

Wirral's Area Forums



West Wirral Area Forum

**Papers for the forum meeting
Wednesday 2nd June 2010
Hoylake Community Centre
31 Hoyle Road
Hoylake
CH47 3AG**

7.00pm - 9.00pm

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Community Engagement Team, Corporate Services, Town Hall, Brighton Street,

You Decide...

June's area forum will give you the opportunity to tell us how you would spend **£20,000** on additional council services in your area. Do you think your area needs more activities for young people, bins or benches, signs for your local park? Come along and choose from a wide range of council activities....

In previous years, we have asked residents to fill in questionnaires. However this year, to have your say, you will need to attend the area forum.

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Code of Conduct for Area Forums

- Indicate to the Chairperson when you would like to speak
- Let invited speakers finish what they have to say
- Respect others right to be heard
- Do not use abusive or offensive language
- Do not make any discriminatory remarks
- Do not have private conversations while meeting is in progress

AGENDA

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies
2. Area co-ordinators Report
 - Minutes of last meeting and matters arising
3. **You Decide** - presentation by Jim Wilkie - Deputy Chief
Executive & Director of Corporate Services, Wirral Council
4. Update from Youth Service
5. Public Question time
6. Partner information
 - NHS Wirral
 - Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
 - Merseyside Police/Community Safety
 - Fire Service
 - Older Peoples parliament
7. Dates of Future meetings - **21st October 2010**

Section One

Minutes

AREA FORUM (WEST WIRRAL)

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	Gerry Ellis (Chairman)
<u>In attendance:</u>	Councillors	Jeff Green, Geoff Watt
	Lead Officer	Jim Wilkie (Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Corporate Policy)
	Area Service Co-ordinator	Tracey Smith
	Merseyside Fire Service	John Davies
	Merseyside Police	Inspector Paul Vickers
	Council Officers	Ian Brand (Head of Asset Management), Mike Collins (Community Safety), Carolyn Curr (Head of Corporate Policy), David Green (Director of Technical Services), Howard Mortimer (Head of Special Initiatives Team)
<u>Apologies</u>	Councillors	David Elderton, John Hale,
<u>Apologies</u>	Community Representatives	Gary Evans, Cynthia Radford

1 WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

The Chair, Councillor Gerry Ellis, opened the meeting and welcomed approximately 70 members of the public to the meeting in West Kirby. He invited members of the forum to introduce themselves. He informed the forum that the meeting was scheduled to finish around 8pm as there had been a drop in session from 2pm, and apologised if the posters advertising this were confusing.

The Chair welcomed two young people, Sophie and Chloe, from the Year 6 School Council of West Kirby Primary School to the meeting, to raise the pupil's concerns

and request information, as detailed below, over the proposed Aldi development at the bottom of Bridge Road.

- The school has 300 pupils, resulting in 500 people, including parents, using this busy junction, along with additional traffic created by the new store.
- Was a zebra crossing planned for the junction of Bridge Road and Orrysdale Road and if not, why not?
- How much traffic uses the junction at present and what impact will the Aldi development have on this?
- Was there a need for another supermarket in the area?

They added that many visitors avoid using this junction, such as families in Westbourne Road walking up to Darmand's Green. They confirmed that these issues had been outlined in a letter to David Green and that they were still waiting for a reply.

The Chairman thanked Sophie and Chloe and asked David Green to respond. The forum and audience gave Sophie and Chloe a round of applause.

David Green thanked Sophie and Chloe for taking the time to come along to the meeting and admired their bravery at coming along and standing up at the meeting. He added that he had not responded to the letter as he knew that they would be raising the issue at this meeting. He confirmed that he was aware of the problems around the junction, and that there had been six accidents in three years up to 1997. Measures were put in place and since then there had been no further accidents, and last year yellow lines were put in to slow traffic down. David agreed to arrange for traffic engineers to carry out counts of children / parents / cars in the area, as the placing of crossings are based on number of vehicles / people using an area. This would be followed up with a meeting at the school to discuss the issues, possible solutions and places for crossings to be sited, probably in about one month. He also agreed to revisit the area after the Aldi has opened to monitor traffic levels and the need for possible need for new measures.

The Chairman added that there had been many calls re: why work had been stopped on the Aldi development.

Jim Wilkie confirmed that there had been a minor issue over the ownership of a small piece of the land, but that he was aiming to get all of the parties together to resolve this.

Minute decision

Resolved: That –

- i. Sophie and Chloe be thanked for attending the meeting
- ii. David Green to arrange for traffic surveys to be carried out at junction of Orrysdale Road and Bridge Road area and to arrange a meeting with the pupils at West Kirby Primary School to discuss issues and possible solutions

2 AREA CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT / PARTNER UPDATES

The Area Co-ordinator, Tracey Smith, presented her report containing the minutes of the meeting on 14 October 2009, and local updates, and asked if there were any amendments or matters arising. None were raised. She added that the report included partner updates and asked the partners if they had anything to add to these updates. The partners confirmed that there was nothing further to add to these.

The Chairman asked the public if they had any comments for the partners,

Minute decision

Resolved: That –

- i. the minutes of the October meeting of the Area Forum be confirmed.**
- ii. the Area Co-ordinator be thanked for her report.

3 UPDATE ON FUTURE OF COMMUNITY CENTRES

The Chairman invited Ian Brand to give an update on the Strategic Asset Review in relation to West Kirby and Hoylake.

Ian confirmed that details of the asset transfer programme for Westbourne and Hoylake Community Centres had been included at the last forum meeting, and that the programme was following Council policy and a consistent approach. A meeting was held on 22nd October 2009 at the Deputy Chief Executive's Office, with three chairs of Joint Management Committees (JMC) of these community centres, along with the chair of the JMC from Greasby Community Centre, to look at how things could be moved on. Ian confirmed that this was a positive meeting and progress was being made.

Hoylake Community Centre – building condition surveys were carried out on the centre and these were being used as a basis to take forward issues re: work required prior to asset transfer. There was also a need to develop a business plan, so consultants have been introduced to assist with this.

Westbourne Hall – a meeting was held with the JMC following the building condition survey to look at addressing issues re: heating, structure, damp and roof. Further inspections will take place following the agreed works being carried out. Consultants have also been introduced to assist with the development of a business plan.

The Chairman thanked Ian Brand for his update and the following questions / issues were raised:

1. Vaughan Williams, Chair of the Hoylake Community Centre JMC thanked the Councillors and Officers (in particular Jim Wilkie and Ian Brand) for their assistance in moving the asset transfer forward and confirmed that there was a strong urge to take this forward.

2. Sandra Wall – what was happening with Birkenhead Town Hall, as this great asset was not being used?

Ian Brand – this was one of the assets identified as surplus to requirement, and for disposal. The Hamilton Partnership had been chosen, from a short-list of bidders, as the preferred bidder and work was being undertaken with this group to explore a proposed use for the building and bring this to fruition. The Partnership has been given six months to work up a detailed plan.

3. Margaret Campbell – what was the situation re: community asset transfer of allotments?

Ian Brand – confirmed that there was potential for allotments to go through this process. There were two parties interested in the allotments and the Council was looking to explore terms on these.

4. Rosemary Chandler, Secretary of Sandringham Drive allotments – was there any timescale for allotment transfers?

Ian Brand – the sites being considered were at West Kirby and at Hoylake, but that there were no definite dates / timescales set at present.

5. John Brace – are the community centres to be brought up to standard before being transferred?

Ian Brand – confirmed that the centres would be brought up to the standard agreed with the JMCs and in-line with the Council's approved asset transfer policy. The structural surveys highlighted areas requiring further investigation / work.

Minute decision: -

Resolved that Ian Brand be thanked for his update

4 UPDATE ON REGENERATION PROJECTS / PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chairman informed the forum that there was a written update from Howard Mortimer available at the meeting and thanked him for the report. He added that the following events / developments were good news for the area:

- Return of the Open in 2014
- Women's Open in 2012
- Development of 8 Meols Drive Hotel and spa - Some details of neighbour's concerns were presently being discussed
- Sail/Hotel project - Carpenters (the developers) we had invited to attend the meeting but they declined the invitation
- Kings Gap Court Hotel – new plan submitted for Holiday Inn Express and Marco Pierre White restaurant

Howard informed the forum that his written update was a resume of progress on the regeneration of Hoylake and West Kirby, covering the following:

- Hoylake Station Gateway Project – This £1.2 Million proposal concerns high quality Public Realm improvements of the sort already in evidence in Market Street. The site in-between the station frontage and the Quadrant will require the support of a number of partners including Mersey Travel. Providing the necessary funding can be identified – and this cannot be guaranteed – it is hoped that Wirral's Cabinet will be asked to approve the project for implementation before the return of The Open Championships in 2014. A public exhibition regarding the project will be arranged should it prove deliverable.
- Hoylake and Meols Promenade – The Council continues to seek funding in support of appropriate investment in the Hoylake & Meols Promenade. Following the disappointment of our unsuccessful bid to the CABE Seachange Programme, which targeted a £1M grant towards a phase 1 Hoylake Promenade project, the Council is looking at prospects for an initial 'start-up' project close to Meols Parade Gardens and the Lifeboat Station. This possible action will be informed by Public comment and a special meeting called for this purpose in the spring.

