

YOUR SAY 

 **WIRRAL**

Bidston & Claughton

(also covers St James & Noctorum)

Area Forum

Papers for the forum meeting

Wednesday 25th June 2008

**St Bede's Chapel & Community
Centre, 30 Upton Road,
Claughton, Wirral CH41 0DF**

7.00pm – 9.00pm

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<u>Section One</u>	Minutes from last meeting	3 - 9
<u>Section Two</u>	Sustainable Community	10
	Strong local economy	
➤	Prince Andrew unveils £1.75 million state-of-the-art maritime training centre	10
➤	Pride in the promenade	11
	Sustainable appropriate housing	
➤	Affordable renovated houses for sale	11
	Life chances for children and young people	
➤	Wirral given green light to offer new diplomas	12
➤	Young people's achievements celebrated	12
➤	Wirral Youth Service	13 - 14
	Safer communities	
➤	Wirral Anti Social Behaviour Team	15
➤	Merseyside police	16 - 18
➤	Bring Accidents Down 2 Zer0	18
➤	Wirral Council signs up to Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy	19
➤	Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service	19 - 21
	Health and well being	
➤	Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS foundation trust	21 - 22
➤	LINK – Wirral Local Involvement Network	23
	Living and working environment	
➤	Wirral top of recycling table	24
➤	Wirral receives a tourism boost	24
	Cross cutting	
➤	Equality Standard for Local Government (ESLG)	24 - 27
	Transport	
➤	Wrexham Bidston Electrification	27
➤	Press Release Daily Post March 2008	28
<u>Section Three</u>	Funding	29 - 36

Section One

Minutes - Area Forum (Bidston and Claughton) - 12 February 2008

Present	
Chair	Cllr Denise Roberts
Ward Councillors	John Cocker , George Davies , Steve Foulkes , Harry Smith
Community Representatives	Jean McIntosh
Older People's Parliament Representative	Edith Niblock
Lead Officer	John Webb (Director of Adult Services)
Area Service Co-ordinator	Michelle Gray
Wirral Primary Care Trust	Dr Abhi Mantgani (Medical Director)
Street Scene Manager	Gary Cummings
Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	Dr Judith McGennis
Merseyside Police	Inspector Paul Harrison
Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service	Ben Ryder
Council Officers	Jan Johnson (Minute Taker)
Apologies	Pat Landsborough (Claughton Community Group) , Cllr Ann McLachlan , Alison Moulder (Bidston Community representative)

Index to Minutes

- Minute 1 - Welcome, introductions & apologies
- Minute 2 - Minutes & matters arising from previous October forum
- Minute 3 - Area co-ordinators report
- Minute 4 - Sustainable Community Strategy
- Minute 5 - Partner Information
- Minute 6 - General public question time

Minute 1 - Welcome, introductions & apologies

The Chair, Councillor Denise Roberts, opened the meeting and welcomed forum members and eight members of the public to the Bidston & Claughton Area Forum meeting in St James Centre. A loop system was available for anyone with hearing impairment. There would opportunities for people to ask questions and the agenda would be adjusted to facilitate public question time at the end of the meeting for people to raise any other issues.

The Chair welcomed John Webb, Director of Adult Social Services, as the new Lead Officer who had taken over from the previous Lead Officer, Kevin Miller. The Chair then invited forum members to introduce themselves.

Minute 2 - Minutes & matters arising from previous October forum

The minutes of the Area Forum meeting of 5 June 2007 had been incorporated into the Area Co-ordinator's report and agreed as a true record.

Under matters arising page 10, following a query from a member of the public, information had been provided on the testing and replacing of electric blankets in areas of Wirral. Michelle had a full copy of the Wirral Warm Campaign Outcomes Analysis if anyone was interested.

Minute Decision : Resolved that: Minutes of the Forum held on 2 October 2007 be agreed.

Minute 3 - Area co-ordinators report

Michelle Gray gave an overview of her report:

Section 2 - provided information about current services and raised awareness of local Council initiatives

Section 3 – would be a regular feature for all 11 Area Forums and would include written updates from all partner organizations

Section 4 – update on Area Plans consisted of local statistical information/who's who/places of interest and was a really useful document for the forum and members of public. This was due to be updated in June

Section 5 – recent activities carried out by Streetscene

Section 6 – update on Equality & Diversity which gave information about our current working streams and what initiatives were taking place around equal opportunities

Section 7 – transport and travel

Section 8 – press releases re grant funding available to support Wirral's voluntary and community groups

Forum papers could be downloaded from the internet on www.wirral.gov.uk and, for those with no computer access, could use local library or One Stop Shop facilities.

Michelle would be happy to provide copies prior to the meeting if anyone requested this. michellegray@wirral.gov.uk or 0151 691 8213.

Minute Decision : Resolved: To thank the Area Co-ordinator for the report.

Minute 4 - Sustainable Community Strategy

Sue Weldon, Sustainable Community Co-ordinator, Department of Corporate Services attended the Forum to provide information on what the strategy means to you.

This was a requirement from Central Government, setting out a strategic long term vision for the area, in consultation with all partners. The Local Area Agreement (LAA) is the delivery plan for the Sustainable Community Strategy and set out priorities for our Borough. Its primary aim was to enhance the quality of life of local communities, with actions to improve economic, social and environmental well-being of the area.

The Strategy tells Wirral's story; what makes it unique; the differences between areas; and the problems that Wirral has to deal with. It also looked at solutions, as these would determine the long term vision, and developed an action plan.

Wirral was a Borough of stark contrasts, with 25 areas in 3% of the most deprived, but 7 areas in 10% of the most affluent. Significant inequalities included educational attainment, crime and worklessness. Solutions to solve the problems would look at focusing on right people and places, shared local action and shared principles.

They were broken down in themes such as: Strong local economy, Safer communities, Health & wellbeing, Living and working environment, Life changes for children and young people, Sustainable appropriate housing, plus educational priorities. Each had a number of priorities for improvement underneath it.

Sue went on to talk about how people could get involved and gave examples of how local actions could connect to strategic priorities. Each Area Forum had a list of actions going on which fits into those themes. The consultation document would be launched on the internet within the next couple of weeks and we would be advertising as widely as possible – press/community centres/One Stop Shops etc. hard copied would be available and if anyone wanted one just pass their contact details to Sue tonight and she would arrange.

Councillor Foulkes commented on the Council's just written new Corporate Plan, This was a wider document, with aims similar to those within the Sustainable Community Strategy and would look to the creation of more jobs in Wirral. It had set an ambitious target of getting 10,000 people into the world of work, with schemes being announced aimed at bringing higher paid jobs into Wirral. Both documents link together with one aim of improving quality of life.

Pauline Cocker remarked that might be difficult to get a good response to yet another public consultation and it might be better to go out into local community groups that exist and talk to people. Sue confirmed that they would be doing that as far as resources allowed.

Don Charlton fed back on eight themes of sustainability from a recent presentation he had attended at New Beginnings meeting.

Pauline Cocker asked whether it would be possible to have print off of presentation. Sue Weldon asked for contact details and she would email a copy.

Councillor Roberts asked how long was the consultation period?

It was 12 weeks and Sue Weldon would come back to later Area Forums to update on the results.

Councillor Foulkes referred to comments above and that it was fundamental to everything the Council does to communicate with everyone to ensure all feel included in what is going on. If anybody had a bright thought about how we get to large numbers of people simply and quickly please let us know.

A suggestion of connected to large social gatherings, with a survey of some simple questions was noted.

Minute 5 - Partner Information

Older People's Parliament (OPP)

Edith Niblock highlighted that Wirral Senior Citizen's Forum/Wirral OPP open forum would be held on 20 February between 10-12.30.

Fire and Rescue Service

Ben Ryder provided information on the implementation of the Hazardous Materials Incident Response Pump at Bromborough Fire Station. This resource, although Wirral based, would provide cover throughout Merseyside and was due to be implemented early this year.

Front line fire fighters were still doing home fire safety checks and providing smoke detectors and fire alarms. Reference was made to a road traffic collision scheme which was being piloted on Wirral. A proposal to start bringing front line fire fighters to these meetings was welcomed by the Forum, who noted they would have greater depth and knowledge of local issues.

Pauline Cocker – are you still looking for volunteers for the World Fire Fighter Games in Wirral?

Yes. This will be a massive event in the Capital of Culture year. Anybody who wanted to get involved should forward contact details to Ben who would pass them on. There were many events being held in Wirral and Ben would bring full schedule to the next meeting and also email Michelle in order to get out to everybody in advance.

Councillor John Cocker stated that one of things the media picks up is attacks on the Fire Brigade. Was there any update on that?

Unfortunately we have got incidents of violence involving firefighters. This effects other services too, police, nurses etc and is something that we are all working hard to combat. Firefighters are now embedded into schools in order to educate, but it would be a long task to capture hearts and minds. However, although Ben had personal experience of a couple of violence incidents, he had many more positive experiences to relate.

