

BRIXTON

MOBILE URINAL TRIAL (23 July - 27 August 2005)

REPORT

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1.0 Background and Introduction

Following community and business concerns of the growing problem of street urination in Brixton, the BAC commissioned the Brixton Conveniences Strategy in 2004. The report was completed in April 2004. The report examined public convenience provision in Brixton town centre. One recommendation was a mobile urinal trial, similar to successful schemes around London's West End. On 30 June 2004, the BAC agreed a budget of £5,460 to locate urinals in the Brixton Town Centre for a 3-month trial.

The trial was designed to run as a single project. The budget allocated was to take account of this. Pre-location consultation took place before the initiative proceeded. Discussions commenced between LBL Environment directorate and the Brixton Town Centre Team to explore the best way to consult and identify a satisfactory level of resources to complete the consultation exercise.

The method of consultation would be by canvassing of local business opinion on the issues associated with the trial, e.g. cleanliness and health and safety.

At the end of the consultation period, views were collated and analysed by the town Centre Office and recommendations to proceed with the trial were made accordingly. The scheme was piloted in three sites in Brixton, Tunstall Road, Rushcroft Road and Brixton Hill and would operate on Friday and Saturday evenings for the duration of this period. A contractor, Elliott Loohire, was commissioned to provide this service. The costs identified above included fees for both hire, servicing and project management. The council's Street Care Department monitored the contract and the environmental impact. There was no negative feedback.

2.0 Aims

The purpose of the trial was to reduce the impact of street fouling in strategic locations throughout the town centre, as well as enhance existing convenience provision and identify locations most prone to street fouling.

3.0 Equalities

The trial targeted males, who from current research were seen as the largest group contributing to the street fouling problem. It is not possible to roll out a similar trial for females.

4.0 Impact on Front Line services

Brixton is said to be one of the more challenging metropolitan districts in the country. The trial supports environmental cleanliness objectives in the following documents:

- *The Lambeth Improvement Plan 2005-08 PSA 8 (Env)*
- *The Lambeth First Improvement Plan June 2005 Revision BV189 Street Cleanliness*
- *The Lambeth Community Strategy 2004-15 objective E1; E3; E4; E5;E8*
- *The Community Strategy Delivery Plan for Brixton 2005-08 B3,B4, B5*

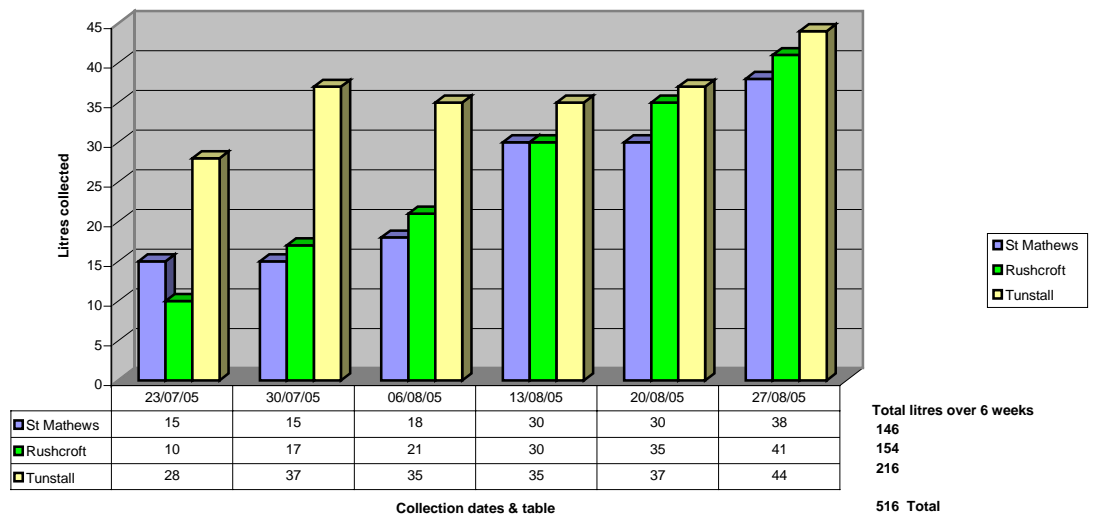
Lambeth's long term vision is designed to promote environmental cleanliness of the borough, for the well being of it's residents, by improving and maintaining high standards

