

WIRRAL TRAFFIC NETWORK MANAGEMENT PLAN

Wirral Council

DECEMBER 2020

CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction	6
1.1	Network Management Duty (NMD)	6
1.2	Traffic Manager	7
2.0	Policy Framework	9
2.1	Traffic Management Act (2004)	9
2.2	Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Transport Plan	10
2.3	Wirral Council Plan 2025	11
2.4	Local Plan	13
3.0	Aims & Objectives	13
3.1	Vision for Wirral	13
3.2	Equality and Diversity	14
3.3	Supporting Future Growth	15
3.4	Noise & Air Quality	16
4.0	Introduction to the Network	17
4.1	Wirral's Highway Network	17
4.2	Road Network Hierarchy	17
4.3	Major Route Network (MRN)	19
4.4	Key Route Network (KRN)	20
4.5	Strategic Road Network (SRN)	21
4.6	Traffic Sensitive Route Network (TSRN)	21
4.7	Tunnels	22
4.8	Traffic Signals	22
4.9	Freight Network	23
4.10	Emergency Services Routes	23
4.11	Bus Network	23
4.12	Rail Network	24
4.13	Ferry	24
4.14	Pedestrians	25
4.15	Cycle Route Network	27
4.16	Public Rights of Way	28
4.17	Coaches	28
4.18	Taxis	28
4.19	Park & Ride	29
4.20	Motorcycles	29
4.21	Abnormal Loads	30
5.0	Managing the Network	31
5.1	Integrated Network Management	31

5.2	Network Operation	31
5.3	Permit Scheme	32
5.4	Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTRO)	33
5.5	Congestion	33
5.6	Bridge Strikes	34
5.7	Partners	34
5.8	Co-ordination of Planned & Unplanned Events	35
5.9	Highway Authority and Utilities Committee Meetings (HAUC)	36
5.10	Joint Authorities Group (JAG)	37
5.11	Asset Management	37
	Key Supporting Principles	38
5.12	General Maintenance	39
5.13	Technology	40
5.14	Highway Obstructions	43
5.15	Miscellaneous Activity	43
5.16	Enforcement	43
5.17	Powers	44
5.18	CCTV	44
5.19	Education and Encouragement	45
5.20	Personal Injury Collision Locations	46
5.21	Planning & Development	46
5.22	The Future	48
6.0	Monitoring & Review	49
6.1	Action Plan	49
6.2	Monitoring Approach	50
	Appendix A – Road Network Hierarchy	51
	Appendix B – Key Route Network	52
	Appendix C - Traffic Sensitive Streets Network	53
	Appendix D – Cycling & Walking Networks	54

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Network Management Duty (NMD)

[The Traffic Management Act 2004: Part 2](#) (the TMA), imposes the Network Management Duty [NMD] upon all Local Highway Authorities (LHA). The NMD requires us to consider the needs of all road users, including pedestrians and other non-motorised users, and manage the road space for everyone including statutory undertakers.

The NMD requires us to identify current and future causes of congestion and disruption, and to plan and take action accordingly. This means that we must have access to or collect the necessary information and data to do this. The needs of statutory undertakers to work on roads, combined with the mix of demands from a wide range of road users, can all affect network capacity. Therefore, it is important that LHAs promote proactive co-ordination of the network, adopt a planned, risk-based, evidence-led approach to known events, and develop contingencies for the unseen.

The Department for Transport (DfT) has produced a [guidance document](#) which provides a framework for undertaking the duties and provisions set out in the TMA.

Wirral Council is committed to delivering an efficient and effective highway network for all users. Making the best use of our current network is important for both economic vitality and society in general. The highway network facilitates the movement and connectivity of people and goods, provides access to homes, businesses, healthcare and schools, and provides public space where people shop, socialise or relax.

Significant changes in travel behaviour have been observed in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic with reductions in vehicle traffic as people have worked from home and stayed local leading to reductions in private car use and increases in walking and cycling. Future travel behaviours are now harder to predict than ever as highly publicised stories about improvements to air quality and environmental benefits are leading some people re-evaluate travel options. With uncertainty around technological advances it is clear that this plan will need to be regularly reviewed to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

The challenge of the Network Management Plan is to balance competing road user demands whilst also improving air quality and reducing carbon emissions. The next 10 years are likely to see significant changes in vehicle operations, both in terms of fuel types and connected technology and future road users making different choices about how they want to travel.

This Plan sets out the framework of how we will manage the highway network in order to minimise disruption and ensure the efficient movement of people and goods by all modes in Wirral, throughout the Liverpool City Region as a whole and on cross boundary borders with Cheshire West and Chester Council's highway network.

Whilst road users may have differing expectations, reliable journey times are important to the majority of users. Therefore, we must identify current and future causes of congestion and disruption, and put plans in place to take appropriate action. We must also consider the needs of statutory utility providers to work on roads, and balance this against the mixed requirements of the wide range of road users which can all affect network capacity. We are fortunate to have a good transport network in Wirral, but we must continue to work hard to improve and develop this to meet the needs of residents, business and visitors, to

ensure that our network supports inward investment, regeneration and housing growth, and has a positive impact on our environment and communities. Through these aims we will ensure an inclusive highway network for all users.

1.2 Traffic Manager

The TMA requires a Traffic Manager (TM) to be assigned to oversee the implementation of the NMD, acting as point of reference when carrying out our duties.

It is the role of Traffic Manager to:

- act as a point of contact for any agency/group planning works/events on the highway;
- record details of those works/events and to identify conflicts/problems;
- facilitate liaison between the agencies/groups involved in the event of a possible conflict; and
- provide relevant information to the public/media.

In addition to the above, the TM will:

- Oversee the implementation of the TMA and co-ordinate resources for undertaking the roles and responsibilities of the TMA and Network Management Duty.
- Review, propose and facilitate arrangements for the management of the local road networks. This will ensure the safe and expeditious movement of traffic within Wirral, and also from, and on to, neighbouring authority networks.
- Co-ordinate arrangements for making the best use of existing road space for the benefit of all road users; considering actions that would make more efficient use of the network and avoiding, eliminating or reducing congestion or disruption, thereby improving journey reliability.
- Co-ordinate the occupation of the highway by Street and Road Works, special/planned events or other obstructions/incursions that may interfere with the safe, free-flow of traffic. Due account must be given to the statutory rights and reasonable demands of those parties needing to enter the highway, maintain or upgrade equipment within it.
- Determine policies, procedures, targets and objectives for improving traffic movement on local road networks.
- Identify proposals for monitoring the effectiveness of arrangements and actions established to meet the requirements of the TMA.
- Establish and maintain working relationships between Traffic Managers in other authorities - in particular the Liverpool City Region - and stakeholders including the emergency services, Merseytravel and Mersey Tunnels, and utilities who would have an interest in, or may be affected by, the Network Management Duty.
- Review the work and practices of other LHAs in responding to the TMA and to implement best practice as appropriate.
- Review all strategies and planning designed to meet requirements of both the TMA and the NMD to determine their consistency with wider local, regional and national legislation, policies and guidance (including Codes of Practice, etc.).

Finally, through undertaking the duties set out in the TMA, the Traffic Manager will be responsible for the following specific actions:

- Identifying and investigating activities and situations which are causing, or have the potential to cause, significant road congestion or any other disruption to the movement of traffic.
- Consider possible actions that can be taken in response to, or in anticipation of, any issues / situations identified.
- Monitor the effectiveness of the LHAs organisation and decision-making processes in the context of the duties and requirements imposed under the TMA.
- Determine specific policies or objectives in relation to different roads and classes of road in the authority's network.
- Assess the performance of procedures and/or resources put in place for the management of the LHAs road network.
- Set up, and manage, indicators to monitor the performance of network management policies and procedures.
- Keep under constant review the effectiveness of the arrangements in place for carrying out the NMD.

Where a local authority is seen to be not performing these duties the Secretary of State has powers to intervene and, if necessary, appoint their own TM at the cost of WMBC.

2.0 Policy Framework

2.1 Traffic Management Act (2004)

The [Traffic Management Act](#) was introduced to deliver a range of provisions primarily aimed at reducing and managing congestion and disruption on the road network. The TMA is split into 7 parts:

- Part 1: Traffic Officers
- Part 2: Network Management by Local Traffic Authorities and Strategic Highways Companies
- Part 3: Permit Schemes
- Part 4: Street Works
- Part 5: Highways and Roads
- Part 6: Civil Enforcement of Traffic Contraventions
- Part 7: Miscellaneous and General

This Network Management Plan sets out our approach to satisfying the duties required under Part 2 of the TMA, to manage the road network to achieve:

- ‘the secure, expeditious movement of traffic on the authority’s road network’; and to
- ‘facilitate the expeditious movement of traffic on road networks for which another authority is the traffic authority’.

The action which the authority may take to perform these duties will aim to secure:

- ‘more efficient use of their road network’; and
- ‘the avoidance, elimination or reduction of road congestion or other disruption to movement of traffic on their road network’.

Such action may involve the exercise of any power to regulate, or co-ordinate, the uses made of any road in the network.

Although the production of a Network Management Plan is not mandatory, the Government does encourage highway authorities to prepare one. The TMA states that the authority must nominate a person to be known as the ‘Traffic Manager’. The TM is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the NMD with the primary objective to minimise delays and traffic congestion which result in disruption to life and business.

Statutory Responsibilities

An overview of the other legislation which relates to the TMA is provided in the table below.

Legislation	Activity
Highways Act (1980) Road Traffic Regulation Act (1984) Road Traffic Act (1988)	To maintain highways at public expense
Highways Act (1980)	Powers relating to erection of scaffolding, retaining walls and dangerous land
New Roads & Streetworks Act (1991)	Notification of Utility and Highways works

Numerous other statutory responsibilities are imposed on Wirral under various legislation which must be balanced against the obligations of the TMA.

In addition to legislative requirements, we are also required to assist in the production of statutory documents including the Combined Authority Transport Plan (in conjunction with other Liverpool City Region authorities).

2.2 Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Transport Plan

The Combined Authority Transport Plan articulates the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority's (LCRCA's) vision for transport. The plan provides a single source of information on adopted transport policy and the Combined Authority's investment priorities.

The Combined Authority Transport Plan replaces the Combined Authority's 2015 Transport Plan for Growth. It does not replace the statutory Merseyside Local Transport Plan and Halton Local Transport Plan from 2011. Instead, it provides a non-statutory, updated statement of current priorities and provides a bridge between the statutory plans presented in LTP3 and the development of a new, statutory Transport Plan for the city region (LTP4) which will be produced following the development of an overarching LCR Local Industrial Strategy and Spatial Development Framework, both of which are currently in development. By not pre-empting this process, this will ensure the City region integrates longer-term transport policies with social and economic vision and priorities, including spatial planning vision.

The CA Transport Plan identifies that the main issues and challenges affecting the City Region are grouped around:

- Growth and Jobs
- Modal Shift
- A People Centred Approach

The core vision is to develop a transport system which:

- is comprehensive, affordable and reliable
- is integrated and easy to use
- supports the development of new and existing communities
- is green, and is healthy

As such the Strategic Objectives of the LCR Combined Authority Transport Plan are:

- To support inclusive economic growth across a thriving city region. This is by developing a transport network that effectively and efficiently connects people, freight, businesses and visitors, and in a way that is fully integrated with wider policy objectives.
- To exploit the city region's role as a global gateway that is served by all forms of transport that supports Northern Powerhouse and Transport for the North's aims to rebalance the UK's economy, through economic agglomeration and de-congestion benefits.
- To deliver the objectives above through a new mobility culture, where transport services are modern, safe, clean, healthy and inclusive. This has a focus on boosting healthy forms of travel for short trips and where the public transport networks are the modes of choice.

- To develop a mobility system that enhances the health and wellbeing of our citizens. This will include the development of liveable and resilient city region that addresses the challenges of poor air quality and supports the move to a zero carbon LCR by 2040
- To secure a transport network that is well maintained, safe and resilient

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority: Local Journeys Strategy

The [Local Journeys Strategy](#) presents the LCRCA's strategy for local journeys. The Strategy cuts across multiple forms of transport modes and geographies, and as a broad guide, defines local journeys as those with an origin or destination within the Liverpool City Region that are less than 5km in length.

The document provides a framework for guiding the development of services and infrastructure that support sustainable short trips across the Liverpool City Region. It complements the transport strategies that underpin the LCRCA's Transport Plan.