Councillor Smith asked whether this applied to primary schools as well.

Ben responded that they were trying to as it would be the best place to start,

however it was a continuous loop as there were issues also with those in secondary schools.

Community Safety

Dennis Jones from the Community Safety Team updated on their work. Progress continued to be made, with one of the main areas of contention with being Anti Social Behaviour. Pantha vehicles were being used to help combat car crime. Hot spot areas for burglary and shed breaks were being looked at to try and bring down figures. Although figures are good compared to across the country, we are working to improve that all the time.

The Community Safety Team (CST) was made up of Wirral Council, Police, Merseyside Fire & Rescue, PCT, NHS. Neighbourhood Watch and Vehicle Watch schemes help with the fear of crime and getting communities involved in various projects. Nearly every school on Wirral has got property marked by Smart Water, this was a tracking system to recover property.

Dennis referred to Police initiatives which CST had assisted with including Operation Hawk. They were helping with the expansion of late night buses in order to get people home safely and an extensive project involving CCTV. Involved in improving car park security, including railways stations and their immediate vicinity.

Copies of Safer Wirral leaflet were available for people to fill in as part of a survey in conjunction with the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and could be returned by post or email to dennisjones@wirral.gov.uk.

Wirral Primary Care Trust (PCT)

Abi Mantgani, Clinical Director and also local GP, gave a presentation on two consultations being undertaken on behalf of the whole health economy. The Forum noted the Health Services Journal award to Wirral PCT for best PCT in the country.

In order to ensure that Wirral health economy is sustainable and strong needed to think about long term planning, in consultation with the people of Wirral, partners and other stakeholders. Health for All, Have your Say is a 5 year commissioning strategy 2008-2013 looking at health needs/demographic assessment, mortality rates and health experience, providing services differently and financial resources.

A graph highlighted demographic changes with age 75+ going to increase by 50% in next 20 years. The scale of relative social deprivation on Wirral was also illustrated, showing life expectancy in some case 11% less than in other areas. These areas, therefore, need a lot of input. The strategic objectives were listed over the next 5 years, in conjunction with social services, hospital trust, etc and a listening exercise, running from January to mid April is being undertaken in a bid to know what people think about it. This has already had an excellent response. We have already written to everyone over the age of 16 registered with a GP and would be going to have engagement sessions with some focus groups through specialist groups such as Salvation Army, WMO, Churches Together etc. Also as the PCT employ 1300, with a high percent living in Wirral, we feel they should have their say and could act as advocates to encourage patients and clients to 'have their say' too. Our intentions are to listen/feedback/tell you what we have done about what you have told us and would report back to our Board in June 2008.

The Forum where informed of a Family Fun Day being held at St James Centre on Saturday, where engagement would be made with members of the public.

Councillor George Davies reported that, in terms of alcohol related illnesses, he had recently noted figs of 48% people dependent on alcohol which is a serious concern. Dr Mantgani agreed it could be an inappropriate use of beds etc.

Ben Ryder referred to Liverpool PCT who have a scheme called Fire-fit Kids, where firefighters to into schools to do fitness programmes with them. He thought it would

be good to introduce this to Wirral but would need funding for it. Dr Mantgani suggested writing to either himself at Wirral PCT to Marie Armitage, Joint Director of Public Health at Wirral PCT and also any voluntary groups on Wirral with other ideas/schemes to improve health.

Councillor Foulkes mentioned that the no smoking ban had been a very effective policy. Did Dr Mantgani think that a similar piece of legislation that would have a direct health impact?

Dr Mantgani thought it was too early yet but would see the impact in a couple of years. The numbers taking up the stop smoking help has increased considerably. Two major areas for public health are alcohol and obesity. He referred to food initiatives and quoted that in 2000 there were 10,000 diabetics on the register, this figure today had increased to 16,500.

Peter Wong from PCT Public Health commented that the raising of the age limit to 18 for people to be sold cigarettes would be helpful.

Pauline Cocker referred to the strategic objectives and that reduction of alcohol misuse did not have as much budget around it as some of the other objectives. Dr Mantgani commented that it was a question of balance, with the alcohol population being small. And that the presentation was about direction of travel. Individual details could be provided once finalised. The Lead Officer also referred to investment last year as well by the PCT on prevention.

Councillor Harry Smith reported that a recent regional survey about people who drink in pubs showed a 30% reduction in smoking.

Don Charlton asked whether the £7m for modernising services was capital expenditure?

Dr Mantani replied that this was general, across the board, and couldn't be classified under a particular category. Capital was not included in that but he could come back and report on that at another Forum.

A member of the public queried whether it was appropriate to ask a question about the Ambulance Service and recent poor responses where it had taken over an hour to get an ambulance.

Dr Mantgani confirmed that the PCT commissioned the Ambulance Service and the Lead Officer asked for the concern to be raised here. Details to be forwarded and this would be followed up.

Jean McIntosh was concerned about communication around community centres etc. The area had major alcohol problems which caused a lot of anti social behaviour. It would be helpful to have a drop in at St James and leaflet drop around the ward.

Dr Mantangi would take that on board. Leaflets would come on everybody's doorstep and the idea was to bring services closer to the patients.

Wirral University Teaching Hospital (NHS)

Dr Judith McGennis briefed the Forum on recent developments at WUTH. Concern was reported around infection in large acute hospitals, where rates were rising. However they were doing a lot to try to reduce those figures and make hospitals as safe as possible, thereby keeping people safe and helping the health economy.

Dr McGennis also reported that waiting times were coming down dramatically. GP's can now refer to 5 different centres, depending on where people want to go and have funding from the government to do that.

WUTH scored well in the annual health check and were spending lot of money this year to undertake some virtual leaps forward. £3.1m was being spent on various large schemes, including a system for x-rays being visible on computers, new initiative for local treatment of Macular Degeneration. WUTH had also been designated as a centre for various cancers and would sub- specialize in uncommon cancers. Leaflets were available if anyone would like to take one.

Merseyside Police

Sergeant Ian Harrison from Merseyside Police, based at Laird Street, updated the forum. The section (p27-28) in the Area Forum Co-ordinator's report gave a taste of recent activities and Sergeant Harrison would be happy to answer any questions.

Every crime category had reduced and he would be happy to produce figures. Sergeant Harrison updated on the neighbourhood action groups for each of the three areas of the ward - Ballantyne, Beechwood, Bidston and St James. Each ward now has own individual group of local people to deal with local problems who are involved in setting the priorities for each particular neighbourhood and in trying to find solutions.

Done a lot of work in relation to drugs enforcement and education. This included an exercise around eviction of a crack house recently. Currently running anti social behaviour weekends exercise as this was a big blight on everybody's lives. Working on an initiative in Noctorum/Oxton area where great results are being achieved. This weekend got 2 days when would be going to undertake the same operation in Bidston/St James area with hopefully the same results. Any questions?

Jean McIntosh – questioned whether people that drive around with children in the front of bikes, wearing no head protection, would get punished for that as well? This would depend on the circumstances. If people were driving dangerously then Police would take appropriate action.

Q – can we give you the times when bikes come on to Bidston Rise.

A – yes inform the dedicated team.

Councillor George Davies commented that the Home Secretary would be announcing a new scheme whereby everyone would know the name of their local police officer. Is that a scheme that we have had for past 2 years? Have we been one of the pilots?

A – the Chief Constable would like everybody to know their dedicated officer, although this was not always possible. The Laird Street website link has all contact details.

A query was raised about who to contact if an incident happened at night. This referred to an arson incident.

Sergeant Harrison confirmed that they should contact the Control Room. Dedicated officer were not on 24 hours, so you could either go on website, email, tel no, leave message for Dedicated Officer, or go through control room, where other officers available. Calls are given graded number, depending on what the issue is.

Ben Ryder requested details and he would ensure they were passed to the Arson Reduction Team. This worked in partnership with the Police and did a lot of good work in getting people prosecuted.

Edith Niblock – reported on smoking of illegal substances by people standing in foyer of local pub, smoking drugs right by the police station. People should be aware of this as there were children nearby.

Sergeant Harrison confirmed there was an issue around public houses and drugs misuse, particularly in this area and they were working continuously to combat this and seizures were made.

Minute 6 - General public question time

Q – to the officer from Street Scene. This referred to the footpath in Noctorum and the question was whether Street Scene had responsibility for cleaning such paths?

A – if it forms part of highway then it would be on the same cleaning route as the roads.

The member of the public wanted to report broken glass on the path.

A – would find out frequency and type of cleaning for this particular one and get back to you.

Q – side roads don't seem to get the same attention. Who is responsible for areas

around sub stations?

A – these are leased by Scottish Power. Forward details to Streetscene Officer and he would ensure they passed to the right source.

Councillor George Davies reported on the recent closures of 7 local public houses and put forward that it would be beneficial to see a law established that said owners had to have 6 months training from a brewery.

Sergeant Harrison would pass on this idea to licensing section and get somebody to contact Councillor Davies.

