

WIRRAL PLAN 2020: ANNUAL REPORT

2015/16

THE WIRRAL PARTNERSHIP

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FOREWORD

When we first agreed our 'Wirral Plan: A 2020 Vision' we committed to bring about real change – not just in what can be achieved, but in the manner in which we will deliver it. We set out our aspiration for Wirral built around its people and creating a place where everyone can lead the happy, healthy and successful life they want.

In July when we launched the Plan, and the 20 Pledges we will deliver over the next five years, we immediately set to work on making them a reality.

Within three months, we had established the Wirral Partnership and agreed the first-ever joint Wirral Plan: a shared set of priorities and goals which the Council, the private, public and voluntary sectors had committed to develop and deliver together. This was a huge step forward and demonstrated that Wirral is beginning to lead the way in transforming public services.

The Council and its partners now act as one team; able to harness collective resources of almost £2 billion every year, to invest in the services which local people tell us are important to them.

This partnership, and the collective determination to work together, will make the best use of the resources we have.

Cooperation across Wirral and the wider City-Region is also becoming ever more important, as the Government continues its attack on public spending, and local government in particular. By 2020, the Local Government Settlement – worth £65 million a year to Wirral – will be phased out completely.

The way we meet this challenge is through innovation and through thinking differently about how we provide services. We are taking a fresh look at what we need to achieve – and coming up with new ways of getting the job done.

This is our first Annual Report since the Wirral Plan and the 20 Pledges. To achieve the 20 Pledges and deliver on what we promised to local people has required a complete rethink of what we do, and how we do it.

You'll see in this document examples of where our pledges have started to make a difference. You'll see how the Council is changing; modernising and becoming more flexible in meeting people's needs and you'll see our plans for how we will deliver on each of our pledges.

In July, I called the Wirral Plan 'our contract with the people of Wirral'. I am proud we are meeting that commitment, and confident by continuing to talk, share ideas and work hard, we are well-placed to meet the pledges we have made to Wirral residents.



P.L. Davies

**Councillor Phil Davies,
Leader of Wirral Council
& Chair of the Wirral
Partnership.**

INTRODUCTION

Delivering our 20 Pledges requires a fundamental and radical rethink of how public services are delivered in the modern world. Today, people are leading different lives than they did when most of our services were designed and created. People want greater control; they want greater choice and more independence. People's expectations have changed, and to meet their needs we must change with them

It requires us to be pragmatic and honest with residents and each other in recognising how continued cuts to local government grants and budgets mean we cannot continue to operate in the ways we have in the past.

To deliver our 20 Pledges we must truly understand our residents' needs, desires and aspirations in a more meaningful manner than ever before. If we don't know what people want, how do we know if what we are doing – or have been doing for many years – is right?

If we aren't able to track and improve what we are doing, how can we measure if we're making a difference? Our new approach must be focussed on outcomes – listen to what people want, and then finding the best way of achieving it with them.

That was why during autumn of 2015 we undertook the biggest market research exercise ever completed by this Council.

The results of this research, telling us what is most important to people in their lives, is embedded throughout our plans. It guides our approach to delivering each of our 20 Pledges and supports further research and intelligence to continue our work to transform this borough.

The Council cannot achieve the 20 Pledges alone, nor will we deliver them by operating as we have in the past. This is why we established the Wirral Partnership to create a new approach to public service, one where organisational boundaries and territory no longer matter.

It is also why agreeing a deal on Devolution was so important. The deal opens new doors for Wirral.

It allows us to play a leading role across the region and, as part of the City Region, improve outcomes for residents.

It gives us the opportunity to work with our neighbours to join up resources, operate more effectively and to make our resources go further to benefit our residents.

