

# Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update

## Main report

---

Wirral Council

Final Report

October 2021

---

**Main Contact:** Dr Michael Bullock  
**Email:** [michael.bullock@arc4.co.uk](mailto:michael.bullock@arc4.co.uk)  
**Telephone:** 0800 612 9133  
**Website:** [www.arc4.co.uk](http://www.arc4.co.uk)

© 2021 arc<sup>4</sup> Limited (Company No. 06205180)



## Table of Contents

Executive Summary .....	8
1. Introduction.....	12
Background, aims and objectives .....	12
National Planning Policy Framework .....	12
Regional Context .....	13
Local Policy Context .....	14
Geography.....	14
Research methodology.....	17
Presentation of data .....	17
Report structure.....	17
COVID-19 and BREXIT .....	18
2. Housing market and key drivers .....	21
Introduction.....	21
Dwelling stock, vacant stock and household estimates .....	21
Dwelling type and size.....	22
Property age and condition.....	26
Housing tenure .....	30
Tenure characteristics .....	30
The owner-occupied sector .....	30
Affordable housing.....	34
Past trends in housing delivery.....	36
Demographic drivers: population and households.....	39
Defining the housing market area: household migration and travel to work .....	49
Household characteristics .....	53
Income data.....	56
Summary .....	59
3. Price, rents and affordability .....	60
Introduction.....	60
House price trends .....	60
Private renting .....	66
Relative affordability .....	70
Relative affordability of housing tenure options and defining genuinely affordable housing.....	71
Affordability of prices and rents to selected key workers and households on minimum/living wages .....	80
Concluding comments .....	84
4. Overall housing need and affordable housing need. ....	86
Introduction.....	86
Establishing housing need using the 'standard method'.....	86

Step 1: Setting the baseline.....	87
Step 2: An adjustment to take account of affordability.....	87
Step 3: Capping the level of any increase.....	88
Step 4: Cities and urban centres uplift.....	89
Potential adjustments to the standard method.....	89
Concluding comments on housing need.....	95
5. The needs of different groups.....	96
Introduction.....	96
Housing for people with additional needs.....	96
Age-related housing need.....	97
Housing for older people.....	97
Stakeholder views on older persons' housing.....	99
Health-related housing need.....	104
Stakeholder views on specialist housing.....	111
Life experience-related housing need.....	111
Cultural heritage related housing need.....	111
Gypsy and Traveller Households.....	112
Other groups with particular housing requirements.....	112
Conclusion.....	113
6. Overall dwelling type and mix.....	115
Introduction.....	115
Summary of scenarios.....	117
Overall dwelling mix by tenure.....	117
Conclusions.....	119
7. Conclusion: policy and strategic issues.....	120
Overall Housing need.....	120
Dwelling type, tenure and mix.....	120
Meeting the needs of older people and those with disabilities.....	121
Final comments.....	122

## List of Maps

Map 1.1	Wirral Borough, settlement areas and wards.....	16
Map 2.1	Predominant dwelling type and size by built-up areas within LSOAs: Wirral.....	24
Map 2.2	New build development in Wirral 2007-2018.....	38
Map 2.3	Household characteristics: household type by LSOA, 2019.....	54
Map 2.4	Household characteristics: income type, by LSOA, 2019.....	55
Map 3.1	Lower quartile house prices 2019 by built-up areas within the LSOAs of Wirral.....	64

Map 3.2	Median house prices 2019 by built-up areas within the LSOAs of Wirral .....	65
Map 3.3	2019 lower quartile rents across Wirral and adjacent authorities by built up areas within LSOAs .....	67
Map 3.4	2019 median rents across Wirral and adjacent authorities by built up areas within LSOAs .....	68
Map 3.5	Private rented sector Non-Passported Housing Benefit 2018.....	69
Map 5.1	Current older persons accommodation across Wirral .....	101

## List of Tables

Table 2.1	Dwelling stock and household estimates .....	21
Table 2.2	Dwelling stock by settlement area .....	22
Table 2.3	Dwelling type, number of bedrooms and council tax band.....	23
Table 2.4	Dwelling type, number of bedrooms and council tax band summary .....	23
Table 2.5	Summary of dwelling type and number of bedrooms by settlement area .....	25
Table 2.6	Age of dwelling .....	26
Table 2.7	Dwelling stock condition in England and Wirral estimates .....	27
Table 2.8	Dissatisfaction with quality of accommodation by tenure, property type and property age.....	29
Table 2.9	Tenure profile by settlement area .....	30
Table 2.10	Dwelling completions 2007/08 to 2019/20 .....	36
Table 2.11	Change in population 2020-2037 by age group.....	39
Table 2.12	Change in population 2020-2037 under alternative scenarios .....	39
Table 2.13	National and international migration by year.....	43
Table 2.14	Summary of national and international migration by year group and age group.....	44
Table 2.15	Household types and change 2020 to 2037.....	46
Table 2.16	Change in households 2020-2037 under different scenarios.....	48
Table 2.17	Households moving to Wirral: Location, tenure, dwelling size/type choices by age group.....	51
Table 2.18	Households moving to Wirral: Age group, household type and income.....	52
Table 2.19	Gross household income by settlement area 2019: household survey data .....	57
Table 2.20	Gross household income by settlement area 2019: CAMEO UK data .....	58
Table 3.1	Comparative median house price change 2000-2019 with Liverpool City Region/neighbouring boroughs, North West and England.....	62

Table 3.2	Comparative lower quartile (LQ) house price change 2000-2019 with Liverpool City Region/neighbouring boroughs, North West and England .....	62
Table 3.3	Comparative lower quartile and median house price change 2007-2019 for Wirral and settlement areas .....	63
Table 3.4	Comparative lower quartile and median rental price 2010-2019 .....	66
Table 3.5	Lower quartile and median rents by settlement area 2019 .....	66
Table 3.6	Relative affordability of lower quartile and median prices by local authority area, North West and England (workplace-based and residence-based) .....	70
Table 3.7	Summary of tenure (including affordable options), price assumptions and data sources .....	72
Table 3.8	Cost of alternative tenures by settlement area .....	73
Table 3.9	Household income required for tenure to be affordable (based on 25% of income for rents and 3.5x income for buying) by settlement area .....	74
Table 3.10	Impact of alternative deposits on sale price and income required for open market properties .....	75
Table 3.11	Affordability of private rents by settlement area .....	78
Table 3.12	Affordability of open market prices by settlement area .....	79
Table 3.13	Incomes of key workers and households on minimum/living wage and rental affordability .....	81
Table 3.14	Incomes of key workers and households on minimum/living wage and open market prices .....	82
Table 3.15	Affordability of intermediate tenure options .....	82
Table 3.16	Genuinely affordable rents and purchase prices by settlement area .....	85
Table 4.1	Household change under 2014-based household projections .....	87
Table 4.2	Affordability ratios and affordability uplift .....	87
Table 4.3	Components of the dwelling need calculation for Wirral Borough 2020-2030 .....	88
Table 4.4	Summary of alternative demographic scenarios .....	91
Table 4.5	Affordable housing need by tenure, dwelling type and number of bedrooms across Wirral .....	94
Table 5.1	Older persons' housing preferences by age group .....	98
Table 5.2	Future housing choices of older households (rightsizing) .....	98
Table 5.3	Analysis of future need for specialist older person accommodation .....	99
Table 5.4	Adaptations, support requirements and space for carer to stay by settlement area .....	100
Table 5.5	Adaptations and home improvements required by age group .....	103
Table 5.6	Type of assistance required age group .....	104
Table 5.7	Number of people stating illness/disability .....	105