Q - from a member of the public re the closing off of a footpath, and progress on that?

Councillor Davies confirmed this was coming to Committee on 27 Feb, writing to all residents tomorrow.

Q – will it be concluded or just keep on thinking about it?

A – may have found a way forward through alley-gating.

A question was raised about the poor attendance from the public at Area Forums and how this could be improved. Councillor Foulkes confirmed the Council was working on ideas to make it more interesting, possibly by developing budgets and giving the Forum greater remit.

The Chair thanked people for attending and St James' Centre for the use of the venue.

Section Two

Local Updates

Area forums provide an opportunity for people who live or work in Wirral to have a greater say on local issues and be more active in decision making and shaping local services.

They involve local ward councillors, police, Wirral Primary Care Trust, fire safety representatives along with community representatives and officers from various departments of the council. Forums also provide information about current services, how they can be accessed and ultimately raise awareness of local council initiatives.

This section covers relevant news under the Council's Sustainable Communities Strategy themes *strong local economy, sustainable appropriate housing, life chances for children and young people, health and well being and living and working environment.*

Strong Local Economy

Prince Andrew has unveiled a £1.75 million state-of-the-art maritime training centre in Birkenhead.

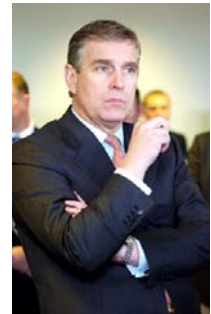
The Duke of York, who served for 22 years with the Royal Navy, also revealed the new name for the Laird Foundation in Birkenhead, which merged with Mersey Maritime last year and is now known as Maritime and Engineering College North West.

Based at Maritime and Engineering College North West in Monks Ferry, the Quay Skills training programme uses virtual reality technology from the filming and gaming industries to create virtual ports, where port workers can learn to drive forklift trucks, cranes and other equipment.

The training focuses on port operations and international trade and logistics. After a tour of the college and demonstration of the virtual reality facility, the prince unveiled a plaque with the college's new name and said: "This part of the world has obviously got huge potential for growth in the maritime sector and it's really good to see that you've actually put your minds to it locally and you're driving this maritime heritage forward in a way that's going to give these young people a future."

The college represents more than 1,000 maritime businesses on Merseyside, providing more than 26,000 jobs in the city-region and contributing £2.5 billion to the local economy each year.

In order to develop Quay Skills, Mersey Maritime, with the support of Wirral council received £656,000 from the Single Regeneration Budget, funded by the Northwest Regional Development Agency and £656,000 European funding from Merseyside's Objective One programme. A further £450,000 investment came from the private sector. [Article and picture by Wirral Globe]



Pride in Our Promenades

“Most of the improvements to the Promenade between Seacombe and New Brighton will be completed by the end of June, in time for the return of the Tall ships to the Mersey the following month. The works have been funded by grants from the European Union and the Northwest Development Agency through Mersey Waterfront. They form part of Mersey Waterfront’s Pride in our Promenades programme, and include:

- A much more inviting entrance to the Seacombe end of the prom, with the removal of parked cars and the provision of more attractive surfacing, seating, lighting and landscaping
- New entrance features and signage at the Seacombe and New Brighton entrances to the prom
- Improved settings for the seven pieces of artwork making up the Millennium Trail
- Installation of interpretive artwork on two previously dilapidated walls between Seacombe and the Town Hall
- Improved paths and landscaping to the banks to the north of the ventilation shaft
- New railings at Vale Park
- Refurbishment of Dr Poggi’s shelter at Vale Park
- Better signage and additional seating and litter bins along the whole of the prom

To help publicise the improvements, Mersey Waterfront is supporting a series of performances in mid-July being organised by Hand in Hand Productions, with participation by many local schools and arts groups.

For further information, contact Martin Purssell, Project Manager Wirral Waterfront, 0151 691 8626, martinpurssell@wirral.gov.uk”

Sustainable Appropriate Housing

Affordable Renovated Houses For Sale - Wirral Council’s new improved HOUSED scheme

As part of Wirral Council’s Empty Property Strategy the Empty Property Team have established a scheme called HOUSED (Home Ownership Using Sustainable Empty Dwellings). The scheme enables those wishing to own their home, the opportunity to purchase a property that has been refurbished to extremely high standards at an affordable price.

There are currently five properties under refurbishment that will be ready for sale in May. All of the properties in the scheme are fully refurbished to Decent Homes standard with new kitchens and bathrooms. They also have a full Gas Central Heating system, new UPVC double glazed windows and doors, electrics and plumbing. The available properties are in the Birkenhead/Rock Ferry/Tranmere areas, prices range from £75,000-£85,000 although a 10% grant may be available reducing these costs to £67,500-£76,500.

We are also able to offer the free service of a Home Ownership Advisory Officer and a grant of up to £2,000 to help with reasonable costs such as Legal & IFA Fees and Removal Costs. If you are unsuccessful with this phase of properties, your details can be kept on file as there will be more properties available in the next phase.

For more information call Michelle Griffiths on the Empty Property Hotline, 0151 691 8005 or log onto www.wirral.gov.uk/he/housing/PSHR/housed. You can also email us at emptyproperties@wirral.gov.uk.

Life Chances for Children and Young People

Wirral given green light to offer new diplomas

Wirral has been given the go-ahead to offer Diplomas, a new qualification for 14-19 year olds.

Developed in partnership with universities and employers, the Diploma combines theoretical and practical study, providing a different style of learning that will offer young people an alternative route into higher education, apprenticeships or employment with training.

From September 2009, eight diplomas will initially be offered: Construction and the Built Environment, Creative and Media, Society, Health and Development, Engineering, Hospitality and Catering, Hair and Beauty, Business and Administration and Information Technology. By 2013 a total of 17 diplomas will be available for all Wirral's learners.

Students studying the diploma will continue to be based at their school or college but will have opportunities for hands-on experiences in a work related environment. This could be with a local employer, university or college or training provider.

The Diploma represents a huge opportunity for Wirral students of all abilities to develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes to succeed in work and life in the twentieth first century. Information about these new qualifications will be available next term from schools and colleges in the consortium, Connexions and i-choosewirral.org.uk

For further information ring Barbara Mervyn, 14-19 Curriculum Manager, Wirral Council, 0151 346 6749.

Young people's achievements celebrated

The achievements of 13 young people have been celebrated at an event facilitated by Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team.

The celebration evening took place for a determined group of young people from across the borough to commend their participation in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme as part of their silver award.



Caroline Laing, Manager of Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team, who hosted the evening said: "We too often hear about the negative behaviour that a small minority of young people engage in. This event was a chance to celebrate the achievement of a group of committed young people and the positive contribution they have made."

The programme was co-ordinated by Jo-Anne Seddon, an Advocate from Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service seconded to Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team and conducted in her own time as a volunteer. The 26-week programme saw the young people study first aid, undertake search and rescue exercises, use personal protective equipment used by fire crews and spend time with a number of services such as Response, Merseyside Police (Mounted Section), Forum Housing, HMP Walton and Marine Rescue.

Wirral Youth Service

Wirral Youth Service provides opportunities, which are open to all Wirral young people. Youth work helps young people learn about themselves, others and society, through informal educational activities which combine fun, challenge and learning.

The Service works with young people aged 13-19 years, and specifically targeted young people aged 20 until their 25th birthday who have additional needs and need support with transition into adult life/services.

The Youth Service in Wirral works with many young people in a variety of different settings, these include: Youth clubs, Street work projects, "Kontaktabuses", "Wirral Youth Theatre" and Youth Arts, "Response" – Advice, support, advocacy and information service and Substance Misuse Service, International exchanges, Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Outdoor activities, Projects in schools

The Service is flexible and able to respond to the needs of young people and offers opportunities that are both universal and targeted. Youth work on Wirral is delivered through joint working between the Local Authority, voluntary organisations and other agencies.

Youth workers work with young people in many different localities in Wirral. Having a variety of youth clubs and street work projects allows youth workers to work with young people in their neighbourhoods, meet their specific needs and respond to issues that are important to them.

Much of the work of the Youth Service takes place in one of sixteen open access youth clubs located across the Borough. Street work teams of youth workers make contact with young people who do not access the service elsewhere, build relationships with them and in negotiation with the young people, develop programmes which address their specific needs. This work is delivered on the streets, through project work and on mobile Kontaktabuses.

Response is a Borough wide Youth Service provision, providing counselling, support, advocacy and information for young people. Many of these young people have complex needs requiring intensive support from the service including homelessness, abuse, poor health and poverty.

The agency also has a team of specialist workers providing support to young people who have drug and alcohol problems. The team work with those individuals in a variety of settings including outreach street work and one to one work in their homes or wherever young people feel safe. The team also deliver educational programmes within schools and other youth settings on the risk, consequence and health implications of substance misuse. Partnership work plays an important role in targeting vulnerable, hard to reach groups of young people. Service level agreements and regular joint working ensures the needs of young people are met.

