

# WIRRAL PLAN 2022/23 REFRESH

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Wirral's strategic ambition and priorities for the Borough were brought together in September 2021 when the Council unanimously agreed the Wirral Plan 2021 - 26. The Plan sets out the future vision for the Borough: **to create equity for people and place and opportunities for all to secure the best possible future for our residents, communities and businesses.** Based on what people told us matters, the Plan sets out what we will deliver over the next five years.

The Wirral Plan focuses on reducing inequalities across Wirral as we all work to recover from the pandemic, physically, emotionally, financially. We are using this unique point in time to ensure Wirral's recovery is on the right track and aims to create a fairer and more prosperous place for people to live and work; making sure we meet and exceed our obligations in responding to the Climate Emergency; addressing the cost-of-living crisis; tackling health inequalities and building a vibrant Wirral where anyone can achieve their aspirations and share in future successes of the borough.

**The Wirral Plan identifies the priorities for the Borough under the five themes:**



**These overarching themes remain relevant, but against a changing social, economic and political landscape, there are some new short-term actions we need to focus on for this year.**

This includes reflecting significant organisational changes taking place within the Council as part of our wider change and improvement journey. These are outlined in the Improvement Plan which complements and aligns with the Wirral Plan.

This 1-year refresh of the Wirral Plan sets out some specific themes for the next 12 months within a clear framework **of economic and social regeneration and neighbourhood delivery:**

- **Driving Economic Regeneration:** Key to the successful delivery of the Wirral Plan is our bold and ambitious regeneration programme. This will generate the inward investment and new employment opportunities that will address the disparities within the Borough. Our Local Plan sets out this ambition through a brownfield first approach that will drive forward the regeneration of Birkenhead and the docklands. This will enable the Council to achieve its housing growth targets and provide new employment opportunities in some of our most deprived neighbourhoods, whilst protecting the greenbelt in the West of the Borough.
- **Enabling Social Regeneration:** High levels of deprivation, driven by longstanding economic challenges and high levels of worklessness are the primary reasons for Wirral's poor health outcomes. Prioritising our regeneration programme will be essential for directly tackling the causes of the health inequalities that divide the East and West of the Borough, with the goal to improve healthy life expectancy and reduce the demand on health and care services. Securing inward investment into the Borough and will also provide opportunities for training, apprenticeships and jobs for young people and school leavers, reducing the need to look

outside the Borough to find employment. Generating jobs and prosperity for the people of Wirral in the future, with Community Wealth Building principles at its heart to help build an inclusive, fairer economy.

- **Transforming our Neighbourhoods:** As a Council we will re-focus our spending to ensure it directly addresses the challenges which our communities face. To achieve this, we will engage with and listen to our communities and work with our partners to develop an approach to neighbourhood working that tailors service delivery to the differing needs of our communities.

The refreshed Plan will enable the Council to fulfil its role as the principal driver of economic and social change for the whole Borough. With its democratic mandate, the Council provides the place leadership which is essential to meeting the challenges and opportunities ahead.

**As place leader, the Council is responsible for harnessing and driving forward working in partnership with the wider public, private and third sector partners and local communities. We will build on this in the coming months, working together to achieve these joint priorities and our Vision for long-term success of the Borough.**

The following section outlines this Vision and what we will do this year to help us achieve it.

## 2.0 VISION AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The global COVID-19 pandemic has created unprecedented challenges and new experiences for everyone. However, whilst the pandemic has affected us all, the burden has not been shared equally. The long-standing problems associated with health inequality have endured; vividly exposing the impact of these unacceptable differences on people and communities. The pandemic has also made these health differences worse, and the heaviest impacts have fallen on the lives of people already experiencing health, economic and social inequalities.

Whilst we have made great progress to support people to live healthier lives in Wirral, health inequalities are stubbornly persistent. Prior to COVID-19, Wirral already had some of the poorest health outcomes in the country, with high numbers of socially and economically vulnerable people and extensive, prevailing health inequalities. Within Wirral the difference in life expectancy between those living in the most and least deprived areas is 10.7 years for men and 11.2 years for women. The impacts on individuals, families, communities, services, and the economy are enormous, and the pandemic has aggravated these further.