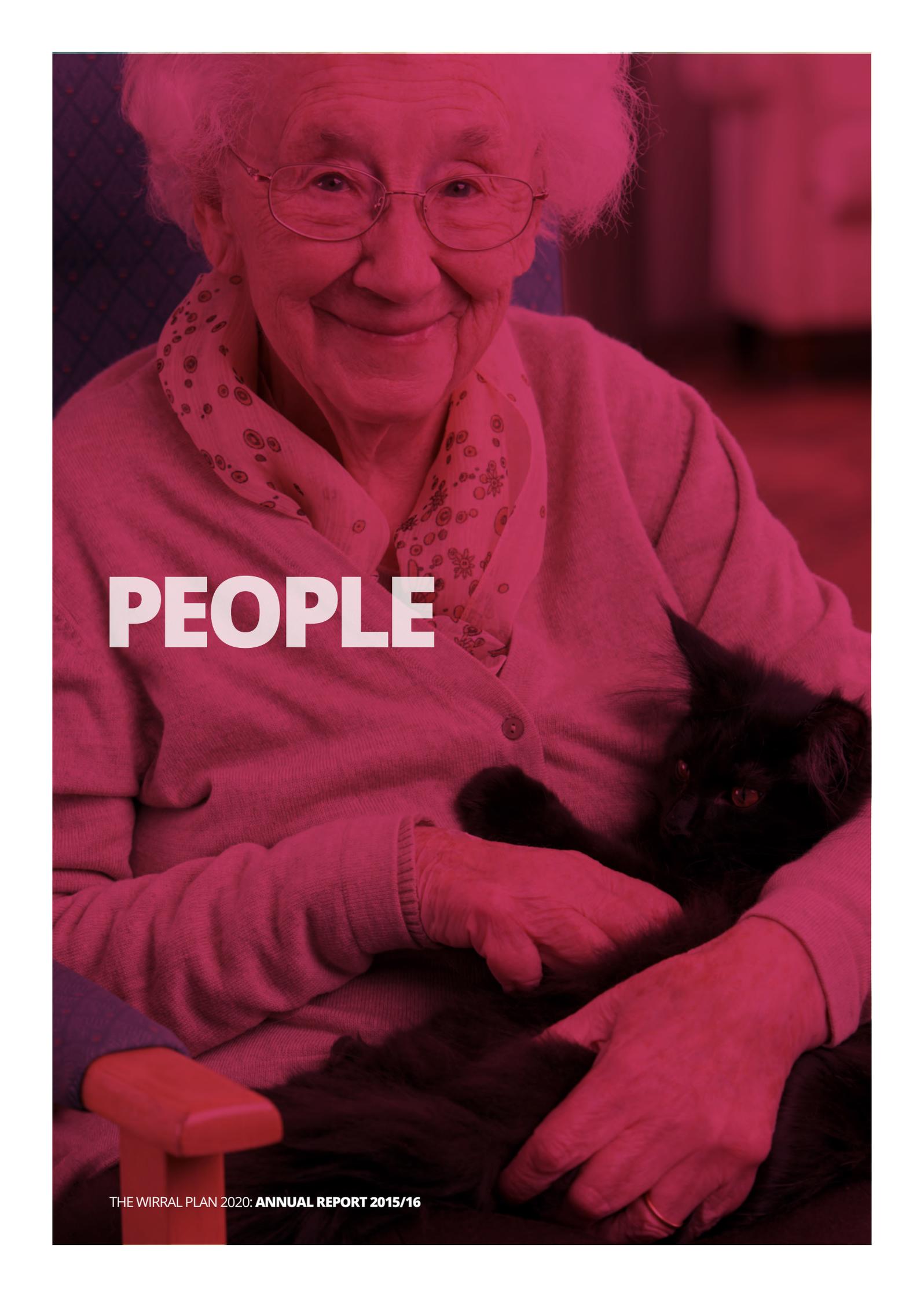
Wirral is leading this drive to integrate services and work with partners on new ventures to provide services in a better, more sustainable way.

For each of the 20 pledges, detailed plans explaining what we need to achieve and how we will go about it have been developed by members of the Wirral Partnership. The following sections of this document report our progress on each of our 20 Pledges – and what we will do next.



A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'E. Robinson', positioned above the printed name.

Eric Robinson
Chief Executive,
Wirral Council.



PEOPLE

Wirral is a place where the vulnerable are safe and protected, every child gets a good start in life and older residents are respected and valued.

Ensuring the most vulnerable among us are safe, and feel safe, is perhaps our most important responsibility. We will work across Council and agency boundaries to promptly identify and tackle problems before they develop. **W**





CASE STUDY: **SPECIALIST SUPPORT FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

People affected by domestic abuse will now be able to find a safe haven and specialist support thanks to a successful funding bid by Wirral Council. 6 new units of safe accommodation will be made available to victims, and two new specialist domestic abuse workers will be tasked with providing advice and support on issues like mental health and substance misuse.

Cllr George Davies, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Housing and Engagement said: 'I want to congratulate our officers who submitted a compelling bid which will make a real difference to people affected by domestic abuse. We will now work in partnership with Wirral Women and Children's Aid to deliver these extra resources for some of the most vulnerable people in Wirral.

'We have pledged to treat domestic abuse with zero tolerance, and that also means giving victims somewhere they can feel safe and supported during times of crisis.'

Wirral Council is one of 46 local authorities across the county getting a share of the £3.5m fund. Communities Minister Baroness Williams, with Home Office Minister Karen Bradley, has already led a review of services working with women's domestic abuse charities, local

authorities and other local service providers to gain a much clearer understanding of the range of challenges victims and services are facing.

Baroness Williams said: 'Domestic abuse is an appalling crime that shatters lives and this Government is determined to ensure that no victim is turned away from the support they need. 'This new funding will help Wirral Council and specialist charities provide a strong safety net for anyone facing the threat of abuse in their own home.'





Pledge One:
**Older people
live well**

For the first time– there is a joint strategy for older people in Wirral. Agreed by the Council and all partners in January 2016, The Ageing Well in Wirral Strategy is going to transform how older people are viewed, supported and inspired in this borough. Every public agency in Wirral who provides care, supports or otherwise works with older people are now working together; to integrate their services, and make sure that older people in Wirral are championed and enabled to live their lives to the full.

A huge amount of work will take place over the next twelve months to improve the lives of our older residents. Services between social care and the NHS will become more and more joined up, sheltered and extra care housing will be improved and expanded, homes will be made more accessible and safer for older residents, and opportunities for volunteering, learning and being active in communities will be identified, expanded and promoted.