International Work Each year the Youth Service runs a comprehensive programme of International Youth Exchanges. Young people from Wirral take part in a number of international opportunities including, Hong Kong and the Azores.

Duke of Edinburgh's Award The Youth Service is the Licensed Operating Authority for the whole of Wirral. Awards can be gained through a variety of approved operating units and access organisations made up of a combination of youth centres, schools, an open award centre and a selection of voluntary groups. Young people in Wirral consistently gain over 450 awards per year at bronze, silver and gold levels.

The Award is available to all young people aged between 14 and 25 with the emphasis being the development of young people's leisure time. By taking part in the Award, participants are

able to increase their own self confidence and self esteem, make new relationships and develop fresh skills.

During the summer holidays the Youth Service was able to offer an adventure activity programme to youth clubs and associated organisations. Over 160 young people took part in sailing, canoeing, rafting, climbing and adventure course activities which were delivered by both licensed operators and our own staff. Despite the inclement weather there was a 90% take up on the activities offered.

Duke of Edinburgh's Award staff continue to work with a group of Looked After Children in a bid to help them successfully complete their Bronze Awards. In August, most of this group attended a 3 day residential course at The Oaklands Centre where they engaged in a wide variety of outdoor activities. One young woman in particular was identified as having the potential to take a future lead role and will probably be invited back and given a work experience opportunity.

Wirral's D of E Open Award Centre is due to move premises again. Following a decision to vacate the Somerville Site at Gorse Lane we have entered into negotiations regarding the use of the Wirral Alternative Schools Programme new premises at Solar Campus.

In our drive to make the Award available to everyone and to diversify its delivery we are now helping several new units run the Award. This includes Meadowside Special School where we will adapt the Award for pupils with complex learning difficulties.

Wirral Youth Theatre operates across the Borough to enable young people to access a wide range of performing arts related activities. Art forms such as drama, dance, music, technical theatre and new media are used to help young people to develop personally and socially as well as developing theatre and media related skills.

The Cavendish Youth Centre is open on Monday and Wednesday 7.00 pm – 10.00pm. The newly refurbished club is proving very popular with young people; there are now separate areas for specific activities including a chill area, a computer room and a fitness room. The club have been working in partnership with the Wirral Youth Theatre on Drama and Dance. The D.i.ing and M.C.ing is very popular with the young people, the activity is likely to continue for some time. Funding from the Area Forum has enabled a first aid course to go ahead with eight young people looking forward to achieving an accredited outcome

Charing Cross Methodist Youth Club As a fundraiser it was decided to have the Youth Club and the Play section work in partnership, this manifested itself in a joint sleep over. This turned out to be very successful "Stay Awake Over" and was enjoyed by all. The club raised £300. The club is open on four occasions through out the week Mondays and Wednesdays 6.30 – 9.30 and Thursday 7.00 – 10.00 and Saturdays 4.30 – 7.30. Mondays and Thursday are dedicated to work with special needs young people who come from a wide range of localities and the other two sessions serve the needs of the local community. The programme for both groups include extensive variety of craft workshops, discos and games and the Club makes full use of a garden area to enjoy games and activities in the outdoors

The North End Young People's Project has developed work in Birkenhead Park and liaises closely with the Birkenhead Park Community Projects Officer, supporting the development of the Birkenhead Park Sports Association. The young people have been involved in a range of activities and are currently planning summer programme

The Fender Youth Action Project works with young people from Beechwood and Ballantyne Estates. The young people greatly enjoyed their visit to the theatre to see Blood Brothers and this has proved to be an excellent starting point for their Year of Culture activity theme.

Safer Communities

Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team (January 2008 – May 2008)

In addition to ongoing enforcement action against the perpetrators of anti-social behaviour, specific activity has included:

Celebration evening for young people (March 2008)

A celebration evening took place for a determined group of thirteen young people from across the borough to commend their participation in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme as part of their silver award. The programme was co-ordinated by Jo-Anne Seddon, an Advocate from Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service seconded to Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team and conducted in her own time as a volunteer. The young people were respectively from Woodchurch High School, Oldershaw School, St Mary's RC College, Weatherhead High School, Ridgeway High School, Wirral Alternative Schools Provision and the Fire Support Network. Their achievements were acknowledged by the Mayor and Mayoress of Wirral, High Sheriff of Merseyside and senior Council and Fire Service officers, including Wirral Council's Chief Executive.

Ice Cream Engagement Project (launched April 2008)

This innovative project is funded initially by Wirral Drug & Alcohol Action Team. It involves the use of a decommissioned ice cream van staffed with workers from Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team's Youth Respect Team, including a specialist alcohol misuse worker. The purpose of the project is to provide alcohol misuse awareness to young people and the project is touring Wirral twice a week, targeting both hot-spot locations of anti-social behaviour and areas where young people congregate. The project is being sponsored this financial year by Beechwood & Ballantyne Community Housing Association.

Anti-Social Behaviour Advice Surgeries (launched May 2008)

A six-month programme of advice surgeries for residents in the private sector suffering with anti-social behaviour has been launched by Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team. This will see the Team's Respect Bus taken into communities and staffed with Enforcement Officers who can take complaints directly from the public and provide comprehensive advice. The full timetable can be found at:

http://www.wirral.gov.uk/News/Archive/200804/news_0000601.html

Deployment of the Community Mobile Police Station (May 2008)

The unit, a partnership between Wirral Council and Merseyside Police, managed by Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team, has been re-located to Poulton, on the corner of Sherlock Lane and Clayton Lane. This part of the Poulton area has been identified as a 'hot-spot' for anti-social and criminal behaviour and the unit will be located within the area, as a central hub, for tackling crime and disorder within the neighbourhood until the end of the school summer holidays.

Merseyside Police Neighbourhood Priorities Update

Laird Street Neighbourhood aims to provide a dedicated, accessible and responsive neighbourhood policing team that strives to:

- Reduce crime and disorder , Reduce the public perception of crime and anti-social behaviour , Disrupt, arrest and prosecute offenders, Provide total care for victims

Primarily in the areas of:

- Anti-social behaviour, Violence - especially domestic violence, Burglary - especially dwellings, and Vehicle crime

By utilising:

- Problem-solving strategies in association with our numerous Partner Agencies, Intelligence led patrolling in uniform and plain clothes, Targeted work against offenders and 'Hotspot' locations, Gathering, collation and use of sourced and community intelligence, The application of all available technologies, The continued use of available and emerging legislative powers & processes, The utilisation and development of innovative methodologies & techniques

Update against your priorities:

Bidston & St James At the NAG meeting on 11th April 2008 the following issues were discussed and agreed:

You said Anti-Social behaviour in and around Birkenhead Park was an issue; we agreed this as a priority.

We did Engage in problem solving with partner agencies to establish a series of strategies to tackle the problem (both short and long term). We planned and executed a successful, weekend long multi-agency enforcement campaign with partners. Further enforcement campaigns are planned to coordinate with school holiday periods

We have planned more diversionary activities in association with Youth Services and Birkenhead Park Pavilion; these are ongoing throughout the year and focussed especially around school holidays and other periods where demand is anticipated to be high.

You said Youths using motorcycles in the Gautby Road area were an anti-social problem; we agreed this as a priority.

We did Work with the Local Authority and Wirral Partnership Homes to maintain fences and open areas to prevent access. We have had some success in this area but more work is required (still ongoing). We worked with the Youth Services and Voluntary Groups to provide diversionary activities such as parties, bulb and tree planting and litter picks.

Beechwood At the NAG meeting on 23rd April 2008:

You said Criminal damage on the Beechwood Estate (predominantly cars and dwellings) was a problem - we agreed this as a priority.

We did Develop a protocol with Local Authority and BBHA partners to have graffiti removed as promptly as possible. We also developed a series of diversionary activities (mainly sport related) to engage the local youths and provide alternative outlets for their energy.

We did continue our school contact programme to educate the younger children (and parents) of the environmental problems caused by damage (and used the opportunity to talk about alcohol abuse).

You said Anti-social behaviour on Ballantyne and School Lane was an issue; we agreed this as a priority.

We did Begin a problem solving process with our statutory and non-statutory partners. Enter into partnership working to provide alternative venues for youths to gather.

We also sought funding and provided advice to local churches and private individuals to begin target hardening of key locations. We carried out enforcement activity and additional patrolling in an effort to educate the youths and minimise the problem.

Nocturnum & Claughton At the inaugural NAG meeting on 30 January 2008 a series of issues were discussed and two priorities were agreed:

Anti-social behaviour in the Townfield Close area The unlawful use of motorcycles especially on the footpaths in the area. These problems also resulted in additional youth disorder in the paths and closes used as approach paths to Townfield Close. Action was taken on all of these with some effect but they were retained as priorities at the NAG meeting at 27th February:

You said Youth disorder and anti-social behaviour were an issue in Townfield Close (and surrounding paths and closes)

We did Begin planning with partnership agencies to install broadband linked CCTV in the proposed new build (doctors surgery) at Townfield Close. We also planned with partners to install low-level security lighting on some woodland paths.

