

Wirral's Area Forums



Birkenhead Tranmere and Rock Ferry

Area Forum

Papers for the forum meeting

**The Lauries Centre
142 Claughton Road
Birkenhead, Wirral CH41 6EY**

Tuesday 8th February 2011.

7.00pm-9.00pm

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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
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Area Forum

October 2010

7.00pm

AGENDA

- Welcome, Introduction & Apologies
 - Minutes & matters arising
 - (previous meeting – October 2010)
 - Census 2011 Information.
- Parks and Countryside Services Procurement Exercise
 - Public Question Time
 - Area Forum Partner Updates

Section One

Minutes

Previous minutes

Tuesday, 5 October 2010

Present:/In attendance:

Councillors	WJ Davies J Stapleton (Chair) B Kenny C Meaden
Community Reps:	Peter Exley and Hazel Roberts
Lead Officer:	David Ball
Area Service Co-ordinator:	Andy Brannan
Wirral NHS:	Cathy Gritzner
Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	Sandra Shannon
Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service:	Ian Maxwell
Streetscene Manager:	Garry Cummings
Community Safety:	Ian Lowrie and Stephen Preston
Council Officers:	Jayne Elliott (minute taker)
Mersey Travel:	Steve Cook and David Jones
Apologies:	Councillor Phil Davies Councillor Moira McLaughlin

1 WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

The Chair, Councillor J Stapleton welcomed the Forum members and 19 members of the public to the Birkenhead, Tranmere & Rock Ferry Area Forum meeting held at Rock Ferry Community Centre

Apologies: Councillor Phil Davies and Councillor Moira McLaughlin.

2 MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING (JUNE 2010)

2.1 Andy Brannan reported that he had received written and verbal updates. See page 11 & 12 of Forum Papers for written updates.

The verbal updates are as follows:

- Rodney Street signs have been sited correctly.
- David Ball reported that 2 bids have been submitted for Byrne Avenue Baths. The 2nd stage business plan has been reviewed and evaluated.

- Further information for the Business Plan has been received. The review is going on and will be reporting to Cabinet on the outcome on 4th November 2010.

Q. Outside Byrne Avenue Baths there are litter bags dumped in the grounds.
A. Street scene will arrange for someone to look at the situation and remove rubbish and maintain the area.

2.2 Andy Brannan reported that there is funding available for Community Voluntary Groups. If there are any groups that require funding, application forms are available.

2.3 A Brannan introduced the Energy Project Plus Information Stand. This is “working towards a sustainable future” The Officer from Energy Project Plus will answer any questions at the end of the meeting.

3 MERSEYTRAVEL - QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION

David Ball introduced the two representatives from Mersey Travel to give a presentation on ‘How Disabled Access Works in Stations’. David Jones, from Integrated travel has had 20 years experience in policies and creating disabled access in stations. Network Rail own all the stations, but Mersey Travel and Network Rail are working together to improve the stations.

The main two stations that have an access problem are Green Lane and Rock Ferry. There has been £3.3 million spent to put in two lifts at Hamilton Square Station. If passengers have an access problem at a station, then they can contact the station to arrange help at the station and/or the staff will arrange a taxi to an appropriate station. 1-hour notice would be preferable. In the future it is hoped that there will be more accessible stations.

Q. Hamilton Square has brilliant staff, but the lifts break down frequently. It is important that Green Lane and Rock Ferry Stations be sorted out. Why should disabled people have to phone in advance for help and assistance?

A. David Jones gave his thanks for the positive comments regarding Hamilton Square Station. He stated that it was customary to give notice to staff, but said that the stations are all staffed and will offer help and assistance at any time.

Q. In Liverpool, the rail replacement buses are all wheelchair accessible, why is this not the case in Wirral.

A. There should be no difference in areas; taxis can be arranged if the bus is not accessible. Liverpool has planned engineering, so they can arrange vehicles in advance.

Q. Taxi’s can’t provide the safety requirements for wheelchair users.

A. The comments are accepted and feedback is welcome.

Q. Is there a review of Mersey Link service? It allows a pick up by Mersey Link from a Station to where the passenger wishes to go – e.g. Train to Southport and then Mersey Link to final destination.

A. There is a review of the Mersey Link service.

Q. Councillor Stapleton asked why there is a huge step and gap between the train and the platform at Hamilton Square Station?

A. Hamilton Square station was a Victorian built station and has been built on a slight bend. It is not possible to solve this as the train would hit the platform.

Q. The signs at the stations for destinations are confusing.

A. This comment will be taken away and looked into further to try and improve this.

Q. There was a problem on the Liverpool to Birkenhead line not so long ago. The train broke down just before Hamilton Square station, another train was sent for assistance and that also broke down. Staff kept on saying it would be fixed in 10 minutes. The problem was not fixed in 10 minutes. Hamilton Square station was in chaos and no manager was available to speak to regarding this problem.

A. All comments will be taken back to Mersey Travel. Normally the 2nd train would solve the problem and move the broken down train. Apologies were given to all passengers on behalf of the staff. David Jones was disappointed that a Manager could not be found at the station and this will be taken up with Mersey rail.

Q. Is there an old steam train in the unused tunnels at Lime Street Station?

A. Unfortunately there is no steam train, just cobweb old tunnels. Steve Cook and Dave Jones thanked everyone and they apologised for not coming to the Forums more often.

4 WIRRAL'S FUTURE - BE A PART OF IT

David Ball explained to the Forum Members the Council's Consultation Process which is taking place across the borough. The idea of the process is to ask Wirral residents "How to spend future resources". The Council has estimated to find savings of £108 million over the next 4 years.

Task Groups have been set up:

- Children's Services
- Adult Services
- Economy
- Living Environment

A questionnaire has been set up and they will be available at various locations around the borough for Wirral residents to complete. All forms are to be completed by 31st October 2010. They will be analysed and sent back to the Task groups to prepare a final paper ready for the Council's Cabinet Meeting at the end of November. This meeting will also have the Budget proposals for the next financial year.

4.1 Q. How much will this cost for the 4 task groups and are they present employees?

A. The resources are already there – they have been drawn from private, public and voluntary sectors. They are giving their time freely. The costs are approx £3 – 4 K and this is mainly the printing.

4.2 Q. Has any decision been made with the Housing Market Renewal funding?

A. The Council are waiting for the Government decision of the amount of funding available for the next 4 years. This decision will be available at the end of November. When the amount has been received the implications will be looked at.

4.3 Q. What if the Public want to spend the money on other things?

A. It is not practical to re-assign finances half way through a financial year.

4.4 Q. They are asking to complete the questionnaire before knowing how much money is available?

A. You could argue when the consultation takes place, but it would take too long if you waited for the budgets to be set. The idea is to just get Wirral Residents ideas and priorities ready for the budget decisions.

4.5 Q. An idea to save money would be to get rid of Howard Coopers Department, Children's and Young People. The department does not serve the local schools and the money could be put to better use.

A. Stephen Preston, who is a Chair of Governors, explained that he takes great exception to these comments. The department does a lot of work and without this department it would put a lot of children on Wirral at risk. The department is OFSTED checked and the special needs section on Wirral is excellent.

A. Councillor Brian Kenny explained that Mersey Park Primary could not exist without the help of Howard Coopers Department. They have just appointed a new Head Teacher with the help of this Department.

A. The comments made against the Children's and Young People's Department and the Schools are offensive – all teachers are OFSTED checked and it has been clearly proven that there is an excellent quality of teachers on Wirral.

5 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

It was noted that there was no attendance by the Police again. Andy Brannan to contact the police and will arrange for them to attend future Forums. Any police issues can be discussed with Andy Brannan at the end of the meeting.

5.1 Q. There is not much lighting in the around the Adult Learning Centre.

A. A Lighting Engineer will look at this problem and report back to A Brannan.

5.2 Q. The Bushes on the roundabout at Argyle Street have not been cut back.

A. The answer to this is in the written update of the Forum pack. The reason for the bushes not being cut back is to stop the sight of motorists across the roundabout so that they have to slow down.