The objectives of the Local Journeys Strategy are to:

- Continue the momentum built up through LSTF and STEP by developing a co-ordinated, long term programme of investment.
- Take advantage of 'quick win' opportunities to demonstrate our intent and capability.
- Target investment to maximise value for money through the creative use of revenue to support capital investment in infrastructure.
- Address barriers to walking and cycling including road safety concerns, fear of crime, poor maintenance and unpleasant local environments.
- Adopt a 'whole-journey' approach, and promote active travel choices for access to bus and rail hubs for local journeys.
- Promote active travel for short journeys to improve health outcomes, including journeys to school, encouraging the use of local stations, promoting sustainable travel in housing developments and through the introduction of new transport infrastructure.
- Contribute to national air quality objectives by reducing carbon emissions, including supporting the use of active travel for last-mile freight movements.
- Promote behaviour change as part of a targeted programme of actions to improve the attractiveness, safety and marketability of walking, cycling and public transport networks.
- Develop best practice and innovation in spatial planning, infrastructure and streetscape design.

2.3 Wirral Council Plan 2025

This plan sets out a clear and specific set of priorities which have been developed based on feedback from residents through consultations, surveys and community events.

The Council accepts that there have been and continue to be a number of significant challenges ahead, not least spending reductions due to budget deficit reduction requirements imposed by central government. To support these priorities the Council will need to take hard decisions about transforming existing services. Following the change of the external highway

maintenance contractor in 2018 to an in-house service, Wirral Highways will need to continue to review the delivery of certain services. Some services will also need to be more targeted and we will continue to consider new ways of commissioning services to improve value and quality. Decisions about the future commissioning of highway services will be better informed by the continued development of our formalised asset management approach.

[Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Policy](#)

The Wirral Council Plan 2025 is keenly aware of the impact of highways on Wirral as a place to live and work. The Foreword for the Plan, written by the Council Leader, states:

“...we are responsible for improving the quality of life every resident gets to enjoy.

We do this by delivering better outcomes for local people.

by keeping the streets clean and improving the environment, making sure communities have good, affordable housing, are safe and roads are kept in good condition.”

Wirral Council's vision and priorities are set out below. Highways & Infrastructure services will contribute to achieving these priorities in a wide variety of ways as detailed in the table below.

Wirral Council Plan 2025 Vision/Priorities	How will Highways & Infrastructure services contribute towards the 2025 Vision/Priorities?
Sustainable Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage services using a formalised, risk-based approach to asset management that makes best efficient and effective use of resources; • Maintain good quality networks with appropriate ride quality for all modes of transport on the highway for use by vehicles, cycles and pedestrians; Effective street cleaning and gully emptying operations to ensure effective and efficient functioning; • Plan capital investments based on whole-life issues; Implement flood prevention schemes where identified; • Use of recycled materials and minimisation of waste in support of climate change objectives;
Inclusive Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the condition of highway assets such that they do not restrict the reliability of journeys or increase congestion without good cause; • Communicate road works to road users so that alternative travel plans can be made.
Brighter Futures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain highways so that they can be used safely and reliably, both generally & specifically near schools and residential areas by cars, buses, bicycles and pedestrians; • Manage the Resilient Network.

Active and Healthy Lives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure highways are maintained so that they can be used safely and reliably and deliver a ride quality that does not adversely affect air quality, with enhanced access to alternative sustainable routes and modes.
Safe & Pleasant Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the condition of highway assets so that they contribute to an environment in which all residents can be proud, and enable community cohesion; • Replace streetlights in Wirral with LED lights by 2021 • Engage with stakeholders to ensure that, where possible, services reflect their needs.

2.4 Local Plan

Within the emerging Local Plan there is a significant amount of housing and employment development planned over the next 15 years. Without investment in key infrastructure, this will add significant additional pressure to our transport network and will need to be carefully managed so not to cause detriment to network performance.

The aim will be to produce clear objectives so that the performance of the network can be protected through private sector investment in transport solutions. One such option is the continued investment through developer contributions.

Key to our network's performance is journey times, these must be protected along the priority routes for all modes of travel, we will actively monitor motorised vehicles. This information will be used to inform future development considerations and mitigation.

The plan will need to take into account the planning design guidance and the area plans as these will have an impact on the ability to manage the network.

We will:

- Make full use of traffic impact assessment modelling to identify the need for transport improvements;
- Ensure the developments outlined in the core strategy provide sufficient detail on how they will manage the transport network;
- Ensure that development make clear use of the hierarchy of users' needs by prioritising pedestrian and cyclist networks, providing and improving links over private car use;
- Encourage new developments to provide appropriate parking levels in-line with our highways design guide;
- Where able encourage development in locations with good road access. If appropriate developers may be required to contribute financially towards improving access roads and transport facilities to protect journey time reliability;
- Ensure developments that affect the highway provide adequate investment to counter any negative effects through developer contributions.

3.0 Aims & Objectives

3.1 Vision for Wirral

As touched upon in the LCRCA's Transport Plan and Wirral Council 2025 plan, the vision of this Network Management Plan is to encourage:

- More people walking and cycling to become fitter and healthier;
- More people using public transport to reduce air pollution and congestion;

- More people using technology to make journeys easier e.g. journey planning, smart ticketing;
- More people being able to access local centres by bus or by walking and cycling;
- More public transport, cycle facilities and pedestrian facilities provided across the borough;
- Less people using their cars, especially for short journeys;
- Less accidents and injuries on our roads;
- Less cars on our roads;
- Less emissions from cars, buses and lorries; and
- Less congestion and delay.

This will be achieved by the following:

- Residents, businesses and visitors will be engaged through consultations, forums and user groups and we will work in partnership;
- We will use engineering to improve our road networks, to build new cycle routes, improve pedestrian facilities and take advantage of new technology to make it easier to travel efficiently, safely and sustainably;
- People will feel confident to change their travel habits and try healthy, environmentally friendly ways of getting around;
- Residents, business and visitors will know how to get around and where to find information; and
- Enforcement will be required where people do not comply with the driving laws, or do not consider other road users in their driving or parking habits.

3.2 Equality and Diversity

As a diverse borough, transport services need to be inclusive, and cater for the needs of all users. Accessibility, availability and affordability are important and are recurring themes within the LCR Combined Authority Transport Plan and Local Journeys Strategy. They help to ensure that the transport network is within easy reach, and can take people where they need to go, at a price they can afford.

There are clear links between transport and social exclusion and overcoming the barriers to opportunities and services is a key issue. Therefore, the transport system must support all members of our community. This will help to improve quality of life and encourage independence, particularly for disabled and vulnerable users. Focussing our efforts to mitigate the impact of any barriers is therefore essential in ensuring equality of travel opportunity. We are committed to creating an inclusive network which works for everybody and provides the most deprived with access to employment and healthcare ensuring the needs of all residents are met.

As the highway authority we must consider the needs of anyone with a protected characteristic as per the Equality Act 2010 when making any changes to our road network. Accessibility requirements apply to temporary measures as they do to permanent ones.

We use [Equality Impact Assessments](#) (EIAs) to improve services by focusing on fairness, access and inclusion. They help us to assess a policy, service or process and how it might

affect different groups. EIAs help us to find and mitigate any impact which might have an impact on people knowing about a certain service, using it, and getting the best from it.

To improve access to and encourage people to use public transport, the Council will have due regard to the relevant provisions contained in sections of the [Equality Act 2010](#) and the Public Sector Equality Duty which are relevant to the provision of public transport services and infrastructure.

In addition, it will support the DfT aims covered in the 2018 document, [The Inclusive Transport Strategy: Achieving Equal Access for Disabled People](#).

3.3 Supporting Future Growth

Transport played a central role in the shaping of Birkenhead and wider Wirral. From the emergence of a settlement growing out from the Birkenhead Priory, to the Laird Grid which was formulated and positioned around the movement of docklands workers and goods, or the Queensway Tunnel which was for many years the longest road tunnel in the world.

The Council are developing a Framework for Birkenhead 2040 which sets out how transport, movement and connectivity will play a key role in supporting Wirral's future. The provision of efficient, well maintained and accessible transport networks is a critical factor in facilitating economic growth ensuring housing and employment opportunities are fully accessible both within and outside of the borough. We need to have the necessary infrastructure in place that will meet the current and future needs of businesses and residents.

This plan will support and build up on the opportunities presented by our transport assets:

- The M53, A41 and the Kingsway and Queensway tunnels provide strong strategic highway links that are essential for the flow of people and goods - but the design and location of some of the infrastructure that was once built to connect us, now actually divides.
- High frequency Merseyrail services connect Wirral with the wider City Region, with one of the best urban transit systems of any city in the country the Birkenhead 2040 Framework area is blessed with six Merseyrail stations which will grow in significance through investment to deliver new trains on the network to be implemented by the end of 2021, but all of the stations sit on the south side of the docks.
- The waterfront is an important asset for movement both across (by ferry) and along (by foot or cycle). But as entry point, or gateway, we need to create an environment that invites or draws people into the wider area beyond.

The Birkenhead Regeneration Framework sets out an ambitious programme of projects, that delivered together, will transform Birkenhead. They include public realm works at key junctions, establishing clear route hierarchies, and the prioritisation of pedestrians and cyclists, through to wider aspirations around mass transit supporting major new waterfront developments at Wirral Waters and Woodside. At the heart of this is the recognition of the sustainability of Birkenhead and the need to tackle the climate crisis by changing the ways we travel.

Birkenhead's challenges are different to many towns and cities - plans to support new development does not lie in creating new roads to unlock development potential – we need the opposite; to take away overengineered roads and infrastructure which have become barriers for redevelopment and have severed our communities.

This plan will support the Regeneration Framework with opportunities to facilitate active travel. The Regeneration framework highlights that we have no capacity issues but we do have infrastructure problems. The focus of the framework is on removing the road infrastructure which prohibits the safe and easy movement of our local communities into and through our core without the use of cars. It sets out how the vision is to reallocate road space to pedestrians and cyclists and challenge ourselves and the market on car use and parking provision – breaking the norms and ensuring that going forward we have sustainable neighbourhoods without dependency on private vehicles.

Presently, around 40% of households in Birkenhead do not have access to a car, compared to the wider Wirral average of around 20%. This currently presents a social equity challenge – where those least likely to use a car suffer most severely from the negative externalities created by the car use of others; poor air pollution, increased road danger, increased noise and reduced social cohesion. But low car use also presents an opportunity as Birkenhead grows - to embed sustainable travel from the outset, rather than try to change behaviours after the fact. We need to modernise our movement system and deliver travel infrastructure that maximises our potential – including mass transit which can enhance our north-south connectivity, reduce carbon emissions, and create market opportunities including ‘last mile’ linkages.

Providing for trips on foot, by bike and by public transport is more important here than in most places due to the number of households that do not have access to a car. Helping people and goods to move around efficiently, cleanly, safely and healthily by the most appropriate mode is an integral element of our vision for Birkenhead. Two-thirds of all journeys in our city region are less than 5km in distance, but half of them are made by car. We want Birkenhead to be a place where walking and cycling are the safe, healthy and pleasant choices for more of these journeys, and this needs to be set into how we design and plan new communities, streets and places, and regenerate existing ones.

We have made good progress with new cycle and pedestrian infrastructure and have developed ambitious proposals under the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), including strategic cycleways between New Brighton, Wallasey, Liscard, and Birkenhead.

Despite the success of Merseyrail and the local bus network, public transport connectivity has long been an acute issue for the areas north of the Great Float area. This, combined with the potential of Wirral Waters proposals to significantly expand the population of these areas is a key challenge for movement and connectivity and the driver behind our pursuit of a new Mass Transit system to serve this geography.

Wider market changes, including the phasing out of petrol and diesel cars during the lifetime of the Framework also necessitate the need for change. In part, this will inevitably require investment in electric charging facilities and electricity generating infrastructure as our demand for electricity grows. Similarly, the expanding home delivery market will also ultimately need to embrace e-vans and cargo bikes and co-ordinated last mile delivery too.