We have also begun negotiations to fund and install 'alley gates' on Pleasington Close to prevent/control access and minimise the problems caused by transient youths.

We liaised with Wirral ASB Team to site the 'Respect Bus' at this location to break down barriers and establish rapport with local youths. This enabled us

to identify informal leaders within the groups of youths who have been targeted.

We have continued to task neighbourhood and Patrol staff to provide a high visibility presence in the Area.

You said Unlawful use of motorcycles had become an anti-social behaviour and quality of life issue. We planned and executed a weekend long multi-agency enforcement activity on 8th & 9th February.

This was a great success, a great deal of alcohol was seized and disorder related calls for service were noticeably diminished throughout the period. We also carried out diversionary activity where 80 plus youths attended a free concert at Birkenhead 6th Form College. Again the resultant reduction in disorder/anti-social behaviour was evident.



Bring Accidents Down 2 Zero

'Bring accidents down 2 zero' is a new scheme that aims to reduce the speed of traffic in your area, without the need for traffic calming measures such as speed bumps and chicanes.

Driving at 20 miles per hour through residential areas makes you 80% less likely to have an accident than if you drive at 40mph, and 40% less than if you drive at 30mph.

Through the use of 20 mph signs, erected on lamp posts at the roadside, drivers will be aware of the advisory 20 mph speed limit and will be encouraged to reduce their speed, though no legal enforcement will be in place.

Which areas are involved?

There are seven areas across Wirral in which we are trialling the scheme. These areas include Oxtton, West Kirby, Liscard/New Brighton, Greasby, Meols, New Ferry and Bromborough

Will the Police be issuing fines for people driving at over 20 mph?

No, the Police will not be issuing speeding fines, as these 20 mph signs are advisory, not a legal requirement. However, Community Speedwatch members will be on duty across Wirral using radar guns to gauge traffic speeds. Anyone driving at unacceptable speeds will have their registration noted down and forwarded to Merseyside Police who may take action.

What can I do to help promote the scheme?

If you wish to raise awareness of the scheme in your area, then feel free to download a copy of the poster and leaflet to display in your window, or local shop window etc. The more local people that are aware of the scheme the better, as everyone will watch their speed in your area.

How do I get a 'Bring accidents down 2 zero' scheme in my area?

You could apply via your local councillor, or you could contact us via the contact details below.

How do I give Wirral Council some feedback about the scheme?

You can send an email to streetscene@wirral.gov.uk , call us on 0151 606 2004 or write to Road Safety Team, Cheshire Lines Building, Canning Street, Birkenhead CH44 8ED.

Wirral Council signs up to Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy

Wirral Council has thrown its support behind a borough-wide strategy to reduce the harm caused by alcohol.

It aims to tackle misuse of alcohol by young people, to improve the treatment for people experiencing problems with alcohol and to address the related social problems of antisocial behaviour, crime and domestic violence.

John Webb, Wirral Council's Director of Adult Social Services said: "We recognise that alcohol plays an important part in the local economy and for the majority of people who drink sensibly, it is an enjoyable part of their social lives.

"However, we are also aware of the significant harm that alcohol misuse causes to the health of people and the well-being of communities in the borough, and we are concerned that, for an increasing number of people, the effects of alcohol misuse are presenting serious and in many instances, life-threatening dangers."

Marie Armitage, Wirral's Joint Director of Public Health added: "I would like to formally welcome Wirral Council's decision to offer their support to this important strategy. I firmly believe that, by effectively tackling alcohol misuse, we will support local people to lead safer, healthier and more fulfilled lives."

Wirral's Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy sets out a number of targets including;

- Improving access to alcohol interventions and specialist alcohol programmes
- Reducing the number of people who abuse alcohol being denied immediate access to appropriate specialist treatment
- Increasing the number of people who abuse alcohol successfully completing their treatment programme
- Reducing admission and re-admission rates amongst those presenting at Wirral Hospital Trust, with alcohol specific and related conditions
- Reducing the length of stay within Wirral Hospital Trust for patients admitted with alcohol specific and related conditions
- Increasing the number of people who abuse alcohol taking advantage of support services and entering into education, training and employment
- Increasing the number of people reporting a reduction in their drinking levels
- Increasing the numbers of people receiving aftercare following treatment for alcohol misuse

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service

**The Fire Service on Wirral is delivered through 6 community fire stations
located at:
Birkenhead, Bromborough, Heswall, Upton, West Kirby and Wallasey.**

We are committed to innovative and imaginative change in order to help make our communities safer and stronger. We are also committed to integrated working with other authorities, agencies and the voluntary sector to improve public safety and well being.

We have an **Integrated Risk Management Plan 2008/09** which sets out the measures which are intended to be taken to continue the modernisation and improvement of services to the people of Merseyside. This I.R.M.P can be viewed online at www.merseyfire.gov.uk/media or copies are available at local libraries and One Stop Shops.

Merseyside has become the first fire and rescue service in the country to receive a **Beacon award** for its role in improving public health – and in doing so has become the first fire service to win three Beacon awards. The Fire Service was one of only six authorities across the UK to receive Beacon Status for Reducing Health Inequalities. It has previously been awarded Beacon Status for its Services for Older People and Children At Risk – Early Intervention. Furthermore, young people from the Wirral are currently undertaking a 12 week **Beacon Course**. The use of the fire service as a vehicle to reduce and prevent fire and anti social behaviour and to engage with young people in our local communities has been recognised as a valuable contributor both locally and nationally and is one of a number of multi partnership initiatives that Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service is facilitating as part of its contribution to community safety.

The Fire and Rescue Service also received further recognition for making a significant contribution outside its core role and consistently showing excellence and innovation.

The health award means fire services and other agencies from all over the world, concerned with the health agenda will come to Merseyside to learn more about MFRS' successful health programme, which include

Fire Fit Kids - Firefighters deliver fun, high energy physical activity programmes to school pupils, with a particular emphasis on encouraging the participation of those pupils who traditionally shy away from competitive sports. This will hopefully be introduced into schools on Wirral later this year.

Heartbeat Gyms: Outreach gyms in Community Fire Stations across Wirral help promote rehabilitation and health promotion needs of people with cardiac problems. Start Right: Aims to reduce childhood obesity and encourage healthy lifestyle in children aged 5-8 and their parents, using firefighters as positive role models.

Market garden: Use of land at Bromborough Community Fire Station for local youngsters to grow fruit and vegetables and then use them in healthy recipes.

Community engagement remains the cornerstone of our proactive activity, in particular the delivery of the **Home Fire Safety Checks** and the provision of free smoke detectors were necessary. We continue to improve our effectiveness by utilising intelligence led targeting of **HFSCs**. We are currently developing household specific dwelling fire prediction software to assist in the process.

The Service has set challenging performance targets and we are pleased to report that Wirral stations regularly achieve and exceed these targets. During the last quarter the Fire Service visited nearly 6,000 homes on Wirral and completed Home Fire Safety Checks.

With the onset of the finer weather and the large areas of green belt land on the Wirral we are in the process of implementing a collaborative **grass fire strategy** which will help reduce the risk of fires and also assist in how better to deal with these incidents.

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service is extremely proud to be hosting the 10th **World Firefighters Games** as its contribution towards the city's European Capital of Culture celebrations. The Games take place between August 24 and September 2, 2008, with the new waterfront Echo Arena being transformed into the 'Official Games Village' for the duration of the 10 days.

Find out more about the World Firefighters Games 2008 by visiting www.wfg08.com

Fire Support Network is a non-profitable registered charity which works in partnership with the Fire Service on Merseyside to promote fire safety to the local communities through volunteers and partner organisations. Volunteer roles vary from working directly with the fire-fighters, leafleting and replacing batteries in smoke detectors to providing an after fire care service and fund raising.

Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer can register online at www.firesupportnet.org.uk or contact via telephone on 0151 296 4600.

Community Fire Stations

- | | | |
|--|----------|---------------|
| • Birkenhead: Exmouth Street. Birkenhead | CH41 4AX | 0151 296 5325 |
| • Bromborough: Dock Road South. Bebington | CH62 4SQ | 0151 296 5925 |
| • Heswall: Telegraph Road, Heswall | CH60 OAF | 0151 296 5805 |
| • Upton: Arroe Park Road. Upton | CH49 OUF | 0151 296 5895 |
| • West Kirby: The Concourse. West Kirby | CH48 4HX | 0151 296 5955 |
| • Wallasey: Mill Lane. Wallasey | CH44 5UE | 0151 296 6180 |

For a FREE Home Fire Safety Check, including FREE smoke alarm installation if required please contact Fire Service Direct on

FREE phone 0800 731 5958

Health and Well Being

Wirral University Teaching Hospital 
NHS Foundation Trust

The Trust is pleased to be able to participate in the Local Area Forums and welcomes the opportunity to brief Wirral residents and our partner organisations on topical issues. Representing the Trust will be an Executive Director or Senior Manager and the elected Public Governor for the host constituency.