Table 5.8	Summary of accessible housing standards.....	108
Table 5.9	Future need for wheelchair adapted properties .....	109
Table 5.10	Wheelchair use assumptions and resulting annual need .....	109
Table 5.11	Wheelchair dwellings needed by age group and number of bedrooms.....	110
Table 5.12	Wheelchair dwellings needed by settlement area .....	110
Table 5.11	Distribution of BAME households across the borough.....	112
Table 6.1	Summary of dwelling size (number of bedrooms) scenarios.....	117
Table 6.2	Overall annual dwelling size and tenure mix recommendations .....	118
Table 6.3	Overall annual dwelling size and tenure mix under recommendations (% data by tenure).....	118
Table 6.4	Overall annual dwelling size and tenure mix under recommendations (% data by tenure).....	118

## List of Charts and Figures

Figure ES1	Affordable tenure split with and without First Homes .....	9
Figure ES2	Future dwelling mix and future development priorities: tenure and number of bedrooms.....	10
Figure 2.1	Characteristics of owner-occupied households and dwellings .....	31
Figure 2.2	Characteristics of private rented households and dwellings .....	33
Figure 2.3	Characteristics of affordable housing households and dwellings .....	35
Figure 2.4	Dwelling completions, by type, compared with the annual target, 2006/07 to 2019/20 .....	37
Figure 2.5	Variant population projections 2020 to 2037 .....	40
Figure 2.6	Components of population change 2011 to 2018 .....	41
Figure 2.7	Profile of households by age of household reference person 2020 and 2037 .....	45
Figure 3.1	Median house price trends 2000 to 2019: Wirral, North West and England .....	61
Figure 5.1	Establishing need associated with age, health and life experience .....	96
Figure 6.1	Summary of current dwelling stock and dwelling mix under baseline demographic, aspiration and expectation scenarios .....	116

Please note that in this report some of the tables include rounded figures. This can result in some column or row totals not adding up to 100 or to the anticipated row or column 'total' due to the use of rounded decimal figures. We include this description here as it covers all tables and associated textual commentary included. If tables or figures are to be used in-house then we recommend the addition of a similarly worded statement being included as a note to each table used.

*This report takes into account the particular instructions and requirements of our client. It is not intended for and should not be relied upon by any third party and no responsibility is undertaken to any third party. arc<sup>4</sup> Limited accepts no responsibility or liability for, and makes no representation or warranty with respect to, the accuracy or completeness of any third party information (including data) that is contained in this document.*

Registered Address: arc4, 41 Clarendon Road, Sale, Manchester, M33 2DY  
Email: [businessteam@arc4.co.uk](mailto:businessteam@arc4.co.uk) Web: [www.arc4.co.uk](http://www.arc4.co.uk)  
arc4 Limited, Registered in England & Wales 6205180 VAT Registration No: 909 9814 77  
Directors Helen Brzozowski and Michael Bullock

# Executive Summary

## Introduction

The Wirral Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2021 provides up to date evidence to inform the strategies, policies and decisions of the council and its partners. Building on the findings of the 2019 SHMA, the 2021 SHMA provides further analysis of future housing need and affordable housing need over the period 2020 to 2037 to inform the Local Plan process and help to determine local housing priorities. The study draws upon the household survey carried in 2019 and refreshes the evidence presented in the 2019 SHMA.

The SHMA has been prepared in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and associated Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

This report has been prepared during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is too early to be definitive on the longer-term implication of the pandemic on demography, economy and housing. However, there are several emerging trends relating to the age distribution of excess deaths amongst older residents which will affect patterns of housing demand; the economic impact and practicalities of housing delivery; dwelling design and access to open space; and the pandemic has reinforced the importance of having a supply of good quality affordable housing.

Adjustments to data in the light of the pandemic have been made where possible (for instance Housing Delivery Test targets have been revised downwards).

## Dwelling stock

There are 148,810 dwellings and 144,596 households across the borough. The vacancy rate is 3.1% which is higher than the rate for England (2.4%). Most dwellings are houses (73.9%), 18.4% are flats and 7.7% bungalows. 67.3% of households are owner occupiers, 16.9% privately rent and 15.7% live in affordable housing. There are around 400 intermediate (affordable home ownership) properties in the borough.

Most households were satisfied with the state of repair of their home and 8% were dissatisfied, particularly those who rent privately and from a social housing provider.

## House prices and rents

In 2019, lower quartile prices were £109,950 (North West £120,000 and England £153,500) and median prices were £157,500 (North West £170,000 and England £235,000). Prices are lowest in the Wallasey and Birkenhead areas and highest in Hoylake and West Kirby.

In 2019, lower quartile private rents were £451 each month (£494 North West and £667 England) and median rents were £550 (North West £624 and England £1,001).

## Future dwelling mix and development priorities

The SHMA has carefully considered the future population and household projections over the period 2020 to 2037, the range of dwellings lived in by different households and their dwelling aspirations (likes) and expectations. This helps to determine an



appropriate mix of dwellings to inform future development priorities to better reflect the housing needs of communities across the borough.

The study has also calculated an annual need for 374 affordable homes each year across the borough which justifies the need for a robust affordable housing policy. This is a revised figure from that published in the 2019 SHMA and there are two main reasons for the reduction in need. Firstly, the time taken to reduce the backlog of need has been changed to 10 rather than 5 years to provide consistency with the standard method for calculating overall housing need. Secondly, updated information on newly built and pipeline affordable dwellings has been included in the model.

There is a need for 779 dwellings each year based on the government’s standard method for calculating housing need (December 2020). It is recommended that this is uplifted to 785 to support economic growth across the borough. The current target for delivery by tenure is 80% market and 20% affordable. Given the level of affordable need identified, it is recommended that the minimum affordable target is 20% and the council should seek a higher proportion of affordable housing on sites, where possible, based on viability evidence. This marks a change in affordable housing targets but represents a pragmatic response to the level of affordable need identified across the borough, and recognised the need to deliver at least 10% of homes where major development involving the provision of housing is proposed (NPPF para 65). The introduction of First Homes as an affordable tenure requires 25% of new affordable dwellings to be First Homes. This changes the overall split between affordable rented and affordable home ownership products. Figure ES1 compares the affordable tenure splits with and without First Homes. The overall recommended affordable housing split taking into account First Homes is 57% rented and 43% affordable home ownership options at takes into account the need for 25% of new affordable dwellings to be First Homes.