- The Sail – In September 2009 Council's Cabinet agreed that the Council should engage with the developers (Carpenters) and their legal advisors to draw up a development agreement and identify a clear proposal covering precise plans re: parking and a clear stakeholder and public engagement plan.
- Public Realm Improvements – Following a study 3 years ago by consultants W. S. Atkins examining the prospects for high quality Public Realm improvements in central West Kirby, the Council has been pursuing possible external regeneration funding to help facilitate a initial programme of improvements. If the necessary financial resources can be assembled the first phase of work to be targeted could be Dee Lane / Banks Road. Such improvements would concern surfaces, lighting, street furniture, planting and signage.
- Wirral Country Park – Some public funding has already been expended on improving pathways and cycle ways in the Country Park. In respect of a proposed new Visitors Centre at Thurstaston – replacing the existing building – about half the costs of the project have been secured from Wirral Council subject to the achievement of the balance from external sources. Unfortunately, so far, Council Officers have not been successful in obtaining that balance. The Council, however, continues to seek and secure this outstanding balance and is currently pursuing an idea suggested by Cllr. Jeff Green in that regard.

The following questions / issues were raised:

A member of the public asked – was the Hoylake Golf Resort still in the planning stage?

Howard Mortimer – confirmed that this was still in the very early stages and that documents were being prepared inviting expressions of interest in initial terms.

Councillor Jeff Green – raised concern re: the Core Strategy Document over the implications for the Hoylake shopping centre.

Jim Wilkie – confirmed that the Council had a retail assessment carried out by Roger Tym and Partners to look at the condition of shopping areas across Wirral along with scope for further retailing facilities. As part of this exercise the consultants recommended that the descriptions given to shopping areas should be looked at, as terminology has changed. The report also identifies vulnerable shopping areas. No retail areas have been downgraded. Jim offered to discuss this issue in more detail at a future forum meeting and this was agreed by the Chairman and Councillor Green.

Member of the public – what type of environmental agreements have been sought for the proposed Golf Resort site?

Howard Mortimer – the area is within the Green Belt, and as land is in need of remedial action (flood plain / poor agricultural land etc.) this provides an opportunity to improve the area and quality of the land by introducing water features, improved access, localised habitats etc.

Elizabeth Davey– the land that has been identified as high grade agricultural should be protected and kept for agriculture and what is happening on the greater concourse project?

Questions were asked about progress of the greater concourse project. The project includes improvements to all areas, including a new fire station, health centre and

retail facilities. But as this involves the Concourse, which is a Council owned building, the project has been passed onto Asset Management to progress.

Ian Brand added that the project was being reviewed and he would be meeting with the Head of Procurement next week to look at whether the procurement exercise is still valid. He agreed to give a further update on this at the next forum.

Eddie Boulton commented on the Council's Core Retail Assessment and felt that it placed Hoylake below Birkenhead and other areas, and asked if the plans for The Open etc. will change this strategy?

Jim Wilkie – apologised if the strategy had confused people, and explained that it was a document setting out a planning framework and not for getting resources. Birkenhead was seen as the main retail centre, and there was no intention to downgrade any of Wirral's retail areas. The aim is to adopt a hierarchy of centres which is more consistent with national policy advice and therefore to strengthen their protection. The document looks at prospects for the next 20 years for future retail provision. He agreed to discuss this in more detail at the end of the meeting.

John Hutchinson – The Core Strategy Document which he felt was ill-presented and resembled a Green Paper, included an objective to reduced dependency on retail jobs , but more retail areas are being planned.

Jim Wilkie –development frameworks are set out under Central Government guidance, and the Core Strategy was complimented by the Planning Advisory Service. The proposed objective in the Core Strategy to reduce dependency on jobs in retailing is not inconsistent with consulting on options to accommodate future retail growth: the Council is looking to increase increasing employment levels across the Borough. The Golf Resort opportunities and the return of The Open has been widely welcomed by the public and elected members. The aim is to build on this opportunity and look at how we can drive / improve our local economy. There are a range of issues, such as bio-diversity and the greenbelt, but we are trying to realise the asset whilst respecting the local environment.

Margaret Campbell – what is the timeframe for the Carpenter progress consultation re the Sail project?

Ian Brand – The Cabinet did not place an end date on this, but we are looking to start negotiations on this as soon as possible.

Councillor Geoffrey Watt – Is there any significance re: dates in the Forward Plan re: the Sail Project?

Jim Wilkie – the Forward Plan is an advance notification of when officers anticipate reporting back to elected members, and officers work towards these dates. The dates are not guaranteed..

John Brace – the cycle path was not continuous and involved returning to the road for the last Open – will this be improved for the next Open?

Jim Wilkie – now that we have confirmation of the Open events a process re: logistics will be launched, and this will be discussed in more detail at a future forum.

The Chairman added that the local Councillors would ensure that consultations similar to those that took place for the last Open event (14 events took place) will allow everyone to have their say..

Member of the public – what was happening to the former toilet block at Hoylake Promenade?

Howard Mortimer – a helpful meeting has been held with the Development Control team and it was hopeful that the developer Mr Watson would be able to start on site in early summer.

A member of the public – what is the situation re: the management of Ashton Park? He alleged that there had been no representation at the forum from Parks and Open Spaces since 2002

Chairman – Martin Harrison, the Vice Chair of the Park, has been involved with the gateway review, as well as Wirral's Parks Friends groups (he added that he was disappointed that the allotments groups had not been included in this). Part of this includes looking at outsourcing maintenance to the gardens by 2011. He admired Martin's work and added that Jim Lester has attended many forum meetings, but agreed to request a representative from Cultural Services to attend the next forum meeting.

Brigitta Muller – asked if someone from the Youth Service could attend the next meeting to give an update on West Kirby Youth Club?

Jim Wilkie – confirmed the Area Co-ordinator would invite a representative of the Youth Service to the next meeting.

Inspector Paul Vickers added that discussions had taken place with the Youth Service and that the intention was for the centre to be used six nights a week for pre-arranged meetings. Therefore the use of the centre would be much more controlled.

Councillor Jeff Green – the minutes of the last meeting were not accurate, and the issue raised was that the way the Council communicates was not good enough. There needs to be better involvement with the community, and this was being discussed in some depth. Cllr Green had already shared some views with Jim Wilkie

Marko Muller – Why do we need a further hotel that everyone is complaining about when there will be a boutique hotel in Meols Drive?

Howard Mortimer – the proposed hotel development still has to receive planning approval.

John Hutchinson – what progress has been made re: negotiations between lake users, the Council and the preferred developer, as believe the planned meeting had been cancelled?

Howard Mortimer – a meeting took place several weeks ago and progress has been made. A second meeting was arranged, but this was postponed and is due to take place in about 10 days.

Minute decision:

Resolved that: -

- (i) Howard Mortimer be thanked for his update**
- (ii) Howard Mortimer to update the forum on development on the regeneration of Hoylake and West Kirby, and to advertise / invite forum to any public consultations arranged on the regeneration projects**
- (iii) Jim Wilkie to arrange for a detailed discussion to be held on the retail assessment at a future forum meeting**
- (iv) Ian Brand to give an update on the greater concourse project at the next forum meeting**
- (v) Jim Wilkie to arrange for discussion on logistics / plans for the Open event at future forum meetings**
- (vi) Tracey Smith to invite a representative from Cultural Services to the next forum meeting**
- (vii) Tracey Smith to invite a representative from the Youth Service to the next forum meeting**

DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Chairman asked for views on the drop-in session prior to the meeting and whether this should be held at a future meeting, within the Hoylake area.

Brigitta Muller – thought it was a good idea, but felt that there should have been more representation from Council departments - e.g. the Youth Service.

The Chairman agreed to ask Officers to look into this and invite more departments along to the next open event. He confirmed that the next area forum would be held on 2nd June 2010, thanked the minute taker and everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.30pm.

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, NHS Wirral, University Teaching Hospital Trust, fire safety representatives etc 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.

Community Safety

Legal action against the perpetrators of anti-social behaviour has included:

Reported January 2010:

- 45-year old female from Ridings Hey, **Noctorum** was issued with an eviction order due to criminal behaviour by her partner. The Order was postponed for two years on condition that she does not invite her partner to her home or permit him to enter the property including the garden and driveway areas*;
- A court rejected the request from the mum of a family (formerly living in **New Brighton**) that was banned from Wirral in 2005 to have the Anti-Social Behaviour Order against her ended, following a challenge by Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team;
- 17 year-old male from Beatrice Avenue, **Bebington**, was issued with an interim Anti-Social Behaviour Order pending a further hearing following alleged abusive and threatening behaviour;
- The first Anti-Social Behaviour Closure Order was used in Wirral by Merseyside Police on a property in Big Meadow Road, **Woodchurch**. Working closely with Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team and Wirral Partnership Homes the property was closed for three months following serious nuisance caused to neighbours.