Pledge Two:
**Children are
ready for school**

We said when we launched the Wirral Plan that everything we did would be tailored and designed based on what people actually want to improve their lives. We are living up to this promise, and have asked over 3,000 young people in Wirral what they need and what is important to them. That has led to us starting work on an entirely new approach to how young people are supported from birth to 18.

Our work is already seeing results. Almost 70% of Wirral children are now reaching a 'good level of development' by age 5. This is higher than the national average (66.3%) and higher than the same time in Wirral last year (63%). How we work with children under 5 and their families has also been completely redesigned, with a new approach to 'early help' and a new approach to early years services rolling out across the borough during 2016.

Almost 70% of Wirral children are now reaching a 'good level of development' by age 5



Pledge Three:
Young people are ready for work and adulthood

Wirral's schools continue to perform well. With 84% of schools now rated good or better by OFSTED we are well on our way to achieving our target of every school being rated good or excellent. We can do more to help, and we are making huge progress. A new, innovative company was launched by the Council in December 2015 – Edsential – which will provide many services to help schools improve in a range of areas.

Students also took their first steps towards new careers when they entered the new Wirral Metropolitan College Campus, the first key landmark site to open on the Wirral Waters Development. We also have the Wirral Young Chamber – the fastest growing scheme of its type in the country – which is helping over 700 young people improve their business and employment skills. Our levels of young people achieving well at GCSE & A Levels continues to rise, at the same time as our rate of 16-18 year olds not in education employment and training continues to fall. This huge success is due to excellent schools supported by a Council that takes education seriously. We will continue this work throughout the next year and make sure we continue to think differently, try new things and make sure our young people have every opportunity to succeed.



Pledge Four:
Vulnerable children reach their full potential

Wirral Council has almost 700 children in its care. We are doing a huge amount of work to support those young people – and their families – so that they are able to live full lives, set high goals for themselves, and meet them. The looked after children awards event held at Wallasey Town Hall was a fantastic example of this, with over 100 young people, their families and foster families coming together to celebrate their achievements.

We are running an extremely successful campaign – Walks of Life – to encourage Wirral residents to become foster carers. Already this year, well over 200 Wirral residents have applied to open up their home to provide love and support to a vulnerable young person. During the coming year, our services for vulnerable young people will continue to improve – fewer children will be taken into care, because we will identify and tackle family problems earlier and those children who are in care will achieve more, in their education and their future careers – thanks to programmes such as our Get Real scheme.

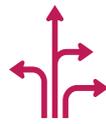
The number of 16 to 18 year olds in education, employment or training is rising



Pledge Five:
Reduce child and family poverty

Our main focus in achieving this pledge is to make sure our evidence and intelligence is effective, so that we can target our efforts in the areas that will make the most impact across the entire Wirral Partnership. We have already completed extensive research with families through focus groups and workshops and are now in the process of using that research to better plan the services and support available to people.

Reducing child poverty cannot be done in isolation; it is not a single project plan – it is about a series of factors being identified and improved over time. We are working to increase the availability of jobs in Wirral, to improve people's skills, their health, and their readiness to work.



Pledge Six:
People with disabilities live independently

We are already seeing the impact of this pledge, with significantly more disabled people being helped to continue living in their own homes – thanks to new adaptations, new technology, and working in partnership with social landlords, other public agencies and the NHS. We'll make sure that trend continues throughout this year and the lifetime of the Wirral Plan.

We've made sure all of our new gym and exercise equipment is accessible for disabled people, and we're now taking a completely different look at how services and support for disabled people is provided. For the coming year, we will start to roll out Wirral's first 'all age disability strategy'; this is the plan to ensure that, regardless of age, background or where you live, living with a disability will never be a barrier to living a full life.

Thanks to new technology and adaptations, and working with our partners, we're helping more disabled people to stay living in their own homes



Pledge Seven:
**Zero tolerance to
domestic violence**

Repeat incidents of domestic abuse have reduced year-on-year, and our rate of repeat victims is also significantly below the national average. We are also working with Tomorrow's Women Wirral to provide a peer mentoring scheme to provide more support to victims of domestic violence, as well as expanding our services by working with the Police and Crime Commissioner. Working with perpetrators of domestic abuse is also important, and we have designed a new scheme to change behaviours and reduce repeat incidents with the highest risk domestic abuse perpetrators in Wirral.

This year will see a whole new approach to how domestic abuse is spotted, tackled and reduced. We will combine our efforts with the Police and other agencies, creating one integrated service providing more joined up support. We will also put our focus on children living in families who are experiencing domestic abuse and we will tackle repeat offenders, making sure that our services and support have a long-term impact in changing lives for the better.

We will combine our efforts with the Police and other agencies, creating one integrated service providing more joined up support

An aerial photograph of a city and harbor at dusk. The city is densely packed with buildings, and the harbor is filled with industrial structures and a large ship. The sky is a deep blue, and the overall scene is bathed in the soft light of twilight. The word "BUSINESS" is overlaid in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the middle of the image.

BUSINESS

“ Wirral is a place where employers want to invest and businesses thrive. We must seize the opportunities before us, and work hard to create new ones to transform Wirral’s economy for this generation and the next.