5.3 Q. The bushes at Rock Ferry library need to be cut back.

A. This area will be looked at and will be reported back.

5.4 Q. It is acceptable to slow the traffic down on the roundabout by not trimming the bushes back. This may be dangerous for the pedestrians?

A. This will be looked at again.

5.5 Q. There are no brown bins for the houses on and around Hollybank Road.

A. Gary Cummings from Street Scene will take up this issue as this area must have been overlooked.

5.6 Q. Would it be possible to have the gap in between the curb and the road by number 1 Hamilton Square fixed as the gap caused a wheelchair to fall into this.

A. This area will be checked.

5.7 Q. The empty flats in Thorsway would be an ideal place to house the 50 – 60 thousand homeless soldiers.

A. The flats are in a state of disrepair and are planned to be knocked down.

6 AREA FORUM PARTNER UPDATES

Wirral PCT - There is a new service available for Lifestyle Services. It is on a Saturday morning at 30 Argyle Street, Birkenhead. For a comprehensive report, see

page 28 of the Forum report. Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service Ian Maxwell reported that in addition to the update on page 23 of the report the following updates:

The Home Fire Safety strategy is conducting safety checks in local homes. The fire service is actively collecting materials prior to Bon Fire night. If anyone is aware of any bon fires being set up, please ring the fire service (Leaflets available).

Q. In the Manning Street and Lord Street area bon fires are being lit and it smells like burning tyres.

A. If this happens again, please contact the fire brigade and they will inspect the area.

Q. The smoke alarms which have been fitted by the fire service have started to beep as the battery needs replacing.

A. The fire service realised that the company employed to supply the smoke alarms used old stock. This company has now been replaced. Please ring the fire service and a fire officer will go and fix the problem.

Q. Is it right that motorbikes have been spotted in Liverpool fitted with fire hoses?

A. This is a new trial for small rubbish fires. The idea is for the motorbike to get through busy traffic. We are awaiting the outcome of the trial. We are the first in the country to trial this.

The Street scene telephone number can be used to inform the fire service of bonfire locations. Wirral Community Patrol See pages 14 & 15 for a more comprehensive report. The Community Patrol Officers have now been trained with the use of defibrillators. They are now working together with the ambulance service. Community Patrol can receive calls through a Blackberry Phone and they can attend if they are in the vicinity. The Community Patrol is also working together with the Fire Service. The vans are to be fitted with 40 litre water containers and pump so they patrol can deal with small fires.

Q. A girl recently has been fined after she dropped a lolly ice stick. When the bin men won't take additional bags from the wheelie bin – who is fined then? The bin bags are a problem for the residents around this area.

A. The crew will report the issue of extra bin bags. If this continues an officer from street scene will visit the household. This issue is to be discussed at the end of the meeting.

Q. There is still a problem of dog fouling, but to catch the culprits the timing of the community patrol officers needs to be right.

A. There are 6 officers on patrol from 7am – 8pm. Speak to the Community Patrol at the end of the meeting.

Q. There have been numerous phone calls regarding the dogs on Mersey Park play area.

A. Patrols have attended Mersey Park and a man has been fined.

Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust Sandra Shannon explained to the meeting about the Financial Challenges of the Wirral Hospital. It is positive and in a better position than some trusts. Arrowe Park Hospital has just opened the new women & children's department and a new maternity ward with a birthing pool. Ronald MacDonald house has also opened at Arrowe Park. A new Gynaecology and Diagnostic department will be opening this year.

Q. What is happening to Clatterbridge Hospital? It seems to be getting quieter.

A. There have been no changes to the hospital. There will be a review of all

services and will be looking at the best way to deliver services. There are options to move services around the hospitals. It was commented that Clatterbridge Hospital seems to be a much quieter and civilised hospital. It is cleaner and parking is so much easier. It has the best Oncology and Dermatology departments.

Q. If you wish to keep informed of the services the hospitals offer, then you could become a member of the Trust. You will receive regular newsletters and keep up to date with what is going on. Tranmere has the lowest % of membership

A. Application Forms are available at the meeting.

7 ENERGY PROJECT PLUS

Energy Projects Plus (EPP) – “working towards a sustainable future”, officers attended forum to promote the Warmer Wirral project and where there for advice at the end of the meeting.

Matters arising

-It was noted that there was no attendance by the Police again. Andy Brannan to contact the police and will arrange for them to attend future Forums. Any police issues can be discussed with Andy Brannan at the end of the meeting.

Because of a problem with the emailing system between Wirral Council and Merseyside Police, the area forum report with the details of the forum was not received by Insp Mick Blease, who therefore did not have the date and time of the forum.

-2.1 Q. Outside Byrne Avenue Baths there are litter bags dumped in the grounds.

A. Street scene will arrange for someone to look at the situation and remove rubbish and maintain the area.

The black rubbish bags have been removed from the outside of Byrne Avenue baths.

-5.1 Q. There is not much lighting in the around the Adult Learning Centre.

A. A Lighting Engineer will look at this problem and report back to A Brannan.

There are adjacent street lights on Howson Street & New Chester Road but nothing in the car park itself. There are no proposals to introduce further lighting on this car park at this moment in time.

-5.3 Q. The bushes at Rock Ferry library need to be cut back.

A. This area will be looked at and will be reported back.

A verbal update will be given on the evening of the forum

-5.4 Q. It is acceptable to slow the traffic down on the roundabout by not trimming the bushes back. This may be dangerous for the pedestrians?

A. This will be looked at again.

Traffic Officers have been at the roundabout to look at the issue. Their findings are that all the designated crossing points, for pedestrians, at his roundabout have sufficient sight lines around it.

This means that pedestrians can cross safely at these points because any vehicle that emerges from beyond these site lines would be well within the safe stopping distance for this category of road.

Therefore additional sight lines are not required across the roundabout as sufficient ones exist around it.

-5.5 Q. There are no brown bins for the houses on and around Hollybank Road.
A. Gary Cummings from Street Scene will take up this issue as this area must have been overlooked.

Unfortunately we cannot add any more properties (eg, new estates) to a route at the current time due to this increasing the cost associated with this.

Residents can take advantage of the cheap compost bin offer which can help with waste that goes in the brown bins. The website for the compost bin offer is now www.merseyside.getcomposting.com

-5.6 Q. Would it be possible to have the gap in between the curb and the road by number 1 Hamilton Square fixed as the gap caused a wheelchair to fall into this.

A. This area will be checked.

The gap between the road and curb has now been repaired.

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.

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

Reported November 2010:

- 15-year old male from Bedford Road, **Rock Ferry**, was issued with a 2-year Anti-Social Behaviour Order following alleged threatening behaviour towards a Council employee and in and around the Peel Avenue area of Rock Ferry;

- **Safety put first on Bonfire Night (October 2010)**

HAVE FUN - BE SAFE – BEHAVE was the shared message being given by community safety agencies this bonfire period. Residents were urged to make Bonfire Night safe by attending an organised firework display instead of holding their own. Free displays were organised at a number of venues across the borough and residents were encouraged to participate in and support these activities. Agencies including Wirral Council, Merseyside Police and Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service worked together with partners to proactively prevent and reduce the problems that can be associated with this time of the year.



Residents were asked to ensure that no potentially flammable materials were left lying around and parents were asked to do their part by helping to reiterate the dangers and consequences associated with fire setting and firework misuse to their children. Public assistance was also sought to help stop Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service's valuable resources being overstretched by attending deliberate fires such as bonfires, wheelie bin fires and rubbish fires associated with anti-social behaviour. Members of the public were encouraged to report unauthorised bonfires for removal by a quick response team.

As part of Operation Banger, the multi-agency plan of activity for this time of year, work was undertaken with children and young people in schools about the hazards associated with this period and the consequences of engaging in anti-social behaviour. Other activities included high visibility policing; advice to shops regarding the sale of alcohol, fireworks, flour and eggs to young people; seizing illegal fireworks; carrying out test purchases and engaging young people in positive activities.