Reported February 2010:

- 37 year-old male of no fixed abode was issued with a 2-year Anti-Social Behaviour Order following an alleged catalogue of anti-social behaviour which banned him from, amongst other things, a large area covering **Arrowe Park**, Arrowe Park Hospital and parts of **Greasby**;
- 15-year old male from Union Street, **Tranmere**, was issued with a 2-year Anti-Social Behaviour Order following a catalogue of anti-social behaviour;
- 65-year old male from Lansdowne Road, **Birkenhead**, was evicted from his home following alleged anti-social behaviour by him and visitors to his property, including loud parties, fighting and drunken behaviour*;
- 17 year-old male from Beatrice Avenue, **Bebington**, was issued with a 2-year Anti-Social Behaviour Order following alleged abusive and threatening behaviour, evidenced by officers from Merseyside Police, Wirral Community Patrol and the Oval Sports Centre (see above).

Reported March 2010:

- 29-year old male from Wellington Road, **Oxton**, was issued with a 2-year Anti-Social Behaviour Order following threatening behaviour and repeatedly forcing his way into a residential building where he did not live;
- 23-year old male from George Road, **Hoylake**, was issued with a 3-year Anti-Social Behaviour Order following previous anti-social behaviour within the Hoylake, Meols and West Kirby area and previous convictions for offences including assault, criminal damage, theft, burglary, handling stolen goods, fraud, public disorder, possession of an offensive weapon and breach of a previous Anti-Social Behaviour Order;

- 84-year old male from Larchwood Close, **Pensby**, was issued with an interim Anti-Social Behaviour Order following an alleged catalogue of anti-social behaviour;
- 44-year old female from Greenwood Road, **Woodchurch**, was given a final chance to maintain her tenancy following a catalogue of anti-social behaviour by her children. A warrant for possession of her property was suspended on condition, amongst other things, that she complies with the terms of her tenancy agreement related to conduct*.

* issued in partnership with Wirral Partnership Homes.

Additional activity has included:

- **School bus run targeted for non-payment (March 2010)**
Pupils who dodge bus fares travelling to and from school were the target of a multi-agency operation. Merseytravel's Revenue Protection Team, Merseyside Police, Happy Al's Bus Company and Wirral Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Team and Education Social Welfare Service took part in the operation and were tackling what had become a repeated issue of non-payment of fares by a number of school children, which had been identified by Happy Al's Bus Company connected to a specific bus route. A high-visibility operation saw the officers stop the bus on its route and take the names and addresses of all young people not in possession of a valid ticket. Nineteen young people were identified for non-payment of fares. Their schools were notified and letters sent by Merseytravel to the children's parents outlining the consequences for non-payment;
- **Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy & Minimum Standards launched (March 2010)**
Wirral Community Safety Partnership launched its Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy which sets out planned activity to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour, setting out 34 objectives that will seek to be achieved over the next two to three years by a range of partners. The Partnership also made a public commitment to deliver a minimum set of standards related to anti-social behaviour.

Community Safety is about the welfare of the community in regards to reducing crime and helping people to be made aware of crime and how to avoid being a victim. That's the reason why we support Neighbourhood Watch and the benefits that brings, such as pulling communities together. There are nearly one thousand various Neighbourhood Watch groups including Business Watch, the newly formed Allotment Watch and, of course, Neighbourhood Watch. We have attached details of the national scheme for information but you can form a new Neighbourhood Watch or become a member of an existing scheme by forwarding details to the Community Safety Team.



<http://www.mynhw.co.uk/>

Owing to Neighbourhood Watch Schemes and other initiatives, analysis shows that during 2009 -2010 we achieved a 10.1% overall reduction in the total number of crimes reported to Merseyside Police on Wirral -

- **14.6% reduction in serious violent crime**
- **7.9% reduction in assaults with less serious injury**
- **13.6% reduction in thefts from vehicles**
- **7.9% reduction in thefts of vehicles**
- **19.5% reduction in ASB**

We have commenced a quality assurance inspection of the work of the **Domestic Violence MARAC** (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) which will be completed by the end of this year.

The work of the **Hate Crime MARAC** is developing well which now includes all six strands of diversity • Age • Disability • Race • Religion or Belief • Gender • Sexual Orientation. This group are also subject to close monitoring through the CAA (Comprehensive Area Assessment).

The CAA, is a new way of assessing local public services in England. It examines how well councils are working together with other public bodies to meet the needs of the people they serve. It's a joint assessment made by a group of six independent watchdogs. Assessments will be made publicly available every year and will provide an annual snapshot of quality of life in the area.

If someone is subject to Hate Crime, they could report it to Merseyside Police or through a third-party reporting agency such as -



<http://www.stophateuk.org/>

<http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org/>

In the case of 'Crime Stoppers', we would encourage people to report through them for any information in regard to any type of crime.

Seasonal security issues -

At this time of the year (dependant upon weather conditions!!) we are often tempted to leave windows and doors open to cool ourselves down but please consider that a number of burglaries and thefts of and from cars occur through windows being left open or insecure.

If you have a UPVC door ensure that when you are in the house, it is locked from the inside as many are insecure and can be opened from the outside otherwise you may find an unwanted intruder!

Whilst the number of house burglaries on the Wirral continues to fall, garden sheds remain popular targets for thieves due to their potential rich pickings and often low-level resistance. Sheds can be overlooked when home security is considered despite the fact that the value of the contents, such as mowers, power tools, garden furniture and cycles etc, can often add up to several hundred pounds. A burglar can also use garden tools, to break into a house.

Use a means of securing items together in the shed such as a good quality chain and padlock. A number of other security measures can be taken such as property marking using uv pens, SmartWater, Selecta, DNA, Redweb or similar.

If you require any further advice regarding security, contact the local Crime Reduction Officers on 0151 606 5484 / 5480 or visit Merseyside Police website <http://www.merseyside.police.uk> and access the personal security tab. Alternatively access the above Neighbourhood Watch website.

Don't forget, Wirral is a safe place and let us collectively keep it that way!

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service

Operations.

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** which is a local strategic plan that outlines the measures intended to be taken to continue the modernisation and improvement of services to the people of Merseyside. Integrated Risk Management Plans have now been produced locally to facilitate the management of specific local priorities. Although the Wirral is inherently a safe place to live, there are pockets of risk and your Fire Service works proactively to reduce these risks, we constantly review our strategies to ensure they maintain their effectiveness.

Accidental Dwelling Fires and Road Traffic Collisions where people are killed or seriously injured remain challenging. During 2009-10 we visited over 22,000 homes delivering Home Fire Safety Checks as part of a comprehensive Accidental Dwelling Fire Strategy. In the case of Road Traffic Collision we work in partnership to develop initiatives aimed at raising awareness and reducing the number/severity of these incidents.

In addition to the above, work has continued in respect of reducing the risk of death and injury across the area through Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service's statutory duty to maintain operational readiness and training is a key element of that. Earlier in the

year we participated in numerous multiple high rise exercises working with the local housing trust to secure a block off flats in order to practice the full High Rise Procedure including use of Dry Risers and search procedures.

Environment.

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service has set a goal to become an environmentally regenerative service and to reduce our carbon footprint with the ultimate aim of becoming carbon positive. The aim of which is to leave the climate in better shape at the end of each year.

This goal will take a sustained effort over a number of years and will require radical change in how we operate as a business, whilst we maintain our high levels of service, intervention and response to the people of Merseyside. In 2004 we became the first Fire Authority to be certified to ISO 14001 for our Environmental Management System following an external audit we have secured recertification.

We have achieved the Carbon Trust's Carbon Standard, in recognition and appreciation of our efforts in the field of carbon management, emission reduction and the mitigation of climate change.

Forward Look

We will be concentrating on the following environmental priorities in 2010/11:

- Waste Management Project: Zero waste to landfill
- Pollution Prevention on our own sites: Drain and emergency planning.
- Reduction of CO2 emissions: Biofuels trial, buildings and vehicle projects.
- Reduction of water use: Rainwater harvesting trial and washroom optimisation.
- Reduction of transport impacts: Trial of electric cars, travel booking systems, Cycle to Work Scheme 2010.
- Environmental Management System: Seeking accreditation of all sites to ISO14001:2004 and EMAS accreditation (the highest level of accreditation).
- Sustainable Procurement: Provision of a system to:
 - Assess the competency and risk of contractors
 - Undertake lifecycle assessment of key/ high environmental risk goods and services.

Youth Engagement

The Youth Engagement Team commenced a 12 week **Beacon Course** in January for students living on the Wirral. Referrals came from Wirral Alternative Schools Programme. The course was run out of Birkenhead Fire Station and was designed for children aged 11-16yrs. This is a partnership project to engage young people at risk of exclusion from mainstream education and involvement in arson related crime. The course participants were given a learning experience outside the school environment to build their confidence and self-esteem. The course combined practical drill ground and scenario based training with classroom centred activities and workshops-including community fire safety

The course concluded in April with an end of course presentation at the Training & Development Academy in Croxteth for the students and their families.