Controlling Infection

- Our Elective Surgical Unit at Clatterbridge remains MRSA bloodstream infection free – this Unit can undertake most planned surgical procedures including joint replacements.
- Our Women's Services Unit at Arroe Park is also MRSA bloodstream infection free
- The annual incidence of MRSA bloodstream infections across the Trust has reduced from 35 in 2006/07 to 26 in 2007/08 – a 26% reduction.
- Reducing the incidence of MRSA and Clostridium difficile is a very high priority for the Trust and staff are implementing a comprehensive action plan to achieve this.
- In partnership with local GPs, our staff are working towards a more prudent use of broad spectrum antibiotics that, if over-used, can make C.difficile infection more likely to develop.

Waiting for Treatment

- Currently, no patient waits longer than 5 weeks for an outpatient appointment when referred by a GP for a specialist opinion and many waits are much shorter than this
- Many patients referred for most orthopaedic and gynaecology outpatient appointments will wait only 2 weeks
- Currently, most patients will wait no longer than 10 weeks for their operation once they have been 'listed' by a consultant.
- Patients with suspected or confirmed cancers are referred, diagnosed and treated well within national targets
- Waiting times for new referrals to the Audiology service have reached an all time low of 6 weeks thanks to the hard work of the staff in that department.

Improving Our Standards

- Our Women's Services achieved a 'hat-trick of excellence' when they were recently awarded CNST Level 3 accreditation. Of the 156 Maternity Units in the country, only 17 others have achieved Level 3 and our Unit is the only one to have achieved 100% in every standard at every level.

Clinical Negligence Scheme for Trusts (CNST) Level 3 is evidence that our maternity services are extremely safe, well-managed and overall 'first-class'. This follows the Unit's score of 'best

performing' in the Healthcare Commission's Maternity Services Review and being named 'best in the region' in a national survey of new mothers and mothers-to-be at the end of 2007

- For the second year running we have been named as one of the country's Top 40 performing hospitals by an independent benchmarking company that compares our performance in 20 key areas – including infection rates, mortality rates and waiting times – against other, similar hospitals.
- In the 2006/07 Healthcare Commission Annual Health Check we scored 'good' for our use of resources and 'good' for the quality of our services
- An external assessment of our standards by the Patient Environment Action Team resulted in the following scores being awarded to the Trust for 2007.

	Environment	Food	Privacy & Dignity
Arrowe Park	Good	4 (Good)	5 (Excellent)
Clatterbridge	Good	4 (Good)	4 (Good)

Improving Our Facilities

In this financial year, 2008/09, around £10million will be spent on capital schemes to improve our facilities and update the services we provide – schemes will include:

- £3.1m to upgrade our IT systems, £900k to provide parents' accommodation at Arrowe Park Hospital, £500k to replace medical equipment, £1.3m to upgrade surgical wards, £290k to improve car park Infrastructure, £400k to improve & standardise ward storage facilities, £100k to improve disability access, £780k for environmental/energy usage improvements, £250k to improve privacy & dignity at ward level

Providing New Services

- The Trust is now designated as a centre for providing drug therapy for age-related Macular Degeneration. This is a new, local service for the benefit of Wirral residents.
- The Trust is a designated Urology Cancer Centre for Wirral, Chester and Northern Cheshire patients requiring major cancer surgery
- We are the only NHS organisation in Merseyside and Cheshire to offer a new laser technique – the *greenlight laser* – that is transforming the treatment of prostate conditions
- We will soon be bringing our Rheumatology services closer to where people live and work with the appointment of an additional Consultant Rheumatologist – clinics will soon be up and running at St Catherine's Community Hospital and Victoria Central Hospital as well as Arrowe Park & Clatterbridge Hospitals.

Easy to Use Website

- Our new-look, easy access website can provide lots of useful information for patients, the public, staff and GPs about the Trust and its services go to www.whnt.nhs.uk
- The website is speech enabled for browsers with sight related problems
- The new, easy click, 'email a patient' facility has been very well received by patients and their relatives

Come and Join Us!

- As a Foundation Trust we are keen to involve our Public Members in helping us to shape future services – we currently have more than 5,500 Public Members and are keen to recruit more. Public Members can get involved as much or as little as they like – from just receiving 'Public Membership News', our regular newsletter, to participating in surveys or standing for election as a Public Governor. To join, simply complete and return the attached Membership Application Form or join on-line @ www.whnt.nhs.uk
- During June and July the Trust is holding elections for Public Governors to represent the Public Members of the following Wirral areas - Bidston, Bromborough & Eastham, Claughton, Liscard, Tranmere, New Brighton & Wallasey and West Wirral. The results will be announced after 10th July.

LINK **WIRRAL LOCAL INVOLVEMENT** **NETWORK**



WHAT WILL WIRRAL LINK DO?

- Give everyone a chance to say what they think about **their local health and social care services** – what is working well and what is not so good.
- Give people the chance to check how care services are planned and run
- Feedback what people have said about services so that things can change for the better.
- Operate independently but in partnership with statutory organisations such as the National Health Service and Local Authority.

WHAT POWERS WILL THE WIRRAL LINK HAVE?

- Make reports and recommendations and request information, and get a reply within a set amount of time.
- Where appropriate, enter, view and monitor certain services to see what they do.
- Tell elected politicians on the Wirral Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) what they have found and get a response.

WHO CAN BE A PART OF LINK?

- Anyone can be a part of a Wirral LINK but there will be different levels of activity, involvement and membership.
- The LINK will be representative of everyone in the community, this means all of the different groups, and types of people that make up the local population.
- The LINK should also be able to give people who do not usually have a say to give their views.
- LINKs Members will include:
 - Individuals
 - Service User Led Groups
 - Local Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations

BUT...you do not have to be a member of a LINK to get involved and have your say.

There is lot of work to do however, we have an enthusiastic and dedicated team working within our Community Engagement Team:

Please contact Karen Prior and Lynda Denman,

LINK Support Workers

Tel: 0151 645 4038

Email: wirralink@vcawirral.org.uk

Living and Working Environment

Wirral top of recycling table!

Wirral Council has emerged as top of the recycling table in Merseyside. Figures recently released by Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority show that Wirral recycled 31.68% of its household waste between April 2007 and December 2007, putting the borough ahead of the region's four other authorities.



Wirral's success comes after the implementation of grey recycling bins and an alternate weekly collection, as part of a new waste contract with Biffa. The new figure of 31.68% compares to the previous year's figure of 13.5% of household waste being recycled.

Wirral receives tourism boost

Three of Wirral's visitor attractions have received a ringing endorsement from coach operators from around the UK. Representatives from over fifty UK tour operators visited a number of attractions in Merseyside including The Lady Lever Art Gallery, Sunlight Vision Museum in Port Sunlight and Ness Gardens.

The tour was organised by the Mersey Partnership and Northumberland-based Steve Reed Tourism in Partnership with Wirral Council's Tourism Team. The idea behind the tour was to attract more business to Wirral and exploit the massive tourism potential in the Borough.

Cross Cutting (across all themes)

Equality Standard for Local Government (ESLG)

Jacqui Cross started working for the council six months ago as the Corporate Equality and Diversity Co-ordinator. Jacqui's job is to co-ordinate numerous activities across the whole council in order for us to reach level three of the equality standard for local government.

Each and every one of us (council employees and residents) has a role to play in ensuring services are appropriate for people who need to use them, and for all residents to feel they are able to access job opportunities here at the council.

Why is this so important? Wirral is a great place to live and work for most people. However, because some people are different from that majority for example they may be older than you, have a different sexual orientation than yours, they may follow a different religion than you, or be disabled, have a different ethnic background, or wish to become a different gender than they were assigned at birth, we want to play our part in making Wirral a great place to be for everyone.

No one wants to face or fear discrimination, so it is crucial that we promote equal chances for all and take pride in making the positive changes that will need to happen.

Over the coming year everyone will be encouraged to take part in one or more of the following activities (to name but a few):

- Participating in one of the council's equality consultation events
- Taking part in completing equality impact assessments

- Completing questionnaires in order for us to develop an equality profile of those who use our services
- Visiting the equality and diversity section of the council's website
- Reading a copy of our 6-monthly newsletter Equality Watch (first issue late summer 2008)
- Helping us to assess the accessibility of our buildings

Finally a big thank you to everyone who has helped us in the last six months to speed up the momentum of activities. For more information please contact Jacqui on 0151 691 8064 or jacquicross@wirral.gov.uk

Equality profiles

Sexual Orientation issues – profile of Wirral LGBT forum

What is the LGB&T Forum? The Wirral LGB&T Forum was set up with the help of the Wirral Voluntary & Community Sector Network (The Network) for members of the LGB&T community who live and work on the Wirral. Its purpose is to give these members a voice in the decision making process that affects Wirral, to sign post members to services that can help with particular issues and to provide social networking opportunities. The Forum has been established to help any one of any Age, Culture, Faith or Disability.