- **It was all about Respect (October 2010)**

Wirral hosted a week-long programme of events and activities to tackle anti-social behaviour and promote respect. The activities for “Respect Wirral 2010 – It’s All About Respect”, co-ordinated by Wirral Council’s Anti-Social Behaviour Team -were supported wholeheartedly by a range of agencies including Merseyside Police, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service, social landlords and local community groups.



More than 2,000 properties in hot-spot locations of anti-social behaviour were targeted with information to assist in the identification and reporting of incidents. In addition, more than 400 members of the public were provided with information about how to report anti-social behaviour.

The week began with high-visibility activity in the Rock Ferry and Seacombe areas by the Council, Police and social landlords engaging with adults and young people. Issues with vehicle nuisance were tackled head-on with modified car users in a hot-spot location spoken to and warned about the risk of their cars being seized by the police if nuisance continued to be caused to neighbouring properties.

The Grange Park area of West Kirby saw environmental improvements led by the Friends of Grange Park residents' group with the planting of cherry trees and a lantern making workshop with children and young people. Tower Grounds in New Brighton saw local residents lead on an environmental audit with agencies. Work was undertaken in partnership with Leasowe Community Homes, taking the opportunity to speak with residents and young people attending the annual 'Unity in our Community' Halloween fancy dress party.



Grange Park, West Kirby

Throughout the week, members of the public were invited to step on board the Anti-Social Behaviour Team's Respect Bus to report issues or find out how to deal with anti-social behaviour problems.



Respect Bus

➤ **Truancy crackdown in Wirral (December 2010)**

Wirral Council and Merseyside Police joined forces to crackdown on truants. An anti-truancy blitz stopped nearly 70 young people over three and a half days in November and December.

The crackdown on truancy saw officers from the Council's Education Social Welfare Service and Anti-Social Behaviour Team, join together with Police Officers, to return to the streets of Wirral. Using information from schools and members of the public, known truancy hotspots across the borough were targeted.

Nearly 65% of the young people challenged did not have a valid reason for being absent from school. Three quarters of these were shopping and a significant number were accompanied by an adult.

Cheshire and Wirral Partnership challenges stigma through art

CWP premiered fine art produced in collaboration with service users as part of its 'Challenging Stigma' campaign and the Liverpool Independents Biennial Festival.



Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (CWP) challenged stigma associated with mental health, learning disabilities and drug and alcohol issues at 'Stigma – the person behind the picture' exhibition within The Six Rooms Gallery, in Birkenhead. A photo gallery of the art is available online via CWP's website www.cwp.nhs.uk

Interactive sofa proves a hit...

More than 500 people attended this year's Wirral Recovery Convention at New Brighton's Floral Pavilion. The December event was held for the third consecutive year and marked



successful partnership working across Wirral for its drug and alcohol services, including CWP.

Mental health Trust urges public not to be S.A.D. this winter

CWP are urging those members of the public who feel more lethargic or experiencing any kind of depression during the winter months due to changes in day length and weather to seek help from a health professional. Seasonal affective disorder (S.A.D.) is commonly referred to as the 'winter blues'.



Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service

Operations.

The Fire Service on Wirral is delivered through 6 community fire stations located at.

- **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**

Comprehensive Spending Review.

Like most public bodies the Service has seen its budgets severely reduced as part of the Governments Comprehensive Spending Review.

Commenting on the Government's public spending announcement, Tony McGuirk, Chief Fire Officer for Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service said:

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service faces unprecedented cuts in its income from Government over the next two years totalling £7.7 million.

The Government, however, has indicated that the four-year financial settlement is 'back-loaded' which, along with other financial changes, means a forecast total deficit of £18 million – 25% of our current £73 million budget.

It is the most significant financial challenge the Authority has ever faced and will put great pressure on our ability to maintain our current very high standards of prevention and emergency response.

Almost 80% of our costs are staff related and much of the rest involves running and managing our buildings and equipment.

The Fire Authority will be meeting over the next few months before setting its budget in February 2011.

At the time of drafting this report no decisions have been made

Despite the current financial difficulties the Government has given approval for 7 new fire stations one of which will be at Birkenhead. Work on site is scheduled to commence next year (2012).

MFRS news can be followed via our website Merseyfire.gov.uk we can also be found on social network sites - @Merseyfire on Twitter or visit our Facebook page - www.facebook.com/merseyfire.

Community Fire Safety

Wirral Community Fire Safety are working collaboratively with a number of partners including;

Wirral NHS

Wirral Assistive Technology Team, Merseyside Society for Deaf and Visual Impairment Team

Wirral Advocacy

Safeguarding Adults

Community Mental Health

These partnership arrangements have proved successful in targeting the most vulnerable members of our community, in the most hard to reach areas, and have facilitated multi agency interventions.

Youth Engagement

Partnership working has seen the development of some new youth intervention initiatives.

P.H.S.C.E. - working with Livesafe MFRS produced a new programme for youth engagement specifically designed for PHSCE lesson within secondary schools. (136 yr8 pupils at Prenton High school have completed this course to date)

Fire Science - 180 yr7 pupils at Bebington High school have completed this course to date.

Alive and Kicking –an intervention programme for yr 6 pupils developed in conjunction with Merseyside Police. 4 schools and 1,400 pupils have completed this course to date.

These sessions, which have been a great success are to be continued in 2011 and are to be offered to schools that are surrounding the Hot spot areas for ASB and Secondary Fires.

Road Safety

MFRS is currently reviewing our RTC reduction Strategy with a view of maintaining a proactive role in RTC Reduction. We continue to be part of the wider Wirral Road Safety Partnership working with Wirral Road Safety Team our trained staff are planning to put on more events to check Child Car seat fitting for safety and to give advice on type and legal requirements, whilst delivering Home Fire Safety advice we are also issuing leaflets compiled in conjunction with the team giving advice on Road Safety. Approval is imminent to place hard hitting road safety messages on the side of Fire Appliances throughout the Wirral. e.g. " POLICE CAR IF YOU'RE LUCKY, AMBULANCE IF YOU'RE NOT. SLOW DOWN."

Healthy Homes Initiative.

During October 2010, MFRS and its partners piloted the Healthy Homes initiative to cut the number of deaths and accidents at home, and. It was piloted in the New Brighton area visiting over 1000 properties and offering residents a free home safety check, identifying potential hazards around the house and giving advice to help remove them. The scheme seeks to improve the safety, health and wellbeing of the public by providing a home fire safety check, smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, insulation and central heating for low income tenants and anyone aged over 60, Wirral's free loft and cavity wall insulation scheme residents in the borough, and incident reporting via Merseyside Police. The agencies working in partnership for Healthy Homes includes MFRS, Merseyside Police, NHS Wirral, Wirral Council, Housing, Reach out, Age Concern, Welfare Rights and Popin. The initiative is currently being trialled by fire crews throughout the Wirral to reduce risk, and contribute to the Local Area Agreement strategic objective of making Merseyside a safer, stronger, healthier community.

Equality & Diversity

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service is one of the first Services in the country to be recognised as excellent in equality and diversity. West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service is the only other Fire Service to achieve this standard.

The Government report says the approach to equalities is clearly led strongly by elected members and senior managers and underpinned by the widespread commitment and enthusiasm of staff at all levels.

The Peer Review confirmed Merseyside has a well embedded approach to equality and diversity and has translated the approach into a wide number of highly effective outcomes for local communities and their own staff. The Review specifically commends the work of the fire service community advocates commenting; of particular note is the work undertaken by the advocates. They are largely recruited from these vulnerable communities and are making a positive contribution to prevention work. The review also makes a number of recommendations including Merseyside sharing good practice possibly mentoring another fire and rescue service which is at the developing level. Mike Hagen, Deputy Chief Fire Officer and CFOA lead on Diversity, added this recognition is great news for our communities and our staff who have worked so hard to reach and influence those who need us the most. I am sure the outcome of the assessment will encourage us to go even further in the future.

Fire Support Network

FSN 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.

NHS Wirral

NHS Wirral Community Trust

NHS Wirral has received approval from the Department of Health for our provider arm to become a community trust. Following a positive consultation with

stakeholders and the public, we will now proceed with our plans to launch the new Trust on 1 April 2011.