Partnerships.

The Fire Service are committed to working in partnership to achieve strategic objectives within the Local Area Agreement, examples of this are

Wirral Heartbeat, has been in partnership with MFRS for the last 10yrs. Heartbeat gyms are sited on fire stations across Wirral where persons suffering from heart related illness are offered structured fitness programmes in a safe and secure environment. At present some 1600/1700 member visits take place each month.

Working in conjunction with the PCT the partnership has made these facilities available for courses aimed at tackling lifestyle issues within the local community. One such project at Wallasey is aimed at tackling childhood obesity through a mixture of fitness training and cooking displays showing young people how they can cook a nutritious meal in the time it takes to buy fast food. This programme has been so successful that it is being rolled out to other areas of Wirral.

Other projects include a fitness project for over 40 males and a programme aimed at the BME community which provides lifestyle support in accordance with their religious and ethnic traditions.

Road Safety.

Through participation in the **Wirral Roadsafe Partnership** MFRS are taking action to impact on RTC Reduction National Indicators. We have trained staff to check Child Car seat fitting for safety and to give advice on type and legal requirements. A number of successful events have been held across Wirral where MFRS, along with Wirral Road Safety, checked child restraint and provided parents and carers with information and advice

Fire Fighting Equipment for Wirral Wardens and Rangers

Wirral has:-

- 10 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – more than any other district on Merseyside
- 70 Sites of Biological Importance (SBI)
- 220 designated green spaces in the current Unitary Development Plan for Wirral
- 24 Allotments

These sites are either patrolled by Wirral's Community Patrol, Wirral Park Rangers and/or National Trust Rangers.

As part of our strategy for tackling Small Fires in such areas portable fire fighting equipment has been provided to Park Rangers and Community Patrol Wardens. Training has now been completed and PacLider Portable Water Fire Extinguishers have been distributed to wardens. The issue of the equipment will decrease environmental impact by extinguishing small fires on discovery and therefore reducing the Carbon emissions.

Wirral 'Trailblazers' Mountain Bike Club

MFRS in partnership with Merseyside Police, Wirral Youth Services and Anti Social Behaviour Teams are endeavouring to set up a Mountain Bike Club initiative based at Bromborough Fire Station.

The aims of the project are:

- To promote community health.
- Provide training in cycle proficiency and off road riding skills for young people.
- To be inclusive of all young people initially in the area around Bromborough.
- To break down barriers between young people and agencies.
- To address issues including Arson Reduction, RTC Reduction, Anti Social Behaviour and obesity.
- MFRS have allocated a small pool of bikes to start the project and it is hoped that more bikes will be purchased through successful funding applications.
- A 20 bike Burtech Trailer has been purchased with funding from 'Your Wirral' and is now being stored at Bromborough Community Fire Station.
- A "go live" date for Trailblazers has been set for June 2010.

Wallasey Youth Hub is a joint project currently underway involving MFRS and Wirral Borough Council Youth Service. The scheme involves the development of facilities at Wallasey Community Fire Station to provide amenities for young persons to interact, these will include meeting area, I.T.C suite, dance studio and a number of activity rooms. The overall design was developed in conjunction with young persons who will ultimately be using the facility. Work is nearing completion and there will be a formal opening by the Mayor of Wirral in June 2001.

This scheme will complement the recently completed Lifestyle Centre at Wallasey, which provides a heartbeat gym, kitchen and community meeting facilities. These two projects will provide an opportunity for interaction between all age groups.

Equality & Diversity

- **Single Equality Scheme:** Our single equality scheme has been approved by Authority and is in its final stages of consultation with the staff side organisations (FBU & Unison).
- **Pride-** We are attending both Liverpool Pride (7th August) and Manchester Pride (28th August)
- **Recruitment** – We have achieved (and exceeded) our stretched recruitment targets as set out in the National FRS Equality & Diversity Strategy, for recruitment of women into the operational sector and recruitment of BME candidates, over the last quarter (targets: women 17.8%; BME; 17.6%....actual: women 33%; BME 33%)
- **Local Government Equality Framework:** Having been rated as an "Achieving" Authority under the local government equality framework in 2009, we are now working to the "Excellent" level, and hope to have a Peer Challenge against this some time in October 2010.
- **Regional event:** we are currently working with the other FRS across the NW region, in planning an event for members of the respective Fire Authorities to showcase the work each service is doing in respect of Equality & Diversity.
- **CFOA Lead:** Mike Hagen (DCFO) has been appointed as the Diversity Lead for CFOS (Chief Fire Officers Association).

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 Contact Numbers

- **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:** Arrowe 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

FREEphone 0800 731 5958

Equality & Diversity

Communities

What is Community Cohesion?

Community cohesion is what must happen in all communities to enable different groups of people to get on well together. People all want to fulfill their potential and feel that they belong and contribute to their local area.

Councils and their partners play a central role in providing services that are fair and promote equality and positive relationships. They are also taking an increasingly important and central role as community leaders and in 'place shaping'. Place shaping involves defining the positive aspects of a locality and promoting local pride and belonging.

Some examples of recent events that have taken place in Wirral are:

Wirral United Trophy football tournament November 2009 as part of Wirral's Diversity Day celebrations



The Wirral United Trophy entailed two events; the first one engaged male adults of various ages and ethnicity (white English, Chinese, Irish, Bengali, Indian, Sudanese and Polish) of which 18 teams participated in an all day football tournament.

(Pictured is Katrina Roberts, Chair of Black & Racial Minority staff diversity forum with Deputy Mayor and Mayoress of Wirral and drummer)

The second event engaged children aged 8 to 9 years old also from diverse cultural backgrounds (white English, south Asian and African) who took part in workshops.

The overall objectives were to: positively engage the community in activity; promote cohesion using football as a tool; promote access to services; promote fitness and healthy living; raise awareness around racism and empower young people/children



There was a need for the project because a number of race hate incidents had previously taken place within the borough, particularly in Birkenhead. Merseyside Police and the black and racial minority (BRM) community were keen for an activity to take place which demonstrated diverse racial groups could engage with each other.

Wirral Council's Black & Racial Minority Staff Forum effectively engaged community groups to set up and develop a project that specifically targeted the Black & Racial Minority community and men, as victims of the race hate incidents had been male and the perpetrator. In addition by engaging children and raising their awareness about racism and bullying is a mechanism to not only prevent racial incidents taking place, but also to equip and enable them to report incidents and intervene.

Elders African Caribbean Community Voice - Winter Celebration, Wallasey Town Hall



Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoress Alan Jennings and Cathy Jennings opened the Wirral Elders of African Caribbean Community Voice (ACCV) celebration at Wallasey Town Hall. The event organised by volunteers of the Elders group Rachel Wilson and Helen Renner was attended by over a 100 residents of all ages.

Everyone enjoyed the wide range of food which included English and African dishes. Children were entertained with a magician, Santa Claus and presents. Adults enjoyed the excellent disco specialising in African music.

The event was sponsored by Wirral Council's Equality and Cohesion team.

Birkenhead's worldly Woodlands Primary School (featured in Liverpool Echo – 2nd March)

Woodlands Primary School in Birkenhead has one of the most multi-cultured registers in the country with a quarter of pupils having English as a second language.

The children's mother tongues are made up of 11 countries as diverse as Sri Lanka, Sudan and China and 21% of pupils on the register are of Bangladesh descent.

And whether its Eid parties, a collective countdown of the Ramadan fasting period or making Japanese sushi – the school does all it can to celebrate globalism and build international links.

- Eid - the annual Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca which is one of the greatest religious observances in Islam
- Ramadan - is the name of the ninth month in the Islamic calendar. During Ramadan, all observant Muslims observe the Fast of Ramadan between dawn (fajr), and sunset (maghrib). Ramadan in 2010 will start on Wednesday, the 11th of August and will continue for 30 days until Thursday, the 9th of September

From the age of six, pupils study Japan with a focus on the country firmly embedded in all spectrums of the curriculum. For example, Japanese calligraphy and authentic kites are made in art and technology classes. An annual Japan day is held with pupils able to do everything from sushi making to wearing traditional Japanese dress.

Children are also in touch with their counterparts in Japan with the primary linked to Tanabe Higashi school in Kyonanabe. Pupils are also in regular contact with schools in Germany and France as part of French and German lessons – other permanent fixtures on the timetable.

The school has even set up a link with a school in Sierra Leone to complement a focus on Africa.

Even the staffing appointments address the multi-cultural roll, with four bilingual Bengali/English speaking teaching assistants and a Polish speaking teaching assistant employed.

The school's international focus has seen teachers working elsewhere in the borough and beyond to share ideas and see how it operates.