**Figure ES1 Affordable tenure split with and without First Homes**

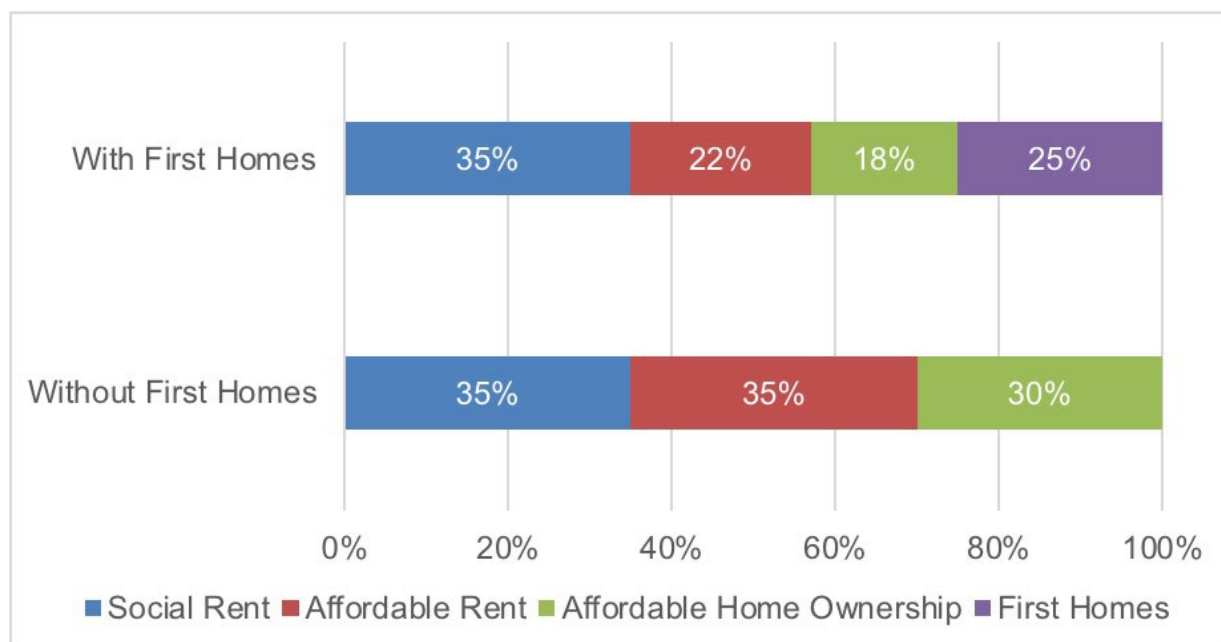
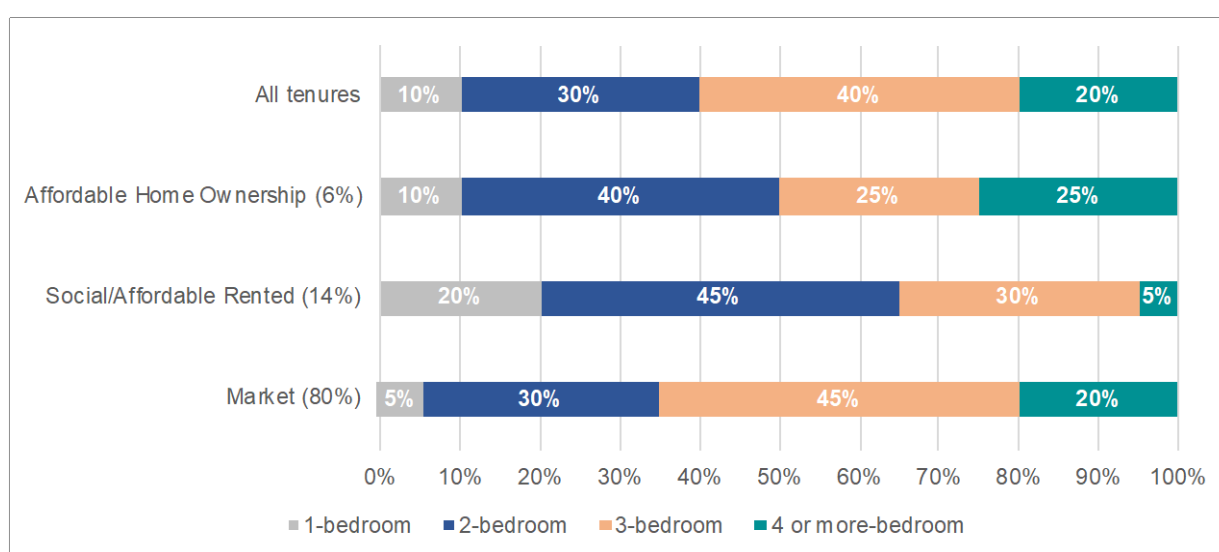


Figure ES2 summarises the recommendations for development by tenure and number of bedrooms based on the minimum 20% affordable housing delivery. Overall, the focus of development should be 2 and 3-bedroom dwellings. For market housing, there is a particular need for 2, 3 and 4-bedroom dwellings. For affordable/social rented housing a broad mix is needed with just over half of need being for 1 and 2-bedroom dwellings. For intermediate (affordable home ownership) strongest need is for properties with 3 or more bedrooms. Regarding dwelling types, the SHMA recommends that the council encourages innovative dwelling design, particularly in regeneration areas. It is expected that a broad range of houses, apartments and level-access accommodation will be developed across the borough.

**Figure ES2 Future dwelling mix and future development priorities: tenure and number of bedrooms**



### The needs of other groups

Particular needs which have been identified in the SHMA are:

- Increasing and diversifying the supply of specialist housing for older people. There is a need for 3,481 more units of accommodation for older people by 2037 including 2,332 C3 planning use class units (for instance sheltered/retirement, Extra Care, co-housing) and 1,149 residential care C2 planning use class units.
- Based on an assessment of additional needs and longer-term demographics, a minimum of 6% of new dwellings (50 each year) should be built to M4(3) wheelchair accessible and adaptable standard; and all other new dwellings should be built to M4(2) accessible and adaptable standard.
- An increase in the number of dementia-friendly homes.
- The promotion of independent living for those with additional needs.
- Provision for older people with learning disabilities.
- 17.5% of black and minority ethnic (BAME) households are in some form of housing need compared with 9.4% of all households.