We will focus on Wirral’s priority growth sectors to promote and grow jobs in the visitor economy, advanced manufacturing, maritime and renewable energy sectors. We will work with our partners to deliver these ambitions for Wirral and ensure our plans are both economically and environmentally sustainable. ”





**CASE STUDY:
THE WIRRAL
GROWTH PLAN**

The first Wirral Growth Plan was agreed at Cabinet during January 2016 – pledging to make CH41 – Downtown Birkenhead – the most attractive postcode in the Northern Powerhouse for companies looking to invest.

This plan, and this pledge, captured the imagination of the entire region – being covered by the BBC, many business magazines, local and regional radio and newspapers, as well as being highlighted by the Cabinet Office and Department for Business as a key national announcement for the developing Northern Powerhouse.

A series of schemes and developments worth more than £150 million are already set to come online during 2016 which are going to make Birkenhead and Wirral the first choice for developers and companies looking to invest in the Northern Powerhouse. Cllr Phil Davies, Leader of the Council, said at the time: “Wirral is a place investors are interested in. Already home to global businesses including Cammell Laird, Vauxhall Motors, Typhoo Tea and Unilever’s Advanced Manufacturing Centre – businesses and employers are looking for available land, skilled staff and a strong transport and digital infrastructure - Wirral can offer all that and more.



“Where else can investors get UNESCO World Heritage views, a working port and dock system, award winning schools and colleges and a local authority with a proven track record of supporting business. I’m confident our Downtown Birkenhead postcode - CH41 – can become the most attractive in the Northern Powerhouse for investment.”

The Wirral Growth Plan describes new approaches to driving further investment and growth in Wirral by creating a revitalised Downtown Birkenhead as a national centre for enterprise in the low carbon industry, professional services, retail and leisure, and the maritime industry. The Plan has been developed by Wirral Council with key local partners, including Wirral Chamber of Commerce and Wirral Metropolitan College.



Pledge Eight:
Greater job opportunities in Wirral

Our new approach to generating economic growth is already seeing really positive results; creating new and exciting jobs for residents all across the borough. The first new buildings on Wirral Waters officially opened last year – the new Wirral Metropolitan College Campus and the Tower Wharf HQ of the Contact Company, creating up to 400 new jobs. These developments have both been supported by the launch of the Wirral Waters Investment Fund, another example of the Council being innovative and thinking in new ways – using business rates to trigger further investment.

More new developments have opened their doors this year – such as the Lightbox and Turbine Business Park – and we are supporting existing businesses to succeed and grow, such as Carmet Marine and Cabfind. This work has contributed to earnings for full time employees living in Wirral being higher than the North West average, and the highest in the entire City Region. Next year we will move up a level, and make sure our drive to increase investment and business growth in the borough is translated into new, better jobs for Wirral residents.



Pledge Nine:
Workforce skills match business need

It's vital for us to help business to grow and create jobs, and it is equally important that when we are successful, Wirral residents have the skills to benefit from those jobs and excel in them. Wirral already performs well in adult skills, and we have seen a 149% increase in the number of people achieving Apprenticeship qualifications last year.

Our pledge was to make sure that residents access job opportunities have the skills business need, and we have secured £7 million in European Social Fund monies to do just that. We are now also working with Wirral Metropolitan College and Chester University to design a training and skills programme which will equip our residents with the skills businesses want, which will be rolled out during this year.

The first new buildings on Wirral Waters are now open – the new Wirral Metropolitan Campus and the Tower Wharf HQ of The Contact Company, creating up to 400 jobs



Pledge Ten:
**Increase inward
investment**

Investment in Wirral is thriving. Just this year, we have announced plans for an International Golf Resort in Hoylake, a new 'Maritime Knowledge Hub', a £12 million investment into a new retail scheme at Junction 1 of the M53 – creating over 350 new jobs, over £8 million investment into Croft Retail Park on top of the exciting plans for the complete transformation of Birkenhead as part of the '£150m of projects announced to regenerate the town.

This coming year will see no let-up in that momentum. New plans for retail, leisure, professional services, maritime and cultural industry developments throughout Birkenhead will be announced. We will create a new, reinvigorated approach to driving investment and marketing Wirral to the world and we will make sure that we live up to our promise of securing at least £250 million of new investment into the borough to transform our economy for this generation and the next.



Pledge Eleven:
**Thriving small
businesses**

The Wirral Chamber of Commerce is the UK's fastest growing Chamber and a key partner for the Council. The Chamber successfully led on a project to establish a Business Improvement District for Birkenhead (BID); helping businesses in Birkenhead to take an active role in transforming the town. Last year, thanks to the work of both organisations, we saw an 11% increase in businesses operating in Wirral – up to 8,200 – which is a bigger increase than both the regional and national average.

We have worked to achieve an additional £1 million in funding from the European Regional Development Fund to use to support small business and we are backing local retailers; re-introducing 'Free After 3' schemes and reviewing parking and high-street support across the borough. Our pledge is to create 250 new businesses and we are already well on the way. Our task now is to support those new businesses to grow. We'll work across the City Region and make sure that we get the best value for Wirral, and we will work with people such as the Chamber to get Wirral businesses the very best support to help them succeed.

