

# Remarkable scientific discovery leads to toilet closures

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The word toilet was originally a euphemism – it used to mean “a dressing room”, which derived from an earlier sense “act of dressing” which in turn came from French toilette, “clothes bag”, originally a diminutive of toile, “cloth”, where toile came from Latin tela “something woven, a net”.

Recently, local politicians have made a remarkable scientific discovery about such “dressing rooms” and us Norfolk people. They found out that we’ve developed to an evolutionary stage where we no longer need these antiquated toile-ettes – a discovery which will surely soon be written up in major scientific journals.

Graham Plant was one of the earliest to notice this remarkable biological development, when he was a county councillor. He closed down the toilets at the Norwich Park and Ride sites because he reckoned that even elderly people could drive all the way from North Norfolk to visit Norwich and not need to go to the toilet when they arrived in Hellesdon or Sprowston. They could wait until they got into the city, even if the bus was late and the weather was very cold. Lavatories (original meaning: “washrooms”) were now “frills” that could be dispensed with – though according to



■ Winterton on Sea's public toilet, which is set to close.

Picture: SUBMITTED/BOB ATEYO

the EDP there were a still a few people at a less advanced evolutionary stage who disappeared behind the bushes before the bus came.

Then Norwich City Council began to catch on. First they closed the toilets at the bottom of Grapes Hill, the top of St Stephen's, and St Andrew's Plain, to demonstrate we didn't need them; and then they shut the ones at Tombland and St Saviour's. They even put up a notice in City Hall informing us that, however much council tax we paid, we weren't allowed to use their toilets because obviously we no longer needed to.

Now, Great Yarmouth Council have also

belatedly realised how amazing we are, and they're closing down toilets too. The one by the beach in Winterton is now completely redundant as far as we're concerned.

We can spend all day on the beach or drive there from far away without needing to visit a public convenience. The building will doubtless still be standing there, as a monument to our biologically less evolved past, but it will be locked. I do wonder about holidaymakers from less fortunate parts of the country who have not yet overcome this feeble need to keep visiting a toile-ette.

But we'll be OK.