

# Renfrewshire Council – Statement of Community-Based Provision for the Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Act 2021

June 2022

## 1. Background

The Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Act 2021 was passed in 2021 and will be fully in force from 15th August 2022.

The Act aims to make sure **everyone in Scotland who menstruates** can have reasonably convenient access to period products, free of charge, as and when they are required.

Period products must be reasonably easy to obtain and provided in a way that respects the dignity of those obtaining the products. In addition, there must be a reasonable choice of different products available.

Each responsible body, including all Scottish Local Authorities, must, as soon as reasonably practicable, prepare a written statement describing the plans for provision. The Act requires responsible bodies to consult with individuals on the arrangements that should be put in place prior to making decisions on how they fulfil their duties.

Renfrewshire Council carried out a free period product consultation over 4 weeks in April 2022. The results of this consultation informed our **Statement of Community-Based Provision** which is as follows:

***‘Renfrewshire Council will work with partners across Renfrewshire to ensure that free period products are available for those who need them, where and when they need them.***

***Renfrewshire Council will ensure that both single use and reusable products are available, and in all cases will seek to provide and promote environmentally friendly products.***

***Renfrewshire Council will ensure products are available in ways that preserves the dignity of our citizens and will work to reduce the stigma associated with menstruation.’***

## 2. How we will do this

Products will be sited in the following locations:

- Renfrewshire House
- The Russell Institute
- All OneRen Libraries, Town Halls and Leisure Centres in suitable locations, including toilets and public areas.
- JobcentrePlus offices
- Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau
- Community Pantries
- Other community locations at the request of the organisation involved. This may include 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations, Early Learning and Childcare Centres, Respite Units, Community Centres and community and voluntary groups.

Products held in those locations will be freely accessible without individuals having to ask for them or justify why they need them or the amount that is needed.

In addition, we intend that any individual living in Renfrewshire will be able to order a supply of products online for delivery to their home address.

We will also work with Renfrewshire HSCP to establish a supply of free products in health settings such as GP surgeries, Sandyford Clinic and pharmacies.

Organisations who wish to hold period products for their service users can contact Renfrewshire Council at any time to be considered for products.

Retail premises, such as shopping centres will be involved in the provision where possible.

The service and locations of products will be promoted throughout Renfrewshire so everyone who needs period products knows where they can access them.

### **3. Consultation**

Scottish Government guidance stated that to ensure that the arrangements meet people's needs, responsible bodies should consult with individuals who may either

- need to use free products currently
- need to use products in the future or
- need to collect products on behalf of someone who needs to use products

The consultation must seek information to inform decisions about:

- The way products may be made available;
- The types of products required;
- The premises where the products will be available (including location within these premises)

#### **Method**

Renfrewshire Council used an online public consultation to gain as many responses as possible. This was promoted on Council social media, to Council staff, via Engage Renfrewshire (our 3<sup>rd</sup> sector interface) and via existing networks such as our Advice Partnership and Our Children group. Questionnaires were also offered in a paper format.

Notification of the survey also went to organisations working with ethnically diverse groups and those with a physical disability, as well as those with mental ill-health.

In addition, in-depth sessions were held with two community groups, Kairos Women+ a community-led women's space for all women and non-binary people in Renfrewshire and STAR Project, a community organisation which supports people in a number of ways and aims to tackle the impacts of poverty.

#### **What we asked**

We asked questions about:

- Existing provision (online and in community settings) and how well that works
- Who was/would be accessing products and how
- What products people wanted to see:
- Where they should be sited what buildings/organisations and where within those buildings
- Potential levels of usage, ie. will use free products/won't use free products/will use sometimes
- What the barriers would be to using free products

The Consultation questions are available as **Appendix A**

## Results

**424** Responses were received to the online survey and the responses have informed both our Statement and our provision plan. A separate Consultation Report is available.

### **4. Provision Plan**

1. We intend to work right across the Council area, including schools, to ensure widest access to products.
2. We will work to get a supply of period products in the locations highlighted in the consultation where a current supply of products is not available. This includes GP surgeries, Sandyford Clinic, pharmacies and retail premises.
3. While our existing service around free period products in schools and the community to date has been absorbed into services, we will examine the need to resource a specific service to expand access, centralise online order approval, distribution and invoice control across the Council as well as carry out regular reviews to optimise the service.
4. We will work with Corporate Communications Team to promote the service in a number of ways, including:
  - providing marketing materials to all venues involved
  - providing marketing materials to be displayed more widely throughout Renfrewshire
  - social media posts
  - Council website
5. The list of community settings for products will be reviewed and updated on at least a 6 monthly basis.
6. We will work with and provide guidance to organisations holding products so that they meet the standards for dignified provision.
7. We will work with partners to help challenge the stigma about periods, especially for young people, and encourage people to talk more openly about them.
8. We will examine options for inclusion/development of an app showing locations of free period products in Renfrewshire.

## Appendix A

### Period Product consultation

New legislation is being introduced to make free period products widely available in Scotland. This means everyone in Scotland who menstruates should have reasonably convenient access to period products, free of charge, as and when they are required.

Councils will have to make sure that free period products are available for people.

We are looking for your views on where and how these products should be made available in Renfrewshire and what types of products we should offer.