Training

Elumos: In December 2008 Wirral Council launched its first large-scale e-learning package called Elumos. The programme was a modular approach to raising awareness of Equality and Diversity amongst Wirral staff. Since its launch over 5000 staff and elected members have accessed the various modules and as we move into 2010 we have now launched the programme via the internet as well. This has allowed us to provide access to a further 900 users and we are also looking at widening its access to our Local Strategic Partnership Groups.

Dealing with Diversity workshops: E-learning alone will not provide for all our learning requirements and we have decided to launch a series of theatre based face to face workshops for management staff starting in March 2010. These workshops are highly interactive and will provide thought provoking work based scenarios for managers to watch and then discuss openly in group. Using this method of training compliments the material delivered by Elumos by blending the two types of learning together to provide a much fuller understanding of Equality and Diversity in the workplace.

'Theatre&' Equality and Diversity Training – Tuesday 16 March 2010

A member of Corporate Policy team reported the following;

Attending the Theatre& course after I completed my Elumos training has given me a more in-depth understanding of how we use words/sentences could be interpreted other ways by people we don't know. Sometimes if we're used to an environment and the people in it, we don't always consider other people's feelings that are new to those environments.

This training has given me an insight in to people from different backgrounds and cultures that we may not always come across in everyday life and how their feelings could be hurt with 'banter' and 'stereotyping'.

This training is very useful and informative as the Theatre group were acting out different scenarios and getting the group involved which meant we weren't just spoken at which made it more enjoyable.



Human Rights

What are human rights and where do they come from?

In 1948 a group of prominent men and women from all over the world came together to draft one of the most famous rights charters known today. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is based on a simple idea – that we are all human and thus entitled to basic rights and freedoms.

Now the Human Rights Act sets out how human rights fit into British society and legislation. Its aim is to make the guiding principles behind human rights part of our law and part of how we treat each other.

At their most basic, human rights are about how we treat each other. As a result they are particularly important for some of the more vulnerable or less powerful in our society, such as people in care, young children or people with learning difficulties.

Human Rights are based on five core principles:

Fairness
Respect
Equality
Dignity
Autonomy

Who do human rights apply to?

Regardless of the way human rights are sometimes reported, they apply to everyone. They belong to each and every one of us and they apply close to home as well as abroad.

How do human rights work?

By making public authorities accountable for their decisions, human rights can help to protect vulnerable individuals against public bodies such as government departments, hospitals, schools or local councils.

They provide a consistent and fair method of weighing up situations to help tackle important social issues by finding the best solution for all involved. They also enable us to strike a balance between protecting individual rights and the rights of the wider community.

Human rights work in practical and straightforward ways, bringing common sense into situations where bureaucratic procedures and systems lose sight of people and their individual needs.

They are relevant to your day-to-day life and protect your freedom to control your own life, effectively take part in decisions made by public authorities, which impact upon your rights and get fair and equal services from public authorities.

They help you to flourish and fulfill your potential through:

- [being safe and protected from harm](#)
- [being treated fairly and with dignity](#)
- [living the life you choose](#)
- [taking an active part in your community and wider society](#)
-

The Convention Rights

There are 16 basic rights in the Human Rights Act, all taken from the European Convention on Human Rights. They not only affect matters of life and death like freedom from torture and killing; they also affect people's rights in everyday life: what they say and do, their beliefs, their right to a fair trial and many other similar basic entitlements.

Article 1 – this article is introductory and is not included in the Human Rights Act.

Article 2: Right to life – everyone's right to life must be protected by law. There are only very limited circumstances where it is acceptable for the state to use force against a person that results in their death, for example a police officer can use reasonable force in self-defence.

Article 3: Prohibition of torture – everyone has the absolute right not to be tortured or subjected to treatment or punishment that is inhuman or degrading.

Article 4: Prohibition of slavery and forced labour – everyone has the absolute right not to be treated as a slave or to be required to perform forced or compulsory labour.

Article 5: Right to liberty and security – everyone has the right not to be deprived of their liberty except in limited cases specified in the Article (for example where they are suspected or convicted of committing a crime) and provided there is a proper legal basis in UK law for the arrest or detention.

Article 6: Right to a fair trial – everyone has the right to a fair trial and public hearing within a reasonable period of time. This applies to both criminal charges brought against them, and in cases concerning their civil rights and obligations. Hearings must be before an independent and impartial court or tribunal established by law. It is possible to exclude the public from the hearing (though not the judgement) if that is necessary to protect things like national security or public order. A person who is charged with a criminal offence is presumed innocent until proven guilty according to law and must also be guaranteed certain minimum rights in relation to the conduct of the criminal investigation and trial.

Article 7: No punishment without law – everyone has the right not to be found guilty of an offence arising out of actions which, at the time they were committed, were not criminal. People are also protected against later increases in the maximum possible sentence for an offence.

Article 8: Right to respect for private and family life – everyone has the right to respect for their private and family life, their home and their correspondence. This right can only be restricted in specified circumstances.

Article 9: Freedom of thought, conscience and religion – everyone is free to hold a broad range of views, beliefs and thoughts, and to follow a religious faith. The right to manifest those beliefs maybe limited only in specified circumstances.

Article 10: Freedom of expression – everyone has the right to hold opinions and express their views on their own or in a group. This applies even if these views are unpopular or disturbing. This right can be restricted only in specified circumstances.

Article 11: Freedom of assembly and association – everyone has the right to assemble with other people in a peaceful way. They also have the right to associate with other people, which includes the right to form a trade union. These rights may be restricted only in specified circumstances.

Article 12: Right to marry – men and women have the right to marry and start a family. The national law will still govern how and at what age this can take place.

Article 13: This article is not included in the Human Rights Act.

Article 14: Prohibition of discrimination – in the application of the other Convention rights, people have the right not to be treated differently because of their race, religion, sex, political views or any other personal status, unless there is an 'objective justification' for the difference in treatment. Everyone must have equal access to the Convention rights, whatever their status.

Article 1 of Protocol 1: Protection of property – everyone has the right to the peaceful enjoyment of their possessions. Public authorities cannot usually interfere with a person's property or possessions or the way that they use them except in specified limited circumstances.

Article 2 of Protocol 1: Right to education – everyone has the right not to be denied access to the educational system.

Article 3 of Protocol 1: Right to free elections – elections for members of the legislative body (for example Parliament) must be free and fair and take place by secret ballot. Some qualifications may be imposed on who is eligible to vote (for example a minimum age).

Article 1 of Protocol 13: Abolition of the death penalty – this provision prohibits the use of the death penalty.

(A 'protocol' is a later addition to the Convention).

A recent poll undertaken by the Human Rights Commission found that 43% people asked thought that human rights only applied to terrorists and people in prison.

Principles into practice, real case studies – S was the same-sex partner of a woman with a mental health condition who had been detained as a patient. Liverpool Council refused to recognise S as being her partner's 'nearest relative'. Being someone's nearest relative is a statutory role with important responsibilities when it comes to making decisions about a patient's detention and treatment.

With heterosexual couples the wife or husband automatically qualifies for nearest relative status and couple living together qualify after a six month period. For any other category of relationship the Mental Health Act states that people must have been living together for at least five years. S had only lived with her partner for three years. She argued that the right to respect for private and family life (Article 8) includes issues of sexual orientation, personal choice and identity.

Following her case, the definition of nearest relative was found to be discriminatory and the court applied an identical qualifying period for all couples, regardless of the sexual orientation.

In 2005, Mr & Mrs D, both aged 89, were separated when Mr D needed residential and nursing care. Mrs D was told that she didn't qualify for a subsidised place in the council-run home and went to live with her son.

Human rights experts and older people's organizations pointed out that this was breach of the couple's right to respect for their private and family life (Article 8), which is protected by the Human Rights Act.

Following the publicity and a campaign by the family, Mrs D's needs were reassessed and Gloucestershire County Council offered her a subsidised place in the same care home as her husband.

In East Sussex, two disabled sisters living with their parents in a specially adapted house had a dispute with the local authority. They needed help in order to move around but the local authority claimed that manual lifting was too great a health and safety risk for its employees. As a result the sisters were unable to move or to leave their home.

The judge who heard the case drew on human rights principles to establish the state's obligation to enable disabled people to participate in community life. He said that it had a responsibility to respect their dignity while doing so. He ordered the local authority to revisit its policy to strike a balance between the human rights of service users and the rights of carers to a safe working environment.

As a result of the case, East Sussex local authority amended its code of practice on manual handling to include the dignity and rights of those being lifted. The code was circulated to other local authorities, NHS trusts and care providers.

To find out more about human rights, please visit The Equality and Human Rights Commission's website: www.equalityhumanrights.com

Do you want to become a member of Equality Watch?

This will entitle you to receive copies of equality watch newsletters, regular updates on national and local equality and diversity headlines and the opportunity to be involved in the council's equality watch initiatives. If you are interested in becoming a member of equality watch and would like to register please email: equalitywatch@wirral.gov.uk

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. This report sets out the main challenges and opportunities for the Trust over the coming months and highlights achievements and service developments:

1. The Challenges Ahead

All public services, including the NHS, are now facing the consequences of the worldwide recession and the need to reduce the national debt. In line with all other healthcare organisations, this Trust must therefore strive to provide the highest possible quality healthcare services in a tighter fiscal climate, accepting that expenditure will no longer grow at the rate it has over the past decade.