3.4 Noise & Air Quality

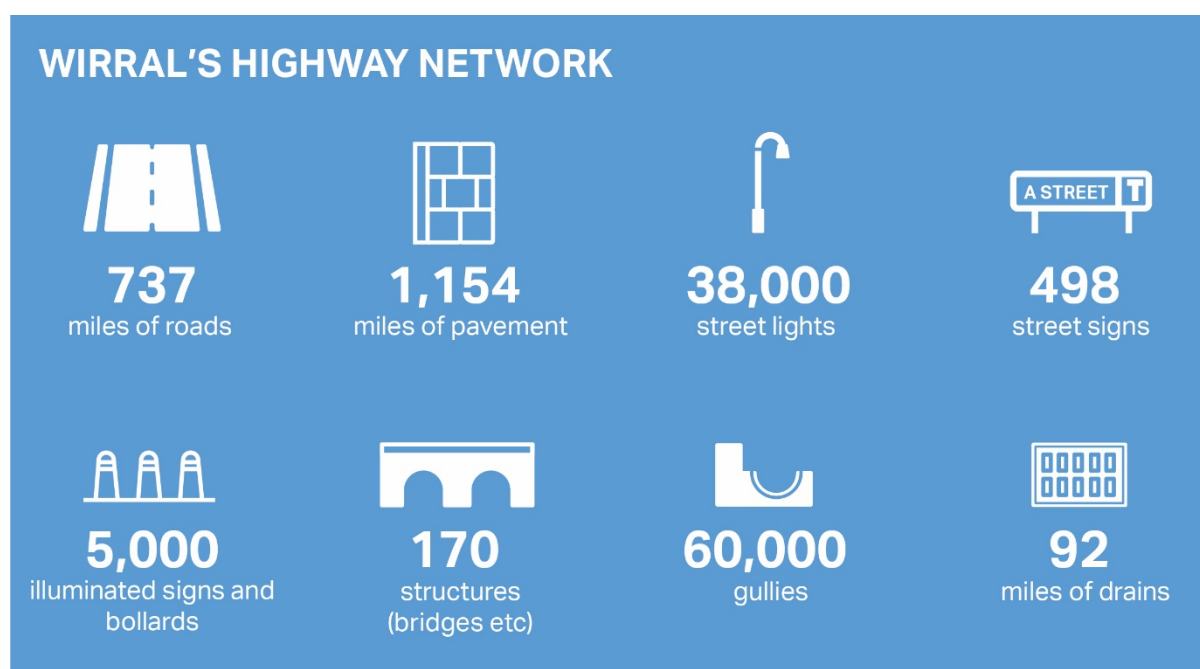
The Highway Network can influence noise and air quality, impacting upon our business and communities. Whilst the details of these arrangements are outside the scope of this document, it is recognised that Wirral Council will continue to liaise with the relevant stakeholders in relation to noise and air quality. It is important that relevant stakeholders

share information and cooperate to exploit opportunities to bring about improvements. This will be done through participation in, for example, air quality groups, as required through Coordination meetings.

4.0 Introduction to the Network

4.1 Wirral's Highway Network

The highway infrastructure in Wirral is key to keeping people and places connected. It is the largest, most valuable, public asset within our control. This section provides an overview of the network assets, for which Wirral Council are responsible for. In brief, it is made up of:



**Infographic as of March 2020*

4.2 Road Network Hierarchy

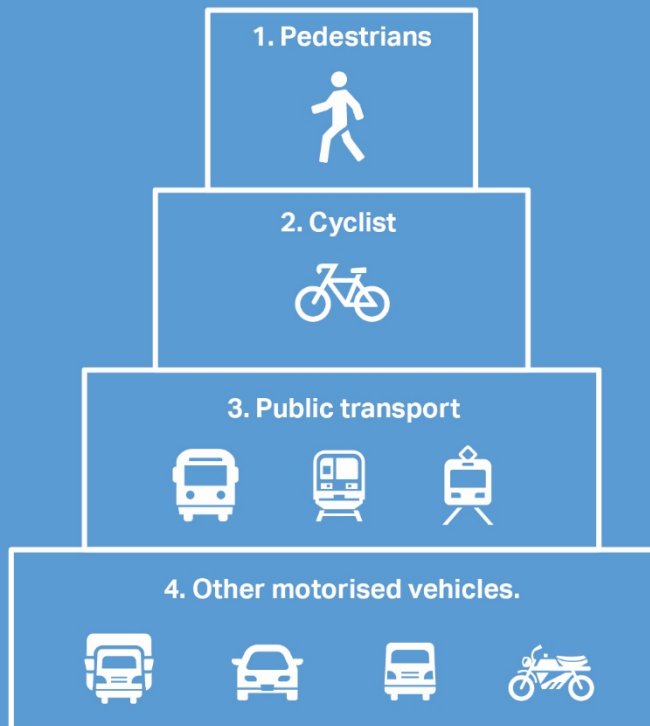
It is important to ensure that the network caters for all road users/modes of transport. In particular, Wirral Council wish to enable infrastructure and policies to support sustainable alternatives to private car usage. By promoting walking and cycling and public transport we will improve the environment (air and noise quality) and make Wirral a more 'liveable' borough. This approach is a key strand of our action plan in response to our [Climate Emergency Declaration](#). A plan of the Road Network Hierarchy in Wirral is provided in Appendix A.

In order to achieve this, there are two streams to the road hierarchy which must be considered, including:

- Road User Hierarchy
- Road Mode Hierarchy

ROAD USER HIERARCHY

Road User Hierarchy (prioritised based on following modes):



It is the responsibility of the Traffic Manager to ensure that these priorities are adhered to when considering any new works on the highway.

There are two streams to the road hierarchy; these being:

- Road User Hierarchy
- Road Mode Hierarchy

These hierarchies, along with the identified networks below, are to be used when considering any new works on the highway network, and the resulting proposals should be fully reflective of these.

The Road User Hierarchy gives a definition of priority for road users as follows:

- (a) Pedestrians;
- (b) Cyclists;
- (c) Public transport passengers; and
- (d) Other motorised vehicle users.

The use of the Road User Hierarchy is intertwined with the classification of a road within the Road Mode Hierarchy.

The Road Mode Hierarchy is defined as follows:

- (a) Strategic Routes with priority for freight movement;

- (b) Strategic Routes with priority for public transport;
- (c) Strategic Routes with priority for motorised traffic generally;
- (d) Local Distributor Roads, and
- (e) Local Access Roads.

On Local Distributor Roads there will still be a need to accommodate motorised traffic, but these roads will not generally be signed for through traffic and heavy goods traffic is discouraged. For motorised traffic, priority will vary depending on the circumstances of the individual route, such as whether or not it is part of the identified networks discussed below.

On Local Streets (including residential, service and pedestrianised areas) pedestrians receive the highest priority, followed by cyclists. As with Local Distributor Roads, further prioritisation will depend on the circumstances of the individual streets, such as whether or not it is used by public transport, service vehicles or taxis. District centres are to be treated in a similar fashion to Local Access Roads with walking, public transport and cycling receiving the top priority.

Recommendation 12 (Network Hierarchy) of the Road Liaison Group's [Well Managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice](#) document states that *"a network hierarchy, or a series of related hierarchies, should be defined which include all elements of the highway network, including carriageways, footways, cycle routes, structures, lighting and rights of way. The hierarchy should take into account current and expected use, resilience, and local economic and social factors such as industry, schools, hospitals and similar, as well as the desirability of continuity and of a consistent approach for walking and cycling."*

Wirral Council as the local highway authority, manages all local classification and Primary Route Network (PRN) decisions in our jurisdiction, consulting with neighbouring highway authorities (including Highways England) where relevant. Changes to the PRN or road classification do not require public consultation or advertisement. The Secretary of State retains ultimate legal responsibility for road classifications and the PRN, and retains the right to intervene.

At present, a review of Wirral's road classification network has been undertaken and the next stages of this review will involve formalising the identified outcomes and reporting this to the Environment, Climate Emergency and Highways committee.

4.3 Major Route Network (MRN)

As part of the [Transport Investment Strategy](#), the UK Government has committed to creating a Major Road Network (MRN). This consultation asks for views on:

- how to define the MRN;
- the role that local, regional and national bodies will play in the MRN investment programme; and
- which schemes will be eligible for MRN funding.

The aim of the MRN is to help deliver the following objectives:



The £28.8 billion [National Roads Fund](#) (NRF) for 2020-2025 provides the Government's pledge to roads spending. Within the NRF, the draft Roads Investment Strategy 2 (RIS2) will receive funding of £25.3bn. The remaining £3.5bn will be available for the Major Road Network and Large Local Major schemes. The split of funding between these two areas and its annual profiling will be determined in due course.

The creation of a MRN will allow for dedicated funding from the NRF to be used to improve this middle tier of our busiest and most economically important local authority 'A' roads.

4.4 Key Route Network (KRN)

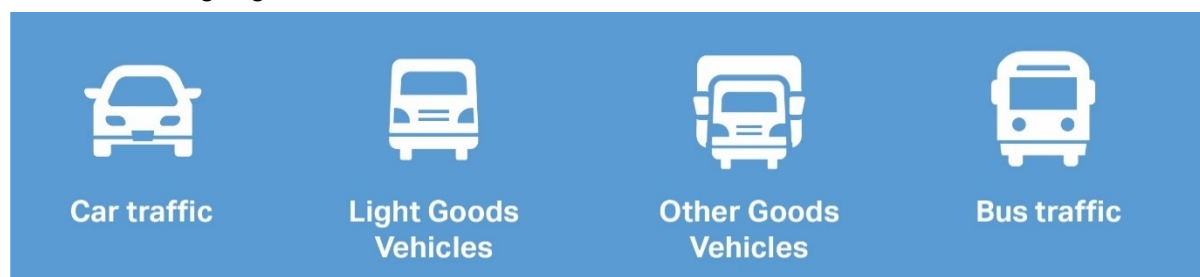
The [Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Devolution Agreement](#) sets out the powers available for the Liverpool City Region Mayor to develop *"a Key Route Network of local roads which will be managed and maintained by the Combined Authority on behalf of the LCR Mayor..... This will be achieved through a single asset management plan, working towards streamlined contractual and delivery arrangements across the city region"*.

An additional devolution agreement was reached such that *"the government will work with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Mayor to establish appropriate local traffic and highway powers which would be conferred on to the Mayor as part of the Key Route Network"*.

The LCR Key Route Network has now been defined as:

1. Roads that form part of the Primary Route Network (PRN): The KRN includes all roads within the Primary Route Network (PRN), which form a continuous network between 'primary destinations'. In essence, these are the most important local roads identified by their green-backed road signs. The KRN also includes two Mersey Tunnels, the Silver Jubilee Bridge and those roads that serve primary destinations immediately outside the boundaries of the Liverpool City Region.
2. Strategic links to development sites: In addition, the KRN includes roads that link significant new or proposed housing and employment areas that are not already part of the PRN.
3. Links to the trunk road network: The KRN also includes roads that aren't part of the PRN but provide links to the Strategic Road Network (SRN).
4. Traffic volumes: The Key Route Network also includes roads carrying the most significant volumes of traffic (defined as more than 10,000 vehicles per day), and which are not already part of the PRN.

5. Functional importance: Finally, the KRN includes roads that are important in functional terms having regard to:



Major progress has been made in the development of a Carriageway Asset Management Plan for the KRN. The business case submission for a £28m 'Invest for Growth' Key Route Network (KRN) programme has been approved, and funding awarded for delivery in 2018/19 and 2019/20. This will act as an integrated programme of investment in the strategic highway routes that contribute to growth in the Liverpool City Region (LCR).

A plan of the KRN is provided in Appendix B.

4.5 Strategic Road Network (SRN)

The SRN is comprised of trunk roads and motorways. The Liverpool City Region's trunk road network comprises parts of the M53, M56, M57, M58, M6, and M62 to the east of junction 6 and the A5036 from the Port of Liverpool to Switch Island. These roads remain managed by Highways England.

Highways England have provided a '[Network Management Map](#)', which illustrates the SRN, the areas of responsibility and relevant contact information.

4.6 Traffic Sensitive Route Network (TSRN)

Section 64 of the [New Roads and Street Works Act](#) (1991) (NRSWA) enables a local authority to designate certain streets, or any part of a street (carriageway, footway or pedestrian area), as 'traffic sensitive'. It is a designation that allows highly trafficked highways to be identified as requiring Works Promoters to give greater advanced warning of proposed works or activities, as works on TSRs will have the greatest impact on traffic (in terms of delays and congestion).

Currently, there are 183 roads which are classed as 'traffic sensitive' within the borough. In addition to this, a review of the TSR network is underway to determine whether there are any other roads which can be classified as traffic sensitive. In order to formalise the findings of the TSR review, ongoing data collection and consultation with Statutory Undertakers is being carried out.

A plan of the TSR network in Wirral is provided in Appendix C.

4.7 Tunnels

The Kingsway, Queensway, and Mersey Railway Tunnels, also known as the Mersey Tunnels, connect the borough with Liverpool. The Kingsway and Queensway Tunnels connect Wallasey and Birkenhead with Liverpool via road respectively and form part of our Key Route Network, whereas the Mersey Railway Tunnel connects Birkenhead with Liverpool via rail. All tunnels are owned and operated by Merseytravel and have their own police force.