Note that there is overlap between affordable, specialist older person and M4(3) need, so for instance the development of an older person's level access, wheelchair accessible affordable dwelling would help address three aspects of housing need.

# 1. Introduction

## Background, aims and objectives

- 1.1 The Wirral Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2020 update has been prepared to update the evidence being used by the council to develop its Local Plan. The SHMA update also considers responses to the Local Plan 2020-2037 Issues and Options consultation which was undertaken in early 2020 and proposed changes to calculating housing need. Ultimately, the SHMA update provides detailed, robust and defensible evidence to help determine local housing priorities and to inform the council's housing and related strategies. Note that the timescale for the Local Plan has been revised to 2020 to 2037 and this is reflected in this SHMA update.

### Aims

- 1.2 The aims of the SHMA are to:
- Establish an appropriate housing need based on the latest MHCLG model outputs taking into account uplifts linked to jobs growth and/or policy interventions and the implication of the revised standard method on housing numbers;
  - Establish the housing requirement for the borough, an overall dwelling type, size and tenure mix;
  - Quantify the level of affordable housing needed and the appropriate mix of affordable housing;
  - Provide the evidence base to support the new Local Plan and local housing strategies and policies;
  - Identify the housing needs of different groups as outlined in the NPPF Paragraph 61 within the borough, with a focus on 'different groups' such as older persons' needs and supported/special needs housing; and
  - Provide a clear and robust evidence base which all partners and agencies can use to better understand the current and future nature of the area's housing needs.
- 1.3 Data will be presented for the council area as a whole and broken down into 7 defined sub-areas, known as settlement areas.

## National Planning Policy Framework

- 1.4 The evidence base needs to take account of the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The latest version was published in July 2021 and supported by Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). The NPPF 2021 sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Paragraph 10 of the NPPF states that plans, and decisions should apply a *'presumption in favour of sustainable development'*. As part of this, in relation to plan-making, it sets out that this means *that 'strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing...'*

- 1.5 Paragraph 60 provides an important context to the policy for housing delivery, as follows:
- 'To support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay'*
- 1.6 Paragraphs 61 and 63 relate to the evidence base requirements which underpin this study:
- Paragraph 61: 'To determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance – unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach which also reflects current and future demographic trends and market signals. In addition to the local housing need figure, any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for.'*
- Paragraph 62: 'the size, type and tenure of housing need for different groups in the community, should be assessed and reflected in planning policies including but not limited to: those who require affordable housing; families with children; older people; students; people with disabilities; service families; travellers; people who rent their homes; and people wishing to commission or build their own homes.'*
- Paragraph 63: 'where a need for affordable housing is identified, planning policies should specify the type of affordable housing required'..*
- 1.7 The NPPF 2019 (Paragraph 65) requires that:
- 'strategic policy-making authorities should establish a housing requirement figure for their whole area, which shows the extent to which their identified housing need (and any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas) can be met over the plan period. Within this overall requirement, strategic policies should set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocations.'*
- 1.8 The Localism Act 2010 introduced the 'Duty to Co-operate' as a replacement for Regional Spatial Strategy and this requirement is also established in National Planning Policy (NPPF 2019, Paragraphs 24-27). Section 110 requires local authorities and other bodies, including Local Enterprise Partnerships to co-operate in maximising the effectiveness of strategic matters within development plan documents. The provision of housing development is a strategic priority and the council will have to ensure that it is legally compliant with the Localism Act at Local Plan examination.
- 1.9 The NPPF 2021 sets out affordable housing definitions which are presented at Technical Appendix A.

## Regional Context

- 1.10 The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) was established on 1 April 2014. The area includes Wirral and five other local authorities; Halton,

Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton and St Helens. The LCRCA works collaboratively with the Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to deliver economic growth.

- 1.11 The LCRCA Plan for 2018-2020<sup>1</sup> contains eight high level priorities, of which, priority five is:

*‘Good quality and affordable housing’.*

This priority is accompanied by the following vision:

*‘We want everyone in the city region to have access to a good-quality home in a safe neighbourhood - safe, secure, good quality housing is a basic human right’.*

To achieve this vision the LCRCA is preparing a City Region Spatial Framework and Housing Strategy.

- 1.12 The LCR Strategic Housing & Employment Land Market Assessment (SHELMA)<sup>2</sup>, 2012-2037, has been produced to inform the Spatial Strategy and each local council’s Local Plan. The SHELMA identifies that Wirral sits within the Central Liverpool City Region Housing Market Area.
- 1.13 The LCRCA has adopted a ‘brownfield first’ approach to housing development and reports having around 400 sites on its register to help identify priority sites for sustainable urban housing.
- 1.14 The LCR is one of three places in England chosen to pilot an approach to homelessness known as Housing First. The £7.7 million pilot began work with homeless people in summer 2019.

## Local Policy Context

- 1.15 The Wirral Council Plan 2025<sup>3</sup> (2019) contains five priorities which the council and its partners are committed to achieving. Within the priority ‘An Inclusive Economy’ is the pledge to achieve the outcome *‘Wirral residents will have access to great jobs and good quality, affordable housing’* and specifically the document states three actions relating to housing:

- Encourage quality, affordable homes;
- Bring empty properties back into use; and
- Improve private sector properties.

## Geography

- 1.16 Wirral is a metropolitan borough in Merseyside located in the North West of England. It is located on a peninsula with Cheshire West and Chester to the south and contains several key transport corridors. The borough is also connected to

<sup>1</sup> A Plan for the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority 2018-2020

<sup>2</sup> Liverpool City Regional SHELMA Executive Summary, March 2018, GL Hearn

<sup>3</sup> <https://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/documents/s50062011/Appendix%201%20Wirral%20Council%20Plan%202025.pdf>

