

Fewer than one in five washrooms regularly meet the nation's hygiene standards

A report which surveyed 1,000 UK adults found many experience toilets or urinals that are unclean, have a lack of hand soap or toilet roll, or unpleasant spills or smells.

But only 17 per cent of washrooms always deliver on basic expectations and 23 per cent of Brits have spent less time at cultural or entertainment venues because of the state of the toilets.

The survey by hygiene brand Tork also found many needs remain unrecognised in washroom maintenance and design, after polling 11,500 people in total, across 11 different countries.

Olivia Slater for Essity, maker of Tork washroom products, which created the report, said: "These figures are even higher for those with certain physical or cognitive conditions.

"While wheelchair users and those who are pregnant are especially concerned, there is also a lot of concern amongst those living with less visible conditions.

"When a washroom fails to meet these diverse needs, it directly impacts a business's reputation and revenue.

"This is one reason why 'hygiene for all' is a core pillar of our sustainability strategy.

"By focusing on inclusive hygiene, we help organisations create better experiences that serve as many people as possible, including the cleaning staff who maintain these vital spaces."

The report went on to find 15 per cent have not gone back to a cultural or entertainment venue because of their negative experience of its facilities.

While 30 per cent have spent less time there than they otherwise might have, and 17 per cent have avoided eating and drinking – a crucial revenue stream for these businesses.

Washrooms not meeting expectations in these spaces leave 26 per cent feeling frustrated, and 13 per cent with anxiety or stress.

Nearly a quarter (24 per cent) will try and avoid touching objects or surfaces in entertainment or cultural venue washrooms, while 11 per cent won't go in if there are others using them.

Around one in six (15 per cent) have also avoided using the toilet in a workplace, and 19 per cent have limited eating or drinking to stop them needing to use the loo.

Among the top things people believe are 'overlooked' by staff in toilets included the cleanliness of toilet bowls (44 per cent) and hand soap is available (39 per cent).

While four in 10 worry whether toilets are properly ventilated, and 41 per cent see waste bins overflowing and not emptied frequently enough.

Olivia Slater for Essity added: "Clean and sanitary toilets are not just a matter of public health - they're a reflection of how much an organisation values its people and its visitors.

"Clean and sanitary toilets are a fundamental part of any space that welcomes people - whether that's a bustling office or a public venue.

"Inclusive hygiene is about more than just cleanliness - it's about ensuring everyone, regardless of ability or circumstance, has comfortable access to hygiene in what is often one of the busiest spaces in an establishment."