5.0 The Trial

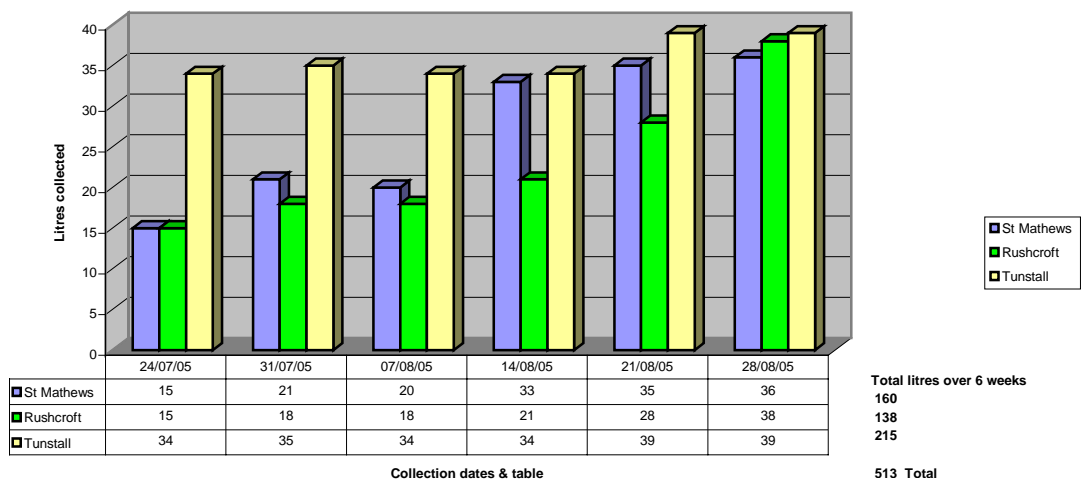
The pilot scheme was run for a 6-week period at weekends only, from 23 July 2005 to 27 August 2005. The units were deposited on Friday and Saturday evenings at 8pm, respectively and removed on Saturday and Sunday mornings at 7am, for measuring, emptying and cleaning.

The following data analyses the usage in fluid measurements over the trial period.

Urine measurements - Friday

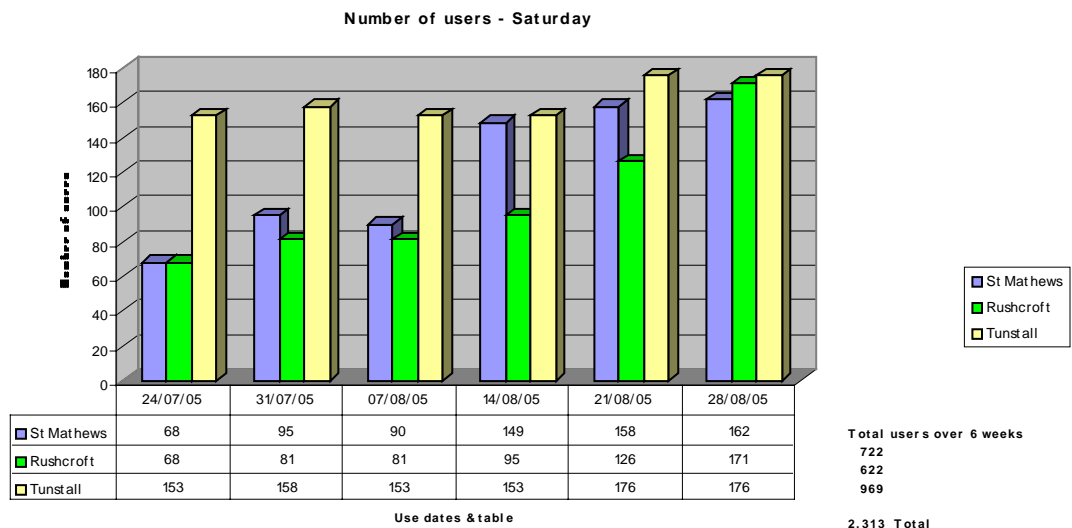
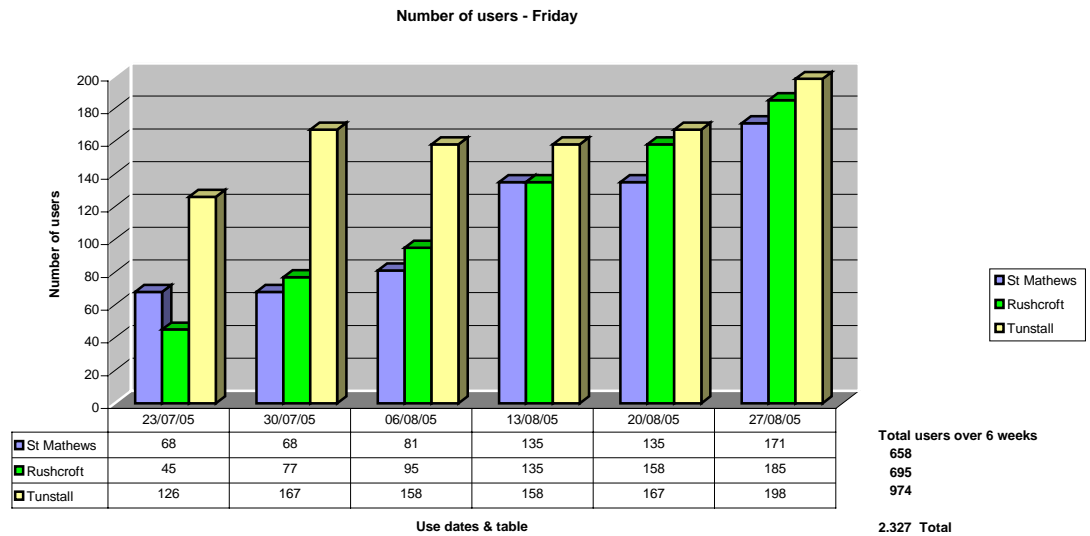