Website: <http://www.everyoneweb.com/wirralgibtforum> email wirralgibt_forum@yahoo.co.uk

Disability issues – profile of Wirral Carers / WIRED Do you look after someone? Does someone depend on you? Is your caring role too much at times? If you answered yes to any of these questions then you are one of Wirral's 37,500 carers.

A carer is someone who looks after a family member, partner or friend in need of help because they are ill, frail or have a disability. This can be a mother, father, brother, husband, child or even a friend or neighbour.

At Wired we may be able to support you with your caring responsibilities by offering advice, help and even someone to talk to when things are getting too much for you. In a recent national survey nearly 90% of the people said that caring had an impact on their health. Many carers were affected by stress, anxiety, depression or loss of sleep.

We now have over 470 carers registered with us who receive quarterly news letters which include information about changes to services, invitations to carers' events and activities such as the carers' art classes, pamper days and even samba drumming.

We have a carers counselling service which gives you the opportunity to talk to someone



about any issues you have without feeling guilty or judged. Our counsellors are experienced at listening, are unpaid and offer their services voluntarily.



If you would like to join the carers register or talk to someone about anything relating to your caring responsibilities then please call the Carers Team on the **Carers Helpline** on **0151 670 0777** between the hours of 9am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday or you could log onto www.wirralcarers.co.uk and email us. On the website you will find lots of helpful information and links to other organisations who may be able to help you.

Sexual Health - Terrence Higgins Trust on the Wirral On 22 February 2008, Terrence Higgins Trust officially opened its new centre in Birkenhead. Attended by Claire Sweeney, the Mayor of Wirral, Cllr Phil Gilchrist and Chairman of Wirral PCT, Frances Street, as well as over 50 representatives of other agencies on the Wirral, the opening was a great success.

Terrence Higgins Trust was established in 1982 in response to the death of Terry Higgins. Terry was one of the first people in the UK to die of HIV related illness. Terry's friends wanted to do something that would highlight the situation both politically and socially with a view to stopping other people going through what Terry went through.

25 years later, and Terrence Higgins Trust is now the largest HIV and sexual health charity in Europe with over 30 offices across England, Wales and Scotland. Whilst we still provide many of our services primarily for people infected or affected by HIV, we increasingly provide other sexual health services such as, in some areas, screening for sexually transmitted infections.

Across the board, one of the biggest barriers that exists to the maintenance of good sexual health in the UK is the stigma and discrimination associated with sexual ill health. This is particularly pronounced for people living with HIV.

On the Wirral, we will be providing services with a strong emphasis on sexual health promotion as well as harm reduction. We will continue to provide services for communities that are under-represented in many ways, such as the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community.

However, our services are for anyone, and thus individuals or professionals with queries or concerns about sexual health can contact us for support and information. Our services will include:

Outreach, Face to face, Targeted group work, Capacity building with communities, Safer sex information and advice, Safer sex campaign and other resource distribution, Training and education, Counselling

Some of these services are currently in place whilst others will be developed and rolled out throughout 2008/9.

For more information contact: Terrence Higgins Trust, 5 Bridge Street, Birkenhead, CH41 1AS, Tel: 0151 666 9890, Email: info.wirral@tth.org.uk, Web: www.tth.org.uk

Age Issues – profile of Age Concern Age Concern Wirral exists to promote the well being of older people in the whole of the borough of Wirral helping to make later life a fulfilling and enjoyable experience. We believe that each person has a right to a life, which maintains their personal independence, safeguards their privacy, offers genuine and informed choices, and provides opportunity for them to enjoy and contribute to the community as fully as possible, and meet their social, spiritual, cultural and individual needs.

Head Office, 42-44 Market Street, Birkenhead, Wirral CH41 5BT 0151 666 2220

Active Age Centre, Whetstone Lane, Birkenhead, CH41 2QS, 0151 647 3537

The Lauries Centre, Unit 2, 142 Cloughton Road, Birkenhead, Wirral CH41 6EY, 0151 649 1760

Devonshire Resource Centre, 141 Park Road North, Birkenhead, Wirral, CH41 0DD, 0151 653 4404

Please visit the following website to find out more about Age Concern
www.ageconcernwirral.org

Gender Issues – profile of TransWirral is an education, advocacy, campaigning and support organisation for all transsexual/intersex people (including teens) who reside in the north west of England.

Transsexualism is a gender identity disorder in which there is strong and on-going cross-gender identification, i.e. a desire to live and be accepted as a member of the opposite sex. There is a persistent discomfort with his or her anatomical sex and a sense of inappropriateness in the gender role of that sex. There is a wish to have hormonal treatment and surgery to make one's body as congruent as possible with one's psychological sex.

TransWirral provides a supportive environment for transsexual/intersex individuals, helping them overcome their sense of isolation and providing educational and social opportunities.

Meetings are usually held on the first Saturday of each month between 1 – 3pm. Trans people are encouraged to bring along family members and friends who themselves may need help and advice.

email robyn@transwirral.zzn.com or penny@transwirral.zzn.com or visit www.transwirral.btik.com Helplines: 07833 385126 or 07961 828471

Race Issues – profile of Wirral Change Wirral Change provides support for members of the Black Racial Minority community who have multiple barriers to employment which are further compounded by issues relating to language, culture, unrecognised qualifications and a lack of recent or local work experience. Specialist guidance workers engage and support customers to access employment opportunities and support participants to overcome multiple barriers to employment.

For further information contact Clint Agard, Wirral Change on 0151 650 5428 or email clint.wirralchange@yahoo.co.uk

Wrexham Bidston Electrification

Residents will recall that an update was provided at the previous area forum meeting with regard to the progress of proposals to electrify the Wrexham to Bidston rail line and link it to the existing Mersey electrics network.

Network Rail were expected to have issued partners with the results of the GRIP3 (Guide to Rail Investment Projects) study, which was jointly funded by Merseytravel and the Welsh Assembly Government, at the end of March 2008. The GRIP3 study will provide a clear indication of the project costs.

The preparation of this report was delayed due to staffing resources at Network Rail, however these have now been resolved and a meeting is to be held late May/early June, with representatives from Merseyrail and Welsh Assembly Government, with Network Rail to finalise aspects of the study.

In parallel with the GRIP3 study, an update of the original Faber Maunsell demand study is being undertaken. Residential and employment patterns alongside the line have changed since the study was completed, which may result in additional passenger forecasts, and therefore it was felt this was the appropriate time to update the study. Future updates will be provided to the Forum as the project progresses.

Streetscene Call centre: 0151 606 2004	Wirral Council website: www.wirral.gov.uk
Merseyside Police:	www.merseyside.police.uk
Merseytravel:	www.merseytravel.gov.uk
Local Area Forum:	www.engage@wirral.gov.uk or 0151-691-8026
Department for Transport:	www.dft.gov.uk

Press Release

Rail bosses vow £75k to look at line speed-up Merseytravel bosses pledge a further £600k to investigate electrification of rail line on Wrexham-Wirral-Liverpool route

MERSEYTRAVEL bosses pledged to fully fund a further £75,000 investigation into the electrification of the Bidston to Wrexham rail line, a Welsh Assembly Minister revealed yesterday .

The second stage study would consider the infrastructure needed to upgrade the route to a fast borderlands rail link, halving journey times between the North Wales town, Wirral and Liverpool.

An initial feasibility study by Network Rail, which was jointly funded with the Welsh Assembly Government, is expected to report in the next few days.

Merseytravel chief executive Neil Scales yesterday met Welsh Assembly transport minister Ieuan Wyn Jones for talks over the progress on the project.

Wrexham AM Lesley Griffiths, who was at the meeting, said it was the first opportunity for the minister to meet Mr Scales and hear directly how committed Merseytravel are to this scheme going ahead.

She said last night: "The much-anticipated feasibility study by Network Rail is due to be handed over to the Welsh Assembly Government and Merseytravel in the next few days – and I along with everyone interested in this scheme look forward to its publication.

"This line has great potential for the region as a whole. The benefits would aid economic development and could provide a rail link from NE Wales to Liverpool's John Lennon Airport."

Electrifying the line could halve the journey times.

It currently takes a diesel train an hour to travel from North Wales to the Birkenhead station, at which point passengers have to change to a Merseyrail electric service heading into Liverpool. The operator has included the step in their 2011 transport plan.

If the project goes ahead, it would be funded jointly by the Welsh Assembly Government, the Department for Transport and Regional and Local Transport Authorities, including Merseytravel.

A Welsh Assembly Government spokesperson said: "The Assembly Government is waiting for a feasibility study of the project by Network Rail before it can undertake detailed consideration."