This means that management of community health services such as community nursing, physiotherapy etc. remains focused on the improvement of these services within the NHS.

Frances Street, previously the Chairman of NHS Wirral, will become the Chairman of the new Trust, and John South, previously Director of Primary Care and Provider Services at NHS Wirral, will be interim Chief Executive until March 2012. About 1400 staff will transfer to the new organisation.

James Kay has been appointed Acting Chair of NHS Wirral.

GP Consortia

Under the Coalition Government's proposals, groups of GPs (consortia) will come together to commission most health services for their populations, taking over this responsibility from Primary Care Trusts (ie NHS Wirral).

In Wirral, 3 GP Consortia, representing 57 practices across Wirral will be "pathfinder consortia", working under the auspices of the PCT until they take over the reigns fully in 2013.

Public Health

The Government has also published a White Paper on the future of Public Health, transferring most responsibilities from the NHS to Local Authorities, and creating Public Health England. NHS Wirral and Wirral Council are working closely together on the transition to the new arrangements.

No Cold Calling Zones –

Community Safety work closely with partners in order to reduce crime and disorder. As part of that process, Wirral Council and Wirral Partnership Homes teamed up to develop a '**No Cold Calling Zone**' scheme specifically designed to protect the social landlord's tenants. No cold calling zones have been set up in various other parts of Wirral but this latest scheme at Brookdale Close in Greasby represents the first time that an area of social housing has been covered.

'**No Cold Calling Zones**' are designed to deter unwanted visits by doorstep salespeople. Brian Simpson, Chief Executive of Wirral Partnership Homes, said: "Because our tenants live in rented accommodation they are generally not targeted by rogue home improvement companies. However, they do receive unwanted visits from doorstep sales people using high pressure tactics to sell products such as mobility needs and burglar alarms. Promoting this scheme will give tenants the confidence and support to say no to some very glib salesman."

Cllr. Gill Gardner, Wirral Council's Cabinet Member for Environment, added: "Trading Standards have set up a number of cold calling zones in a number of owner/occupier areas in the borough. These schemes are intended to remind doorstep sellers and consumers that there are cancellation rights in place for these types of contracts."

This is the first time that we have extended the principle to social housing and I applaud this partnership and look forward to it developing in the future.”

1. These are the Doorstep Selling Regulations

a) The Cancellation of Contracts made in a Consumer's home or place of work etc Regulations (2008) give you protection when you buy goods or services from a trader on the doorstep or in the home (or in someone else's home), at your place of work, or when you buy from a trader on an excursion they have arranged away from their business premises.

b) If you change your mind about a purchase **above the value of £35**, you have at least seven calendar days to cancel the contract (the 'cooling-off' period). **It does not matter whether you invited a trader into your home or not** - the Regulations cover both solicited (invited) and unsolicited (uninvited visits or 'cold calling').

c) A trader must advise you **in writing** that you can cancel the contract – this information must usually be set out in your contract and should be legible and have equal prominence to any other part of the agreement. If there is no written contract, you must still be given this information in writing at the time you agree.

d) If you are not given this information in writing the trader can't hold you to anything in the contract. The trader may also be guilty of a criminal offence, and may be investigated by your local authority Trading Standards Service.

WIRRAL OLDER PEOPLE'S PARLIAMENT . REPORT WINTER 2010-2011

This report describes the history and structure of Wirral Older People's Parliament; our vision, and our achievements. It shows how we have increasingly become a significant part of the life of Wirral, involved in policy-making across the borough. It indicates our future plans, and the resources which we will need to achieve these. We are looking to the business community of Wirral, as well as the statutory and voluntary organisations, for this sponsorship.

1. Our History.

Ideas about forming a strong, representative voice for the older people of Wirral appear to have surfaced in about 2005. At the time, Age Concern Wirral housed a very successful “Senior Citizens’ Forum”, and the Director of Adult Social Services at the time considered the possibility of expanding this to become a more powerful and influential voice. In the early years of the decade, the National Service Framework for Older People, a central government initiative, had started the process of lay representation in policy making, and the Senior Citizens’ Forum had provided an articulate body from which to draw these representatives. During 2006, the elected members of the council considered the proposal that the council should support (both financially and in practical ways) the formation of an expanded older people's organisation, and there was 100% support across all political parties. In January 2007, an invitation was sent to hundreds of older citizens from the Age Concern group and from the council data base of involved older people, to attend a meeting to discuss the idea. About 60 attended, and almost all wished to be involved in the proposal. The debate, structured and led by older people present, produced the start of the vision which has grown over the years. We work with statutory and voluntary agencies, to maximise the quality of life for our older citizens. From this was born

Wirral Older People's Parliament. It had strong support from council officers, elected members, and the Primary Care Trust ; with Age Concern Wirral always there with encouragement and advice.

The original idea was to form a body with two elected members from each of the 22 wards across the four parliamentary constituencies which comprise the borough. Wirral has had a well-established system of Area Forums. These are council organised public meetings, each covering two local authority wards, held three times a year, with a panel of six ward councillors, community representatives, health service and police spokespeople and for the past four years, one of our WOPP members. The Area Forums have an agenda of issues of local interest. Our initial meeting visualised four elected members from each Area Forum, and from this group of 44 would be elected an executive group of about 10. All other citizens of the Wirral, aged 50 or above, could become associates. This has not come about, for various reasons. The cost and complexity of the electoral process, and the lack of enough candidates in every ward, led to a re-think.

2. Constitutional Development.

An executive core group was identified at the inaugural meeting, and this formed the basis for launching the organisation. During the first year, with an initial promise of annual funding of £15,000 from the council, a part time worker was appointed, and given a desk in Age Concern. We were very anxious, from the start, that the WOPP (as we chose to call ourselves) should be independent of the statutory authorities and of the political parties. Our home within Age Concern Wirral brings us numerous advantages. Our funds are ring-fenced within their accounts, and we benefit from their charitable status. We moved from a single desk to a good sized office in Age Concern's central Birkenhead base, and we have the advantages of sharing their telephone and switchboard, their computer network and photocopiers (although we do make a contribution for all of these facilities)

Within months, it became clear that we needed a coordinator with a wider range of skills, and extra administrative assistance. Our part time worker wished to move on and we appointed first Brian Christian as a full time coordinator, and then Anne McCabe as his part time administrator. This is our present set-up.

During the early months, a number of special interest committees were set up, with a small core group running each one. The chair of each of these groups has an executive seat. By definition, an organisation such as the OPP has to work around the fact that members are often very elderly, and are all volunteers. Two executive members have sadly died during the four years of our existence, as has one of our two esteemed patrons, Lady Grace Sheppard. Others have developed significant health problems. Many members have caring duties for ailing family members or grandchildren. Others have extended periods away from home, on holiday or for other reasons. For these reasons, the activities of committees can fluctuate. Details of these committees are given later in the report.

Having reviewed the idea of an elected core, we decided on a single form of membership. This is open to anyone aged 50 or above, living in the borough, and is currently without charge. Membership grows steadily, despite a loss due to deaths or moving out of the area. We are currently just below 1,000. Members come from throughout the borough. We do not ask age (since we are an organisation wishing to overcome age discrimination), so cannot give an age profile. We know that many are in sheltered housing and some are in residential or nursing homes. Some members are still working, and many members are heavily involved in a variety of other community groups. Members receive at least four mail-shots a year, giving them newsletters, details of forthcoming meetings and events, minutes of the quarterly parliament meetings and details of various consultations etc.

3. Committees and Meetings.

There are quarterly meetings for members in the council chamber at Wallasey Town Hall on the first Fridays of March, June, September and December, from 11am -1pm. At these meetings, we report on activity over the past three months and will normally have one or two invited speakers. We have featured a variety of local officials, from senior council officers, the Chief Constable and senior health managers, as well as MPs and councillors.

Executive Committee meets monthly, on the third Friday of the month in the Town Hall. Policy and constitutional issues are discussed, along with reports from the various committees. Activities are planned. Minutes are taken.