**Addressing this, and the current cost of living crisis is a key priority for us this year. The pandemic has shown us what we can achieve when we all work together and the speed at which we can make change happen.**

High levels of deprivation - driven by longstanding economic challenges and high levels of worklessness - are the primary reasons for Wirral's poor health outcomes. Tackling this requires a collective and focused effort.

**Prioritising our Birkenhead Regeneration will be essential for directly tackling the causes of the health inequalities that divide the East and West of the Borough,** with the goal to improve healthy life expectancy and reduce the burden on health and care services. Securing inward investment into the Borough will also provide opportunities for training, apprenticeships and jobs for young people and school leavers, reducing the need to look outside the Borough to find employment.

The key enabler for us to achieve this is the new Local Plan for the period 2021 to 2037. The Plan will set out how the Council will meet the Borough's housing and development needs, and will include policies to tackle climate change, and protect our natural and built environmental assets. The Local Plan's strategic policies align with this Wirral Plan Refresh and will enable the comprehensive regeneration of Birkenhead.

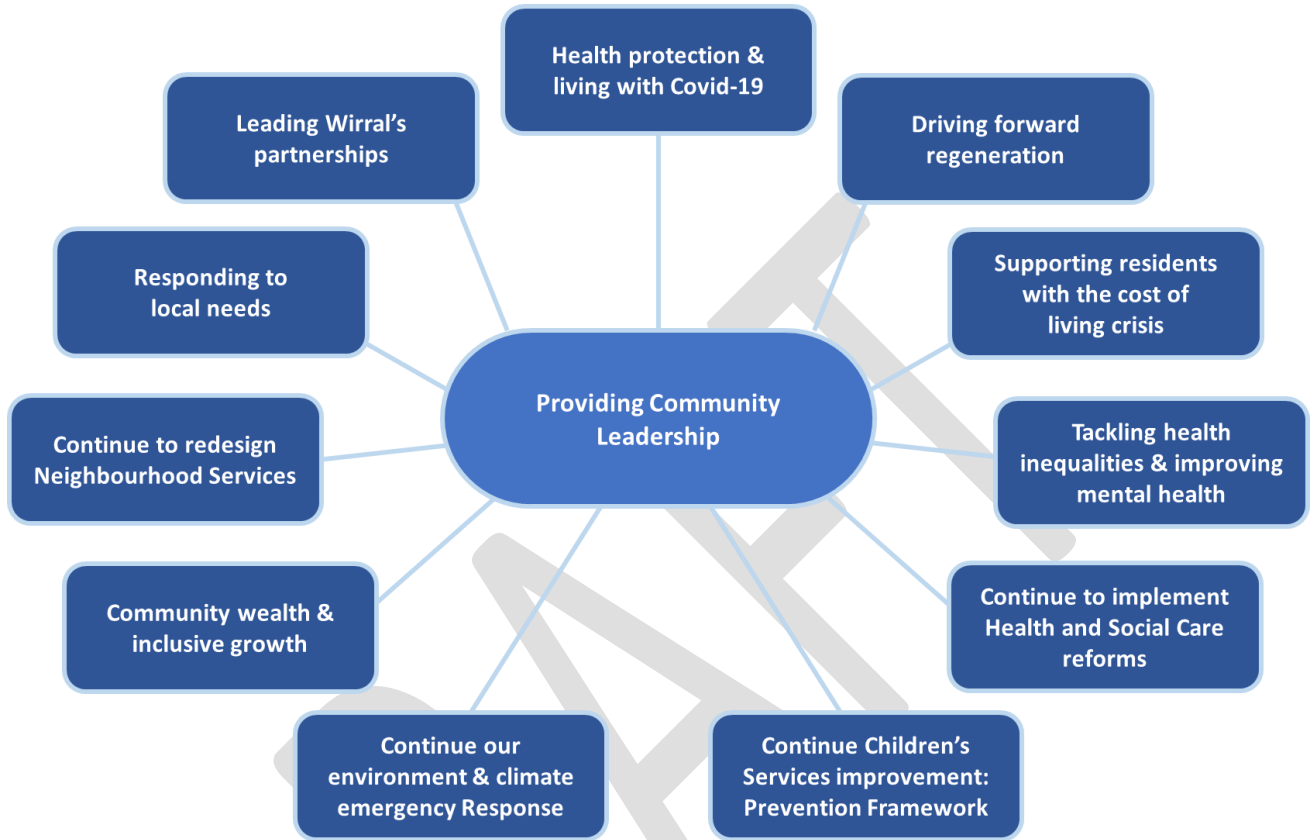
Ensuring that our regeneration plans directly address health inequalities will be a fundamental objective and one which will benefit every resident. Although some things that influence our health cannot be changed, such as our age and genes, there are many important factors that, collectively, through regeneration, we can improve. Issues such as poverty, unemployment, poor housing, and unhealthy environments are major contributors to this health gap. This is evidenced in Wirral's Public Health Annual Report 2021 – Embracing Optimism: Living with COVID-19 which identifies the following recommendations:

- Prioritise economic regeneration and a strong local economy
- Strengthen action to address differences in health outcomes and prevention
- Increase support for children, young people, and families
- Safeguard a healthy standard of living for all
- Residents and partners continue to work together

**Tackling health inequalities makes good economic sense and is a key part of our plan to become financially sustainable. This is a once in a generation opportunity to do things differently.**

### 3.0 KEY PRIORITIES FOR 2022/23

For 2022-23, there are some specific priorities we will focus on to help achieve the Wirral Plan vision. These are summarised below and will be worked up through more detailed delivery plans through our committee work programmes.



A summary view of the refreshed Wirral Plan 2022/23 is provided below. This re-states the overall plan vision and five thematic priorities. It highlights the core aims against these priorities and summarises the key deliverables for 2022/23. Each of the Council's Policy and Service Committees will be responsible for ensuring these activities are effectively planned and delivered throughout the year.

# Wirral Plan 2022 – 2023 Plan on a Page

## VISION:

To create equity for people and place and opportunities for all to secure the best possible future for our residents, communities, and businesses.

Inclusive Economy	Active & Healthy Lives	Brighter Futures	Sustainable Environment	Safe & Vibrant Communities
<b>Aims</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver regeneration, transport, and growth ambitions</li> <li>• Deliver Local Plan</li> <li>• Create community wealth/social value.</li> <li>• Create jobs and support local businesses</li> <li>• Develop quality, affordable, and sustainable homes</li> <li>• Prevent and relieve homelessness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with partner agencies to improve mental wellbeing</li> <li>• Encourage active living</li> <li>• Support people to live independently</li> <li>• Deliver the public health services and actions to improve wider determinants of health</li> <li>• Tackle health inequalities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Break the cycle of poor outcome</li> <li>• Reduce educational attainment inequalities</li> <li>• Raise the aspirations of all children and young people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond to the climate change emergency</li> <li>• Protect our cherished local environment</li> <li>• Improve street cleanliness</li> <li>• Support active travel networks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with partner agencies to reduce crime and tackle Anti-social behaviour</li> <li>• Tackle rough sleeping and homelessness</li> <li>• Deliver everyday neighbourhood services to the best possible standard</li> </ul>
<b>2022/23 Deliverables</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submit Local Plan for examination</li> <li>• Continue the delivery of the Birkenhead 2040 Strategy</li> <li>• Continue to work with Peel to deliver the Wirral Waters Regeneration area</li> <li>• Continue to implement the regeneration of New Ferry</li> <li>• Continue to improve the quality off Wirral’s Housing offer</li> <li>• Refresh Wirral asset management strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health Protection and living with Covid</li> <li>• Development of Wirral Health Protection Service</li> <li>• Mental Health and Wellbeing transformation programme</li> <li>• Healthy Wirral Key Improvement Programme</li> <li>• Health &amp; Wellbeing Strategy</li> <li>• Rollout the Digital Telecare System</li> <li>• New Adult Social Care Model</li> <li>• Develop a partnership approach to the cost-of-living crisis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the ‘Breaking the Cycle’ prevention programme</li> <li>• Deliver the Wirral School Improvement Strategy</li> <li>• Deliver the SEND Transformation Programme</li> <li>• Deliver an improved Healthy Child Programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-establish the Council’s Carbon Budget and reporting</li> <li>• Annually review the Council’s Environment &amp; Climate Emergency Policy and Action Plan</li> <li>• Coordinate the Climate Emergency Action Group</li> <li>• Invest in the tree planning programme and plant 21,000 trees per year for 10 years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver the Wirral Community Safety Strategy 2021 – 2026</li> <li>• Review and restructure the Neighbourhood Engagement Team</li> <li>• Deliver the Building Resilient Communities programme</li> <li>• Implementation of Active Travel Schemes in Partnership with the Liverpool City Region</li> </ul>