4.8 Traffic Signals

Wirral have a number of traffic signal installations, which are managed in-house and maintained through the LCR traffic signal term maintenance contract. These installations have been located strategically for a variety of reasons including road safety, enhancing pedestrian facilities and managing traffic flows.

All traffic signal installations in Wirral are connected to our Urban Traffic Control (UTC) system which remotely monitors the operation of traffic signals and identifies any problems quickly. The traffic signals on the busiest parts of the network are linked to a Split Cycle Offset Optimisation Technique (SCOOT) system which coordinates the operation of traffic signals and crossings with the aim of reducing delay to pedestrians and motorists. The system also provides an indication of congestion and delays in the network and has the ability to manually or automatically alter signal timing plans when problems or events are identified.

Currently we have the following traffic signal installations:

Traffic Signal Type	Amount	Description
Junction	122	A signalised junction.
Single pelican	29	A pedestrian crossing with traffic lights operated by pedestrians; on single or dual carriageway roads.
Dual pelican	15	
Single puffin	102	A pedestrian crossing where traffic lights go green only when no more pedestrians are detected on the crossing; on single or dual carriageway roads.
Dual puffin	11	
Single toucan	21	A crossing for both cyclists and pedestrians; on single or dual carriageway roads.
Dual toucan	5	
Wig wag	1	A railroad grade traffic signal used at level crossings.
VMS installations	40	Variable message signs used to provide travellers with information on special events/issues on the network.
CCTV locations	112	Closed-circuit television used to identify congestion on the network.

We continuously review traffic signals in order to maintain effective network performance. The Traffic Manager is responsible for monitoring congestion on the network, and where necessary, planning and reviewing the optimisation of signal installations.

4.9 Freight Network

The efficient movement of freight throughout the network is important to our economy. The main routes which comprise our freight network include the M53, the A41 and A554 / A5139 linking to the Stena Line Ferry Terminal in Birkenhead to the M53 and A41 corridors. Wirral International Business Park and a number of distribution centres are also located along the A41 corridor.

The Wirral Cross Docks Bridges form a vital link in the strategic road network in north Wirral, facilitating access to the Port of Liverpool (Birkenhead) and major Wirral Waters regeneration sites. Bridges A and C, which are situated on the A554 Tower Road in Birkenhead, are of particular importance as they form part of the Merseyside Freight Network, providing a key link between the Twelve Quays roll on-roll off ferry terminal, the M53 and the Mersey Tunnels. Bridge A is a lifting bascule steel through-truss highway bridge owned and operated by Peel Ports, for which Wirral Council holds responsibility for maintenance as a highway structure. Bridge C is a fixed steel through-truss highway bridge owned and operated by Wirral Council.

The operation of the roads making up the freight network is important to the reliable movement of materials and goods. We recognise the need to maintain an efficient and sustainable freight network, which considers future development, has good links to the national road network, and is effectively signed to avoid unnecessary freight movements in residential or other inappropriate areas.

The unnecessary use of inappropriate roads by HGVs is an emotive issue leading to complaints from local communities and other road users as well as causing significant highway damage leading to increased maintenance costs. Satellite navigation systems have tended to exacerbate the problem due to incorrect information being entered into the systems or direct routes being identified, regardless of the nature of the roads in question.

In response to this, Wirral Council will consider the provision of positive HGV signing and restrictions where there are known network issues and liaise with satellite navigation mapping providers to highlight unsuitable roads.

4.10 Emergency Services Routes

In the development of any proposals that will affect the highway network, whether permanent or temporary, consideration of the potential effect on emergency response times must be balanced against achieving any objectives of the proposed scheme.

Continuous liaison is carried out with the City Region's emergency services to protect key routes, to ensure fast and effective response times and to maintain safe and efficient service operations. Wirral Council's Road Safety Manager, working closely with the emergency services, frequently reviews the Emergency Services Route Network.

4.11 Bus Network

The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority is the statutory body that sets the strategic transport agenda, allocates funding and makes links to other policy areas. At a practical level, the Combined Authority, supported by Merseytravel, acts as the accountable body for overseeing public transport operations in Wirral, and throughout the city region as a whole.

The Liverpool City Region Bus Alliance is a key element of a comprehensive bus strategy for the whole region. It is built around the idea of ‘multimodal’ transport for customers and looks to simplify the interchange between rail and bus, so journeys are simpler and more enjoyable for passengers. Established in 2016, the agreement between Arriva, Stagecoach and Merseytravel looks to provide local people with a continuously improved, more efficient, integrated and better-value service.

Some services on the bus network are now part of a Quality Partnership between Merseytravel, the bus operators and local councils. These services are more frequent, and commuters can use different operator’s tickets on any bus route which falls under the Quality Partnership. Services include:

- 471 Liverpool – Heswall: and
- 472 Liverpool – Heswall or Barnston.

The LCRCA’s Transport Plan provides a single strategic framework for the development of transport across the Liverpool City Region. One of the fundamental objectives of the strategy is to support sustainable economic growth in the Liverpool City Region. An effective public transport network not only widens people’s access to a range of employment opportunities, but also frees up space on the road network for other journeys and reduces the burden to business from congestion, traffic delays and unreliability.

Increasing the usage of public transport facilities will help to alleviate congestion hotspots, which in turn can have a positive effect socially, environmentally and economically. Facilitating a shift from private car and providing adequate public transport will help to achieve the aims set out in the LCRCA’s Transport Plan and Cool 2 Wirral’s draft Climate Change Strategy.

4.12 Rail Network

The majority of Wirral is also well connected by rail with Merseyrail operating frequent services (between 4 - 6 trains per hour) to Ellesmere Port and Chester, and to Liverpool via the Mersey Railway Tunnel. The Borderlands rail line operates hourly services from Wrexham to Bidston where it connects with the Merseyrail services, providing connectivity to Deeside in Flintshire. In total there are 25 rail stations in Wirral, 23 on the Merseyrail Wirral Line, and 2 on the Borderlands line.

Wirral Council are committed to working in partnership with Merseyrail to monitor and improve accessibility at all rail hubs including the enhancement of pedestrian and cycling connectivity and parking arrangements.

4.13 Ferry

Ferry services across the River Mersey play an important role in attracting visitors to the LCR. They also serve a commuter market in providing access between the Wirral and Liverpool, particularly for cyclists. Wirral is served by a direct commuter shuttle ferry service from Seacombe to Pier Head in Liverpool, and a tourist ‘daily explorer’ ferry service that also calls at Woodside, Birkenhead. Each year there are 450,000 to 500,000 passengers using the daily explorer ferry, which outnumbers the equivalent commuter service boardings by approximately three to one.

The closure of Spaceport at Mersey Ferries' Seacombe terminal and approval of the Eureka Mersey project which will deliver a major new science and discovery visitor attraction to Wirral will also provide opportunities to strengthen access by sustainable modes to the site and wider network.

4.14 Pedestrians

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

In 2017, the Government published its first [Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy](#). The Strategy sets out the Government's ambition to make walking and cycling the natural choice for shorter journeys, or as part of a longer journey. It supports the transformation of local areas – change which will help to tackle congestion, extend opportunity to improve physical and mental health and support local economies. Desire lines forming part of the LCWIP are included in Appendix D.

The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) is a strategic approach to developing a cohesive network of high standard active travel routes across the region. This will enable people to be able to walk and cycle for short journeys and multimodal journeys using public transport – but for this people need suitable routes. Across the borough, we want to improve our roads, footways and cycleways so that people can walk and cycle from where they live to where they want to go. This is not just about people who already walk and cycle, but those people who would and could do so if there were more suitable roads, footways and cycleways.

In relation to walking, the LCWIP looks to:

- increase walking activity, where walking activity is measured as the total number of walking stages per person; and
- increase the percentage of children aged 5 to 10 that usually walk to school.

To facilitate the on-going expansion of our cycle network, we have engaged with Merseytravel in the development of the new LCWIP. Plans of the cycling and walking networks forming part of the LCWIP are included in Appendix D. In relation to cycling, the LCWIP looks to:

- increase cycling activity, where cycling activity is measured as the estimated total number of cycle stages made; and
- reduce the rate of cyclists killed or seriously injured on England's roads, measured as the number of fatalities and serious injuries per billion miles cycled.

The LCR LCWIP is a strategic approach, with a focus on consistency of high standard, safer routes to cycle and walk right across the City Region. The LCR Steering group is working to the London Cycling Design Standards (LCDS), which has been agreed by each of the authorities in the LCR to be used as guidance for cycling measures. Separated cycleways as advocated in the guidance will be perfect for some locations, but in others will not be suitable due to the constraints or conditions of the road location. A range of measures will be utilised to introduce the most appropriate measures for each specific site.

The following principles are used in the LCDS guidance to help design high quality environments, and these will be utilised in the LCR along with the more detailed guidance on infrastructure design.

- **Safe** cycling and walking environments that are safe to use and feel safe
- **Accessible** streets to support all people walking and cycling
- **Comfortable** riding and walking surfaces that are fit for purpose, smooth, well-constructed and maintained
- **Direct** and easy to use routes that meet users' needs
- **Coherent** street layouts that are legible, consistent, joined-up and inclusive
- **Adaptable** roads designed to accommodate all users' needs

Pedestrian Dropped Kerbs

We are able to consider requests for new dropped kerbs to be installed at junctions and pedestrian crossing points. Route action plans are developed each year as part of the Combined Authority Transport Plan Capital Programme focusing on key strategic routes to employment, public transport hubs, healthcare facilities and shopping areas.

Living Streets

Living Streets - the national walking charity - works with schools in Wirral to create safe and enjoyable streets to encourage more children to walk to school.

Walk Once a Week and Free Your Feet takes place in selected schools in the borough, with more intensive work in secondary schools through a project called Campaign in a Box.

Further information is available on the [Living Streets](#) website.

Sustrans

In order to promote sustainable travel, we engage with various groups including Sustrans and Cycling UK to promote cycling within the borough. Information on the regional and national cycle routes within Wirral is available on the Sustrans [website](#). Sustrans also work in partnership with Bike Life; an assessment of city cycling development which includes infrastructure, travel behaviour, satisfaction, the impact of cycling and new initiatives ([Bike Life Liverpool City Region](#)).

Active Travel Forum

The Council facilitates the Wirral Active Travel Forum which meets quarterly. The forum's vision is to improve the health of Wirral residents by promoting active travel modes as the natural choice for shorter journeys, or as part of a longer journey in Wirral – regardless of age, gender, fitness level or income.

The forum brings together residents, public and private organisations and individuals to support active travel as a simple, low cost and effective way for people to access life opportunities whilst increasing levels of physical activity in their day to day life. Membership is open to all.

The forum's role is to ensure ideas are put forward regularly so that relevant schemes are developed that respond to and meet local needs, taking into account the wider City Region priorities. An annual workshop will be held to update members on the context of these priorities and present future funding streams.

4.15 Cycle Route Network

Maintaining and introducing key cycle routes, as well as promoting cycle usage throughout the borough, is vital in delivering a sustainable borough as set out in the Wirral Council Plan 2025 and the Cool Climate Change Strategy.

Cycle Route Network

The current strategic cycle route network is a Liverpool City Region Partnership activity coordinated by Merseytravel. Details of the Liverpool City Region Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) can be found at <https://www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/LCWIP-REPORT-FULL.pdf>

Currently, there is a total of 22 cycle counters in Wirral, located on key commuter/leisure routes, which monitor the levels of cycle usage in the borough.

During the lifespan of the [Local Transport Plan 3](#) (LTP3), the target for cycling was a 12% increase across Merseyside (compared with the 2010/11 baseline). The current indicator now sits at 46%, exceeding the target set by 34%.

At a local level, the Wirral Plan 2020 <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/about-council/wirral-plan-performance> reports cycle usage increased 59% from 2013-14 to 2017-18. https://www.wirral.gov.uk/sites/default/files/all/About%20the%20council/Wirral%20Plan/Pledges/Q4%202020%20Pledges/Pledge%2013%202019_20%20Q4%20Transport.pdf

Future Development

Going forward, Wirral's growth aspirations will present opportunities to encourage and enable an increase in cycling. Therefore, there is a need to consider the implementation of an efficient and usable cycle network, and plan how this is developed and managed. As part of the planning application process, we ensure that cycle parking is provided at key developments, along with other accompanying features for cyclists to ensure the development is accessible by bike.