**Exciting plans for the complete transformation of
Birkenhead as part of the £150m of projects to
regenerate the town**



Pledge Twelve:
**Vibrant tourism
economy**

Wirral continues to out-perform City Region colleagues in relation to the growth of the visitor economy. The 'Wonders of Wirral' and 'Play, Eat, Stay' campaigns continue to deliver positive results. A new strategy and implementation plan, developed based on extensive insight and research, is in development and will be delivered to complement work within the Growth Plan.

Wirral's visitor economy is the fastest growing in the city region, estimated to be worth over £355 million in 2014; employing 4,800 full time equivalent jobs; and attracting 7.5 million visitors. The major campaigns for the current year have been delivered and evaluation is ongoing; with projections that higher levels of involvement and response than ever before. Representatives from Visit Britain have made visits to Wirral and enjoyed tours of the main attractions, leading to more extensive coverage in national travel guides.

The Wirral Tourism Business Network continues to grow and is leading the development of our new Tourism Strategy, with particular focus on the wedding and group travel markets.

Wirral's visitor economy is the fastest growing in the city region, worth around £355 million. It employs 4,800 full time equivalent jobs; and we attract 7.5 million visitors



Pledge Thirteen:
**Transport &
technology
infrastructure fit
for the future**

Our residents' survey has told us that transport networks – roads and pavements, specifically – are extremely important for residents across the borough. We have continued to deliver in this area, and other notable achievements include securing £6.4 million funding approval from the government, together with £700,000 council funding to replace the Dock Bridges in Birkenhead.

We have also started consultation to seek resident's views on highways and transport services in Wirral. The results will enable the Council to find out what residents think about these important services and will help to assess how Wirral is performing and which services it needs to prioritise and to improve. We are replacing street lights across the borough; making sure they are efficient, effective and environmentally friendly: 7,700 LED and dimmable lighting units are currently being installed – at a rate of 500 per week, and we have invested almost £4 million in improving Wirral's highways. By June this year, Wirral businesses will have access to superfast broadband – an investment worth almost £16 million. We have also put in place a grants programme to help businesses to access broadband, with 116 local businesses accessing grants of up to £3,000.

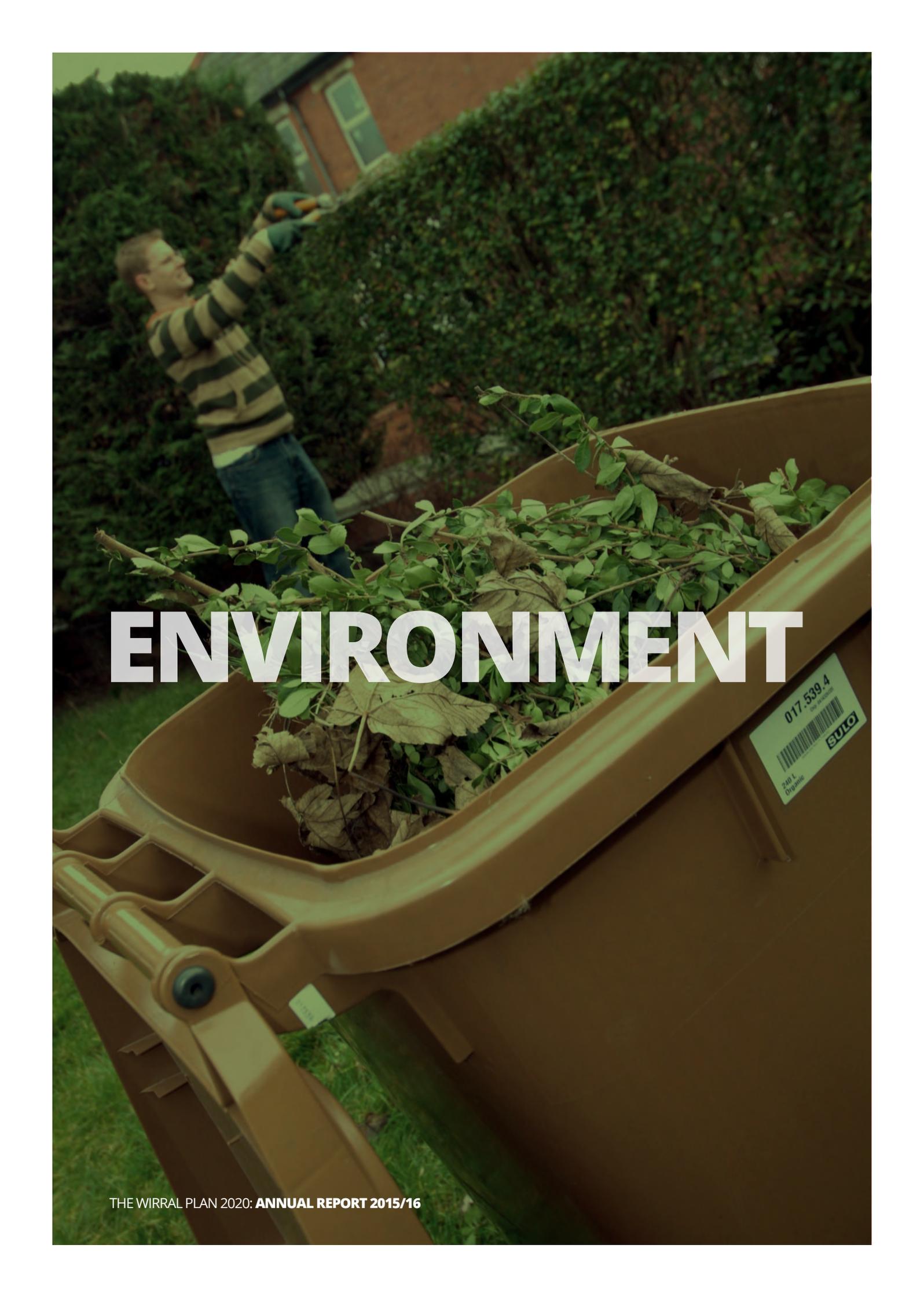
We are replacing street lights across the borough. 7,700 LED and dimmable lights are being installed at a rate of 500 per week



