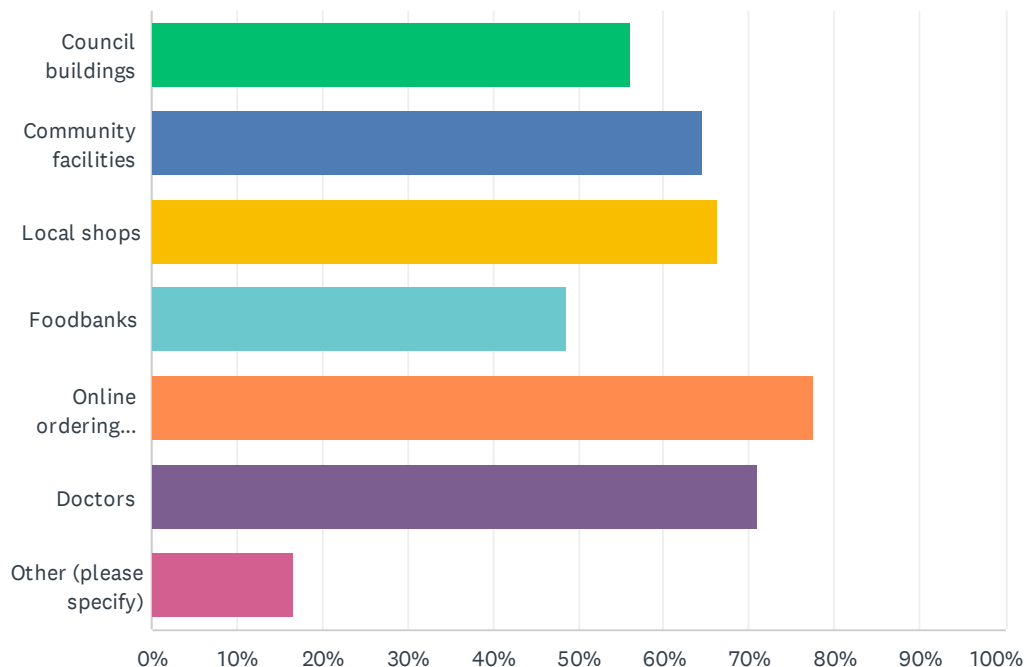
Answered: 274 Skipped: 14



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I prefer to take a pack home	56.93%	156
I prefer to use them in the building	20.44%	56
I have no preference	22.63%	62
TOTAL		274

Q9 Where do you think you should be able to access free period products? (select all that apply)

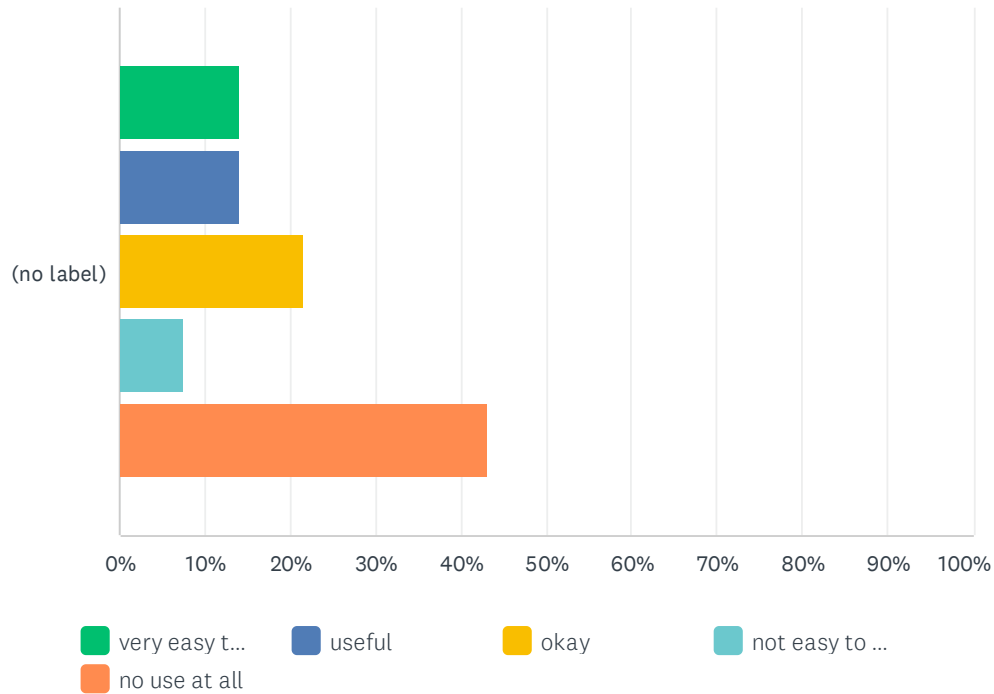
Answered: 282 Skipped: 6



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Council buildings	56.03% 158
Community facilities	64.54% 182
Local shops	66.31% 187
Foodbanks	48.58% 137
Online ordering service	77.66% 219
Doctors	70.92% 200
Other (please specify)	16.67% 47
Total Respondents: 282	