Richard Down, Reporter, Daily Post, richarddown@dailypost.co.uk

Section Three

Every year each area forum has funding to give out to small community groups within their ward area. This funding is to help and support services that benefit the community. This section provides an update on how some of this money has been spent in this area.

Its up to you!

Wirral has been named as a government pilot area for Participatory Budgeting.

Participatory budgeting (PB) engages with local people to take decisions on the spending priorities for a part of the local authority budget in their local area for activities such as local environmental issues, community facilities, road safety measures or local crime initiatives.

PB must be conducted on an inclusive basis and can help bring about a change in the relationship between communities, elected councillors and local authorities.

In order to move this work forward we took the advice of the Participatory Budget Unit in order for trials to take place.

After discussions with the unit we have earmarked 3 area forums:

- **Bidston and Claughton**
- **Oxton and Prenton**
- **West Wirral**

The pilot will provide us with a new and innovative way of allocating community initiatives fund in these three areas.

The most significant change will be in the replacement of panel decisions with all projects voting on who should be allocated funds.

Applications for funding will remain the same; however the consideration of bids will be determined by PB sessions. Applicants will be requested to attend the session in their area, and in a 2-3 minutes statement why they should be funded. Attendance is compulsory.

Each presentation will be scored out of ten by the other applicants and when scores are added together the top ranking projects will receive funding. Further details and information about the sessions will be sent out to the applicants who submit eligible bids.

FREE FUNDING INFORMATION 4 YOU

Wirral Council supported by Wirral Local Strategic Partnership's Neighbourhood Renewal Fund are pleased to provide a FREE funding information service available online.

There are hundreds of grants available to support Wirral's voluntary and community groups from local opportunities to Government, National Lottery and Trust Funding sources.

To find out which grants you may be eligible to apply for visit our free search facility:

Step One

Go to www.wirral.gov.uk

Click on the *Funding Initiatives* icon under the 'Popular Pages' list.

Step Two

Then click on one of these links to browse and search for funding information.

www.open4community.info/wirral
www.open4socialenterprise.info/wirral

You no longer have to be left in the dark about what funding your group or organisation could apply for, find this out for yourself.

In addition you can also visit the following web site for a wide range of associated information including signing up for regular early funding alerts via email.

www.mfip.org.uk

Area Forum Funding Progress Report - Bidston and Claughton

(previously awarded monies - to 2006/2007)

Received From	Project Details	Decision	Progress Report
North Birkenhead Development Trust	To purchase materials and cover arts tutors fees for a groundwork and art work project which will enable young people to be engaged in the design and creation of the arts / ceramic feature.	Panel considered this to be a good project and agreed to contribute £1,000.00 towards this from the Local Agenda 21 Fund.	Two separate consultation events, one to cater for adults and one to cater for younger people, were held to get views on several design concepts for the artwork. A local artist was commissioned to complete the artwork. The collection of images for the artwork element of this project took place in January and we are now waiting to have this installed. It will be fitted in the library, but will be visible from the outside of the building.
Birkenhead Park Crown Green Bowls Forum	To organise a summer school for young people to introduce them to the sport of crown green bowls.	Panel considered this to be a good project and agreed to award £500.00 from the Community Initiatives Fund.	As part of Birkenhead Park children and young people's activity week woods-4-fun was run for children aged 6 - 16 on five consecutive mornings. 118 children were involved and all expressed a wish to be able to play again. This has enabled us to expand the interest of the younger generation and quite a few clubs now have junior sections.

Received From	Project Details	Decision	Progress Report
Claughton Community Group	To contribute towards the installation of CCTV and Christmas Lights within Claughton Village.	Panel agreed to consider this application despite it being received after the closing date, and agreed to contribute £1,000.00 from the Community Initiatives Fund and £2,000.00 from the Community Safety Fund.	The CCTV and christmas Lights were installed within Claughton Village thanks to the funding.

Area Forum Funding Progress Report

Bidston / Claughton

previously awarded monies - 2007/08 onwards

Organisation	Project Details	Decision	Progress Report
Wirral Scorpions JFC	To purchase new training, match, first aid equipment and sundries for the two new teams at the club.	Panel considered this to be a good project that will encourage more young people from the local area to develop their skills and improve their fitness levels, and agreed to award £350.00 from the Community Initiatives Fund.	The funding was spent on new training equipment and kit. Two teams completed the course and entered the Wallasey Junior Football League. This has helped ensure that many local boys have a focus and goal, have somewhere to train and decent equipment to improve their health and football.
Beechwood Community Association	To purchase two computers with printers.	Panel fully support the work of the association, and consider that purchasing this equipment would improve services for all residents on the Beechwood Estate. Agreed to award £1,568.00 from the Community Initiatives Fund.	The two new computers have increased the efficiency of the organisation by allowing training sessions running parallel to the day to day office management. By having volunteers with enhanced skills has allowed the association to increase services at all levels.
9th Birkenhead North Brownies	To contribute towards the purchase of equipment for the group.	Panel fully support the work the group does with young people and felt that the purchase of this equipment would encourage healthy activity. Awarded £435.00 from the Community Initiatives Fund.	Thanks to the funding we have been able to purchase equipment to enable the girls to learn crafts, cookery and be involved in healthy activities and games. The group has doubled in size and the girls attend regularly.

Organisation	Project Details	Decision	Progress Report
Birkenhead St Marys Cricket Club	To contribute towards cost of repairing and adding security features to the club roof.	Panel considered this to be an excellent project and were happy to support the cricket club, with this being their first application for funding. Panel agreed to award £3,000.00 (£565.88 from the Community Initiatives Fund; £1,934.12 from the community Safety Fund and £500.00 from the Local Agenda 21 Fund).	<p>The replacement of the existing roof has been completed, including an indestructible wire mesh for added security.</p> <p>Since the work was completed no persons have illegally entered the building meaning there have been on disruptions to all club activities, including youth group meetings, training, and local volunteers meetings.</p>

Organisation	Project Details	Decision	Progress Report
Wirral Festival of Music, Speech and Drama	To contribute towards costs of festival.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="801 212 1532 352">1. Bidston & Claughton - Panel considered this to be a good project, and agreed to award £50.00 from the Community Initiatives Fund to encourage more users from the forum area. <li data-bbox="801 395 1532 536">2. New Brighton / Wallasey - Panel considered this to be a good project, and agreed to award £100.00 from the Community Initiatives Fund to encourage more users from the forum area. <li data-bbox="801 579 1532 719">3. Heswall / Pensby & Thingwall - Panel considered this to be a good project and agreed to award £103.00 from the Community Initiatives Fund. <li data-bbox="801 762 1532 1023">4. Greasby, Frankby, Irby, Upton & Woodchurch - Panel wished to congratulate the applicant on their application, particularly the even breakdown of numbers benefiting / amount requested from each forum. Panel wished to support the continuity of the festival and agreed to award £154.00 from the Community Initiatives Fund. <li data-bbox="801 1066 1532 1171">5. Bebington / Clatterbridge - Panel considered this to be a good project and agreed to award £103.00 from the Community Initiatives Fund. <li data-bbox="801 1214 1532 1355">6. Birkenhead & Tranmere / Rock Ferry - Panel considered this to be a good project, but did not support this as did not feel that this would benefit people in the forum area. <li data-bbox="801 1398 1532 1428">7. West Wirral - Panel considered this to be a 	<p>The Speech and Drama Festival and Music Festival took place in February / March 2008. The audience at both weekends was approximately 1,000. The festivals encourage the study of speech and drama in Wirral, and reward people showing promise in these talents. They also help to increase the interest of the public in these arts by providing a platform for competitors, which will increase their self esteem and confidence.</p>

Organisation	Project Details	Decision	Progress Report
		<p>good project and agreed to award £30.00 from the Community Initiatives Fund.</p> <p>8. Bromborough / Eastham - Panel considered this to be a good project and agreed to award £51.00 from the Community Initiatives Fund.</p> <p>9. Oxton / Prenton - Panel considered this to be a worthwhile project and agreed to award £51.00 from the Community Initiatives Fund.</p>	
North Birkenhead Development Trust	<p>1. To contribute towards developing a pensioners luncheon club and advice service.</p> <p>2. To contribute towards providing day-time diversionary activities for children and young people.</p>	<p>1. Panel considered this to be a good project and agreed to award £722.50 from the Community Safety Fund.</p> <p>2. Panel considered this to be a good project and agreed to award £545.00 from the Community Initiatives Fund.</p> <p>Total awarded £1267.50.</p>	<p>1. A number of activities were arranged to try and attract people to the pensioners luncheon club, including safety day; international women's day; bingo sessions; summer trip to Christleton; and a trip to the Christmas markets in Manchester. Table games are also available for use on request (cards, dominoes, scrabble).</p> <p>2. These activities have been very successful. A variety of activities have been organised, from art and craft sessions to Christmas Grotto; cookery to a trip to the local fire station. We are working with Birkenhead Park in planning a Festival of Sport for August 2008.</p>