Pledge Fourteen:
**Assets and buildings
are fit for purpose**

We are taking a completely different approach to buildings, assets and land. We want to make the best use, and best value, from the buildings we own and operate from. We are working with every public agency in Wirral to develop the first joint Asset Strategy, which will result in the entire public sector sharing buildings, sharing costs, and providing easier, more joined up access to support and services for residents.

This year the Council has significantly reduced the number of buildings our staff work from, with large sites such as Acre Lane in Bromborough being vacated and the land sold. We will then use the income from this land to further improve the environment and our ability to attract businesses to the borough. We will make do more of that work this year, making sure that public money is invested into services and people, and keeping our building and running costs to the absolute minimum.



ENVIRONMENT

/// Wirral has an attractive and sustainable environment, where good health and an excellent quality of life is enjoyed by everyone who lives here.

Working to reduce levels of inequality, particularly in relation to health, remains of paramount importance to this Council. We want all of our residents to have a good quality of life and live healthy lifestyles in clean and safe environments. ///





CASE STUDY:
BIRKENHEAD PARK

Birkenhead Park made the grade as one of the top ten parks in the world, alongside green spaces in New York, Paris, Florence, Barcelona and Beijing.

The Guardian had this to say: “As the first publicly funded park in Britain, Birkenhead pioneered one of the country’s gifts to urban civilisation. It impressed Olmsted, too, and so can take some credit for inspiring Central Park and the Buffalo network... Birkenhead can be seen as the democratisation of the aristocratic landscape, with striking buildings such as an Italianate boat house and a “Swiss bridge” artfully distributed among winding paths and curving lakes.”

Birkenhead Park was officially re-opened in 2007 after an £11.25m facelift, following a five-year programme of improvements which saw the 226-acre park’s famous Swiss bridge, boathouse and grand entrance restored and renovated. The Grade I-listed park also benefited from new bridges, paths, and railings, and the restoration of much of the original planting.

Cllr Chris Meaden, Wirral Council Cabinet member for Leisure, Sport and Culture, said: “We all know what a special place Birkenhead Park is and also how historically significant,

but it is wonderful to know that other people outside of the area recognise it.

To see Birkenhead named alongside the likes of New York, Barcelona and Paris in this list is just amazing and a credit to the staff, volunteers and the Friends group who work tirelessly, every day of the week, to look after it on behalf of all of us.”

Birkenhead Park placed in the world's top 10

WIRRAL JEWEL WAS PIONEER

By LORNA HUGHES
ECHO reporter
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BIRKENHEAD Park has been named one of the world’s top parks by a national newspaper.

The park made the grade in the Guardian’s list of the 10 best parks in the world along with green spaces in Paris, Florence, Barcelona and Beijing.

It acknowledges Birkenhead Park’s status as the first publicly funded park in Britain – and the impression it left on American designer Frederick L. Olmsted, who went on to design Central Park in New York.

It said: “As the first publicly funded park in Britain, Birkenhead pioneered one of

the country’s gifts to urban civilisation. It impressed Olmsted, too, and so can take some credit for inspiring Central Park and the Buffalo network.

“It was created by Joseph Paxton, the gardener who went on to design the giant greenhouse known as the Crystal Palace. Paxton also worked on the Duke of Devonshire’s gardens at Chatsworth, and Birkenhead can be seen as the democratisation of the aristocratic landscape, with striking buildings such as an Italianate boat house and a ‘Swiss bridge’ artfully distributed among winding paths and curving lakes.”

Birkenhead Park was officially re-opened in 2007 after an £11.25m facelift. The Grade I-listed park benefited from new bridges, paths, and railings and the restoration of much of the original planting.



Pledge Fifteen:
Leisure and cultural opportunities for all

To many, Wirral remains the 'leisure peninsula'; we have fantastic beaches, parks, tourist attractions, cultural and sporting facilities all across the borough. It is our job to make the most of them, to encourage more people to use them and to make sure they're improving our residents' quality of life. To get there, we have developed Wirral's first Leisure Strategy, to help us achieve our pledge of leisure and cultural opportunities for all.