We are currently developing a comprehensive Active Travel Plan which will provide a framework for the development of our walking and cycling network going forward and support future funding bids.

4.16 Public Rights of Way

A Public Right of Way (PROW) is a highway, usually in the form of a footpath, which the public has a right to use at any time. We currently maintain around 160km (100 miles) of public footpaths, bridleways and byways, plus other 'permissive' paths.

The official PROWs are recorded in the Definitive Statement, which is available [here](#).

4.17 Coaches

Coach parking helps to attract tourism which in turn has beneficial effects on the local economy. Drop off/pick up facilities are located at Europa Pools along Conway Street, and on Chester Street, Birkenhead nearby the Woodside gyratory (to accommodate national and local services). The Chester Street facility is situated close to Hamilton Square train station, and Woodside bus and ferry terminal.

The current provision of coach parking within the borough is considered to be acceptable, however as part of the Council's regeneration programme there will be a requirement to evaluate the future need for such facilities to prevent any future problems on the network.

4.18 Taxis

The Licensing Service is responsible for issuing all taxi related licences, as required by law. They also monitor compliance with licence conditions, standard of service offered to the public and take enforcement action where necessary ([Taxi and Private Hire](#)).

The following taxi-related licences are issued by the Licensing Section:

- Private Hire Driver
- Private Hire Vehicle
- Private Hire Operator
- Hackney Carriage Driver
- Hackney Carriage Vehicle

There is currently a limit on the number of Hackney licences issued by Wirral Council. Recently, an independent review of Hackney licenses was carried out with the findings of the review indicating the current provision, and limit, of Hackney licences could be maintained with no effect on service provision. We continue to review Hackney licence provision to ensure the needs of our residents, businesses and visitors are met. Taxi rank and operational issues are considered at the Private Hire / Hackney Carriage Joint Consultative Committee.

Car Parks

The Parking Policy and Strategy is available to view [online](#). It encompasses both on-street and off-street parking and provides a framework for parking management within the borough. It will be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure it continues to complement, and secure delivery of, parking policy dependant strategies such as the climate emergency and active travel plans linked to government legislation and other local policies. We are continuing to expand our network of Electric Vehicle charging points. Blue badge holders continue to be able to park for free in any of the disabled parking spaces or standard Pay & Display parking bays.

Additionally, we are an advocate of JustPark – a cashless parking system that allows users to pay via a mobile app. Drivers are also able to search, navigate to, and pay for parking spaces using the app. Cashless parking is available at all pay and display car parks throughout Wirral.

4.19 Park & Ride

Park and Ride facilities are essential in reducing the dominance of private vehicular trips, thus alleviating congestion on the road network. In conjunction with Merseytravel, we offer park and ride services at 12 rail stations in Wirral which also include cycle storage facilities ([Secure Cycle Shelters](#)):

- Birkenhead North (630 spaces)
- Bidston (198 spaces)
- Bromborough (87 spaces)
- Eastham Rake (101 spaces)
- Green Lane (60 spaces)
- Hoylake (167 spaces)
- Leasowe (207 spaces)
- Bebington (24 spaces)
- Meols (62 spaces)
- Moreton (34 spaces)
- Rock Ferry (25 spaces)
- Spital (141 spaces)
- Wallasey Grove Road (168 spaces)
- Seacombe Ferry Terminal (200 spaces)

Wirral continue to liaise with Merseytravel to deliver a rolling programme of P&R improvements. Consideration will also be given to the introduction of bus-based P&R if/where appropriate, to expand choice for travellers and encourage modal shift.

We ensure that access to all stations by all modes of transport is available, ensuring crossings are in appropriate locations, bus stops are to standard, and cycle parking is provided at stations. Regular engagement is undertaken with Merseytravel and Merseyrail to address specific issues.

4.20 Motorcycles

We are part of the BikeSafe initiative, which is a nationwide plan of action to reduce the number of motorcycle collision casualties by promoting safer riding. BikeSafe Merseyside was formed as a partnership between Merseyside Police, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service and Wirral Council as an active response within the national BikeSafe initiative. BikeSafe workshops are held on the Wirral to promote safe riding systems for everyday motorcyclists.

Additionally, motorbike users do not need to display permits, vouchers or pay and display tickets and can park for free in any Wirral Council pay and display car park or on street pay and display parking bays. Car parks with specific motorbike parking bays include:

- Claughton Road/Oliver Street, Birkenhead
- Barton Street, Birkenhead
- Elgin Way, Birkenhead

- Seaview Road, Liscard
- Manor Road, Liscard
- Cherry Tree Centre, Liscard

4.21 Abnormal Loads

An 'abnormal load' is defined as a vehicle which has any of the following:

- A weight of more than 44,000 kilograms (44 metric tons)
- An axle load of more than 10,000 kilograms for a single non-driving axle and 11,500 kilograms for a single driving axle
- A width of more than 2.9 metres
- A length of more than 18.65 metres

Two days' notice is required if a driver intends to take an abnormal load on the highway network. For large enquiries, i.e. from Highways England, assessments are made within five full days and involves liaison with the Police where escorts are required.

Whilst abnormal load movements often take place during off-peak hours, there is usually minimal effect on congestion.

Highways England's Electronic Service Delivery for Abnormal Loads (ESDAL)

[ESDAL](#) is Highways England's official website that is used by police, hauliers, local highway authorities, bridge authorities and any other interested agency, to effectively manage the movement of Abnormal Indivisible Loads throughout the UK.

All information is captured and stored by Highways England via a web portal. A haulier will enter the details of the Abnormal Indivisible Load movement, and the software will provide a map of a suitable route, informing the haulier of any structures that may pose a hazard (e.g. a weak bridge). The software automatically notifies the Police and any other interested agency in every Force area that the load is to pass through. This provides the relevant authority and Police the opportunity to raise an objection. The haulier must then carry out an effective risk-assessment regarding the resource required. The software automatically highlights notifications that have not been made within the legal timeframe, enabling the Police to decide whether to accept or reject the notification.

5.0 Managing the Network

5.1 Integrated Network Management

Recommendation 6 (An Integrated Network) of the Road Liaison Group's [Well Managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice](#) document states that "*The highway network should be considered as an integrated set of assets when developing highway infrastructure maintenance policies*".

Highway infrastructure management policy needs to be developed integrally with the overall management of the network. We consider the needs of all road users, particularly the vulnerable, in planning and managing the network. This has special implications for maintenance, as when schemes are planned and programmed, there may be an opportunity to incorporate added value to safety, priority, integrity or quality of:

- footways and crossing facilities (particularly for vulnerable users);
- cycle routes and crossing facilities;
- motorcyclists;
- facilities for public transport and users (and also to influence reliability); and
- facilities for freight movement.

5.2 Network Operation

The Network Management Plan forms the basis for operation of the network and how it should be developed. The overall aim is to:

- Achieve an easy to use, consistent and functional road network for all users which links well with its neighbours; and
- Facilitate the efficient and safe movement of people and goods whilst protecting the quality of life within communities.

The Council will continue to implement innovative, value for money solutions that get more out of the existing transport network without compromising road safety. These solutions include continuing and expanding our behavioural change initiatives to reduce traffic volumes, improving the attractiveness of commercially operated public transport services through partnership with bus operators, improving walking and cycling facilities, targeted demand management through parking management and replacement and upgrading of the current urban traffic control system to provide route guidance and journey time information.

Roadworks on the network have the potential to cause congestion, even if only temporary, this can add delays and frustration to road users. It is therefore essential that all roadworks by any contractor is properly managed.

The Network Management Plan will look to minimise the impact of traffic and congestion on the network and support all modes of transport.

We will:

- Update and continue to develop our Local Street Gazetteer (LSG) to ensure all information is kept centrally and controlled from one point of contact. The Council's Geographic and Mapping team maintains the Street network for Wirral that feeds into the [National Street](#)

[Gazetteer](#) and is utilised by the Streetworks team as well as external partners including Department for Transport, emergency services and statutory undertakers;

- Review and update our traffic sensitive streets in-line with Government guidance;
- Develop and implement a map-based system for recording Traffic Regulation Orders;
- Extend street works management practices to include the authority's own work, works undertaken by developers and utility companies;
- Continue to operate effective parking regulation and control, regularly reviewing our policies and procedures to ensure that they support the delivery of the NMP;
- Work to ensure that all regulatory features, such as double yellow lines and other such parking restrictions are maintained to a standard that enables their enforcement;
- Review the awareness of works programmes and congestion implications within the Highways Operational Services contract;
- Improve the high quality walking and cycling route network with priority given to New Brighton, Birkenhead and Leasowe through the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan process;
- Be aware of and support any future technological advances that could impact on network operation (electric and autonomous vehicles);

5.3 Permit Scheme

In October 2017, we became a permit authority. This replaced the previous notification process where works promoters would submit a 'notice' advising the council of intended works. The permit scheme allows us to have more control over the time and nature of works taking place on the highway, particularly on parts of the network which are traffic sensitive.

Under the permit scheme, organisations, such as utility companies, now need to [apply for a permit](#) before they start any works on the highway network. The only exception to this is emergency works, as defined in section 52 of the [New Roads and Street Works Act, 1991](#).

Aims of the Permit Scheme

Being a permit scheme authority enables, amongst other things, the following:

- apply parity to all works promoters carrying out activities on the highway;
- encourage collaborative working;
- enable greater coordination of all planned works;
- reduce the disruption and delays caused by street and road works;
- enhance safety of all road users at street and road works; and
- enhance the reliability of activities taking place at a particular time on the Strategic Road Network.

Going Forward

Communication and strong links between all highway service areas is essential to achieving the aims of the permit scheme, which contribute towards good network management. The implementation of the permit scheme is overseen by the Traffic Manager, who is responsible

for considering the impacts of works/events on the highway, encouraging communication and coordination of those works/events and making decisions regarding what work should and should not take place.

Dig Once

Liverpool City Region are investing in building a 200km+ digital infrastructure network across all 6 local authorities to provide fibre backhaul connectivity to support and boost economic opportunities and social inclusiveness. The programme will be owned and managed in conjunction with a joint venture partner (to be appointed in November 2020) and is expected to be completed by 2023.

The 200km+network is referred to as the spine route and there is expected to be interest in some locations in connecting the spine route with existing or new ducting laid and owned by individual local authorities.

A “ Dig Once” policy is to be introduced to ensure that where there are highway initiatives such as regeneration or upgrade programmes running alongside or in close proximity to the spine route , the opportunity is not missed to lay ducting as part of the scheme. This will be funded by LCR and the agreement will be that LCR will therefore subsequently own and maintain the ducting and fibre network.

Dig once opportunities “off spine” are being considered in the same way but they will not be LCR funded and will be owned and maintained by the individual LA.

5.4 Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTRO)

A TTRO is made when it is necessary to prohibit or control vehicular and/or pedestrian traffic along the highway for the duration of works or an event on the highway, and can be applied to roads, footways or public rights of way. We will make a TTRO on behalf of a works/event promoter to cover planned situations, whilst an emergency notice may be also necessary if access is needed without delay. Details of different types of TTROs are found in the [Road Traffic Regulation Act, 1984](#).

TTROs are normally used to allow works to be carried out on apparatus located within the highway. This typically includes the installation of, or maintenance works to services such as gas, electricity, water etc. We require as much notice as possible when applying for a TTRO as the works must be publicised in the local press; minimum timeframes for TTRO applications is 12 weeks.

5.5 Congestion

The impact of congestion on businesses and quality of life is a concern to many residents, business owners and road users. Economic costs, air quality and noise pollution are often raised as the main problems associated with congestion.

Some parts of our road network currently experience congestion problems at peak times, and other areas are likely to suffer in the future, when development associated with Wirral’s growth aspirations are brought forward.

We monitor congestion hotspots by collecting data from traffic signal controllers and CCTV locations. It is crucial that these areas are closely monitored to minimise the impacts of congestion. Knowing where congestion occurs now, where it may occur in the future, why

congestion is happening and what roads are affected enables us to prioritise improvements to the network.

Ensuring that the network is managed, and maintained effectively, can also help to reduce the economic, and environmental cost of congestion in the borough.

To support future network planning Wirral uses a SATURN traffic model which is the lower tier highway model to the over-arching strategic regional Liverpool City Region Traffic Model.

5.6 Bridge Strikes

A bridge strike occurs when a motor vehicle crashes into a bridge at a location where a road or railway passes over a road. These incidents can cause death or serious injury to road and/or rail users. After an incident, the bridge needs to be checked to make sure it is safe, and debris is to be cleared. This can cause significant delays to both road and rail users, as well as disruption to the affected community.