National Issues Committee has a small membership. It is extremely active in writing to politicians and civil servants, as well as many other national bodies, about issues raised by members. It is affiliated to the National Pensioners Convention. It has taken up a huge variety of topics of importance to older citizens. The quality of the replies has been very encouraging – our enquiries and concerns are being taken very seriously. Such correspondence is always copied to our four local MPs. This committee is responding to relevant central government consultations, and is seeking to influence policy which could impact throughout the country – not just in Wirral.

Health and Social Care Committee is very busy, vibrant and active group. The core group meets monthly. Originally we had open monthly meetings, with general business and a special topic. Numbers got unwieldy, so we now have special topic meetings every few weeks, planned by the core group. We have had significant influence on the discharge of older patients from hospital; disabled parking at the hospital; we helped to design a new Care Services Directory; we are planning a big project with GPs to identify voluntary carers of the long-term sick; we have worked with several care homes and domiciliary care providers; we have members sitting on a number of policy groups within the NHS and Social Care agencies.

Members of this committee and the National Issues Committee took an active part in the previous government's "Big Care Debate" as well as local consultation about transformation of care services.

One of our members represented us on the steering group which set up Wirral LINK three years ago, and she became Chair of Wirral LINK, ensuring that the voice of older people is prominent in our local health and social care watchdog.

Crime and Respect Committee works closely with the police and community safety department of the council. The committee has met with Crown Prosecution Service, the courts and probation. The committee was asked to provide an independent investigation following the death of an elderly Wirral resident, which the local media suggested (incorrectly, as we discovered) was the culmination of long term harassment.

Housing Committee has recently responded to a local consultation about development in the Wirral. They have been involved from the start in the Extra Care housing developments which are underway or recently completed. The problems associated with down-sizing one's home in later years; under-occupation of properties; maintenance costs on a low fixed income and more are under review. They have contact with local and national bodies involved with housing policy.

Grandparents who have full time care of grandchildren (GAP) This group is working very hard, locally and nationally to raise awareness of the issues of their situation. There are probably over 200 such households in the borough. The group works locally with schools and Childrens' Services. Many of these households have huge problems of lack of money; overcrowding; ill-health and exhaustion of the grandparents; ongoing legal problems with biological parents; and emotional

problems for all concerned. The group has helped a number of households to increase their income. It has worked to improve the quality of advice available locally. It has taken a very active part in national lobbies.

Transport Committee has recently been revived after a period of dormancy. We have representatives on local and regional travel bodies, and on the local pedestrian forum. The difficulties some older and disabled people encounter with public transport are of concern.

Education Committee had a spell of great activity, liaising with the Life Long Learning department of the local authority. It is disappointing that there is relatively little in the way of subsidised leisure classes of interest to older people, run by the council. However, Wirral is well-served by a range of voluntary groups offering such activities at a fairly modest cost. Our desire is to get a comprehensive listing which is more publicly available than at present. This group has also tried to progress the idea of older volunteers offering their experience and time to local schools in a variety of ways.

Intergenerational Work. Several members are working jointly with others from the local authority and some independent groups to look at schemes which involve the young and the old. There are currently plans being made for two or three pilot projects, such as young people capturing accounts of evacuees in the 1940s. Some of these pilot projects need funding.

Constitution Committee and Finance Committee. These meet as needed – the former was active at first. The latter is currently becoming very active.

Regional Involvement. Members have represented the Wirral at North West meetings of Better Government for Older People, and its successor, the North West Forum on Ageing.

Day Conferences.

These have been a popular feature of the OPP from its inception. We have had three or four of these a year, attracting up to 100 participants for a session from 10am till 3pm, with lunch and hot drinks, currently provided free to participants. Subjects have covered a range of topics, including keeping healthy; keeping safe; learning about local resources, and housing developments. The conference which attracted the largest audience of well over 100 was on End of Life issues. We had presenters from a legal firm, undertakers, palliative care specialists, bereavement workers, community health and social care teams. Our most recent Conference was hosted within the hospital education suite, and focussed on personal responsibility for one's health, choosing where to go for advice, showcasing of some different community health resources and an understanding of the role of the hospital in all this. The philosophy behind the staging of these Day Conferences is the wish to inform, consult, and signpost members to services, and to encourage peer support. They are consistently praised by members for achieving these aims.

Next summer, we are planning our most ambitious event to date. We have booked the Floral Pavilion Conference Centre for two full days at the end of May 2011 to showcase what Wirral has to offer its older population. There will be stalls displaying services available from health, the local authority, and a range of voluntary and independent groups. There will be a many leisure activities and special interest clubs, advertising their programmes. There will be entertainment by musicians and others throughout both days. There will be a series of workshops in one of the lecture rooms on a variety of topics. We are asking all participating organisations to contribute as much as they can to the funding of the event, the key costs of which are being met by Wirral University Teaching Hospital Foundation Trust.

4. Achievements to date.

Over the four years of our existence, we have become a voice that is increasingly well known in the Wirral. Barely a week passes without a request for members to participate in some meeting to present the older person's perspective. As I write this, we have been approached by a company in London which has been asked by our Public Health Department to advise on ways of getting those aged 55 to 75 more physically active. Some members will attend a meeting next week, with the researchers. We have people on policy making committees within health, social care, community safety, safeguarding vulnerable adults, transport groups, the extra care housing planning group and regional older peoples meetings, vintage radio and more.

We take up issues brought by members – normally not individual complaints, but a more general approach to a topic. For example, a member who had done GCSE examination invigilation for the authority for many years, was suddenly ignored one year. We made further enquiries and learnt that this was not an isolated case of experienced people being ignored. When we asked the Chief Executive to investigate, he learnt that the administrators were being told to choose the younger members from the bank of freelance invigilators. This was clearly discriminatory, and there were some red-faced officials. Another issue, which started as a particular concern in one sheltered housing complex, was the failure of post and parcel deliverers to wait long enough for a door to be answered when delivering packages. They leave a card with information about how to get the package. This scenario turned out to be widespread across the Wirral, and is particularly difficult for those with mobility problems, who can take some time to get from a chair to the door. Royal Mail and Parcel Force have responded in a very positive way, and we are assessing over the next few months the success of our campaign.

We have had several projects in the field of health. Two years ago we surveyed older people who had been inpatients in hospital during the previous year, enquiring about their discharge. Our questionnaire was sent to several senior managers in health and social care before we finalised it, and the survey was funded in part by the PCT, who paid the freepost costs. The 200 respondents (from 700 questionnaires distributed) divided into half who were completely satisfied with the process of discharge and half who had experienced problems; some of which were quite significant. As a result of this work, several things followed. Firstly, the hospital immediately arranged some short stay parking spaces outside the discharge lounge, for family and friends who were collecting patients. Secondly, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of councillors (which has co-opted OPP members) did a follow up investigation and report, interviewing numerous senior people and reinforced our recommendations. We now have a much more comprehensive discharge team, involving hospital, community health, social services and the new "Out of Hospital" service staffed by volunteers under paid supervision.

Our grandparents group has been a campaign in itself, and represents considerable achievement, with lots more to do before the problems are solved. They have established a close working relationship with the Childrens' Services Department of the council. (contacts from national grandparent carers groups are amazed at the cooperation) Several members have been helped to claim previously unclaimed tax credits and even child benefit. Members have successfully applied for Area Forum funding to work with schools to identify households where grandparents are the full time carers.

Two of our members sat on the Task Force to discuss how adult social care will manage the financial cuts, and to advise for the big public consultation which has just taken place,

Some Wallasey residents worked with health and social care professionals in establishing the integrated care services which were developed there before the rest of Wirral.

We fought hard to secure on-going funding for a bereavement project for older people, hosted by Age Concern Wirral. This project is immensely successful, and is heavily used by GPs. Even now, the long term future is unsure, with the NHS changes pending.