To meet increasing demand, stemming from a growing and ageing population, new technology and high patient expectation, and to absorb increasing costs, the Department of Health expects all NHS organisations to concentrate on improving productivity and eliminating waste, while focussing on clinical quality. Overall, the Chief Executive of the NHS has indicated that the service nationally must identify £15 – 20 billion of efficiency savings by the end of 2013/14 that can be reinvested in the service to deliver year on year quality improvements.

o The local picture

Translated locally, Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust is required to make efficiency savings in the order of £14.3 million in 2010/11, with further, similar levels of savings being required in the foreseeable future.

The Trust has set its budget for 2010/11 based on its contract with NHS Wirral. This year, the national tariff (the schedule of payments for activity undertaken under Payment by Results) has not increased, which means that the Trust has to meet the cost of inflation. This equates to £10 million of the £14.3 million efficiency savings required in 2010/11. This tariff applies to every acute trust in the NHS.

o Meeting the financial obligations

The Trust has initiated a wide variety of internal austerity measures to contribute to the 2010/11 efficiency target, including a freeze on recruitment to posts that do not directly affect patient care, energy reduction measures, hospitality restrictions and reducing the range of goods and services that the Trust purchases.

These measures will not be sufficient to meet the target and each of our Divisions is reviewing its services to seek out waste and inefficiency, while at the same time maintaining and improving service quality for our patients.

In our **Medical Services Division**, comprising the Trust's general medical services, as well as medicine for the elderly/rehabilitation, discussions with clinicians have identified scope to re-design some medical services in ways that:

- take advantage of reducing lengths of stay (e.g. more procedures being done on a day case basis)
- ensure greater collaboration with partner agencies to improve discharge processes and provide rapid assessment services
- introduce more streamlined ways of working e.g. improving the speed at which 'take home' drugs are available for discharged patients
- recognise new, improved methods of clinical practice
- continue to meet the needs and expectations of patients and improve the quality of services
- use resources more efficiently

The planned improvements include:

- the creation of a 12 bed Heart Assessment Unit to be located alongside other medical assessment facilities
- cardiology inpatient services being brought together on Ward 32
- the creation of a new Haematology Day Unit to reduce the demand on the haematology outpatient area on Ward 30
- the development of a new Respiratory Laboratory on Ward 37 to house services for testing and treating patients with breathing conditions
- a new TIA ("mini stroke") clinic to be established on Ward 23 to enhance the provision of services for stroke patients.

These improvements are taking place on a phased basis over the next six months and will allow the Trust to reduce its overall in-patient bed base while continuing to be able to meet the surges in demand that occur each winter.

There will be a number of staff posts affected by these changes but the Trust has given a commitment that there will be no compulsory redundancies thanks to a range of measures including vacancy control, redeployment and voluntary severance. Close liaison is being maintained with staff side representatives and staff affected by the changes.

o **Involving Partner Organisations**

The Chief Executives of Wirral University Teaching Hospital and NHS Wirral, together with Wirral Council's Director of Social Services have attended the local authority's Health & Wellbeing Overview & Scrutiny Committee to outline the 'direction of travel' for health and social care in Wirral over the coming years. They have explained that the Trust is an outlier in terms of length of in-patient stay for a number of conditions and the number of procedures we carry out on a day case basis when compared to our peers and with national 'norms. We have highlighted that the future shape of care provided by the Wirral health economy would be less dependence on beds in the acute hospital sector and more on community based care provided closer to peoples' homes, in line with the national vision for the NHS.

Also, in the autumn of 2009, a 'Summit' meeting of leaders of all organisations in the local health economy (including the local authority, NHS Wirral and health trusts) met to agree how they could work in partnership to improve the health and well-being

of the people of Wirral within the resources available in the Borough's public sector. One of the main themes of this meeting was recognition that there is potential to reduce inefficiencies and costs across the whole economy and this work is continuing.

2. Capital Investment

We are continuing with the £30million, three year development programme at Arrowe Park Hospital that commenced last year. This includes an £11.5million investment to provide a dedicated Women and Children's Hospital at Arrowe Park bringing together for the first time under one roof, all acute hospital services for women and children.

The development includes:

- A major refurbishment of the **maternity wards**, providing all patients with single rooms and en-suite facilities
- A brand new **maternity delivery suite** featuring five new delivery rooms, including two with birth pools and additional facilities to allow partners to stay overnight
- **Creation of an attractive single** front entrance and reception area **to welcome patients and visitors.**

Late 2009 saw the opening of a brand new Children's Outpatient Department and a new 'Ronald McDonald House' facility to benefit families who need to stay close to their sick children.

On the general side of the Hospital we have just installed a second MRI Scanner and opened Ward 12 as a fully re-furbished 20 bed Orthopaedic Unit with 10 en-suite single rooms. We have also invested nearly £1million in adapting our wards to comply with Department of Health guidance on eliminating mixed sex accommodation for patients. Our new Surgical Elective Admissions Lounge (SEAL) opened to patients on 24th May. This facility brings all pre-operative assessment services together to provide a more streamlined process and much better environment for patients admitted for elective surgical procedures. A new, 'state of the art' Decontamination Unit has also recently opened to ensure that we are able to provide the highest standards of sterilisation for surgical equipment.

For more information about our full three year development programme, please go to the interactive plan on the homepage of our website www.whnt.nhs.uk

3. Have you been 'Treated Well' at our hospitals?

If you have received exceptional care from a member of staff or one of our teams why not nominate them for a 'Treating You Well' award as part of our 2010 Foundation Awards?

The award is for staff who put our 'Treating You Well' philosophy into practice – by treating patients with outstanding care, courtesy and consideration. This category of our annual awards programme has now been expanded to accommodate two awards – a team and an individual.

So if you, or a friend, or a member of your family have received outstanding care from a member of our staff or one of our teams, why not nominate them for an award?

You can do this either by completing the form in the Public Membership News newsletter that accompanies this report or by going to the 'Treating You Well' button on the homepage of our website (available from the first week in June) www.whnt.nhs.uk

4. Controlling Infection

The Trust is committed to reducing the incidence of healthcare associated infections. We are one of the few trusts nationally to screen admitted medical & surgical patients for MRSA (meticillin resistant Staphylococcus aureus). This has reduced the risk of those patients who carry the germ harmlessly from developing an infection and reduces the risk of cross-infection to other patients.

We have implemented improved antibiotic prescribing practice and increased our isolation facilities. We also investigate **all** serious infections so that we can learn from them and take action to improve practice where necessary. We routinely publish our infection rates on our website and information can also be found on the Health Protection Agency's website www.hpa.org.uk

MRSA Bacteraemias - we met the challenge to have no more than 18 cases of MRSA bacteraemia in 2009/10. **17** cases were identified, of these, eight were hospital acquired whilst nine were pre-48 hour cases and attributable to the community. This has been achieved as a result of many new trust-wide initiatives that all staff have incorporated within their daily practices.

Clostridium difficile - we met the challenge of no more than 190 cases in 2009/10, with **187** cases being identified.

Our Elective Surgical Unit at Clatterbridge remains MRSA bloodstream infection free – this Unit undertakes most planned surgical and orthopaedic procedures including joint replacements. Our Women and Children's Hospital at Arrowe Park is also MRSA bloodstream infection free.

'5 Moments for Hand Hygiene' is a new campaign that aims to raise the Infection Control profile even higher at the Trust and to increase awareness amongst staff, patients and visitors of the importance of hand hygiene.

5. Care Quality Commission

From 1st April 2010 the Trust acquired unconditional registration to provide healthcare services by the Care Quality Commission under a new, tougher system for regulating standards in the NHS.

6. Improving Standards

- **Our Renal Dialysis Unit has become an accredited Practice Development Unit making it the first of its kind in the country to gain this prestigious accreditation for delivering clinical excellence and for its successful patient and relative involvement.**
- **We have been named, for the third year running, 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 June 2009 we were delighted to receive accreditation by the NHS Litigation Authority (NHSLA) at Level 2, with an exceptionally high level**

of achievement. This shows our commitment to delivering the highest quality and safety in our patient care.

- In the most recent (2008/09) Care Quality Commission Annual Health Check we scored 'excellent' 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 2009 -

<i>Environment</i>	<i>Food</i>	<i>Privacy & Dignity</i>		
<i>Arrowe Park</i>	Excellent	Good	Good	
<i>Clatterbridge</i>	Excellent	Good	Good	

For more information...

Our 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 and the easy click, 'email a patient' facility continues to be a popular feature

Come and Join Us!

As a Foundation Trust we want to involve our Public Members in helping us to shape future services – we currently have 8,500 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 on-line go to www.whnt.nhs.uk or complete the pink form that is enclosed in this information pack and return it to the Freepost address given.