If a bridge strike occurs, it should immediately be reported to Network Rail by using the telephone number on the identification plate fixed to the bridge. Network Rail, working with police forces, have developed a [bridge strike protocol](#), which details the roles and responsibilities of the respective control offices when responding to a reported bridge strike.

The Traffic Manager acts as the 'bridge champion' and is the first point of call for any issues related to bridge strikes.

5.7 Partners

In fulfilling the Network Management Duty, we work closely with a series of key partners, both within and beyond the borough boundary. Our partners include:

- All internal Wirral Council Departments
- Highways England
- LCR Combined Authority
- All LCR Local Authorities
- Cheshire West and Chester
- Mersey Dee Alliance
- Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service
- Merseyside Police
- Merseyside Regional Ambulance Service
- Merseytravel including Mersey Tunnels
- National and Regional Traffic Control Centres
- Statutory Undertakers
- Developers
- Other undertakers, e.g. developers, etc.
- Passenger Transport Operators

- The Public

Forums exist for liaison with the above partners, including:

Regional Traffic Managers Meeting: Liaison between neighbouring authority Traffic Managers.

Highways England – Liaison with Highways England and their agents through quarterly co-ordination meetings.

5.8 Co-ordination of Planned & Unplanned Events

Arrangements are in place to gather information about planned works or events. It is the role of the Traffic Manager to consider how to organise these works and agree (or stipulate) the timing of these works or events to minimise disruption to the network.

Currently, anybody planning on hosting an outdoor event in Wirral is required to liaise with the Wirral Event Safety Advisory Group (WESAG), in order to help plan safely. Guidance for planned events is available [online](#). WESAG is made up of a number of agencies, including:

- Highways
- Wirral Council Licensing
- Parks and Countryside
- Environmental Health
- Health Safety and Resilience
- Merseyside Police
- Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service
- North West Ambulance Service
- Merseytravel

Co-ordination between statutory undertakers and event planners is key to ensure there are no conflicts between the two, with regard to permits.

Management of Unplanned Events

Unplanned events occur outside a local authority's control. Contingency plans have been established for dealing with unplanned events on the public highway promptly and effectively. The Traffic Manager ensures that all parties involved in making these contingency arrangements are fully aware of their responsibilities when unplanned events occur on the public highway and have the information they need to put the necessary plans into practice quickly.

Most unplanned incidents, whether on the highway network or not, can have implications for road users, causing disruption and congestion. Examples include; inclement weather, tidal surges, terrorist incidents, collapsed building, etc. Procedures are in place to manage the effect of such incidents, which cover dealing with the incident itself and communicating it to road users and stakeholders.

We work in-house to control incidents and provide responses to any unplanned events on the highway (e.g. signage to show road closures/diversions, notification to emergency services). Responses are planned in close conjunction with Highways England, who are notified of any incidents on the Major Route Network. In the event of incidents on the

motorway network, tactical diversion routes via the local road network have been agreed with Highways England during motorway closures.

The Civil Contingencies Act requires that we, as a 'Category One Responder', ensure we can respond in support of the emergency services following a major incident. We have adopted an '*All Hazards Emergency Plan*' which ensures that emergency services would receive comprehensive support from Wirral Council, if needed.

We manage all incidents on the highway 'in-house' to ensure they are managed quickly and effectively from an early stage. For incidents that occur outside of normal working hours, a Senior Duty Officer is responsible for co-ordinating the response which may involve utilising the highways emergency call out service. This may involve attending the incident and ensuring appropriate measures are in place in cooperation with the emergency services and other service providers. Where the incident requires a road closure or traffic diversions arrangements are in place to set out adequate signage to indicate the road closures, diversions, etc ([Emergency contact arrangements](#)).

It is the role of the Traffic Manager to act as the first point of contact for unplanned events/incidents on the highway and to communicate those messages throughout the highways service. This ensures that the information can be conveyed to the relevant council officers, neighbouring local authorities and/or emergency services, as appropriate.

Routine Co-Ordination of Highway Works/Street Works Activities

In accordance with Section 59 of NRSWA 1991 Wirral Council hold major works co-ordination meetings on a quarterly basis with statutory undertakers and key stakeholders.

The invitation extends to the Police and our Neighbouring authorities. The meetings are designed to discuss both planned utility works and major highway works forthcoming in the year and provides details of major projects. This meeting is used to foresee and plan what's projected to happen in the future. As we are now a permit authority, statutory undertakers access to the traffic sensitive network requires a permit and works cannot be carried out without permission of Wirral Council.

Leadership is key to ensure these meetings are successful and achieve the primary objectives of maximising works coordination and minimising highway disruption. It is the responsibility of the Streetworks Manager to attend these meetings to provide direction where conflicts occur and offer decision making at a senior officer level.

5.9 Highway Authority and Utilities Committee Meetings (HAUC)

HAUC meetings bring highway authorities and utility service providers together with the aim of reducing the impact of street and road works on members of the public throughout Wirral. HAUC meetings work to ensure that processes, systems and legislation do not hamper the travelling public, whilst continuing to maintain the essential services that utility companies and highway authorities provide.

It is the responsibility of the Traffic Manager to attend, or to allocate a representative with the appropriate skills and senior level to attend these meetings.

5.10 Joint Authorities Group (JAG)

Wirral Council attend the Joint Authorities Group North West quarterly meeting. The JAG includes members of the emergency services and Merseytravel and plays a vital role in ensuring events taking place on the highway are effectively organised, safeguarding and maximising the provisions contained in the New Roads and Streetworks Act (1991) and the Traffic Management Act (2004), and is particularly relevant to the Traffic Sensitive Network.

The aforementioned Acts give powers to the highway authorities to control the activities of utility works on its highway network, which is an essential component in enabling the Traffic Manager to satisfy the requirements of the Network Management Duty. It is the responsibility of the Traffic Manager to either attend, or send a suitably skilled and senior representative, to these meetings.

5.11 Asset Management

Highway asset management is intrinsically linked to network management. Maintenance of the asset is key to ensuring the expeditious movement of traffic on the network; a fundamental principle of network management. The latest guidance on the application of asset management principles are set out in the new national [Code of Practice](#) 'Well Managed Highway Infrastructure' (WMHI) published in October 2016 by the UK Roads Liaison Group.

Self-Assessment

In December 2014, the Secretary of State for Transport announced that £6bn would be made available between 2015/16 and 2020/21 for local highways maintenance and capital funding. This incentive fund is allocated to authorities who apply good asset management principles with a 'self-assessment' questionnaire providing a set of [criteria](#) to qualify for funding.

The self-assessment system ranks us into 1 of 3 bands which correlates with the level of funding provided, with band 3 representing the highest level of funding. Each year a sliding scale reduces the proportion of funding provided to authorities who do not achieve band 3 in order to incentivise continuous improvement. It is our aim to achieve band 3, which enables the highest incentive fund allocation from central government.

Our latest submission met the criteria for band 2 funding. The Director for Neighbourhood Services is committed to ensuring that we meet the criteria which enables us to apply for 'band 3' funding. In response to the self-assessment process we have recently adopted the following asset management policies aimed at providing an overarching framework for good asset management in the borough:

- Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Policy (HIAMP)
- Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Strategy (HIAMS)

Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Policy (HIAMP) and Strategy (HIAMS)

The following Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Policy statements have been developed based on the required outcomes of the Wirral Council Plan 2025 and the Wirral Local Plan and the contribution that highway services make towards delivering those outcomes.

Statement 1

Wirral Council will publish and operate a formalised Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Strategy, aligned to the corporate vision, to ensure the optimal use and direction of the Council's resources in managing and maintaining the borough's highway assets for the benefit of current and future stakeholders. Plans and practices will be developed and reviewed to support the Strategy.

Statement 2

Wirral Council will plan all aspects of maintenance intervention and treatment choices using a formalised asset management, risk-based approach taking into consideration the safety of stakeholders, customer expectations, network hierarchy, levels of service, network condition and social / environmental impact.

Key Supporting Principles

The Strategy is based on the need to:

- Support the vision and aims of the Council;
- Support transport objectives and other corporate and local strategies, objectives and plans;
- Meet statutory obligations;
- Provide a safe and serviceable, customer focused highway network;
- Set out clear decision-making processes and levels of service through consultation with stakeholders;
- Provide effective prediction of future budget requirements and make value for money decisions based upon whole-life lifecycle models for all core highway assets; these models will allow us to predict and undertake timely intervention, using appropriate maintenance methods and maximising operational life for optimum whole life costs (both short and long term);
- Take account of the needs of all highway users and support measures that will improve assets that encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport;
- Utilise the most sustainable resources and methods throughout an asset's lifecycle with the aim of reducing, and where possible mitigating, environmental impacts;
- Identify the network hierarchy and review the resilience of these networks towards disruptive events; management and maintenance of the networks will be prioritised to minimise the effect of these events;
- Adopt a risk-based approach for all aspects of highway maintenance including setting levels of service, inspections, responses, resilience, priorities and programmes to obtain a clear understanding and assessment of the likelihood of asset failure and the potential consequences; and,
- Collaborate with our partners and stakeholders in addition to neighbouring authorities, and in particular the Liverpool City Region, to increase efficiencies, reduce costs and sustain local service levels.

5.12 General Maintenance

Maintenance Type

The main types of highway maintenance are as follows:

- reactive - responding to inspections, complaints or emergencies;
- routine - regular consistent schedule, general pothole repairs / patching, cleaning, grass cutting and landscape maintenance;
- programmed - flexibly planned schemes primarily of resurfacing, reconditioning or reconstruction;
- regulatory - inspecting and regulating the activities of others;
- winter maintenance; and
- resilience - weather and other emergencies.

Each of these maintenance types contribute in varying degrees to the core objectives of safety, serviceability and sustainability. The Senior Manager for Highways Maintenance and Street Lighting compiles a maintenance plan each year, based on road classification and condition and works closely with the Streetworks team to ensure the maintenance programme is coordinated with statutory undertakers to minimise disruption and enhance network operation.

Maintenance Category

Within each of the above types there are various categories of maintenance as follows, each of which should be considered in terms of their output contribution towards the core objectives of safety, serviceability and sustainability:

Reactive

- all assets - sign and make safe for safety purposes.
- all assets - provide initial temporary repair for safety purposes.
- all assets - provide permanent repair for safety purposes.

Routine

- carriageways, footways and cycle routes - minor works and patching.
- drainage systems - cleansing and repair.

The following measures will be used to plan works effectively:

- Best use of school holidays for works to take advantage of reduced traffic flow;
- Internal team meetings to agree on programming of highway works;
- Agreement of night-time working if appropriate and acceptable to Environmental Health with regard to noise nuisance in residential areas;
- Weekend closures to carry out works if necessary in consultation with residents and businesses;
- Review the Traffic Sensitive Street Network, including the hours of traffic sensitivity;
- Meetings with event's organisers/developers/utility companies and highway contractors to discuss individual works and local conditions; and
- Attendance at neighbouring boroughs co-ordination meetings to discuss impact of works on each other's networks.

Winter Maintenance

The Highway Winter Service Operational Plan sets out the standards for the treatment of the borough's highway network as a consequence of winter weather. The Highway Winter Service Policy (2019-20) sets out our approach, and details how winter service will be managed.

The Policy is based on the need to adopt priorities for winter service, which are coherent with the wider objectives for transport, integration, accessibility and network management, including strategies for public transport, walking and cycling. It looks to:

- Maintain the resilience of the network.
- Consider treatment of facilities for public transport users.
- Consider treatment of facilities for road user.
- Consider treatment of facilities for walking and cycling.
- Consider treatment of transport interchanges.
- Consider treatment of promoted facilities such as community or leisure centres.
- Consider the extent of priority for emergency services.
- Consider the extent of priority for key public services and critical infrastructure.
- Consider the extent of priority for vulnerable users.
- Maintain the resilience of Winter Service resources.
- Consider other local circumstances that maybe adversely affected.

Street Repairs

We have a duty to ensure that all roads and footpaths in our ownership are properly looked after and safe to use. This includes signs and road markings on the highway. Ensuring that repairs are undertaken quickly can have a positive effect on safety and ensures the network is suitable for all modes of travel for all users.

We undertake safety inspections of all roads and footpaths at regular intervals to ensure there are no significant hazards which could endanger highway users.

Structural Maintenance Engineering Work on the Highway

An [annual structural maintenance rolling programme](#) is compiled by Highways and Infrastructure Services and approved by the Environment, Climate Emergency and Highways Committee. This programme looks at the requirements for structural engineering works on existing highway assets (such as bridges, culverts, embankments, retaining structures, footbridges and cycleways) and is prioritised on a risk-based approach taking account of safety, network hierarchy, levels of use, network condition and environmental impact.