Urine measurements - Saturday



The above statistics illustrate the weekly levels of urine collected on both Friday and Saturday evenings. It can be observed that the collection levels progressively increased from week to week.

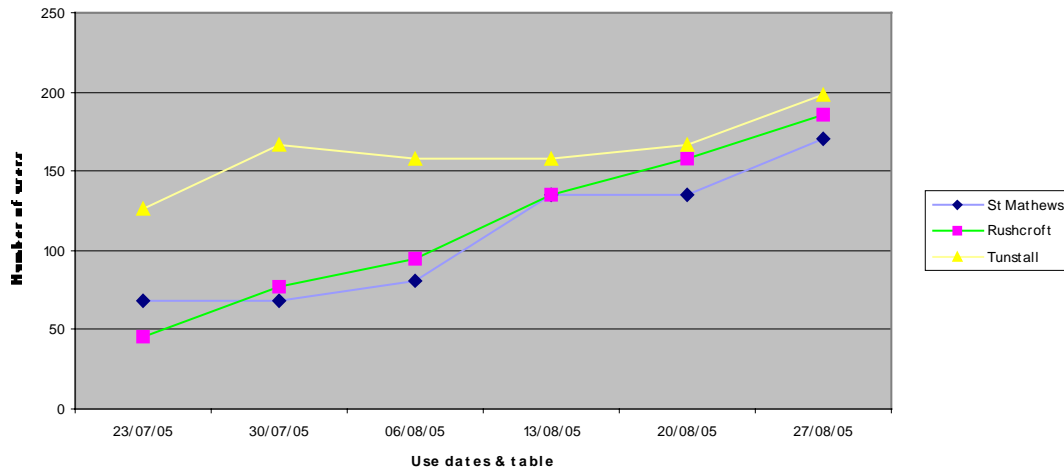
This data demonstrates the number of people using the urinals over the six-week trial period.



The above charts reveal that a total of 2,327 users utilized the urinals on Friday's and a total of 2313 users used the urinals on Saturdays over the six-week trial period. The statistics also indicate that Tunstall is categorically a hotspot having the highest use on both Friday and Saturday evenings. Businesses around that area pointed out that they get the overflow of people from the tube station and bus stops; as a result they have a major battle against a serious problem of street fouling. However, one of the businesses was not entirely happy with the positioning of the urinal. They felt that the urinal should have been positioned further in.

The following chart analyses the overall percentage increase of use over the six-week trail period.