This consultation is for anyone who uses period products, will use them in future or will pick them up for family or friends.

Please give us your views below. This consultation will end on May 29th, 2022, at 11:45pm.

By taking part in this short survey, you will help us to ensure that we are providing the best choice of products in the best possible way. This should take approximately five to ten minutes to complete.

If you would like to contact us in an alternative way, please contact [communityplanning@renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:communityplanning@renfrewshire.gov.uk)

1. Are you aware of our current community provision of free period products in Renfrewshire?
2. Have you used this service?
3. Please tell us more about how you accessed these free period products. (Please tick all that apply)
  - *Online ordering*
  - *Telephone ordering*
  - *Renfrewshire House*
  - *Library*
  - *Town Hall, Sports centre or other One Ren (Renfrewshire Leisure venue)*
  - *Pantry or community food group*
  - *Foodbank*
  - *Other community setting (RAMH REStore/Remode/Home-Start etc)*
  - *Early Learning Centre/ nursery*
4. What free period products have you accessed? (Please tick all that apply)
  - *Pads*

- *Tampons*
  - *Reusable menstrual cups*
  - *Period pants*
  - *Reusable pads*
  - *other*
5. Who did you access products for? (Please tick all that apply)
- *Myself*
  - *Family member/ friend*
  - *other*
6. How did you access products? (Please tick all that apply)
- *Online*
  - *In a building*
  - *By telephone*
7. How easy were the products to access in a building?
- *Not easy to access*
  - *Had to ask, not clearly signposted or easy to access*
  - *Had to ask, but easy to access*
  - *Easy to find, easy to access*
8. If there was difficulty accessing, please tell us what that was? (If you got products that way)
9. How easy were these products to order online?
- *Not easy to order*
  - *Had some difficulty ordering*
  - *Easy to order*
10. If there was difficulty ordering, please tell us what that was? (If you got products that way).
11. Do you feel that the service you used is dignified and meets your need for discretion?
- *Service is dignified and discreet*
  - *It is somewhat dignified and discreet*
  - *It isn't dignified and discreet*
12. If the service is not dignified and discreet, please tell us what could be done to improve it.

13. What free period products would you like to see available, and which would you/your family/friends make use of? (Please select one answer for each product)  
Like to see/ Will use/ Both/ Neither

- ☐ *Period pads*
- ☐ *Tampons*
- ☐ *Period pants*
- ☐ *Reusable menstrual cups*
- ☐ *Reusable pads*
- ☐ *Pantyliners*

14. Where do you think would be the best place to access free products? (Please tick all that apply)

- ☐ *Council building*
- ☐ *Town Hall, Sports centre or other One Ren (Renfrewshire Leisure venue)*
- ☐ *Library*
- ☐ *Doctors/health centre*
- ☐ *Foodbank*
- ☐ *Pantry/Community food group*
- ☐ *Local community group*
- ☐ *Online ordering postal service*

15. Do you think that having products in the locations from Q14 is enough? If not, where would you have them? (Are there any areas missing?) (Any venues missing?)

16. Where in the above venues would you most like to see free period products?

- ☐ *In reception areas even if they are visible to others*
- ☐ *In toilets where it is discreet (including male, female, and disabled toilets)*
- ☐ *On display stands that are easy to find and access*
- ☐ *Somewhere out of the way where no one will see me pick up*

17. How do you think you will access free period products? (Please tick all that apply)

- ☐ *Will order online. This will be my main source of sanitary products*
- ☐ *Will pick up from a venue. This will be my main source of sanitary products*
- ☐ *Will pick up if I happen to be in a venue that holds products*
- ☐ *Will use only for emergencies if I'm near a venue that holds products*
- ☐ *Don't intend to use free products*

18. What is your postcode? (Please provide your postcode as this will allow us to ensure we reach all areas of Renfrewshire)

19. Would you find it beneficial to locate venues offering free products via an app by using GPS or a postcode? (This will let us know if we have managed to reach all areas of Renfrewshire)

20. What, if anything, would stop you from accessing these products? (Please tick all that apply)

- ☐ *Not knowing where to get them*
- ☐ *Embarrassment*
- ☐ *Not sure how much I can take*
- ☐ *My preferred brand not available*
- ☐ *Can't get out to access venues*
- ☐ *A cultural/language barrier*
- ☐ *Don't have internet access for online ordering*
- ☐ *Not clear if the products are free and I'm allowed to take them*

21. To make sure we are asking a broad section of the community their views can you tell us a bit more about yourself. This information will remain anonymous. (Please tick all that apply)

- ☐ *I am a user of period products*
- ☐ *I will pick up products for someone else*
- ☐ *I am a carer (for an adult)*
- ☐ *I am parent/guardian*
- ☐ *I have a disability/ long-term health condition*
- ☐ *I am a transgender or non-binary or intersex person*
- ☐ *I am currently homeless*
- ☐ *I am a Gypsy/Traveller*
- ☐ *I have a low income*
- ☐ *I live in a rural location*
- ☐ *I experience cultural/language barriers*
- ☐ *I am in care/ care experienced*

22. To help us to provide the best service it would be helpful to let us know if you have any further comments or personal circumstances which would affect the way you access products that we could help to overcome. (Optional)