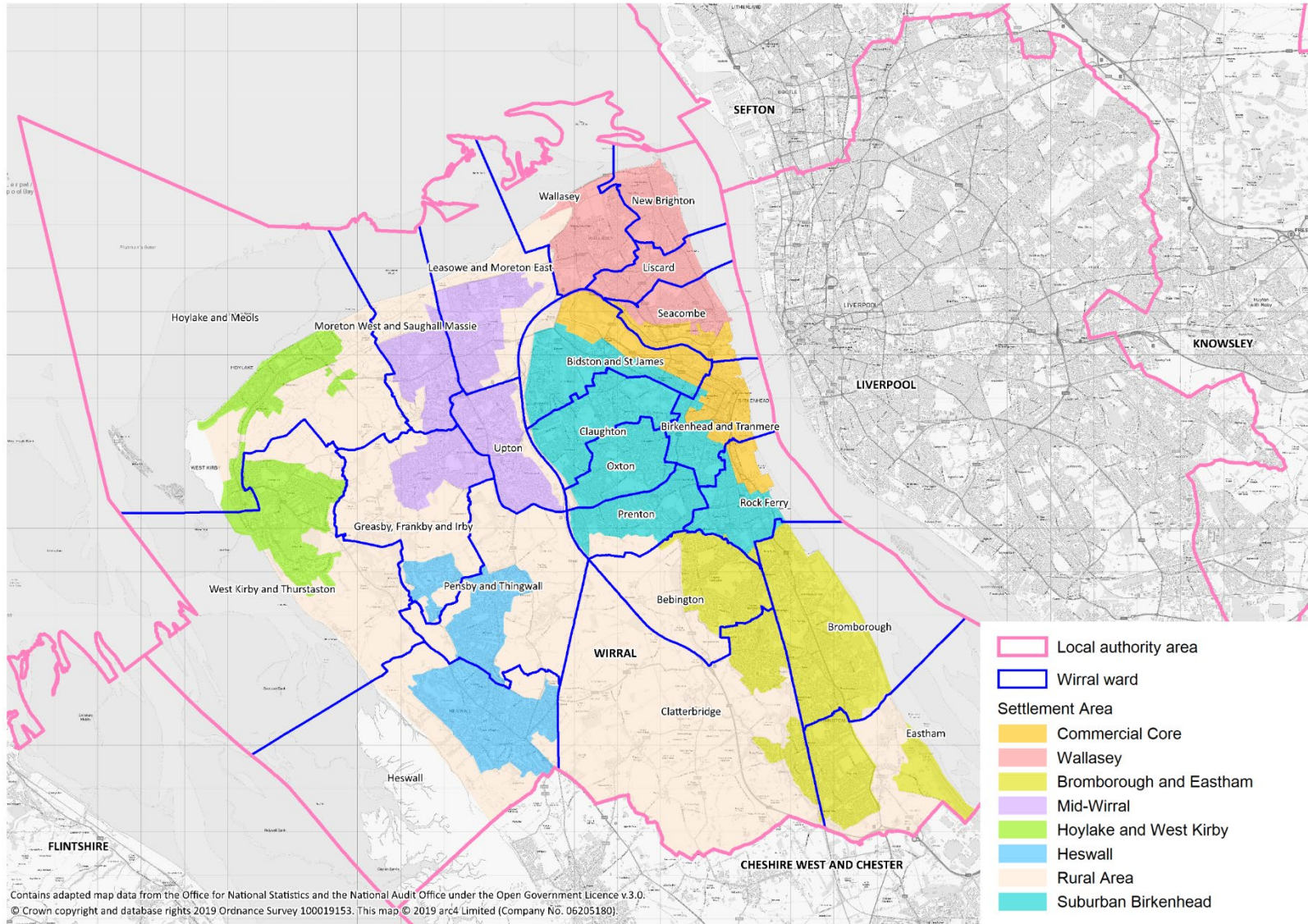
Liverpool across the River Mersey. The resident population of the borough was estimated to be **324,533<sup>4</sup>** in 2020.

- 1.17 The diverse borough includes Birkenhead and a number of other towns and suburban areas and rural localities. For planning policy purposes, the borough is divided into 8 settlement areas:
- SA1 Wallasey;
  - SA2 Commercial Core;
  - SA3 Suburban Birkenhead;
  - SA4 Bromborough & Eastham;
  - SA5 Mid-Wirral;
  - SA6 Hoylake and West Kirby;
  - SA7 Heswall; and
  - SA8 Rural Areas.
- 1.18 These have formed the basis of outputs for the SHMA (Map 1.1), the only exception being the merger of SA2 and SA3 into one settlement area for surveying. The SHMA also presents some data at Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) to provide a fine-grained analysis of selected household and housing market data.

---

<sup>4</sup> ONS 2018 based population projections for 2020

**Map 1.1 Wirral Borough, settlement areas and wards**





## Research methodology

- 1.19 The SHMA update 2021 uses the 2019 SHMA as a base and updates relevant material where necessary. A multi-method approach was adopted in the 2019 SHMA comprising:
- A sample survey of households across the borough. Households in the district were contacted during August and September 2019 and invited to complete a questionnaire. 2,586 questionnaires were returned and used in data analysis. This represents a 14.9% response rate overall and a sample error of +/-1.9% at borough level;
  - An online survey of stakeholders which included 58 representatives from strategic and local organisations;
  - Interviews with estate and letting agents operating within the borough;
  - A review of relevant secondary data including the 2011 Census, house price trends, ONS sub-national population projections and MHCLG/ONS household projections, CORE lettings data and MHCLG statistics;
  - Modelling of data;
  - A Registered Provider workshop; and
  - A review of particular client groups relevant to NPPF Paragraph 61, including hard to reach and vulnerable groups.
- 1.20 Further information on the research methodology is presented in Technical Appendix A.

## Presentation of data

- 1.21 Data presented in this SHMA will be based on the 2019 household survey unless otherwise stated. Where possible, data are 'triangulated' which means several sources are drawn upon to establish a robust output.
- 1.22 It is important to note that survey responses are weighted to correct for response bias and then grossed up to reflect the total number of households and this process is explained in Technical Appendix A. All survey information in this report is for weighted and grossed responses which are rounded up where appropriate.

## Report structure

- 1.23 The Wirral SHMA 2021 update report is structured as follows:
- Chapter 2 considers the housing market key drivers focusing on dwelling stock, demographic drivers, household characteristics including income, economic drivers, migration and travel to work trends;
  - Chapter 3 provides analysis of prices, rents and affordability;
  - Chapter 4 considers the needs of different groups as referenced in NPPF and includes analysis of the need for property adaptations;

- Chapter 5 focuses on overall housing need, affordable need and dwelling mix; and
  - Chapter 6 concludes the report with a summary of key findings and a consideration of strategic and policy issues.
- 1.24 The Main Report is accompanied by a separate technical appendix which provides detailed material that underpins the core outputs of the SHMA update. The technical appendix material includes:
- Affordable housing tenure definitions (Appendix A);
  - Research methodology (Appendix B);
  - Affordable housing need calculations (Appendix C);
  - Dwelling mix analysis (Appendix D);
  - Stakeholder consultation and agent review (Appendix E); and
  - Specialist housing need (Appendix F).

