
EMPLOYEES' WASHROOM CONCERNS AND HOW TO RESOLVE THEM

New independent research and
advice from washroom provider, Elis



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Summary

New independent research conducted by YouGov on behalf of washroom provider, Elis, has found that the majority of employees have concerns about using a workplace washroom. These range from concerns about whether the washroom will be clean or smell pleasant, through to concerns about the equipment and consumables provided in the washroom.

The research has also revealed which upgrades employees would like to be made, in order to improve their workplace washroom.

These findings, together with the simple advice from Elis contained in this report, will help employers provide better washroom facilities.

**“...the majority of employees
have concerns about using
a workplace washroom...”**

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What are employees concerned about?



Seventy five percent of employees have at least one concern about using a workplace washroom, with no significant difference in the percentages between men and women (74% of men compared to 77% of women) Under 35s are the most likely to have concerns (89%) with over 55s the least likely (66%).

What employees are concerned about

(Ranked by the percentage of employees that are concerned)

1. The toilets will be dirty (47%)
2. There will be insufficient toilet paper (45%)
3. The washroom will be unhygienic/dirty (45%)
4. The washroom will smell unpleasant (44%)
5. There will be insufficient soap (30%)
6. There will be insufficient airflow to disperse germs and smells (28%)
7. There will be unpleasant or overflowing sanitary bins (25%)
8. There will be equipment that they will have to touch, as there will not be 'no-touch' options (21%)
9. There will be insufficient hand drying facilities (18%)

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The washroom upgrades employees want

67% of employees would like at least one improvement made to their workplace washroom.

Here are the changes they would like, and how views differ depending on age, gender and the size of company they work for.

1 No-touch soap dispensers, instead of those they have to touch

The improvement wanted by the highest percentage of employees is to have no-touch soap dispensers. Overall 29% of employees said they wanted this, with those working in large companies, with 250+ employees, the most likely (32%). Women are also more likely than men to want no-touch dispensers (34% of women, compared to 23% of men) and under 35s are more likely than other age groups (32%).

Overall 60% of employees said that having no-touch equipment in their workplace washroom is important to them.

2 Better fragrance, so the washroom smells nicer

21% of employees would like better fragrance in their workplace washroom, so that the room smells nicer.

Those working in medium sized businesses (50-240 employees) are more likely to want this (27%), than those working in other sizes of businesses. Manufacturing is one area where the employees are more likely to want this (26%), compared to those working in many other sectors.

“The research also found that 53% of employees think that a pleasant smell, such as a fruity or floral smell, would make them think a washroom was clean and well looked after, whereas only 38% thought a neutral smell would do the same.”



3 Hand sanitiser in the washroom and just outside the washroom

18% of employees would like hand sanitiser in the washroom and just outside the washroom. Women are slightly more likely than men to want this (19% compared to 17%) and over 55s are more likely than other age groups (23%).

4 Toilet sanitiser, to wipe the toilet seat before using

18% of employees would like toilet sanitiser so they can wipe the toilet seat before using. Employees working for large companies, with 250+ employees, are the most likely to want this (21%) as are women (19% compared to 16% of men) and over 55s (22%).

5 Better hand drying facilities

16% of employees would like better hand drying facilities. Those working in small businesses, with 10-49 employees, are the most likely to say this (20%) compared to those working in other sizes of businesses. The over 55s are more likely to want better hand drying facilities (19%), compared to other age groups.

For more information on which hand drying facilities employees prefer, see the Elis research report 'The Truth About Hand Washing and Drying at Work'.

6 No bins overflowing with paper towels

15% of employees say they would like there to be no bins overflowing with paper towels.

7 To be more eco-friendly/sustainable

15% of employees would like their washroom to be more eco-friendly/sustainable. Those working in London are more likely than in other areas of the country to want this (20%). The under 35s are more likely to want this (22%) compared to other age groups.



8 Upgrades to try to reduce the spread of covid

15% of employees think their workplace washroom should be upgraded to try to reduce the spread of covid. Employees working in small businesses, with between 10 and 49 employees, are more likely than those working in other sized business to think this (17%) Women are more likely to say this (18%) compared to men (11%) as well as under 35s (18%) compared to other age groups.

9 Toilet rolls to be replenished more regularly, so they don't run out

14% of employees would like the toilet rolls to be replenished more regularly, so they don't run out.

10 Foam soap, rather than liquid soap

8% of employees would like foam soap, rather than liquid soap.

11 The sanitary waste bins to look or smell cleaner

8% of employees would like the sanitary waste bins to look or smell cleaner.

12 More soap dispensers

6% of employees would like more soap dispensers in their workplace washroom.

“This independent research provides valuable insights into the views of employees across the country, including how their views differ by age, gender and where they work. Elis works with employers, helping them to provide hygienic and well stocked washrooms and we hope this research will also help to build understanding of their employees' views and expectations of the workplace washroom.”

Nick Barton, regional director of Elis

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Top six ways to improve the washroom

Here are Elis's top tips:

- 1 Take another look at your cleaning and bin emptying regime, to see if it needs improving and communicate any changes to employees.
- 2 Switch to no-touch soap dispensers, and other no-touch equipment if possible. Choose wall-mounted, anti-drip soap dispensers with easy-refill pouches to help ensure that the soap is always replenished and available to employees.
- 3 Ensure the washroom always smells pleasant with a wall-mounted air freshening unit. Choose a fruity or floral scent to help ensure that employees know the washroom is clean and well looked after. Also consider how you could get better air-flow through the washroom or install an air purifier.
- 4 Provide hand sanitiser in the washroom and just outside the washroom. Elis provides no-touch, anti-drip dispensers including wall-mounted and free-standing options.
- 5 Ask employees if they would like toilet sanitiser inside the toilet cubicle, to wipe the toilet seat before using and choose easy-refill toilet roll dispensers with spare roll inspection windows to reduce the chance of a cubicle being left without toilet paper.
- 6 Find out what your employees think of the hand drying facilities and upgrade if required. Elis's report 'The Truth about Hand Washing and Drying at Work' found that the majority of employees don't dry their hands properly at work and often blame the hand drying equipment.



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How the Elis Washroom Service can help

Elis provides a cost effective, nationwide washroom service, with a wide range of products and regular, scheduled service visits to help businesses comply with legislation and deliver high levels of hygiene for employees and visitors.

Elis offers its washroom service from a national network of service centres around the UK. Each site has a dedicated customer service team and communicates directly with customers to ensure that the service meets customer requirements. Having a customer service team based at the site providing the service, rather than a remote central call centre, ensures that communications are relayed quickly and in person.

The managed service includes options to meet the requirements of multiple business sectors, with the most appropriate dispensers, hand drying options and consumables.

In addition to hand washing and sanitising, hand drying, toilet tissue, sanitary disposal bins and disposal services, urinal services, air freshening, baby changing and water management products, Elis also offers some of the latest technology to maximise hygiene. Products include the Biozone air purification system and Dyson hand dryers, with HEPA filter and antimicrobial coating.

The Elis range includes no-touch options for hand washing, hand sanitising, hand drying and sanitary disposal bins. Free-standing hand sanitiser stations are also available.

Elis also supplies and launders workwear, linen and mats for businesses of all sizes throughout the UK.



All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 1001 employees. Fieldwork was undertaken between 20th - 24th May 2021. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of British business size.



Find out more:
<https://campaigns.elislaundry.com/washroom-service>
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