Q10 Have you tried our new interactive map on the council website? If yes how helpful did you find it on a scale of 1 - 5. 1 very easy to use 5 no use at all

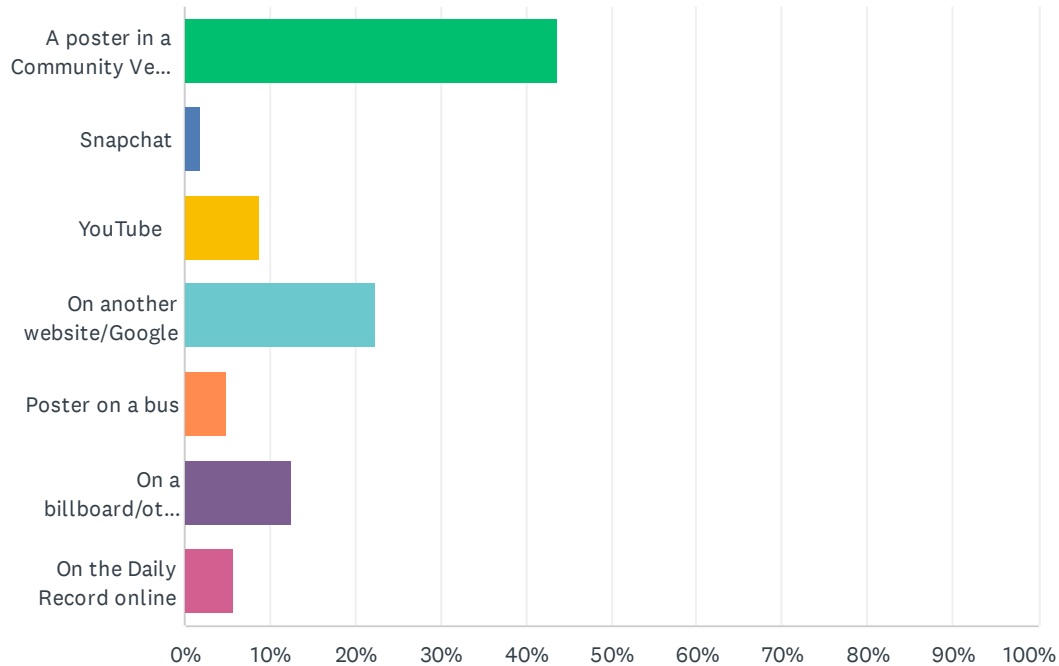
Answered: 186 Skipped: 102



	VERY EASY TO USE	USEFUL	OKAY	NOT EASY TO USE	NO USE AT ALL	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	13.98%	13.98%	21.51%	7.53%	43.01%	186	3.52
	26	26	40	14	80		

Q11 Have you ever noticed any adverts for free period products in North Lanarkshire? If so, where did you see the advert? (Tick all that apply).

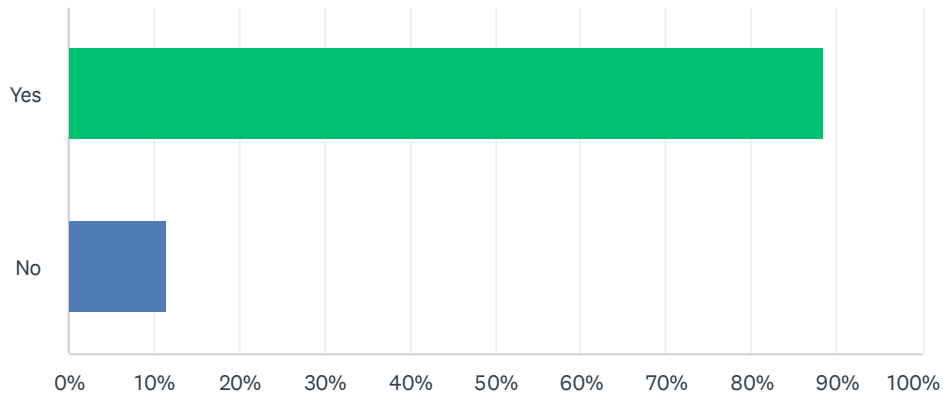
Answered: 103 Skipped: 185



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
A poster in a Community Venue (such as Leisure Centre)	43.69%	45
Snapchat	1.94%	2
YouTube	8.74%	9
On another website/Google	22.33%	23
Poster on a bus	4.85%	5
On a billboard/other outdoor advertising	12.62%	13
On the Daily Record online	5.83%	6
TOTAL		103

Q12 Do you think that providing and promoting free period products helps to make talking about periods and period products easier and more acceptable?