## COVID-19 and BREXIT

- 1.25 This SHMA has been prepared against a backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic and the post-BREXIT transition period.
- 1.26 Regarding the COVID-19 situation, it is too early to be definitive on the longer-term implication of the pandemic on demography, economy and housing. However, there are several emerging trends. Obviously, the age distribution of excess deaths in the pandemic will have an impact on the pattern of housing demand. Although the oldest excess deaths will often have occurred in residential care settings, the housing implications for bereaved older residents and those with “long Covid” need to be considered. Equally, the consequences of a possible spike in births will need examining.
- 1.27 Coronavirus has had and will continue to have an impact on the national economy and the practicalities of building new homes. A recent report by Savills<sup>5</sup> suggests that the impact of Covid-19 will be a reduction in the number of new homes delivered. This is due to a number of contributory factors including:
- the reduction in construction capacity, particularly during lockdown; and
  - confidence in the market to be sufficient for housebuilders to start on new sites to replace those they finish.
- 1.28 The Pandemic has reinforced the importance of good quality affordable housing. Since May, the Health Foundation has been tracking emerging evidence<sup>6</sup> on the impact of the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic on health and health inequalities. This evidence has highlighted the many ways in which different groups are being affected unequally by the virus and the measures to control its spread. There

---

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.savills.co.uk/blog/article/301680/residential-property/what-impact-will-covid-19-have-on-future-housing-supply-in-england.aspx>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.health.org.uk/what-we-do/a-healthier-uk-population/useful-publications-and-resources-on-healthy-lives/covid-19-and-health-inequalities-blogs-series>

is evidence<sup>7</sup> that our housing is an important determinant of our health. It is important for our health<sup>8</sup> and wellbeing that our homes provide for our needs, make us feel safe and allow us to stay connected to our community.

- 1.29 There may well be an increased need to support access into home purchase. A Savills blog<sup>9</sup> suggested three specific effects of Covid-19 on the housing market:
- The impact it has on sentiment, making all but the most committed buyers more cautious in the short term, at least until global stock markets stabilise.
  - The practical impact it has on buyers' and sellers' ability to transact, as it limits people's ability to go about their normal business.
  - Its impact on the economy and the traditional drivers of affordability.
- 1.30 The pandemic has accelerated trends in home working, retail and office use. There are implications for the housing offer, with a 'race for space' *within* dwellings, the need for larger gardens/outdoor space and better access to public space which may alter the demand/need for larger homes in less dense settings. A redistribution of demand between urban and more rural locations has also been suggested. This may have implications for the authority's catchment areas. Repurposing town centres and commercial buildings provides opportunities for new forms of residential occupancy, for instance micro-homes and co-living. Aspirations for a "20 minute city" may drive more polycentric development which could boost housing growth in the authority generally and in new locations.
- 1.31 A recent article through Property Week<sup>10</sup> considers the opportunity to develop new care models that improve best practice in the wake of Covid-19. It suggests that even prior to the pandemic, expectations of elderly residential living were shifting towards new sheltered accommodation or retirement living facilities. Covid-19 has led to new health and safety standards that are likely to increase demand for facilities such as en-suite bathrooms. Such amenities could play an important role in mitigating against future outbreaks, while also addressing the need for more personal and private spaces within communal residential homes.
- 1.32 The short-term economic implications of BREXIT, overlaid on the implications of the pandemic, have often been factored into economic growth scenarios. Longer-term structural changes to the economy, driven, for example, by different trading patterns and new infrastructure development (such Freeports) will alter economic growth.
- 1.33 It's difficult to know exactly how Brexit will impact the UK housing market. However, with a deal in place, many feel Brexit is unlikely to have much of an impact on the sector in the short term. House prices will likely be more impacted by the country's economic recovery from COVID-19 and job uncertainty. If Brexit causes significant job losses, this could lead to a slight drop in house prices. Many in the property industry are already forecasting house price growth to slow down in 2021, but some argue that prices will not fall – or at least not by much.

---

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.health.org.uk/publications/reports/the-marmot-review-10-years-on>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.health.org.uk/infographic/how-does-housing-influence-our-health>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.savills.co.uk/blog/article/297216/residential-property/what-might-covid-19-mean-for-the-housing-market.aspx>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.propertyweek.com/insight/time-for-a-new-elderly-care-model/5110460.article>

However, the implications for the housing market will only emerge over the medium to long term.

- 1.34 There is still uncertainty ahead with how the Brexit deal will impact the economy and housing market, in the shorter term, Job uncertainty, which will likely lead to more people renting for longer, is expected to have a more significant impact on the housing market than Brexit. The furlough scheme is set to end at the end of April. This is when many are predicting unemployment levels will be the highest. At this point, transaction levels are expected to drop. Some buyers and investors will likely wait and see how the economy and housing market fares.
- 1.35 Other potential changes within the housing market such as leasehold reform and cladding replacement may have micro-impacts on niche housing demands.
- 1.36 Adjustments to data in the light of the pandemic have been made where possible (for instance Housing Delivery Test targets which have been revised downwards).

## 2. Housing market and key drivers

### Introduction

- 2.1 This chapter provides a detailed background to dwelling stock and tenure and the underlying economic, demographic and household drivers across Wirral.

### Dwelling stock, vacant stock and household estimates

- 2.2 Current estimates of dwelling stock, vacant stock and households from multiple sources are presented in Table 2.1. For the purposes of the 2021 SHMA update, the total dwelling stock base is assumed to be **148,810** and the number of households as **144,596**. Around 3.1% of dwellings are vacant compared with the national rate of 2.5% and the council have brought an annual average of 292 empty properties back into use over the period 2010/11 to 2017/18.

Table 2.1 Dwelling stock and household estimates		
Dwelling stock	Dwellings	Source
2018 Valuation Office Agency (all dwellings)	148,270	VOA Table CTSOP3.0 and CTSOP1.0
2019 Valuation Office Agency (all dwellings)	148,810	VOA Table CTSOP3.0
2018 Valuation Office Agency (excluding annex and unknown)	147,520	VOA Table CTSOP3.0
2019 Valuation Office Agency (excluding annex and unknown)	148,070	VOA Table CTSOP3.0
2019 MHCLG Dwelling Stock Estimates	148,979	MHCLG Live Tables on
Vacant stock	Dwellings	Source
2019 MHCLG Vacancy estimate (all dwellings)	4,722 (3.2%)	MHCLG Table LT_615
2019 MHCLG Long-term vacancy estimate (all dwellings)	1,920 (1.3%)	MHCLG Table LT_615
Households	Households	Source
2014-based DCLG Household Projections 2020 figure	146,891	DCLG (now MHCLG)
2016-based ONS Household Projections 2020 figure	143,826	ONS
2018-based ONS Household Projections 2020 figure	144,596	ONS

**Note** that the 2019 SHMA and associated household survey used 2019-based data of 148,270 dwellings and 146,132 households. Baseline dwelling and household statistics for each of the settlement areas is set out in Table 2.2.