## 4.0 STRATEGIC DELIVERY FRAMEWORK

To help us achieve our vision and aims, there are a number of key plans and strategies that will inform how we deliver the Wirral Plan priorities. These are set out below:

Wirral Strategic Delivery Framework				
Cross-Cutting Strategies to Support the Wirral Plan				
Local Plan 2035	Health and Wellbeing Strategy	Prevention Framework	Neighbourhoods Working	
Climate Emergency Action Plan	Stronger Economy Plan	Community Safety Strategy	Healthy Wirral Plan	
Key Underpinning Strategies linked to Wirral Plan Themes				
Inclusive Economy	Active & Healthy Lives	Brighter Futures	Sustainable Environment	Safe & Vibrant Communities
Strategic Regeneration Framework Birkenhead 2040 Community Wealth Building Strategy	Leisure & Physical Activity Strategy	Schools Sufficiency & Assets Schools Improvement Strategy SEND Strategy Apprenticeship Strategy	Cool Wirral 2 Highways Infrastructure & Assets Management Strategy Tree Strategy	Community Safety Strategy Domestic Abuse Strategy Libraries Strategy

## 5.0 PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Partnership has a unique strategic role in shaping Wirral as a place, and Wirral has a strong track record of excellent collaboration and partnership working. Since the adoption of the Wirral Plan, the Council has been leading discussions with Partners about future joint priorities and how we can work together to deliver the Wirral Plan as our collective vision for the Borough. There is a strong appetite across the public, private and voluntary sectors for a shared strategic plan and partnership that supports collective ambitions, acknowledging that we can only achieve our goals by working together. A summary of current thematic partnerships under the Wirral Plan priorities is set out below

Thematic Partnerships and Boards	
<b>INCLUSIVE ECONOMY</b>	<p><b>Regeneration and Growth</b> partnerships with developers, skills providers, businesses, and employment support providers to bring forward relevant activity in support of our priorities</p> <p><b>Employment &amp; Skills sub-group</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint projects in enabling young people and people with significant health inequalities to access employment and skills opportunities, with notable joint commissions</li> </ul> <p><b>Housing &amp; Homelessness Strategic Board:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery of new homes, increasing affordable housing in the borough, preventing, and relieving homelessness and supporting safe and pleasant communities</li> <li>• Provision of accommodation and support services to help prevent and relieve homelessness and individuals to reach their full potential</li> <li>• Collaboration and delivery of services to specifically target those sleeping rough within the borough</li> </ul> <p><b>Wirral Partnership Community Wealth Building task group</b></p>
<b>SAFE &amp; VIBRANT COMMUNITIES</b>	<p><b>Wirral Community Safety Partnership</b> (Safer Wirral) is made up of local agencies who work together to make Wirral safer. They include: Police Crime Commissioner’s Office; Merseyside Police; Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group; Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service; National Probation Service; Merseyside Community Rehabilitation Company; Merseytravel</p> <p><b>Wirral Domestic Abuse Alliance</b> is a formal partnership between a range of statutory authorities and voluntary organisations Partners</p>
<b>SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT</b>	<p><b>The Cool Wirral Partnership</b> co-ordinates local action on climate change. The partnership is supported by Wirral Council brings together a diverse range of organisations, including: Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust; Community Action Wirral; Energy Projects Plus; Faiths4Change; Forum Housing; Magenta Living; Merseyside Fire and Rescue; Merseyside Police; Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority; Merseytravel; Wirral Environmental Network; Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.</p>

