

# Consultation

7 March 2022 – 14 April 2022

Period Dignity

North Ayrshire

## Introduction

In 2021 the new Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Act was passed which sets out the right to free period products for all those who menstruate. This was to ensure universal and dignified provision for all and addresses the complex issue of period poverty.

We (North Ayrshire Council) have launched a consultation to seek the views of partners, services, community leads, educational representatives, young people, pupils, students and the general community on our current and future strategy for the provision of free period products in North Ayrshire as set out in the Act. We want and need to hear the views of those with lived experience or those who represent people affected by the issue to help shape a better service and reach a place of period equity for the citizens living in North Ayrshire.

## Background

Everybody deserves access to safe and hygienic menstrual products and the dignity that this affords. There is potential for more targeted access to free period products and some organisations are already providing direct interventions which are focused on the provision of free period products at venues and spaces that are most accessed by those who menstruate and/or are living in poverty, such as but not limited to: Homeless Accommodation, Gypsy Traveller's site, welfare advice services, Women's Aid Refuges, and Drug Rehabilitation centres.

Building on this work, we are specifically seeking to understand the views of groups who may have particular characteristics which place specific barriers to accessing period products. Some of these groups are noted below:

- disabled people
- homeless people
- gypsy/travellers
- victims of domestic abuse
- individuals with caring responsibilities
- individuals living in remote locations
- where cultural barriers exist



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## Current Position

Our pledge and commitment in North Ayrshire is to reduce the stigma around periods and to adopt a collaborative approach with services, third sector organisations and agencies with particular emphasis on addressing the menstruating needs within marginalised communities.

Until now the Council's Facilities Management (FM) have been leading on the supply and the distribution of period supplies in North Ayrshire. FM will continue to work closely with schools to ensure supplies are freely available within North Ayrshire Educational and Learning settings. FM also provide supplies to public buildings, community centres, libraries and leisure centres.

Since the pandemic, the problem of period poverty has been exacerbated but more has been done to widen access to period products, for example, as part of the launch of Community Larders across North Ayrshire, 11 larder sites are given ongoing, regular and complimentary supplies which are passed to those low-income households in need of supplies. This builds on the system already established by North Ayrshire Foodbank who work in partnership with the Trussell Trust to ensure period and hygiene supplies are available to households as part of emergency food boxes.

## Aims and Objectives

Recently a more formal collaboration and partnership approach was formed between the Council's FM team and the Communities Facilities Team to work closely on the joint responsibility for the Period Products (Free Provision) Act and driving forward an ambitious period dignity strategy. FM will continue to build on the links with schools and council offices, whilst Community Facilities will adopt responsibility for reaching the wider community, optimising the opportunity to build on our existing connections and partnerships within internal and external networks.

Educational Services will continue to promote period awareness in Secondary Schools through learning and teaching as part of the Curriculum for Excellence programme.

Our commitment to improving the service provision starts here asking for your valuable views, feedback and support on tackling the issue and helping to bring about positive change to reduce stigma and widen access to essential products.

Please talk to others about the consultation, promote the link to our survey below, share the QR code poster and request some hard copy post cards to encourage wide participation.

Thank you in advance for your co-operation and support.



More information also available:

[www.northayrshire.community/period-dignity-north-ayrshire](http://www.northayrshire.community/period-dignity-north-ayrshire)

For a list of places you can access free period products download the "Pick Up My Period" App. Available on Android and Apple.