Settlement area	Dwellings	Households
SA1 Wallasey	28,355	27,946
SA2 Commercial Core/SA3 Suburban Birkenhead	43,225	42,601
SA4 Bromborough & Eastham	25,154	24,791
SA5 Mid-Wirral	24,057	23,710
SA6 Hoylake and West Kirby	11,559	11,392
SA7 Heswall	12,815	12,630
SA8 Rural Areas	3,106	3,061
<b>Total</b>	<b>148,270</b>	<b>146,131</b>

Source: Households - ONS 2016-based household projections for 2019, Dwellings – VOA 2018

## Dwelling type and size

- 2.3 The 2019 Valuation Office Agency data provides details on overall dwelling stock by type, number of bedrooms and council tax band. Table 2.3 presents the overall dwelling stock profile of the borough compared with the North West and England and Table 2.4 summarises dwelling type and size data for Wirral.
- 2.4 In summary, Tables 2.3 to 2.4 show:
- 62.5% of dwellings in Wirral are council tax band A or B properties and 37.5% are band C or above;
  - 73.9% of dwellings are houses (26.6% terraced, 36.3% semi-detached and 11% detached), 18.4% are flats and 7.7% are bungalows;
  - 8.4% of dwellings have one bedroom, 21.8% two bedrooms, 52.4% three-bedrooms and 17.4% four or more -bedrooms.
- 2.5 Table 2.5 presents a breakdown of broad dwelling type and number of bedrooms by settlement area.
- 2.6 Map 2.1 illustrates the predominant dwelling type and size by LSOA based on 2019 Valuation Office Agency data.

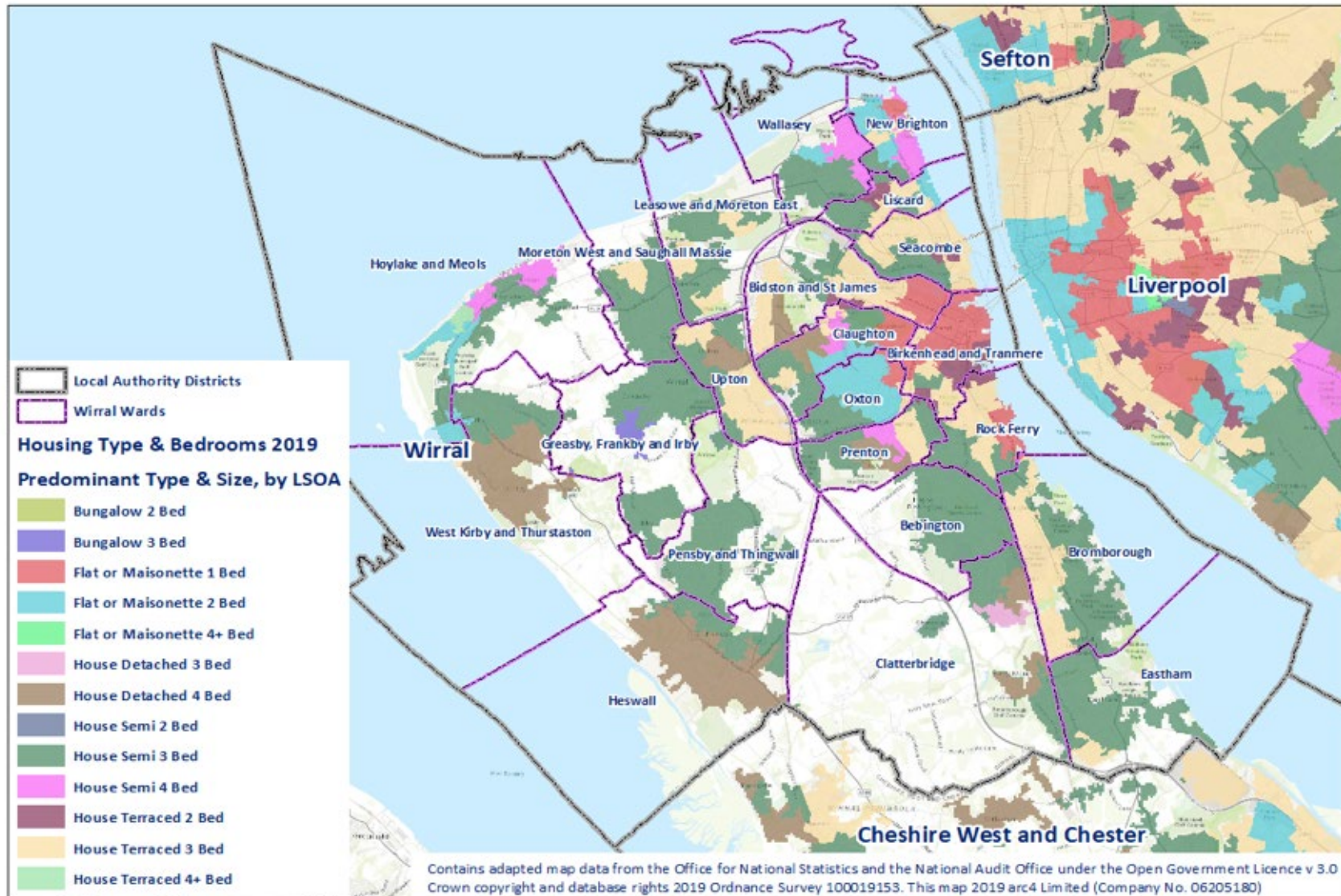
Dwelling type and number of bedrooms	Council Tax Band						
	A	B	C-E	F+	Wirral Total	North West Total	England Total
Bungalow 1-bedroom	0.8	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.9	1.5	1.1
Bungalow 2-bedrooms	0.5	0.9	2.4	0.1	3.9	11.8	4.7
Bungalow 3-bedrooms	0.0	0.1	1.8	0.4	2.3	21.8	3.0
Bungalow 4 or more -bedrooms	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.5	5.7	0.6
Flat 1-bedroom	6.7	0.4	0.0	0.0	7.2	0.1	10.6
Flat 2-bedrooms	6.5	2.2	1.1	0.0	9.9	1.5	10.5
Flat 3-bedrooms	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.0	1.2	2.8	1.8
Flat 4 or more-bedrooms	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	6.8	0.5
Terraced house 1-bedroom	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	9.1	0.5
Terraced house 2-bedrooms	5.1	0.9	0.2	0.0	6.2	0.2	8.9
Terraced house 3-bedrooms	12.6	3.1	1.0	0.0	16.7	5.2	15.1
Terraced house 4 or more-bedrooms	1.8	1.0	0.6	0.0	3.5	2.3	2.4
Semi-detached house 1-bedroom	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.4	0.1
Semi-detached house 2-bedroom	0.9	0.7	0.2	0.0	1.8	13.9	3.8
Semi-detached house 3-bedroom	4.0	10.6	13.2	0.0	27.8	9.1	17.8
Semi-detached house 4 or more-bedrooms	0.5	1.5	4.4	0.3	6.7	0.5	2.6
Detached house 1-bedroom	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0
Detached house 2-bedrooms	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.7
Detached house 3-bedroom	0.0	0.2	3.5	0.6	4.3	0.4	5.9
Detached house 4 or more-bedroom	0.0	0.0	3.5	3.1	6.7	3.7	9.2
<b>Wirral Total</b>	<b>40.7</b>	<b>21.8</b>	<b>32.6</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>100.0</b>		
<b>North West Total</b>						<b>100.0</b>	
<b>England Total</b>							<b>100.0</b>