Wirral Primary Care Trust

Area initiatives:

- NHS Wirral is encouraging patients and the public to provide feedback about peoples experiences of local health services through the **Have Your Say** service. To play your part you can free phone 0800 085 1547, write to HaveYourSay, Freepost or visit www.wirral.nhs.uk

- **Listen Up**

Our communications and engagement team are always on the look out for innovative ways of getting our health messages across. And what better than to host our very own radio programme!

Once a month Senior Communications Manager Jane Cheater presents a special NHS Wirral show on 7 Waves Community Radio, broadcasting from it's studio in Leasowe.

7 Waves can be heard across Wirral 24 hours a day seven days a week – so our programmes are a great opportunity to let people know about some of the services NHS Wirral has to offer.

Our last programme, 'Children's Weight – Why It Matters' focused on the National Child Measurement Programme – how it's delivered in schools across Wirral, and what services we have on offer to help children who are above their ideal weight lead a healthier lifestyle.

Jane was joined in the studio by Kath Ahearne, from the School Health Support Team, who goes into schools to weigh and measure children, and Deb Lowe, Health Improvement Specialist, who gave an overview of the many different services we have to help children and their families.

Former Everton and Tranmere player, Derek Mountfield, also spoke about the programme he runs to teach children and parents about healthy eating and physical activity.

7 Waves broadcasts on 92.1fm –Or you can listen back to previous programmes on line – go to www.7waves.co.uk and visit our podcast page.

If you would like information about any of the free services we offer to help with weight management, please see your GP.

- **Can you help others drop in?**

Drop-in dementia cafés (which are funded by NHS Wirral) first started two years ago, and are proving such a huge success that more volunteers are now needed to enable them to expand even further.

The Wirral branch of The Alzheimer's Society first launched informal gatherings for carers and their loved ones at Port Sunlight Garden Centre in 2008, to give them some brief respite and help them feel less isolated in a pleasant, informal setting.

Co-ordinator Donna DiVito says carers welcome the opportunity to relax over a coffee while those they care for are supervised and entertained nearby.

She said: “The drop-ins are great as they give carers and the person they care for an opportunity to relax, enjoy a coffee, and chat with outreach workers and volunteers. The café initiative is just one aspect of the Dementia Outreach Project, which aims to extend support for carers and the person they care for into the community.”

In Wirral there are 4,500 people over the age of 65 living with dementia. Across the UK 700,000 people have dementia and this number is set to rise to 1 million by 2025.

Carers wishing to attend the drop-in dementia café can do just that – drop in! Would-be volunteers can call Donna DiVito or Christine Henry for an informal chat on 0151 630 5206.

Cafes in the area: Carr Hall Farm Garden Centre Meols –25th May/29th June 10am -12 noon and Ravenscroft Pub Heswall –10th June 2-4pm

Practice specific initiatives:

- Funding has been made available from NHS Wirral to local GP practices to support the development of **Patient Participation Groups** across the Wirral. Patient participation groups (PPGs) are forums providing opportunities for patients to communicate with their practice and NHS Wirral about their experiences of practice services, to exchange ideas and make suggestions about the development of existing services and the planning of future ones. PPGs currently up and running at:
 - **Civic Medical Centre, Bebington.**
 - **Eastham Group Practice**
 - **Orchard Surgery.**
 - **Allport surgery** is also interested in developing a new group
 - **Greasby Group Practice**
 - **West Wirral Group Practice**
 - **Pensby Surgery**
 - **West Wirral Group Practice**
 - **West Kirby Group Practice**
 - **Park Medical Center**
 - **Hoylake and Meols Practice** is also interested in developing a new group.

For further information about an existing group or to enquire about setting up your own group please visit your practice.

Youth Update

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 fourteen 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

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.

Duke of Edinburgh's Award

The Youth Service holds the operating licence for administering and running the DofE. The Youth Service is therefore able to issue individual operating licences to single units such as schools, youth clubs and uniformed organisations. Young people within the borough are able to participate in at Bronze, Silver and Gold levels and are offered a wide and diverse menu of opportunities.

A well equipped Open Award Centre is able to provide comprehensive and quality expedition training for those wishing to attempt their expedition or exploration.

Young people are encouraged to make improved use of their leisure time and by participating in the DofE they are guided towards, helping their own communities, acquiring new skills, keeping fit and taking on new and exciting challenges.

Anyone aged between 14 and 25 can take part in the DofE regardless of background or ability and participants are able to increase their own self confidence and self esteem, make new relationships and develop fresh skills.

Wirral Youth Theatre/Youth Arts

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. A peer education company within the Wirral Youth Theatre have performed in parks and youth clubs a play about risk taking behaviour this is now going into school.

Wirral Youth Service Outreach Team

As part of the Wirral Youth Service reconfiguration, Wirral Youth Service Outreach Team has been reorganised into the four districts of Wirral: Birkenhead, Wallasey, West Wirral and South Wirral. Each outreach team will be managed by a District Youth Worker who will work in collaboration with the Hub managers to deliver a comprehensive Youth Offer to meet the needs of the young people in their district.

West Wirral District Team. As part of the Wirral Youth Service reconfiguration, Wirral Youth Service Outreach Team has been reorganised into districts.

The Team covering this area is the West Wirral Outreach Team. This team is being developed and will give a report at the next Forum about its activities.

District	Team	Wards	Operational times	Staffing	Office base
West Wirral Gary Atkinson	West Wirral Outreach Team	Heswall, West Kirby & Thurstaston, Hoylake & Meols, Greasby, Frankby & Irby, Upton, Pensby & Thingwall.	5 nights per week including Friday & Saturday.	1 full time District Youth Worker 54 hrs/18 sessions of YSW per week.	Fender Youth Club 677 9143

Wirral's Older People's Parliament



Patrons: **Lady Grace Sheppard** For Ethnic Minority Groups: **Lady Irene Chan**

REPORT FOR THE FIRST HALF OF 2010.

Despite the cold start to the year, this has been a busy and fruitful period for Wirral Older People's Parliament. Membership is now about 850 and rising. We are a powerful voice for older people in Wirral. This works two ways. Firstly, we regularly tell the authorities about issues which are important for older people – and we are taken seriously. Secondly, we can get advance warning of issues which will affect all of us, and spread the information. We have members representing us on a number of policy making groups across the council and NHS locally. This means that we can inform YOU – the public about things which are changing.

Our activities are varied.

1. Regular quarterly Parliament meetings in Wallasey Town Hall on the first Friday of March, June, September and December 11am.
2. Monthly meetings of our Executive Committee.
3. Our popular "Away Days", usually in a central Birkenhead hall, lasting from 10-3, including a free lunch. These each have a theme of importance to older people.
4. Regular meetings of committees (Housing, Health and Social Care, Education, National Issues, Grandparents raising their grandchildren, Crime and Respect) Do join in.
5. Newsletters three or four times a year.

Our four Away Days so far this year have been excellent

1. A day for grandparents who have full time care of grandchildren. Plenty of input from our Childrens' Services department of the council and from solicitors. A visitor from the Midlands commented on how well the group was working with council officers. A member has been very successful in the London Marathon raising awareness of the issues.
2. We booked the Williamson Art Gallery for a powerful day on End of Life Care. All aspects of preparing for death were covered. Sounds gruesome? No – it was inspiring, and even funny at times. It comes to us all, so lets make sure we have a good death.
3. Our day on National Issues involved our local MP Angela Eagle (Minister for Pensions and the Ageing Society since last summer), Esther McVey for the Tories and (direct from London) Dot Gibson, the inspiring General Secretary of the National Pensioners Convention. We also had Tina Long from NHS Wirral,

4. A day on Housing for older people, covered the sort of help which is available to make sure we are in housing to meet our needs as we get older, using the latest technology to keep safe. We heard Wirral officials talk about local plans.

Future Plans.

1. A fund raising Golf Challenge Cup at Heswall Golf Club on June 25th to raise money for dementia Care.
2. A campaign to look at all of Wirral's Residential and Nursing Homes for Older People. We want to ensure that every one of these meets the highest standards for dignity and respect. We need help. Please can you contact our office if you currently visit a care home or would like to become a volunteer visitor.
3. We plan an Away Day about Care Home life, and Arrowe Park Hospital would like to join with us to have an Away Day about issues for older people in hospital – and safe discharge home.
4. Another Away Day is planned about crime reduction, and living safely.

Thanks.

We would not exist without the support (financial and practical) from Wirral Council, NHS Wirral, Age Concern Wirral, Arrowe Park Hospital, Wirral Partnership Homes, Riverside Housing, Wirral Methodist Housing Association Wiltshire Farm Foods, Lees Solicitors, Haven Care and Belmar & Liston. Of special note is the regular input at meetings from Pat Lloyd, head of Age Concern's Advice Service and Shirley Tyler, Peace Project.

All members are volunteers, but we need to thank our two members of staff, Brian Christian and Anne McCabe, without whom we could not begin to function.

Anyone over 50, living in Wirral, can sign to join. It costs nothing. Benefits can be enormous. The more members, the more powerful our voice.