5.13 Technology

Technology continues to develop at breath-taking speed. This brings with it challenges and opportunities in equal measure. We must be – and will be – a council which is fit for the digital world.

Urban Traffic Control Unit (UTC)

The UTC unit acts as a hub for traffic control, maintenance of traffic control systems, and other intelligent transport systems, linked to multiple central control systems. UTC monitors and controls the operation of signal installations, and helps Wirral in achieving the following objectives:

- Well maintained and reliable traffic signal equipment;
- Active real-time control to reduce congestion and improve traffic flow;
- Provide road safety traffic control measures;
- Promote reliable journey times; and
- Provide accurate information.

We have implemented measures to optimise signal timings on major routes in the borough, making use of Split Cycle Offset Optimisation Technique (SCOOT) which reduces congestion and delay by monitoring traffic flow on a corridor and altering traffic signal timings to suit real time conditions. This ensures that the traffic signals are operating correctly and that most faults are automatically recognised and reported to our maintenance contractors as soon as possible.

As part of the Key Route Network funding, the Liverpool City Region has recently received the funds to upgrade the entire SCOOT network across the city region. This would enable consistency of traffic signal technology throughout the network and allow each controller to interact with each other to enhance operational efficiency across borders, with the aim of reducing congestion and delay. It will therefore enable our traffic signals to communicate with adjacent Authorities' systems Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS). Additionally, our Traffic Signals Officer attends the Northwest Traffic Signals Group, which enhances collaboration between neighbouring boroughs.

The UTC unit and SCOOT system is complemented by an extensive CCTV network. This system ensures capacity efficiency in the highway network and is used on the main strategic routes within the borough.

Stratos Software

We utilise Stratos software – a cloud-based traffic signal management technology which is used for UTC and traffic signal management purposes. Stratos has been developed by Siemens, who are the term maintenance contractor for traffic signal installations in Wirral.

Stratos is designed as a Strategic Traffic Management tool with capabilities including:

- Urban Traffic Control
- Remote Monitoring
- Journey Time and Environmental Monitoring
- Variable Message Sign
- Fault Management
- Car Park information
- Disruptions Management
- Public facing website capability

InView Software

InView is a fault and asset management system developed by Siemens. It allows Traffic Managers to keep a record of traffic monitoring and control equipment and track the status of that equipment (including maintenance issues, running costs and equipment reliability). It is cloud-based, with a web browser interface, and offers fault reporting and asset management.

Once a fault is logged, the Siemens depot in Lowton is alerted. The messages are conveyed to the relevant engineers, who carry handheld devices capable of notifying the details of the problem, who is then responsible for responding to the issue. The severity of the issue then influences the response priority.

One.Network

Roadworks.org is the national roadworks database for England and Wales. This system, developed by Elgin, is embedded to the Wirral Council [website](#), and allows the public to view full details of all roadworks at a single click. The software can be set up to provide notification of works or events on the highway in Wirral and is also able to notify diversion routes to users, to improve awareness of road closures and enable users to plan journeys accordingly.

Variable Message Signs (VMS)

We have a number of Variable Message Sign installations throughout the borough. These are an effective means of communicating messages to highway users to inform of incidents or events on the highway network, such as road closures, to assist road users route choice and make best use of available highway capacity.

VMS is an integral part of the UTC and can provide information on a wide variety of events/incidents/roadworks to appropriately influence travel behaviour, with the primary function being to deliver early traffic information so motorists can divert from their chosen course if necessary. They also have a role to play in notifying motorists of forthcoming events, major incidents, environmental requirements and even delivering road safety messages.

VMS are present on Local Authority roads approaching the Mersey Tunnels, with two signs on the Wallasey Tunnel Approach Road, one heading towards the Tunnel and one heading towards the motorway. These are not connected to those on the motorway. However, in the future, the VMS will be capable of linking to corresponding systems in other LCR Local Authorities.

The new 'A Bridge' on Tower Road is a key asset of our strategic road network and facilitates access to the Port of Liverpool and major regeneration sites. VMS is also utilised on approach to the bridge, which notifies motorists of closures and provides alternative routes.

Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS)

A number of Vehicle Activated Signs are available throughout the borough. VAS are road signs that light up to warn drivers of a hazard, typically a speed limit or hazard near a school. The signs are activated if drivers travel above the speed limit or too fast for local conditions, focusing the driver's attention back to the required speed.

Journey Time Monitoring

Local Authorities are required to demonstrate tangible evidence that their traffic-reduction measures are having a positive effect on highway operation. One way of doing this is through journey time monitoring using Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR). There are a number of ANPR units throughout the borough which could be used for journey time monitoring.

Customer Relations Management (CRM)

Our CRM system allows it to fulfil its customer facing responsibilities, including any queries on traffic management, infrastructure assets and waste management services. The system has a service level agreement of 10 days for MPs and councillors, and 15 days for the general public. Contact can be made via the [council website](#) which also has online chat facilities.

5.14 Highway Obstructions

The Police have the powers to deal with highway obstructions. It is our duty to work alongside Police in order to keep the public highway clear – not just for vehicles, but for pedestrian footways, cycleways and public rights of way.

5.15 Miscellaneous Activity

In addition to highway works and events, the [Highways Act 1980](#) sets out the legislative regime controlling a variety of other activities on the highway. This includes the placing of skips, scaffolding and building materials on the highway.

There are measures in place to manage applications and licences for skips and scaffolding, which is overseen by Building Control. This information is then shared with the Streetscene manager, who has the final say on whether the license is granted. The coordination between Building Control, Streetscene and the permit scheme helps to reduce conflict.

Details of how to apply for a skip permit are found on the council [website](#).

5.16 Enforcement

Enforcement is an essential element in keeping traffic moving on the highway network. It also assists in realising the full effectiveness of schemes introduced for road safety or accident reduction purposes and can help in the delivery of demand management and modal choice objectives.

5.17 Powers

Tackling congestion on the road network is a key aim of the Network Management Duty. The TMA gives us the powers to consider what measures are necessary to keep roads clear in order to keep traffic moving. We have a range of powers and duties under which we maintain and improve the network and manage its use and the activities taking place. These powers include:

- Highways Act 1980 principally covering the structure of the network;
- New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 covering utility street works;
- Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 regulating the activities of road users.

The TMA adds to these powers, imposing the Network Management Duty, which requires local traffic authorities to do all that is reasonably practicable to manage the network effectively to keep traffic moving.

Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's)

Through the provisions of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, we are able to make TRO's to manage and control where parking is permitted on the highway network, regulate speed limits and other moving traffic issues. Traffic regulation orders are prioritised for addressing road safety issues but can also be helpful to address other road traffic issues such as problematic parking or obstruction.

We will investigate updating and modernising how we capture Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO), using a map-based system. The system will allow consistency, quality and risk reduction in the TRO process.

5.18 CCTV

Our CCTV network plays an important role in keeping traffic moving. CCTV is present in town centres, community shopping areas, major traffic routes along with some housing estates and car parks. CCTV is key to identifying congestion locations on the network in real time live to provide early warnings of incidents in order to facilitate a swift response.

Camera Enforcement

Camera enforcement is already used on Merseyside as part of the Merseyside Road Safety Camera Partnership with the aim of improving road safety by speed awareness and enforcement.

The TMA 2004 allows for the enforcement of parking regulations with approved devices (fixed or mobile cameras). Mobile CCTV cameras are used in places where enforcement is difficult or sensitive such as school entrance markings. The mobile CCTV unit is prioritised based on requests from members of the public and council officers. Camera enforcement is considered an important element of the tool kit available to us to ensure the effects of congestion are minimised.

Currently Merseyside Police are responsible for enforcing the majority of moving traffic offences and other non-moving offences. However, through devolution of powers relating to moving traffic offences to local authorities, we are currently considering the feasibility of implementing enforcement on the following contraventions:

- Box junctions
- Banned turns
- Prohibition of stopping

Car Park Management

[The Road Traffic Act 1991](#) sets out the powers Local Traffic Authorities have in relation to parking enforcement. Authorities need to ensure that roadside controls preventing loading, parking, the banning of particular traffic movements continue to exist where there is a need for them.

Part 6 of the TMA provides for a single framework in England for the civil enforcement of parking. The aim of this is to provide a reasonable, transparent and proportionate system of parking enforcement that is applied consistently across the country. Thus, increasing public confidence by providing a system that can be seen to be balanced and fair to the motorists, whilst satisfying our transport and parking duties.

5.19 Education and Encouragement

Travel Planning

Congestion is a key barrier to movement and can impact upon the economy, environment and liveability of a city. Car use for travel to work has been increasing in Wirral and across LCR Merseyside. As regeneration continues and employment increases, the contribution of travel to work to congestion and poor air quality will also increase without intervention.

As one of the largest employers in Wirral, we recognise that we have a significant role to play in promoting sustainable travel. Sustainable travel can have a number of benefits in terms of reducing congestion, therefore benefitting the economy, environment and overall health and wellbeing. This is also supported by Wirral's Climate Change strategy which aims to use more sustainable modes of transport, more fuel-efficient vehicles and less polluting means of getting around.

Walking and Cycling Promotion

The benefits of increasing active travel are wide reaching for economic, transport, health and environment sectors.

A set of [cycle maps](#) have been developed by Merseytravel for local areas which cover Merseyside, and, in particular, Wirral. Merseytravel also work with BikeRight to offer free National Standard on-road cycle training to young people and children in Merseyside, organised through schools.

The new '[Arrive Happy](#)' campaign will also form part of the marketing strategy for cycling, presenting a positive opportunity to communicate the benefits of cycling and enabling greater activity. In addition to this, we also encourage cycle training for all ages through [Cycling UK](#).

Additionally, Wirral walking guides are available at www.visitwirral.com. Living Streets, working with Merseytravel, also celebrates National Walking Month, which provides incentives for walking (in the form of health benefits).

Communication and Informed Choices

All projects proposed by the council undergo a comprehensive consultation procedure involving all key stakeholders. Given the scale of forthcoming projects and the likely impact upon the highway network, detailed planning and consideration is required, in order to minimise network congestion and disruption particularly once works commence on-site.

Whilst it is acknowledged that some disruption is inevitable throughout the forthcoming development of Wirral's growth aspirations and Birkenhead Town Centre, it is important that relevant information is communicated effectively to road users and stakeholders so that journeys can be planned, and disruption minimised.

Improving Bus Services

Merseytravel are responsible for making decisions on bus service provision. When necessary, we will support commercial operators in reviewing, updating and improving new and existing bus infrastructure, services and routes. We must also be mindful of the impacts of any proposals on congestion and disruption particularly on major routes.

Wirral Council support Merseytravel with the introduction, replacement and upgrade of existing bus stops by assisting with identifying suitable locations, assessing impact on the highway and considering whether additional measures are required such as bus stop clearway road markings. The accessibility of bus service provision from existing footway and cycle links is also considered.

5.20 Personal Injury Collision Locations

Areas with poor road safety records are monitored closely. This gives us a platform of evidence to introduce mitigation schemes and improve road safety for all users. This could include traffic calming, speed limit reviews, altering the layout of a road or even closing a road. The [Wirral Road Safety Plan](#) details the approach to tackling identified road safety issues.

Under Section 39 of the 1988 Road Traffic Act, local authorities have a statutory duty to "take steps both to reduce and prevent accidents". As a result Local Authority Partners must:

- Prepare and carry out a programme of measures designed to promote road safety;
- Carry out studies into accidents arising out of the use of vehicles on roads within their area, and take appropriate measures to prevent such accidents; and
- Take measures to reduce the possibilities of road accidents when building new roads.

5.21 Planning & Development

The Highways Development Control team supports the planning department with the assessment of planning applications, purposely looking at the traffic and highway implications and the affect proposed development will have on it. We look to deliver development in conjunction with the documents described below.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The [NPPF](#) sets out the government's planning policies for England and how they are expected to be applied. It sets out the government's requirements for the planning system only to the extent that it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so. It provides a framework within which local people and their councils can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities.