5. Finance.

Our income has consisted of £15,000 a year from Wirral council since inception, and the PCT offered to pay the same soon after we were established. We also have smaller, but significant sums (some annual, some ad-hoc) from Wirral Partnership Homes, Belmar and Liston (undertakers), Haven Care, Wirral Methodist Homes, Riverside Housing, Lees solicitors, Wiltshire Farm Foods and Wirral University Teaching Hospital Foundation Trust. We have support in kind from Age Concern Wirral, and from Wirral Council through the services of one of its officers who is seconded onto the Executive Committee. We have also received a few smaller donations, all of which have helped. Thanks to these sponsors we have managed to build a thriving organisation, with a strong vision as an independent voice for older residents of the Wirral. The growth in membership, and our plans for future developments mean that our current income is barely adequate, and we have additional worries, described below.

The PCT will be replaced next April by three GP consortia. At this stage, the details are far from decided, and we can get no reassurance about ongoing health funding. The Local Authority is facing savage cuts from central government, and we can get no confirmation that our annual payment is safe. Clearly, much of our income –which employs our two workers and rents our room and facilities - is at risk. We are actively exploring all the options, to ensure our survival. Our members are all volunteers, giving their time freely, usually at personal expense, although we have paid travelling expenses to members from time to time, particularly for out of area meetings.

6. Future Plans.

We aim to continue our success in attracting members, producing the stylish newsletters three times a year, and plan more day conferences and other shorter topic-based meetings. We hope to expand our involvement in various areas of the council and NHS. We will continue our close work with the emergency services. We will continue, on the national stage, to challenge our elected members and senior civil servants. We will work with the National Pensioners Convention and other national groups, including grandparent organisations. We will challenge energy suppliers and other suppliers of services and utilities as appropriate.

At a more detailed level, we have several local campaigns waiting for final blue-prints and funding.

1. We are seeking funding, working with Age Concern Wirral, for a project worker to work with all GP practices in Wirral, trying to get early recognition of people (usually family members) who will be shouldering the long term care of someone with a progressive condition. The aim is to train a group of older volunteers who will be available to meet with newly identified carers, to point them in the direction of all the supports they will need as the demands on them increase. This funding would need to be in the order of £40,000 a year to cover a salary, some admin support and volunteer expenses.

2. It would be good to get separate funding for our newsletters. We could then expand content and increase circulation. Currently they go to all members, and a

further 8,000 are distributed as publicity to various centres and groups. Our newsletters are very popular. Each run of 9,000 newsletters costs £

3. Our website would benefit from an injection of time and money to get it better established.

4. We wish to repeat our hospital discharge survey, to see how the changes implemented have actually benefited older patients. We estimate that £1,000 would cover freepost, printing of questionnaires and analysis of results.

5. We wish to progress the ideas for Intergenerational work. The benefits to old and young are seen as improved understanding, sharing of history and culture, and a reduction in the anxiety so many older people have in the presence of adolescents.

6. We wish to produce a promotional video. This could be a more powerful way of describing our work than reports such as this! It would also give the older population of Wirral more knowledge of what we are doing, empowering them to identify areas of concern.

7. We are very conscious that the closest we have in Wirral to a listing of all learning and leisure activities, is the council-run Grapevine website. This facility is very hard to hear about and difficult to access. It is also far from complete and many leisure and learning organisations are unaware of it. We think that a project worker for at least a year, to actively seek out and promote listing on the website, would be enormously beneficial to all Wirral residents, but particularly the retired, who have more time to participate. This would also tick all the boxes of getting people more involved and active. The hope would be that once well established, the council would be able to maintain it.

Sandra Wall (Chair) December 2010.
42-44 Market Street, Birkenhead. CH41 5BT
0151 666 2220
parliament@ageconcernwirral.org.

**AREA FORUM
STREETSCENE
UPDATE –
FEBRUARY
2011**

Highway Maintenance

*Birkenhead North Station and Proposed Park and Ride,
Birkenhead*

This scheme, funded by Merseytravel, is to provide a car park to Birkenhead North train station on the land between the station and Beaufort Road. The scheme will reduce the parking congestion in Station Road and the surrounding area. In consultation with Merseytravel, this scheme is currently under detailed design and a

commencement date is yet to be confirmed.

Winter Maintenance

The 2010 / 2011 winter season commenced one week in advance of the scheduled season. To date, a total of 2,400 tonnes of rock salt have been spread on the highway network.

It was also necessary to carry out extensive treatment to footways in shopping areas, railway station entrances and in the vicinity of public buildings such as schools and Social Services' properties. A further 175 tonnes was used in this process.

We also replenished the 207 grit bins, using more than 400 tonnes of a salt/sand mixture

The Council's arrangements for receiving detailed forecasts and for making decisions on gritting have proved to be excellent throughout the severe weather. In addition to the continued operational presence of standby staff from the Technical Services Department, Colas' resources were operational for over 1000 hours on gritting activities; a total of 500 hours was spent cleaning snow from shopping areas and a further 100 hours for filling grit bins.

Carriageway Resurfacing

The following carriageways have been resurfaced since August 2010:

Hot Rolled Asphalt:

Borough Road (Part)	Birkenhead
Conway St (Part)	Birkenhead

Footway Reconstruction

The following footways have been reconstructed since August 2010:

Lord Street	Birkenhead
Sumner Road	Birkenhead

A total of 80 street nameplates have been installed since August 2010. This programme is ongoing.

Traffic Management Updates

Traffic Management Schemes

Birkenhead, Tranmere & Rock Ferry

- St Paul's Road, Rock Ferry – Pedestrian dropped kerbs
- Helena Street, Birkenhead – Pedestrian dropped kerbs
- Victoria Park – Cycle stands
- Mersey Park – Cycle stands

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

The Third Local Transport Plan Consultation

The consultation on the Preferred Strategy for the Third Local Transport Plan (LTP3) took place from 8th September to 30th November 2010.

The goals we have set out in the Preferred Strategy are as follows;

- To ensure the transport system supports the priorities of the Liverpool City Region and its Local Strategic Partnerships.
- To provide and promote a clean and low carbon transport system.
- To ensure the transport system promotes and enables improved health and wellbeing
- To ensure the transport system allows people to connect easily with employment, services and social activities
- To ensure the transport network supports the economic success of the Liverpool City Region by the efficient movement of people and goods

- To maintain our assets to a high standard

The consultation aimed to engage as many sectors and people as possible. The views collected will be used to help shape LTP3, which will be in place by April 2011. Copies of the documents that went out to consultation are available to download from the LTP website which is www.transportmerseyside.org or by telephoning 0151 330 1294.

Road Safety

'Kids Court'

A joint initiative run by Wirral Council's Road Safety team and Merseyside Police, as part of Road Safety week in November, saw children encouraging speeding motorists to 'Slow Down.' Drivers caught speeding near to Heswall Primary School had to explain their actions to the children they could have put at risk.

The speeding motorists had been caught by police speeding close to the school and had the choice of being fined and having points put on their licence, or being grilled by a panel of children from the school about their behaviour.

Motorists who faced the children commented that it was a fantastic campaign to slow people down and that the children had been more effective in making them aware of the dangers they posed, than if they had received the points on their licence and a fine.

The overwhelming message from children during Road Safety Week was a simple one: if we want to improve the safety and quality of life of kids using roads in our communities, we need to SLOW DOWN.

Senior Road Users

Wirral Council is committed to offering education and training to a wide range of road users and have been working with road users in the age 55 and over group. In order to reach a wider audience, two available sessions 'Wiser Driver' and 'Wiser Walker' are to be further promoted across Wirral to encourage greater participation. For further details contact the Road Safety team through Streetscene.

Schools Sessions

Every mainstream school on Wirral is offered a variety of both classroom based road safety lessons and practical roadside training which is available from Year 1 up to sixth form. These sessions are taken up by the vast majority of schools on Wirral. Tailored road safety sessions are now being rolled out more widely to special schools across Wirral.

As well as Road Safety Officers visiting schools and delivering these sessions, two new resources will be available early in 2011. These will allow teachers to deliver an element of road safety training within their own PHSE lessons as the resources include issues surrounding risk taking and making informed choices and also include activities on core subjects including maths.