<p><b>BRIGHTER FUTURES</b></p>	<p><b>Partnership for Children, Young People &amp; Families</b> Collaborative partnerships with multi-disciplinary workers from across the borough to jointly deliver eg Prevention Policy and Framework; Breaking the Cycle; Safeguarding</p> <p><b>Community Matters Partnership</b> was launched in January 2019. The Partnership sees Wirral Council’s Early help services work with partners including HomeStart, WEB, Fender Community hub, Caritas, WIRED and North Birkenhead Development Trust and the Safer Wirral Hub</p>
<p><b>ACTIVE AND HEALTHY LIVES</b></p>	<p><b>Health &amp; Social Care; Health &amp; Wellbeing Board</b> A whole systems approach is key to reducing inequalities and improving access for underserved groups. The portfolio of partners and networks is wide ranging and includes: Liverpool City Region &amp; Local Economic Partnership; Healthy Wirral Partnership; Wirral Health and Care Commissioning; NHS Providers; Community, Voluntary and Faith partners; Chamber of Commerce Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (formerly Public Health England) NHSE/I; Healthwatch; Safeguarding; Children’s Services</p> <p>Wirral is one of the defined places within the Cheshire and Merseyside ICS.</p> <p>Community Connectors and Social Prescribers have been integral part to play in delivering personal care plans</p> <p>Wirral Dementia Strategy Board brings together NHS, Local Authority and Voluntary Sector organisations. Wirral plays a key role in the Liverpool City Region Dementia Advisory Group which brings together statutory and voluntary organisations to meet with service users, families, and carers</p>

**LIVERPOOL CITY REGION**

In addition to leading the above range of diverse partnerships, Wirral plays a key role within the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, working together to drive devolution of powers & resources to have a real impact on the City Region’s communities specifically in relation to: economic development, education and skills, transport, employment, culture, digital and housing. Our key focus within the LCR is to:

- Ensure Wirral’s interests are represented delivery of Wirral Plan is supported.
- Secure significant funding opportunities to support Wirral’s Regeneration ambitions generating income for future sustainability.
- Lead Community Wealth Building and inclusive economic growth.
- Continue with joint lobbying to raise the LCR profile and for additional resources to support our local communities.



## 6.0 CONCLUSION

The last couple of years have brought some unprecedented challenges as we learnt to respond to the COVID 19 pandemic and address the changes required for the Council to become a financially sustainable and effective organisation.

One major shift, which has impacted everything that we do has been the rollout of digital processes. For employees to successfully work remotely and access vital information for performing their roles, technologies such as TEAMS, SharePoint and communicating virtually have become essential. This overnight shift has triggered a huge cultural change.

Flexible working has also had paved the way in terms of workforce transformation. With much of our daily work usually carried out on a face-to-face basis, we have had to reconsider how we effectively engage with colleagues and communities, from keeping in touch using video conferencing to embracing new and innovative ways of working.

Last, and by no means least, is the need to embrace and grow the multi-agency partnership working that we have shaped and strengthened during the ongoing COVID response. Working closely with a broader range of partners than usual, including health, housing associations and the voluntary and charitable sectors, had led to a better understanding from all partners of what the others could do, and the potential to bring together and allocate different sets of resources in new ways.

Underpinning the approach set out in this Plan is the need to find new ways to deliver the best outcomes for Wirral residents from significantly reduced resources. To be successful, we will continue to build better partnerships and work collaboratively to make a difference in Wirral. The Council will also continue to be a community leader by connecting with residents, helping to shape opportunities, sharing responsibilities, and always championing Wirral within and outside the Borough.

This Wirral Plan refresh sets out our core priorities in the coming year and the actions that need to be taken to deliver against those priorities. We recognise that successful delivery will require political collaboration and the collective will and effort of our staff, management team and political leaders. We all want the best for Wirral and we are committed to pulling together to deliver the vision we have set for the Borough: **‘to create equity for people and place and opportunities for all to secure the best possible future for our residents, communities and businesses’**.