The NPPF sets out the following guidelines regarding transport:

'All developments that generate significant amounts of movement should be supported by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment. Plans and decisions should take account of whether:

- *The opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up depending on the nature and location of the site, to reduce the need for major transport infrastructure*
- *Safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people*
- *Improvements can be undertaken within the transport network that cost effectively limits the significant impacts of the development. Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.*

Plans should protect and exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes for the movement of goods or people. Therefore, developments should be located and designed where practical to:

- *Accommodate the efficient delivery of goods and supplies;*
- *Give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements, and have access to high quality public transport facilities;*
- *Create safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians, avoiding street clutter and where appropriate establishing home zones;*
- *Incorporate facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles; and*
- *Consider the needs of people with disabilities by all modes of transport.'*

Wirral Unitary Development Plan (2000)

The [Unitary Development Plan](#) (UDP) sets out our policies and proposals for the use of land within the borough, and is an important factor in assessing and determining planning applications. In relation to transport, the document states that *'land-use policies and transport programmes should help to reduce growth in the length, and number of, motorised journeys, encourage alternative means of transport which have less environmental impact and hence reduce reliance on the motor car'*.

The overall aim of transport policy is to provide for the mobility needs of residents, visitors and local businessmen by providing the most efficient transport system possible within Wirral. The [transport section](#) in the UDP sets out a number of proposals and policies in itself which must be adhered to during the planning process.

5.22 The Future

Future Development

Over £4.5bn worth of development has been proposed for Wirral's growth aspirations. The complex project covers a number of sectors from housing, employment, industry and environment, and therefore creative approaches to inclusive placemaking are needed.

A design guide for the central area of Birkenhead and its waterfront with an associated Public Realm Strategy and Delivery Plan is currently under development. The five goals for public realm enhancement include:



We have put in place measures to ensure all development associated with Wirral's growth aspirations is overseen, and this new practical approach to placemaking is adhered to.

Future Mobility

The way people and goods travel from point A to point B is changing, driven by a series of converging technological and social trends. The rapid growth of carsharing and ridesharing; the increasing viability of electric and alternative powered vehicles; new, lightweight materials; the uptake of services such as Uber, and, ultimately, autonomous vehicles. The result is the emergence of a new ecosystem of mobility that could offer faster, cheaper, cleaner, safer, more efficient, and more customised travel.

6.0 Monitoring & Review

6.1 Action Plan

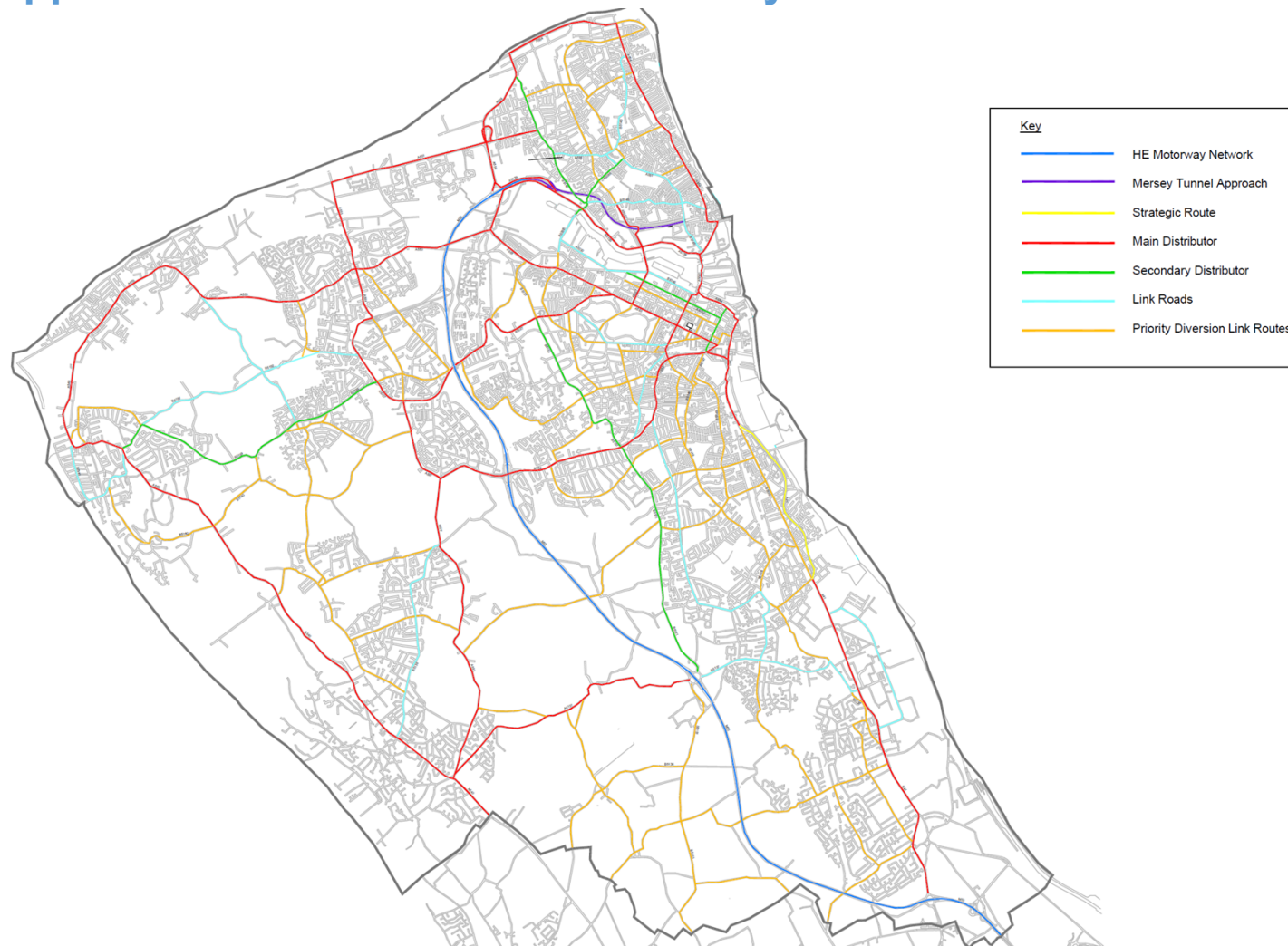
Action	Aim	Timescale	Performance Indicator
Review road classification	To review A and B roads across the borough to ensure that they are still appropriate for their classification to aid network management and traffic movement.	12 months	Findings of review have been implemented.
Review traffic sensitive roads	Formalise findings of the traffic sensitive road review to enable better control of works on the highway.	1-2 years	Update traffic sensitive road network.
Review management of traffic regulation order records	Consolidate orders and simplify system to bring up to date and to assist enforcement	1-2 years	Development of business case.
Cycle/walking networks	Continue to support the LCR in development of the Local Cycling and Walking Implementation Plan.	12 months	Implementation of findings from the LCWIP.
Traffic signals	Review of traffic signals to ensure optimisation in locations of known congestion.	12 months (annual review)	Annual report on traffic signal timing optimisation at congestion hotspots.
Freight routes	Support the Liverpool City Region Freight Strategy.	Ongoing	Successful implementation of the LCR Freight Strategy.
Coordinating highway occupation	System in place to ensure all activities on the highway are recorded to improve coordination between different service areas.	12 months	Council Streetscene, Utility and Public Events are all recorded on one system.
Communicate Network Management Plan across council, stakeholders and partners.	To ensure principals of network management are shared with other service areas, partners and neighbouring authorities.	6 months	Council departments and stakeholders are aware of network management duties

Provision of travel information	To ensure that the public is aware of works/events on the highway network to enable reliable journey times.	Ongoing	Members of public are aware of the applicable roadworks portal
Share best practice with Traffic Managers Group	To ensure neighbouring authorities have a consistent approach to network management.	Every 3-4 months	Neighbouring authorities adopt a consistent approach to cross-boundary issues
Asset management	Ensure Wirral meets the criteria for 'band 3' funding.	Immediately	Wirral receives their full share of DfT funding allocation.
Bridge Strike Protocol	Implementation of protocol	12 months	Joint strategy with Network Rail
Accident/road safety locations review	Highway officers are aware of collision hotspots and programmes are developed accordingly.	Annually	Road safety action plan
Bridge Champion	Traffic Manager to act as a 'bridge champion', who will be the point of call for any issues related to bridge strikes.	Immediately	TM to log all incidents relating to bridge strikes.
Road Safety Audits (RSA)	Develop RSA policy and guidance	1-2 years	Successful implementation and application of RSA policy.

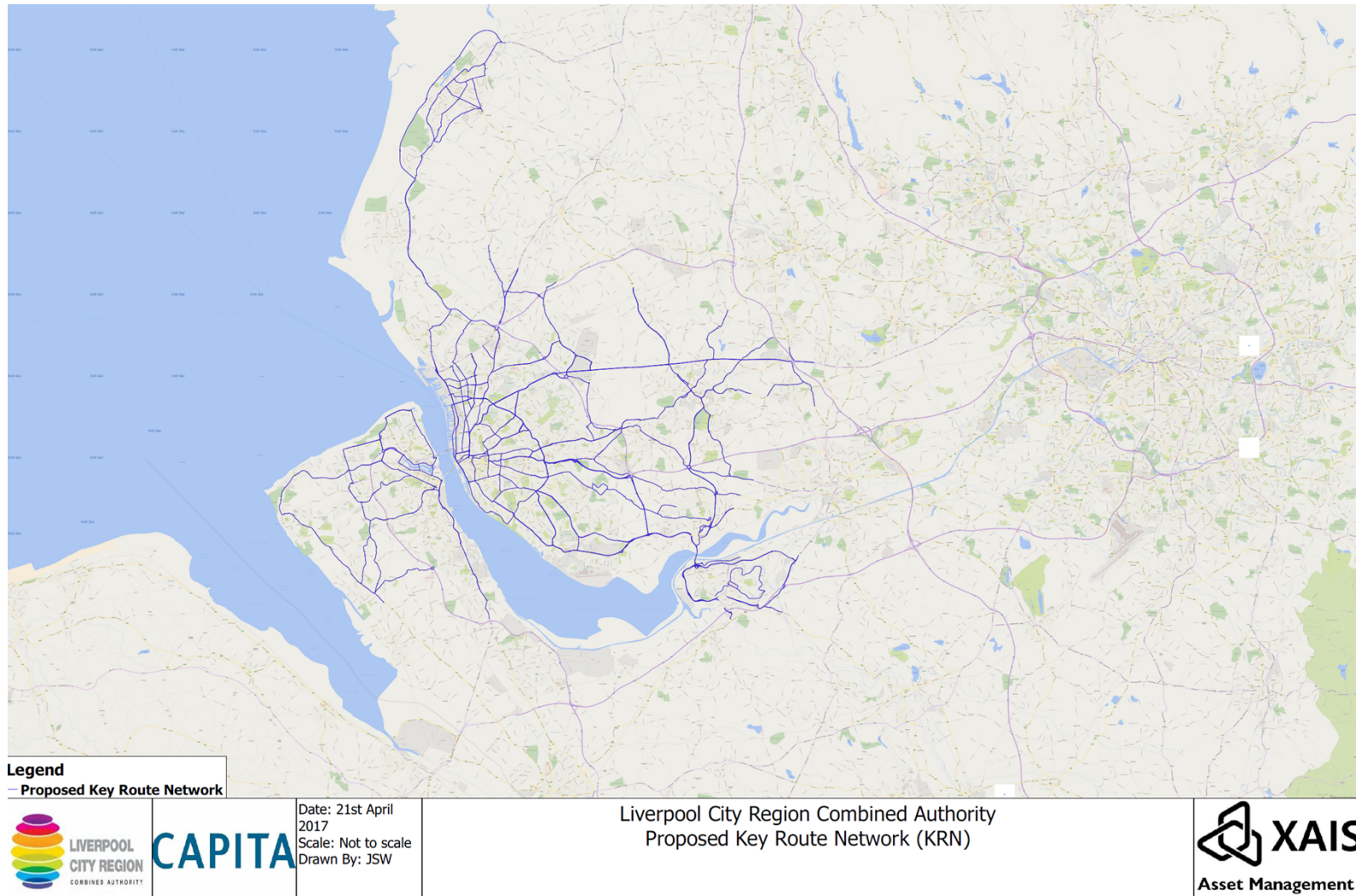
6.2 Monitoring Approach

Given the amount of change anticipated in Wirral over the coming years it is considered necessary to continually update and evolve the document to reflect the relevant issues at the time. An annual review is considered appropriate for monitoring the implementation of the plan and identified actions, with the Traffic Manager and Director for Neighbourhood Services taking account of progress in the interim periods.

Appendix A – Road Network Hierarchy



Appendix B – Key Route Network



Appendix C – Traffic Sensitive Route Network



Appendix D – Proposed Cycling & Walking Networks (LCWIP)