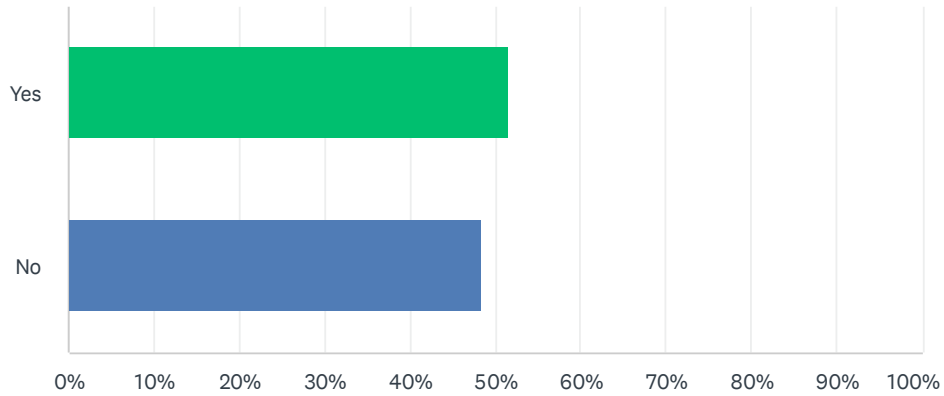
Answered: 216 Skipped: 72



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	88.43%	191
No	11.57%	25
TOTAL		216

Q13 Are you interested in finding out about more environmentally friendly period products?

Answered: 275 Skipped: 13



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	51.64%	142
No	48.36%	133
TOTAL		275



Access to Free Period Products in North Lanarkshire

North Lanarkshire Council has been providing free period products since 2019. We provide free period products to anyone who needs them.

We want to know if you find it easy to access the products and your ideas on how we could make them even easier to access.

Please spare a minute to complete the survey below to help us plan for the future:

1. What area do you live in?

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Airdrie | <input type="radio"/> Cumbernauld |
| <input type="radio"/> Bellshill | <input type="radio"/> Kilsyth |
| <input type="radio"/> Coatbridge | <input type="radio"/> Northern Corridor (Moodiesburn, Stepps, Gartcosh, Chryston, Glenboig, Muirhead, Mount Ellen, Mollisburn, Auchinloch, Cardowan) |
| <input type="radio"/> Motherwell | <input type="radio"/> Shotts |
| <input type="radio"/> Wishaw | |

2. What is your age band?

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Under 16 | <input type="radio"/> 40-49 |
| <input type="radio"/> 16-20 | <input type="radio"/> 50 and over |
| <input type="radio"/> 21-29 | <input type="radio"/> Prefer not to say |
| <input type="radio"/> 30-39 | |

3. Where do you access period products from? (Tick all that apply)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Library | <input type="checkbox"/> Churches |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leisure Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Cafes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Food Bank |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School/ Nursery | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

Please give the name of the building you access period products from most often.

4. What product do you use the most?

- Press on towel-regular with wings
- Press on towel-regular without wings
- Press on towel-super with wings
- Press on towel-super without wings
- Tampon-regular with applicator
- Tampon-regular without applicator
- Tampon-super with applicator
- Tampon-super without applicator
- Environmentally friendly or lifestyle products
- Other (please specify)

5. When accessing products did you have to ask or were they readily available?

- Had to ask
- Readily available

6. Based on your experience how comfortable did you feel when trying to access products

- Comfortable
- Okay
- Uncomfortable
- Decided not to ask for products
- Other (please specify)

7. Has there been a time when the free period products were not available?

- Yes
- No

If Yes, When and Where?

8. Do you prefer to take a full pack of period products home or use what you need at the time?

- I prefer to take a pack home
- I have no preference
- I prefer to use them in the building

9. Where do you think you should be able to access free period products? (select all that apply)

- Council buildings
- Community facilities
- Local shops
- Foodbanks
- Online ordering service
- Doctors
- Other (please specify)

10. Have you tried our new interactive map on the council website? If yes how helpful did you find it on a scale of 1 - 5. 1 very easy to use 5 no use at all

very easy to use	useful	okay	not easy to use	no use at all
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)

11. Have you ever noticed any adverts for free period products in North Lanarkshire? If so, where did you see the advert? (Tick all that apply).

- A poster in a Community Venue (such as Leisure Centre)
- Snapchat
- YouTube
- On another website/Google
- Poster on a bus
- On a billboard/other outdoor advertising
- On the Daily Record online

12. Do you think that providing and promoting free period products helps to make talking about periods and period products easier and more acceptable?

- Yes
- No

13. Are you interested in finding out about more environmentally friendly period products?

Yes

No

If so, please contact the Community Partnership Team on communitymatters@northlan.gov.uk or visit our page on the Council website. northlanarkshire.gov.uk/freeperiodproducts