

# NATSOL



## HOW IMPORTANT IS THAT FLUSH AFTER ALL?



Comparing compost toilets to your traditional WC, there are definitely a number of advantages to having a toilet system that doesn't require indoor plumbing and all the detail that comes with it. Especially if you're in the glamping industry and you want to ride that comfortable line between luxury and original settings.

There was a time when compost toilets were highly sought after by local authorities who used them for allotment sites and parks. These low maintenance loos provided reliable waste management without the hassle of maintaining indoor plumbing that is exposed to the outdoor elements.

Andy Warren, Managing Director and co-founder of NatSol, a business that specializes in the manufacture and installation of compost toilets, recalls, "Since local authorities have had less money to spend on these public areas the demand for compost toilets for these sites has entered a quiet period."

He founded the business in 2005 with colleague Nick Grant and explains that it is only quiet in comparison to how it was for the first five years when the allotment market counted for 85% of their work. There is still significant business coming from the allotment sector and also such areas as rural churches and remote trails. Which makes sense, local authorities may wish to save money but they still need to offer facilities in many remote, rural locations that do not have mains. Of course they're going to choose the most efficient and reliable supplier with the most experience.

### ONE OF THE GLAMPING ESSENTIALS

The glamping and camping industry is another area that has been growing significantly. NatSol are perfectly placed to offer a solution to

the problem of plumbing installation and waste management that many glamping site owners are facing.

One thing that glamping is all about is bringing luxury into the outdoors. Nothing is less luxurious than a toilet that stops working because the pipes have frozen, or there's a leak or a blockage or something in the cistern has stopped working. And glamping site owners have started to realize this.



"Glamping is a growth industry for us," Andy says, "Many glamping sites are purposefully remote and NatSol has offered an affordable alternative to installing mains. Our toilets don't smell and are pleasant to use. Most are wheelchair accessible (actually they can all be set up as wheelchair accessible and most are, although

this may not be relevant on some remote sites) and they are cheaper to install and maintain on remote sites than conventional systems. No mains services are required and there is no freezing risk."

#### HOW DOES IT WORK?

There are many different kinds of composting toilets depending on where they are going to be. One that provides a safe haven for runners, walkers and hikers from hostile growths of stinging nettles in a field, will be very different to one found in a high class glamping accommodation.

The mechanics behind them can be split into two categories: urine separating and non-urine separating. NatSol compost toilets fall into the former category. The urine goes to ground and the solids are then naturally composted without using heat energy from electric elements. According to Andy many "so-called" composting toilets are actually dehydrating or incinerating toilets which require heating or they need electrically driven fans and as much maintenance as a normal WC.

"The big question is whether the composting takes place in the toilet or elsewhere," Andy says, "This depends on the size of the toilet. For example, our small toilet the Compact, has waste removed for composting elsewhere whereas our Full Access toilet has two vaults below floor and solid wastes are composted on an annual cycle without removal."

This is all waterless and odourless, a very important factor for any glamp site owner. NatSol, ever developing their business, have another product, a non-composting, non-urine separating waterless toilet. The ZD, or Zero Discharge, was developed for Richmond Park in London and is coming into use for busy public sites.

Along with the standard designs which NatSol have developed, they do sometimes offer bespoke systems. Manufacturing is mainly done by other companies to their designs while some components are assembled in their own workshop.

"We market our products mostly through enquiries to our website," Andy says, "Which is important because people still have a lot of questions regarding compost toilets and we have considerable expertise in advising enquirers as to which system would suit their needs. We won't

sell a product to someone if we don't believe it is right for them."



#### COULD THEY TAKE OVER COMPLETELY?

So, could compost toilets over-take the traditional WC? Andy thinks that they could eventually get an even firmer lead in remote sites such as outdoor locations and glamping sites. The advantages are simply too prominent to ignore. However, he doesn't think they would for houses.

"Houses produce other waste water which needs treating so it is much simpler to use WCs and treat all the waste in the same way," he says, "But we are not aiming for the housing market. Right now, it's about perception change. There are still negative perceptions amongst people who have not used a good compost toilet."

In that case, aside from the obvious scenarios that would be associated with any kind of toilet that isn't working, how would someone know if they had used a good compost toilet?

"It wouldn't flush for one thing," I think I would start with: "It won't smell for one thing," Andy points out, "It doesn't flush and so it is silent in use and it won't have a high cleaning requirement. There is a view down the loo, of course, but if the last user added 'soak' material - usually wood shavings - then it shouldn't be unpleasant. So, if you were on a good one, like any one of ours, you wouldn't really notice much difference."



They're also very reliable. No mains services required, no vehicle access needed for maintenance of most of the products, and very low maintenance for the larger systems. The C (Compact) takes about 25 'number twos' before it needs emptying to a composter. The FA (Full Access) can handle about 6 people using it full time all year as their only toilet. So, for many glamping sites that are only open for 6 months, that doubles to 12 people using it as their only toilet.

#### CHANGING MINDS

Business is good. Allotments are still keeping them very busy as are other non-profit making organizations. Growing groups as well as community orchards, churches, sports clubs, golf public bodies and charities such as the National Trust make repeat purchases. The Environment Agency has purchased NatSol products. Glamping and camping are growing markets. Where glamping is concerned many site owners are just getting into it and simply do not know enough about the options available, so there is a need to educate them.

A big part of this is how NatSol, as a company, approach customer relationships. The services that they offer are above and beyond what you would expect for a usual waste management company.

"I think we give incredible support to our customers. I don't think any customer who has ever

contacted us with a problem - even years after the guarantee has expired - could say that they hadn't received high quality support to resolve an issue. Our reputation for after sales support is central to marketing our products," Andy says proudly.

And in the growing market they have to keep ahead of the competition. This requires them to keep a look out at what other people are doing and re-evaluate their product and services regularly.

"We stay on top of how the product seems to other people. We have a policy of ongoing design improvements to our existing products and responding to a need for new products if we feel there might be a market for that."

#### IN CONCLUSION

Reliable suppliers are always important in any industry. In NatSol's industry, reliability is everything. This means for new customers and clients that satisfaction is guaranteed. And for guests and users their product will either be completely taken for granted or met with incredible relief.

In the end, you probably won't even miss the flush.

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FA toilet in thatched building for organic farm shop



#### UNITS.

Summary.

Quality Unearthed is bringing a reliable and inspiring sense of order and accessibility to the glamping industry. Over 130 glamping structures across the UK have been catalogued including tree houses, yurts, safari tents, boats, Airstreams, Gypsy Wagons, Geo-Domes and even hobbit houses!

#### FACILITIES.

Every structure brings with it something unique. Some have hot tubs, log burners, WIFI, barbecue facilities while some are more rustic. All of the units are cleaned weekly after a changeover and while it does fall down to the owner to make the decisions on whether pets are allowed or if it is adult only, Quality Unearthed do offer advice. This advice on what tends to be most attractive to customers is based on over 60 years of experience as well as historic sales data.

Quality Unearthed provide a workable way to search exactly what you, the guest, is looking for. Be it a week or weekend of escapism, a family trip, luxurious couples holiday or a pet friendly jaunt outside of the city.

#### THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND.

It is always advisable to book ahead of time to avoid disappointment. For some of the most popular places up to 6 months is recommended by the site, however you can occasionally be lucky with some late deals.

#### PRICE.

Ranges for properties. See website.

#### WIFI

Clearly indicated on each property on website.

#### CONTACT

Website, address, telephone number, email address and any social media accounts.

[www.qualityunearthed.co.uk](http://www.qualityunearthed.co.uk)

Quality Unearthed

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**NatSol** the  
compost toilet  
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