

**COUNCIL**  
**19 MARCH 2018**

<b>REPORT OF</b>	Councillor George Davies
<b>CABINET PORTFOLIO</b>	Housing and Community Safety
<b>CO-ORDINATING CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Mark Smith, Strategic Commissioner - Environment

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report is an update from the Cabinet Portfolio Holder to Members of the Council on matters relating to his portfolio.

**1 GOOD QUALITY HOUSING THAT MEETS RESIDENTS NEEDS**

It has been an incredibly exciting few months for housing in our borough. Not only have we seen the progress of Wirral Growth Company – and the extensive brownfield residential developments it will bring – but we have also seen huge progress in Wirral Waters.

In early February, it was announced that the Council had been successful in securing £6 million extra funding to support the building of more than 1,000 new homes in the borough. The investment will be used to carry out infrastructure works, including land remediation, public realm works and utilities provision, at the Northbank site, part of Peel's Wirral Waters development.

The money, part of an overall £866m investment from the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HiF), will help pave the way for the building of around 1,100 homes by 2025 at Northbank, which is earmarked as a south-facing, waterfront residential 'neighbourhood' anchored by the existing Grade 2 listed East Float apartment block.

You can read more on this in [Wirral View](#) and the [Wirral Globe](#).

Also last month, I was delighted Cabinet endorsed our plans to support a major housing development at Wirral Waters. A £90 million housing programme, involving 500 new apartments, it will kick-start residential development at the site.

It will see a series of apartment blocks built on this key strategic waterfront site in Wirral Waters. It would be constructed using traditional methods, which fit well into the local environment and also focus on quality design.

You can read more on this in [Wirral View](#), the [Wirral Globe](#) and [Liverpool Echo](#).

It's also important Members are aware of the other outstanding work which has been delivered in the past few months through our colleagues in Housing. Some highlights include:

- 181 new affordable homes have been built and completed, funded by a mix of the Help to Buy initiative, the Council's Affordable Homes Programme and the resources of Registered Providers of social housing;
- The Warm Homes Discount was promoted to 6000 households in the areas of the highest rates of Fuel Poverty by the housing Services Team, which resulted in 1600 calls being received and 959 applications for the £140 Warm Homes Discount;
- Following intervention, over 800 homes in the private sector have had hazards removed since the start of the plan to enable those homes to be warmer and safer;

## **2 ENSURING WIRRAL'S NEIGHBOURHOODS ARE SAFE**

The Safer Wirral Hub is now fully operational, and is now able to provide a more joined up and responsive service to Wirral residents. I am pleased to report to the Chamber that ASB complaints reported to Merseyside Police are 11% down on the same period last year, with the reported figures in December the lowest level of reports for any month in the last 10 years.

However, it is clear much work is still to be done – the number of crimes reported by the Police has increased by 16% compared to last year, and we have a number of ASB hot spots and particular issues which are affecting our residents. Together with partners, we are working to address these issues and hope to take action in the coming weeks.

## **3 ZERO TOLERANCE TO DOMESTIC ABUSE**

I am pleased to report the progress of this pledge has continued to deliver impressive outcomes across the whole of Wirral. The intention in the first years of the pledge was to increase awareness of domestic abuse, and a number of campaigns have been carried out to make this happen. In this reporting period the number of 'high risk' cases is higher than the previous year.

We are also supporting a higher number of children experiencing domestic abuse and are seeing a significant increase in the rate of referrals to social care for domestic abuse (age 18+ years). However the percentage of repeat domestic abuse cases (MARAC) has consistently reduced over last 3 quarters, the MARAC team are carrying out further analysis to ensure we have a clear understanding of the situation and can ensure the right support for victims.