BikeSafe

The Merseyside BikeSafe course is entering its seventh year in 2011. This is a motorcycle skills course aimed at riders with a full licence. It combines theory sessions, skills riding and on road observed rides with a view to encouraging riders to go on to undertake an advanced riding course. The course has been run as a partnership between Wirral Council, Merseyside Police, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service and Hyperbaric Medicine and all partners are looking forward to another successful year. For further information call 606 2228 or visit www.bikesafe.co.uk.

Geared and Go

Geared and Go is a new resource designed to educate young scooter and moped riders in road safety issues affecting powered two wheeler users. It is to be offered to schools, colleges and training centres predominantly for 15 to 17 year olds. The important topics included in the half day course are riding techniques, protective clothing, routes to your licence, tips on reducing the risks to them as riders but also enjoying the freedom that their bike gives them. This course will be rolled out across Wirral over the coming months.

School Travel Plans

To date 92% of schools have adopted a School Travel Plan and we continue to work with them in maintaining their plans. A comparison across other Local Authorities shows that 92% is a good achievement.

The School Travel Plan Team continues to engage with all schools to promote safe and sustainable transport on the journey to and from school and a number of highly successful projects and initiatives have taken place.

The Junior Road Safety Officer campaign has proved popular with Primary Schools by empowering the school community to tackle issues relating to safety around their school gates. Crafty's News is a newsletter that is circulated to all Primary Schools once a term to raise important issues and share success stories from other schools, for example, a recent High Visibility day that a school held to promote the *be bright, be seen* message. This same school will also be holding a week long Parking Awareness Campaign, involving speed guns, banners and parking leaflets.

School Keep Clear Audit

The 'School Keep Clear' review has come to it's conclusion with proposals for the third and final batch of schools being completed. The aim of the borough-wide audit has been to improve road safety for school children and the local community.

Following the audit, we have proposed to remove/make amendments to, or install new markings where pedestrian entrances were not covered. Associated signage is to be installed at these locations so that motorists are fully aware of the days and hours of restrictions.

These proposals will bring the road markings into line with the most recent guidelines regarding the protection of school access points and should improve visibility for and of children as they enter and leave school. We believe that this audit and any changes required will help the continuing good progress we have made in making Wirral's roads safer.

Once the work around schools has been completed, schools are offered support by School Travel Advisers to run Parking Awareness Campaigns around their schools, so far, the response has been very positive.

Waste and Recycling Update

Recycling

During July to December 2010, the Waste and Recycling team worked with 1224 properties across the borough, to resolve issues of contamination in recycling bins.

Contaminated recycling bins are not emptied; Biffa report any instances of contamination to the Council, who contact the associated property by letter explaining why their bin has not been emptied and advising them on how they can resolve this problem.

Participation officers visit properties that continually have problems with their recycling to offer advice and guidance on what can and can not be recycled.

The Participation Officers efforts have been hugely successful to date in resolving issues of contamination. Were this approach has not worked and residents continue to put the wrong items into their bins, officers provide further advice along with a notice of intent, to issue a formal notice under Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act if the issue is not resolved.

During this six-month period only a small minority (66) of properties have received formal notices via this process.

Following the notice period any further reports of these addresses presenting contaminated bins for collection may be subject to £100 fixed penalty or prosecution in the Magistrates Court and, if convicted, a fine of up to £1,000.

Participation Officers will be continuing with this work across the borough to improve Wirral's recycling performance and avoid the need to resort to formal action against residents. Any resident requiring any assistance or advice with recycling their waste should contact Streetscene on 606 2004 or email to streetscene@wirral.gov.uk

Through the Future Jobs Fund (FJF) scheme, 5 workers are working with the recycling participation officers to improve recycling rates and reduce contamination in recycling bins. They will also work on reducing the number of households presenting multiple residual (green) bins for collection.

It is estimated that as many as 3000 households are presenting more than one residual (green) bin for collection; this has become problematic as it adds to the workload of our contractor, Biffa.

In certain circumstances, the Council does authorise additional collections from households but these must be agreed in advance with the Council.

It is estimated that during the course of 2011, the FJF Team may be able to halve the number of multiple collections. So far the public have responded very positively to their efforts.

We hope to have a third and final team of FJF officers by the end of March. Staff through the FJF scheme over the last year contributed much to improving our recycling performance.

Home Composting

If you aren't already home composting, now is the time to give it a try! More and more people in Wirral are discovering the benefits of home composting, helped by a fantastic range of Home Composting bins from as little as £14.

As part of the new scheme, which is being run in partnership with Straight plc, low price compost bins are available to residents from as little as £14 for a 220 litre Compost Converter or £17 for a 330 litre model. A wide range of other home composters and composting accessories are also available to residents, including wormeries, kitchen caddies and bases as well as water butts.

Home composting is an easy, feel good activity that you can do in your own garden or allotment. By composting at home, you can divert up to a third of your household

waste which would otherwise be sent to landfill where it produces harmful greenhouse gases like methane.

As well as the environmental benefits, your waste transforms into rich compost that can do wonders for your garden.

Residents can take advantage of these special compost bin offers by visiting <http://www.merseyside.getcomposting.com>. Alternatively, residents can order their home compost bins by calling 0844 571 4444. On this number, residents can also receive helpful composting tips and advice from the composting team on how to get started.

Environment Champions

Do you know someone who makes a special effort to look after and improve their local environment? Or perhaps you are a dedicated volunteer yourself who works hard to keep your neighbourhood clean and green? If so, register your interest to join the Wirral Environment Champions scheme.

We are looking for people like you to help raise awareness of good environmental practice across Wirral by becoming a Wirral Environment Champion.

Anyone can be an Environment Champion; individuals and groups, living in, working in or visiting Wirral. The only requirement is an interest in protecting and improving Wirral's environment.

As an Environment Champion you will be able to help raise awareness of issues such as waste minimisation, recycling, energy and water conservation, sustainable travel, conservation, and improving our Parks and Countryside.

There are many existing groups already helping to improve the environment, by working on our 'Rights of Way', carrying out litter-picks and 'Big Tidy-Ups', or involved in the work of transition towns in order to provide a more sustainable local environment and reduce carbon emissions.

By bringing together Environment Champions and projects, the Council will gain a better understanding of the many diverse groups and individuals who, in one way or another, contribute to improving Wirral's environment. Environment Champions can share ideas with each other and work with the Council to create a better environment for us all.

By creating a register of interested groups the Council is taking the next step in developing the existing informal partnership, which exists between the Council's service providers and the community they serve.

A small piece of your time is all that is needed. From time to time the Council may ask you to put up posters, volunteer to help or set up your own environmental projects, attend and possibly organise events in your own area – however much you are able to do, it will all help our environment!

To register please visit www.wirral.gov.uk/recycling, email envirochamps@wirral.gov.uk or call Streetscene on 0151 606 2004.

Dog Fouling

Following complaints from residents about dog fouling around Moreton Cross and neighbouring roads, the Council arranged for extra enforcement in the area to encourage owners to clear up after their pets.

The complaint came via the Leasowe, Moreton and Saughall Massie Area Forum,

Last year, the Council launched a new enforcement team – part of Wirral Community Patrol - to tackle dog fouling and litter across the borough.

These patrols focus on problem areas. Offenders face either prosecution through the courts or a £50 fixed penalty notice, which must be paid within 14 days. If it is not paid and the individual is found guilty by the court, they could be fined up to £1000 and end up with a criminal record.

The Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996 currently applies to the whole of the Wirral. This means that, by law, dog excrement must be removed straight away from land that has public access, whether or not warning signs are displayed.

It is the duty of every dog owner to clean up after their pet. Bags of dog dirt should be disposed of correctly in a litter bin or, suitably wrapped, in domestic refuse bins. Dumping the bag in a hedge or elsewhere is littering and carries a penalty of £70.

If people have any information about offenders, want to highlight a problem area, or need to report vandalism of litter bins, they are urged to contact the Streetscene call centre on 0151 606 2004.



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

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.

Like all public services, we are faced with making a contribution to reduce the national debt, and, in line with all other healthcare organisations, the 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.