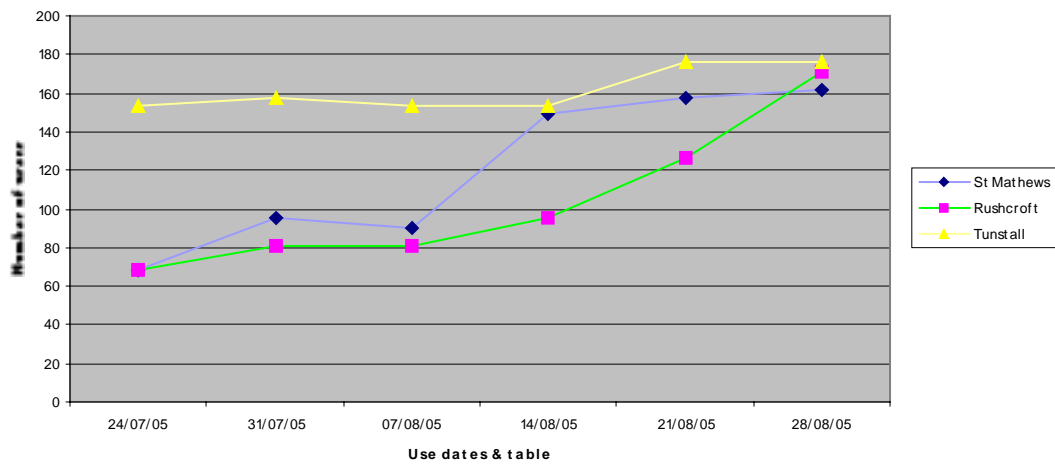
Weekly % evaluation - Friday



User review between week 1 and week 6 - Friday usage

Site	No. of users in 1st week	No. of users in 6th week	Percentage increase in use
St Mathews	68	171	251%
Rushcroft	45	185	411%
Tunstall	126	198	157%

Weekly % review - Saturday



User review between week 1 and week 6 - Saturday usage

Site	No. of users in 1st week	No. of users in 6th week	Percentage increase in use
St Mathews	68	162	238%
Rushcroft	68	171	251%
Tunstall	153	176	176%

It is interesting to note that although Tunstall appears to have the lowest percentage increase in usage from week 1 to week 6, Tunstall achieved the highest usage.

As can be seen from the statistics, the mobile urinal units have been exceptionally successful in combating the impact of late night street fouling.

6.0 Feedback from Local Businesses (Refer Appendix 1)

The mobile urinals were very well received and supported by local businesses. Local businesses are hopeful that Lambeth council will mainstream the scheme. They envisage that people will become more socially responsible for their actions if the Council provides this service permanently.

Local businesses recommended that in light of the overwhelming success of the pilot scheme, should the urinals become a permanent provision, the units be extended to other days in the week e.g. Thursday evenings, as Thursdays are a popular club night. It was also suggested that day time provision would also cater for rough sleepers around St Matthews, thus deterring people from urinating against walls and doorways, which was beginning to erode the walls and could also lead to health hazards, and it would also deal with the stench, which is very unpleasant.

One of the local businesses on Rushcroft Road said that if there were areas outside where people can relieve themselves, they would get less drunken people stumbling in late at night just to use their toilets, and on occasions, disrupt their customers.

A key local business on Tunstall Road said that in days gone by, they were used to public conveniences in the middle of the street, but then, that was something of the past. They have now become so accustomed to people frequently urinating against their shop's side door, that the six-week trial period was especially refreshing for them, however, things have gone back to normal, people peeing against their door. Long-term provision can only be a good thing, anything to keep the streets and their shops clean.

Another local business stated that it has been told that street fouling is associated with an increased evening economy. It is a reality however that late licensing means that street cleansing services need to be able to respond to the impact and challenges created by the thousands of people leaving such premises. A further challenge is to balance the vibrancy of a town centre with a buoyant nighttime economy with the need for clean and peaceful streets required by residents living in an area. Responsibility for finding the right balance falls with the Council, local businesses, the police and indeed local residents and visitors to the town centre as well. It is hoped that the continuation of this trial, which has now been extended by Streetcare until the 31st March 2006 will play a small but important part in starting to achieve this balance. .

7.0 Crime and Disorder implications

We are unaware of any incidents reported to the authorities.

8.0 Area Implications

The problem of street fouling by public urination is recognised in all of Lambeth's town centres but more so in those with thriving nighttime economies. Providing people with an acceptable alternative is the way forward in tackling this unacceptable anti-social behaviour. In light of the success of this trial, Lambeth Streetcare have secured additional funding not just to extend the trial in Brixton but to trial a further 9 sites in Brixton and other town centres in the borough where street fouling is a problem. There is also scope, if current trials are successful, to work in a more formal partnership with local businesses and ask them to contribute to the ongoing provision of this very valuable service.

9.0 Conclusion

The urinal mobile units trial scheme has demonstrated -

- The need for the facility in order to address the issues of street fouling
- The need for night time and day time provision during busy weekends, and potentially other times in the week
- The statistics have shown that the units were well used and usage increased over time showing that people were becoming educated about the provision of this service in Brixton Town Centre.
- The fact that the unit caused little or no concern in terms of vandalism, complaints about siting etc has shown the potential for this type of service to be effectively provided in other town centre areas with similar street fouling issues and for it to be provided permanently in Brixton.

Appendix 1

Local Business approached for feedback

- 1) St Matthews Peace Gardens
- 2) The Fridge Night Club
- 3) Brixton Library
- 4) Ritzy Cinema
- 5) Morley's
- 6) The Body Shop