The strategy, will set out in clear terms how we will capitalise and get best value from the leisure and cultural assets in the borough. It comes on the back of huge developments this past year, including over £2 million investment into the Council's leisure centres, with a 25% increase in members resulting in thousands more Wirral residents being able to get fitter and healthier, the Floral Pavilion going from strength to strength and working to become more commercial in its approach, the Birkenhead Priory being taken off the 'heritage at risk' list and Birkenhead Park being named as one of the top ten parks in the world by the Guardian.

We're looking to get even more value out of our leisure and culture assets after investing more than £2m in our leisure centres



Pledge Sixteen:
Wirral residents live healthier lives

OVER £3 million in additional funding will be invested in Wirral over the coming year; supporting health and social care services to work with residents to transform and improve the services provided. The funding boost comes after health and social care partners in Wirral were successful in bidding to achieve 'Vanguard' status, one of only 29 areas in the UK.

Our work with residents has also seen more Wirral residents stop smoking, with a 4.1% drop, it has seen 7,500 young people get a new 'infant flu jab', and it has seen hugely successful programmes such as 'Reduce the Strength', 'Eat Well Wirral' and 'Takeaway for a Change' being rolled out across the borough, among many other achievements. We have also completed the most detailed and fundamental programme of research into health motivations and behaviour we have ever undertaken, and we will be using this intelligence and insight to redesign our approach to how we design services for residents.

Wirral's libraries are also continuing to play a big part in keeping our residents healthy, socially active and comfortable. Dozens of events have been held every week, from baby and toddler groups where new mums and dads can make friends and build support networks to regular literary events featuring speakers like Frank Cottrell-Boyce, Julia Donaldson and Stuart Maconie. The Bookfest festival of literature takes place every Autumn, and Summer sees hundreds of school children taking part in the Summer Reading Challenge.



Pledge Seventeen:
Community services are joined up and accessible

Making sure residents can access services easily and quickly is vital and we have been making good progress in this area. Services for older people, access to information and advice, foster care, adoption and many other areas are being looked at now to join up with other services, other areas, to provide a more joined up and accessible approach for residents.

We are working with Merseyside Police to begin co-locating community police stations within Council buildings and working with partners across the public sector to make sure that our services and approaches are designed around them, not around the organisations which provide them.



Pledge Eighteen:
Good quality housing that meets the needs of residents

Already this year, we have worked to create 230 new, affordable homes for Wirral residents, with almost 90 more due to be completed before the end of March 2016. Almost 1,000 private rented homes have been improved due in part to the Council's successful landlord licensing project, which makes sure that private rented accommodation in Wirral must be at a good standard before it is allowed onto the market. We have also brought almost 150 empty properties back into use. Next year will see a step-change in our approach, we will move faster, and we will work to encourage more house-building as part of our drive to attract investment and jobs.

We have launched a new service to combat homelessness, with the 'Mainstay' programme being rolled out across Merseyside. Over the last 12 months, 713 vulnerable people were supported to achieve independent living and/or received a package of floating support to help them maintain their tenancy.

Already this year we've worked to create 230 new and affordable homes for local people, with almost 90 due to be ready before the end of the year



Pledge Nineteen:
**Wirral's
neighbourhoods
are safe**

Wirral residents have told us that keeping their communities safe should be our number one priority: we are responding to that, and making sure our actions are stepped up, become more visible and create a significant impact in reducing crime and anti-social behaviour and making people feel safe. The rate of Anti-Social Behaviour in Wirral continues to fall, as do reported instances of assault and other crimes. We must and will do more to support residents.

This coming year, we will work much more closely with Merseyside Police to join up our resources and tackle problem areas and issues. We know that 40% of all anti-social behaviour incidents were in Birkenhead, and we will continue to focus our efforts in those areas where they will have the biggest impact.



Pledge Twenty:
**Attractive local
environment for
Wirral residents**

The environment is hugely important to Wirral residents – parks, beaches and countryside are what make this borough such a pleasant place to live. We will continue our good work in improving the borough, and encourage and enable the community organisations that are so active and committed to their environment to do more.

Last year we began a new, targeted approach to tackle litter through an aggressive enforcement policy. This resulted in over 6000 people being fined for dropping litter in the borough, and we are now expanding the approach to target those people who allow their dogs to foul pavements. We have delivered a successful communications campaign to educate Wirral residents about recycling and to ensure that we can increase our recycling rates over the coming year.

We've fined 6,000 people for dropping litter in our borough and we're about to start doing the same to those people who don't pick up after their dogs

OUR NEW APPROACH

/// We have spent the past few months putting the building blocks in place to create a new Wirral Partnership; one which is equipped to modernise and to work in a completely different way, and one which is equipped to deliver.

These building blocks are what we call our 'Operating Principles': Four main themes which sum up our strategic intent for the how we will change the organisation, in terms of its approach and what it delivers. It is on these foundations that a new Wirral Council – and a new approach to public services throughout Wirral – will be built. ///



Empowering Locally

Giving back power and responsibility to communities and tailoring our support to the unique needs of local areas and neighbourhoods.

We know that the needs of a resident in Birkenhead or Seacombe are likely to be different to the needs of a resident in Eastham or Hoylake. We know that different people and different communities need different things.

To make sure we can meet those different needs, and to create a Council that is truly responsive and can operate on the most local level possible, we have developed a Neighbourhood Development Plan. It's going to lead more independent and resilient communities, with the tools to support each other, to create and implement local solutions to local problems and to take ownership, local control and influence of their assets, open spaces and environment.