2. Meeting the financial obligations

The Trust has initiated a wide variety of measures to achieve the 2010/11 efficiency target in its revenue budget, 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.

3. Capital Investment

On the capital side, we are continuing with the £30million, three year development programme at Arrowse Park Hospital that commenced last year. This includes an £11.5million investment to provide a dedicated Women and Children's Hospital at Arrowse Park bringing together for the first time under one roof, all acute hospital services for women and children which 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**
- **A brand new** Children's Ward, **which opened in mid-August**
- **A new** Gynaecology Diagnostic and Treatment Centre.

We have also recently opened our 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 Arrowse Park 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 to provide single sex accommodation for patients. Our new Surgical Elective Admissions Lounge (SEAL) opened to patients in 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

4. Public Car Parking Charges

With effect from Tuesday 1st February, the charge for car parking in the public car parks managed by the Trust at Arrowse Park and Clatterbridge Hospitals increased from £2 per visit to **£2.50 per visit**.

5. Wirral Millennium

In November 2010, the Trust successfully implemented the second phase (Phase 1b) of its major new IT system - Wirral Millennium. This followed the successful 'switch on' of Phase 1a in the Accident & Emergency Department at the end of May.

Phase 1b involved Outpatients, Theatres, Radiology, and Medical Records and a comprehensive staff training programme was put in place to ensure that the impact on patients was minimised and that 'business as usual' was maintained as far as possible whilst the new system was implemented.

Preparations for Wirral Millennium to replace the old IT systems in inpatients, maternity, prescribing and medicines administrations towards the end of 2011 are now well under way.

6. Trust Wide Goals

A leaflet summarising the Trust's goals for 2010/11 will be included in the information packs that will be available at Forum meetings.

7. Dr Jean Quinn

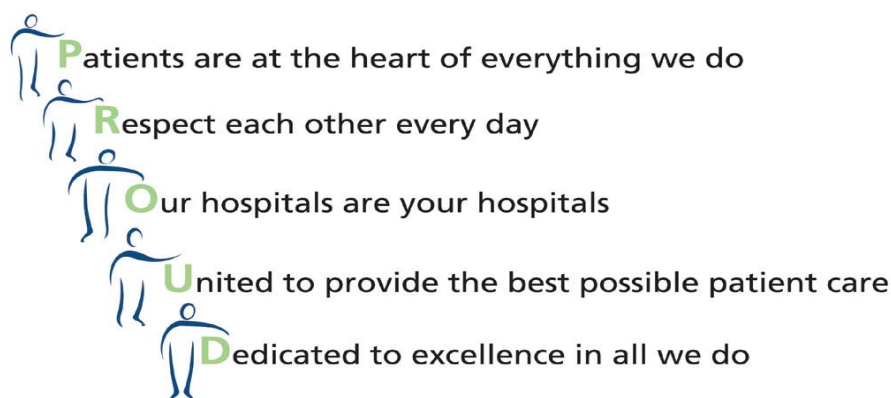
The Trust Board is delighted to announce that Dr Jean Quinn has been appointed as a Non Executive Director on the Board of Directors to replace Mr Michael Carr who took up the position of Trust Chairman from July 2010.

8. Assembly of Governors

The Trust's Assembly of Governors meets in public at least 4 times year. Both Public and Staff Members of the Trust and members of the public are welcome to attend. The next meeting will be on Wednesday 16th March at 6.00pm in the Education Centre, Arrowe Park Hospital.

9. Our Core Values

Some 12 months ago the Trust Board adopted a set of core values to help shape our culture and character and guide decision-making and to which every member of staff should aspire. We are working with our managers and staff to embed these within the organisation.



10. Maternity Services

New mums on Wirral have given glowing praise to the high quality maternity services provided at the Wirral Women and Children's Hospital at Arrowe Park. In the 2010 National Maternity Survey - *Listening to Patients - Survey of Women's Experience of Maternity Care* **90%** of new mums giving birth at the hospital rated their care during labour and birth as 'excellent' or 'very good'. This is a significant improvement on the result received by the Trust in the corresponding survey in 2007.

The findings show that during labour and birth:

- 98% of new mums had confidence and trust in the staff caring for them
- 90% of women felt that their partner/companion was made welcome by staff
- 88% of women were always spoken to in a way they could understand
- 81% of women said that they were always involved in decisions about their care

The survey also revealed that a high percentage of women at this Trust received a choice about where their antenatal check-ups would take place and where they could give birth to their baby.

The quality of our maternity services was also recognised when the team was judged to be the winner of the 'maternity services award for involvement of women in improving local maternity services' by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Maternity (APPGM). From more than 60 high standard entries were received nationally, the judges felt that the Trust's maternity team offered something different, that could inspire other trusts and be of great benefit to women and families in Wirral and beyond.

11. 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 are pleased to be able to report that in the last quarter of 2010 (October to December), there have been NO cases of MRSA bacteraemia across the Trust and in the year to date (April to December) only 5 cases have been identified. This has been achieved as a result of many new trust-wide initiatives that all staff have incorporated within their daily practices.

The incidence of ***Clostridium Difficile*** has also significantly reduced over recent months and we are well on the way to being below the threshold number set by the PCT by the end of the financial year.

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.

12. 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.

13. 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 recognition for delivering clinical excellence and for its successful patient and relative involvement.
- An external assessment of our standards by the Patient Environment Action Team resulted in the following scores being awarded to the Trust for 2010 -

	<i>Environment</i>	<i>Food</i>	<i>Privacy & Dignity</i>
<i>Arrowe Park</i>	Excellent	Excellent	Good
<i>Clatterbridge</i>	Good	Excellent	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 form that is enclosed in this information pack and return it to the Freepost address given.

Wirral Youth Service

Wirral Youth Service provides opportunities, which are open to all Wirral young people. Youth work helps young people learn about themselves, others and society, through informal educational activities which combine fun, challenge and learning. The Service works with young people aged 13-19 years, and specifically targeted young people aged 20 until their 25th birthday who have additional needs and need support with transition into adult life/services.

The Youth Service in Wirral works with many young people in a variety of different settings, these include:

- Youth clubs
- Street work projects
- "Kontaktabuses"
- "Wirral Youth Theatre" and Youth Arts
- "Response" – Advice, support, advocacy and information service and Substance Misuse Service
- 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.

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 (WYT)

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. WYT has now relocated to the Gilbrook School site in Birkenhead.

You Decide Funding There are projects being planned in a number of wards across the face of Wirral using the You Decide funding. The outputs of these projects will be maximised by the joint working of partners in the Integrated Youth Support Service including Youth sports and the Anti-social Behaviour team.

Birkenhead, Tranmere and Rock Ferry

Charing Cross Youth Club has been busy with the establishment of monthly showcase events when the music project, in combination with volunteers, hosts an intergeneration big night for all members and people from the wider community. The Club is close to completing all the four awards of the HPYU accreditation. The Club is open for young people in the immediate neighbourhood on Wednesday 6.00 pm – 9.00 pm and Saturday 4.30 – 7.30. Monday 6.30 – 9.30 and Thursday 7 00 pm – 10.00 pm focuses on young people with additional needs. Fund raising is high on the agendas for both staff and young people and a monthly craft fair, has been organised where over £1,000 has been raised to date. Partnership work with the West African

Caribbean Club is developing and over 30 looked after children attend the group regularly. The Club is open for young people with additional needs on a Monday and Thursday evenings.

Viking Youth Club has a number of exciting events taking place. A group of young people have enjoyed a trip to Alton Towers for their firework display. A course of creative cookery resulted in a selection of delicious cakes.

The Callister Youth Club offers integrated facilities for all young people and a broad and interesting programme of educational visits, arts, crafts and sport. Working with Aiming High for Disabled Children, the club is publicising its programme and the numbers of young people regularly attending has increased.

The South Birkenhead Youth Outreach Project has relocated to Gilbrook and makes use of satellite bases and points of contact across the area. Collaborative work and joint work is being developed with other providers and streetwork is being undertaken in new locations so that vulnerable young people not previously in touch with the Youth Service can now have access to youth workers.