Sandra Wall (Chair) May 2010.

Streetscene

Highway Maintenance

The severe weather in January and February caused extensive surface damage to our carriageways. A recovery plan was put into operation, with Colas our highways contractor putting extra resources in place to cope with the extra works which had to be undertaken within a limited time frame.

To improve our response Colas provided a surfacing crew which allowed major surfacing during March and April of, Barnston Road, Park Road South, Slatey Road, Dunraven Road, Cumberland Road, Cardigan Road, Lathom Avenue, Coronation Avenue, Clarendon Road, Beaumaris Drive, Pool Lane, Telegraph Road (by Mere Lane), Grasswood Road and Greenwood Road.

In addition to this major patching has also taken place in Hoole Road, Ellens Lane, Noctorum Way, Rose Mount, Wexford Road, Clifton Avenue, Curlew Way, Arrowe Road, Greendale Road and a further 28 sites. Preparation work is in progress for our micro-asphalt surfacing which commences 17 May and footway slurry seal is also underway.

A number of Traffic works are on going, Mill Lane, Liscard, Worchester Road, Prenton Hall Road, with a further 8 schemes to complete by the end of May.

Lathom Avenue, Crosthwaite Avenue, and Newell Road have had the footways reconstructed with further schemes planned during June for Eastham Rake, Border Road, Dalmorton Road and Liscard Road (part only).

Traffic Management Schemes

We have been working with our Highways partner Colas Limited since April 2009. Over the past year you may have noticed the newly branded vehicles around the borough as a planned programme of works took place.

Traffic Safety Schemes – the following safety schemes have recently been completed:

- Hoylake Holy Trinity School, Hoylake – Safer Routes to School Scheme

Pedestrian Facilities

- Pedestrian Dropped Kerb Programme – Various Locations

Area Forum Improvements

West Wirral

- Village Road, West Kirby – Vehicle Activated Sign
- Saughall Massie Road – Vehicle Activated Sign
- Meols Drive – Vehicle Activated Sign

Further details on completed schemes and future proposed schemes can be obtained from Streetscene.

Local Transport Plan

The third Local Transport Plan (LTP) will play a key role in helping Merseyside achieve its vision of becoming a thriving international city region by 2030. Wirral Council works as part of the Merseyside Transport Partnership alongside Merseytravel and the other Merseyside district authorities.

The new Liverpool City Region clearly links transport into wider priorities, such as improving Merseyside's health, economy and social wellbeing. Transport also has an important role to play in supporting the work of the Local Strategic Partnerships.

The Partnership started its consultation with stakeholders at the Partnership's breakfast briefing on 3rd March. In addition a LTP consultation event was held with the public on 16th March. Thank you if you took part in this consultation which ended on 12th April. This looked at how you would like to see local transport improve in the long term. Although the consultation has now closed you can still view the public and stakeholder documents for information on the 'Challenges & Opportunities on the website http://www.letstravelwise.org/content164_LTP3.html or by contacting the Local Transport Plan Support Unit on 0151 330 1294.

The responses are now being collated and will be used to look in detail at how we can begin to put these ideas into practice in the immediate future.

Once we have worked these ideas up we will be conducting a 12 week consultation in the Summer, asking for your views on these preferred options.

Please check the Travelwise website towards the end of June for details of this consultation, or contact 0151 330 1294 and request to be included in the consultation, and we look forward to your input then.

Recycling Update

Wirral's official recycling figure for 2009/10 is still being verified, but is expected to be about 36.5%. Residents can be proud of their continuing participation. One of the new initiatives developed in 2009/10 was to recycle the Borough's street sweepings. This initiative is still in its infancy, but it is hoped that when up and running correctly it will increase our recycling rate by 2-3% by recycling a further 200 tonnes of waste each month.

The Waste and Recycling team are welcoming six new staff in May, funded through the Future Jobs Fund (a scheme to provide work and experience to people long-term unemployed). The new Assistant Recycling Project Officers will be working primarily in designated areas, to provide face-to-face contact with residents to educate, help and respond to residents' questions regarding waste and recycling.

Two compost giveaways have been planned for June, to say thank you to residents for achieving a composting rate of 14.61% in 2009/10 (up from 13.96% in 2008/09)! A total of six tonnes of pre-bagged compost will be given away at road shows, taking place at Port Sunlight Garden Centre on the 5th June and Carr Farm Garden Centre on the 12th June. Residents are invited to come along and collect their free compost!

A new subsidised compost bin scheme is available to Wirral residents. Wirral Council has signed up to the National Compost Bin Framework, to provide cut-price composters, wormeries, water butts and accessories to our residents. For further details and to purchase your composters etc, visit <http://www.wirral.getcomposting.com/>, or call 0844 571 4444 (local rate number).

Wirral Council has signed up to WRAP's Waste Collection Commitment. This means that we are committed to providing waste and recycling services, which are good value for money and which meet the needs of our residents (something we believe we already did, but we are now proud to sign up to this national commitment). To see a signed copy of our commitment and for more details, please visit www.wirral.gov.uk/recycling.

We continue to recycle over 160million items each year and with the support of partners and residents, this year we can continue to make Wirral a greener place to live in.

Environmental Streetscene Update

Tidy Business National Award:

Wirral's 'Tidy Business Scheme' picked up a top award at the prestigious Keep Britain Tidy awards on March the 15th. The project won the Tidy Business category at the national annual ceremony, the first time the authority has earned the top prize at these national awards.

The honour, presented by TV comic Ruby Wax, is for Wirral's tireless work with its Tidy Business scheme, which it only signed up to back in August 2008. The authority hit the headlines towards the end of last year when it helped more than 90% of businesses in Oxton achieve Tidy Business status. It led to Keep Britain Tidy officially naming Oxton its first-ever Tidy Business Village.

Wirral's Tidy Business Team are now looking to build on this success and work with West Kirby Businesses to are aiming to announce West Kirby as England's 1st Tidy Business Town during 2010. The project itself is due to commence in June and a launch event is planned before the end of the summer.

School Environment Awards:

Wirral's School Environment Awards took place at the Pacific Road Arts Centre on Thursday the 25th March. The awards recognise the effort made by pupils and staff throughout the borough to improve their local environmental quality and reduce their carbon emissions. This is the second year the event has taken place and this year's winners were:

- TRANMERE ROVERS "GREEN TEAM" AWARD - Liscard Primary
- MAYOR'S OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION AWARD - Anna Cross (Teacher) Ridgeway High
- WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AWARD - Grove Street Primary
- ENERGY AWARENESS AWARD - Park High
- JUNIOR ROAD SAFETY OFFICER AWARD - St Josephs, Wheatland Lane
- ROAD SAFETY PARTICIPATION AWARD - Liscard Primary
- BIFFA SCHOOLS RECYCLING AWARD – Ridgeway High
- COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT AWARD - West Kirby Primary
- GREEN FACILITIES CHAMPION AWARD - Paul Wellsbury, Liscard Primary

Street cleansing and Litter Bins:

As from the 18 May the public can access a street cleansing database through the Council's website. This will allow residents, workers and visitors to see what day and date a given road will be cleansed and the frequency of cleansing for that road.

The list of locations for new litterbins put forward by the Area forums has been finalised and all the bins have arrived. They have been passed to a contractor ready for putting out across the borough as soon as possible. All new bins should be installed by the middle of June.

New Initiatives this year:

- Wirral's Environment Champions: A project to identify and work with a number of volunteer residents throughout the borough is due to commence over the coming months. These 'Environment Champions' will work closely with the authority's Waste and Recycling team to improve their local environmental quality and recycling rates within their neighbourhoods. A pilot in the Beechwood and Ballantyne area (in conjunction with BBCHA) is soon to get underway, this will then shape the form of the project as it is released borough wide later on this year.
- Big Tidy Up Campaign: Wirral Council continue to support Keep Britain Tidy's 'Big Tidy Up' campaign. Community groups wishing to carry out a litter-pick can register on the 'Big Tidy Up' web site (<http://www.thebigtidyup.org>) all groups

registered will receive a litter-pick kit, containing tabards and bags. In order to borrow litter-pickers and have the bags collected groups are requested to contact Streetscene in advance on 0151 606 2004.

Wirral Travel Trainers

Travel training is a key part of the authorities work towards delivering its Accessibility Strategy, as part of the Local Transport Plan and is a supporting element to the successful Wirral Travel Team.

Travel training is a scheme used to help those who need extra help or support to make journeys safely on their own using public transport; the scheme is available for all Wirral residents aged 14 and over.

Travel Training can help those who are not familiar with using public transport and those having to make new or unfamiliar journeys, so they can access employment, healthcare, and other opportunities. Transport can be a barrier for people when looking for employment and therefore they often do not consider job opportunities if they are unsure of their travel options. Travel Training could also help people who have difficulties getting around after a recent disability or illness, and also people for who English is not a first language.

To find out more about the Wirral Travel Trainer call Warren Apter on 0151 606 2369 or email, warrenapter@wirral.gov.uk