Leading Collectively

Working with the public, private and voluntary organisations to agree a vision for the area and a set of priorities that will help us focus together on making a real difference collectively to people's lives.

The Wirral Partnership is a demonstration of how committed we are to working together towards our shared goal – a better Wirral. It shows our commitment to sharing our collective effort to improve the lives of our residents. It shows we are willing – and keen – to forget our organisational boundaries, forget the old way of doing things and concentrate on how we can help each other to achieve what we all want: healthier, happier and wealthier residents.

The Wirral Partnership is how we will achieve that goal and we should be proud Wirral is leading the way in transforming public services.

Against some big challenges we have already started to make progress. For example, we pledged in our Plan to make sure older people could live independently, and with dignity in Wirral. To get there, we agreed a new strategy – Ageing Well in Wirral – one that harnesses all our work with older people, to get the best value and maximum impact from what we do, and one which shifted the traditional view of older people from simply a responsibility to an asset to be developed.

“ The Wirral Plan sets out an ambitious journey to transform the way the public sector works ”



Acting Regionally

On behalf of the people of Wirral, we are playing a leading role in the Liverpool City Region and wider to bring resources from Government, gain more freedoms to transform our economy, improve lives and save money.

The Leader of Wirral Council led negotiations to secure a historic devolution deal for the Liverpool City Region. The fundamental belief driving these negotiations was that decisions made about Liverpool City Region are best made here by local leaders, than in London or Whitehall.

These initial negotiations have secured devolved powers, influence and resources to the City Region which will bring the most benefit to local residents, businesses and communities. We have taken a first step in what will be a long journey to rebuild the economy of our region.

Our next step is to capitalise on those opportunities and these increased powers. To seize the initiative, and use the funding and responsibilities we now have to drive further economic growth, but also to work more closely together as a City Region, making sure we are not only using this agreement to bring investment to the Region, but we are using it to be more efficient and make better use of the resources we already have.



Organising Internally

The Council is changing itself so that we have the right attitudes, abilities, skills, approach and finances to deliver our vision for Wirral.

The Council invited colleagues from the Local Government Association to return to Wirral this year, as part of the ongoing Peer Review improvement programme. The panel, made up of senior, experienced local government professionals, recognised just how far this Council had come in a short period of time. They highlighted where we needed to focus our energies and resources; reviewing our capacity to deliver the Wirral Plan and transform the Council.

The Peer Team supported our approach – in particular our developing ‘new operating model’; a fundamental change in how this Council behaves, acts and is organised.

Delivering the 20 Pledges will require a step-change in how the Council operates: a step-change we are well on the way to achieving. Our new ‘Operating Model’ is a fundamental change in how this Council works, behaves and delivers. It is not just about a new management structure, it is about a change in mindset.

A new focus on customer need, and outcomes – rather than traditional services and process is a change which will not happen overnight but which will be enabled through reorganising ourselves and making sure we have the right skills in the right places.

The Council’s operating model – currently a set of traditional support, back office functions – will be completely reviewed, to ensure the organisation is supported internally to achieve change which is effective, appropriate and delivered at pace. This will be complemented by a reinvigorated drive to embed the right culture throughout our workforce.

GETTING THERE

Getting There

The Wirral Plan was developed to improve the lives of the people of Wirral.

We have set out what we plan to do. We need to ensure we have the right approach in place to make sure our plans are delivered, progress is regularly checked and the right action is taken when we are not doing well. This will be done through our new Wirral Plan Performance Framework.

In developing our performance framework we have set out a series of measures and targets to determine how well we have performed.

We will report our progress towards achieving the pledges every three months, enabling Councillors, residents and other stakeholders to hold us to account.

The strategies that underpin the Wirral Plan each have a designated partnership board which will oversee the delivery of the detailed actions. These boards will receive regular performance updates from accountable leads and will work to actively champion and drive the delivery of the strategies with pace and purpose, jointly resolving any identified issues.

The Wirral Plan sets out an ambitious journey to transform the way the public sector works: it is through this new approach to performance management and monitoring that we will take a measured and robust approach to making sure we get the job done for Wirral residents.

“ The Wirral Plan sets out an ambitious journey to transform the way the public sector works ”

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

We are all proud of Wirral. It is a great place to live, to work and to grow up.

It brings together beautiful, rural countryside with cutting edge new technology and it has a cultural and economic history which is second to none.

The work and achievements we commit to in this document are about its future. They are about delivering on the promises which have been made to Wirral residents: a set of 20 Pledges designed to trigger real, sustainable improvements to the quality of life enjoyed by every resident.

We have achieved a lot since July, but we know there is much still to do. This document gives you a summary of what that work will involve, and what it will achieve. It is the work described in this document that will deliver a better Wirral for us all.

We asked residents what was important to them, and they told us. We now have a clear picture of what people want, and a clear vision of the Wirral we want to create. It is now up to us to achieve it.

“ We now have a clear picture of what people want, and a clear vision of the Wirral we want to create ”

WIRRAL PLAN 2020: ANNUAL REPORT

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THE WIRRAL PARTNERSHIP