Base: Wirral 145,480; NW 3,240,270; England 23,829,070 (excludes annex, other and missing)

Source: VOA 2019

Dwelling type	Council Tax Band				Wirral Total
	A	B	C-E	F+	
Bungalow	1.3	1.1	4.5	0.8	7.7
Flat	14.1	2.8	1.4	0.1	18.4
Terraced	19.7	5.0	1.8	0.0	26.6
Semi-detached	5.5	12.7	17.8	0.3	36.3
Detached	0.1	0.2	7.1	3.8	11.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>40.7</b>	<b>21.8</b>	<b>32.6</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Number of bedrooms	A	B	C-E	F+	Wirral Total
1-bedroom	7.8	0.5	0.1	0.0	8.4
2-bedrooms	13.1	4.7	3.9	0.2	21.8
3-bedrooms	17.5	14.1	19.7	1.1	52.4
4-bedrooms	2.3	2.6	8.9	3.7	17.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>40.7</b>	<b>21.8</b>	<b>32.6</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Map 2.1** Predominant dwelling type and size by built-up areas within LSOAs: Wirral





Settlement area	Dwelling Type and number of bedrooms													Total
	Bungalo w 1 or 2 bedrooms	Bungalo w 3 or more bedrooms	Flat 1 bedroom	Flat 2 bedrooms	Flat 3 or more bedrooms	Terraced 1 or 2 bedrooms	Terraced 3 or more bedrooms	Semi-detached 1 or 2 bedrooms	Semi-detached 3 bedrooms	Semi-detached 4 or more bedrooms	Detached 1 or 2 bedrooms	Detached 3 bedrooms	Detached 4 or more bedrooms	
SA1	1.7	0.3	9.6	12.2	2.0	7.0	27.6	1.7	21.5	13.6	0.0	0.9	1.9	100.0
SA2/3	2.2	0.5	10.9	12.7	1.3	9.7	26.1	1.9	21.3	6.2	0.1	2.4	4.7	100.0
SA4	3.8	2.6	4.0	6.1	0.5	5.6	18.1	1.4	40.1	3.9	0.0	6.2	7.7	100.0
SA5	9.3	3.8	4.7	7.4	0.8	4.4	18.4	3.1	33.5	2.5	0.0	6.2	6.0	100.0
SA6	4.0	3.1	6.5	13.0	3.8	5.2	12.5	0.6	22.2	10.4	0.0	6.8	12.0	100.0
SA7	15.1	11.5	2.5	6.2	0.8	2.2	3.6	1.4	32.5	4.1	0.6	6.6	12.9	100.0
SA8	5.9	10.4	3.3	6.7	0.6	2.6	8.1	1.1	31.1	4.7	0.2	8.1	17.4	100.0
Wirral	4.8	2.8	7.2	9.9	1.3	6.4	20.2	1.8	27.8	6.7	0.1	4.3	6.7	100.0
Base	7,050	4,140	10,470	14,380	1,920	9,310	29,360	2,610	40,460	9,710	150	6,230	9,690	145,480

Source: VOA 2019

## Property age and condition

### The age and condition of Wirral's housing

- 2.7 The age profile of the dwelling stock in the borough is summarised in Table 2.6. More than one in five dwellings (27.6%) were built before 1919. The proportion built has declined for each time period reported and 14.8% have been built between 1983 and the present day.

Age of Dwellings	Number	%
pre-1919	40,820	27.6
1919-44	31,880	21.6
1945-64	27,160	18.4
1965-82	25,930	17.6
1983-99	12,920	8.7
post 1999	8,990	6.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>147,700</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Unknown</b>	<b>570</b>	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>148,270</b>	

Source: VOA 2018

- 2.8 The English Housing Survey (EHS) produces national data on dwelling condition. Applying national trends to the stock profile of Wirral (Table 2.7) would suggest that around 23.5% of dwelling stock is non-decent, which is slightly higher than the national average of 20.6%. The number of dwellings likely to fail the minimum standard of decent homes criteria is estimated to be 14.1% (compared with 11.9% nationally). The 2018 BRE stock modelling report estimated failure of the minimum standard across all stock in Wirral to be 11.4%, with failure on disrepair estimated to be 4.8%.
- 2.9 A full definition of what constitutes a decent home is available from MHCLG<sup>11</sup> but in summary a decent home meets the following four criteria:
- it meets the current statutory minimum for housing;
  - it is in a reasonable state of repair;
  - it has reasonably modern facilities and services; and
  - it provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort.

<sup>11</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/7812/138355.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7812/138355.pdf)

Table 2.7 Dwelling stock condition in England and Wirral estimates								
England			Fails decent homes criteria (%)				All dwellings	
Dwelling age (ehs)		Non-decent	Minimum standard	Repair	Modern facilities and services	Thermal Comfort	in group (000s)	% dwellings
pre-1919		40.1	28.7	11.2	3.9	11.9	4,648	20.0
1919-44		24.1	13.1	7.6	1.7	7.6	3,930	16.9
1945-64		16.6	8.0	3.6	2.0	5.7	4,505	19.4
1965-80		17.5	8.8	1.8	1.9	7.6	4,757	20.5
1981-90		17.6	4.7	*	.9	13.5	1,953	8.4
post 1990		1.5	1.5	*	*	*	3,460	14.9
<b>Total</b>		<b>20.6</b>	<b>11.9</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>23,254</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Wirral Borough			Fails decent homes criteria (estimate of number)				All dwellings	
Dwelling age (ehs)	Dwelling age (voa)	Non-decent	Minimum standard	Repair	Modern facilities and services	Thermal Comfort	in group (number)	% dwellings
pre-1919	pre-1919	16,378	11,710	4,572	1,573	4,870	40,820	27.6
1919-44	1919-44	7,668	4,177	2,407	547	2,422	31,880	21.6
1945-64	1945-64	4,519	2,163	989	530	1,552	27,160	18.4
1965-80	1965-82	4,530	2,274	474	493	1,964	25,930	17.6
1981-90	1983-1992	1,369	368	*	73	1,048	7,780	5.3
post 1990	Post 1992	207	207	*	*	*	14,130	9.6
<b>Total</b>		<b>34,671</b>	<b>20,899</b>	<b>8,443</b>	<b>3,216</b>	<b>11,856</b>	<b>147,700</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>% of all stock</b>		<b>23.5</b>	<b>14.1</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>8.0</b>		
<b>National %</b>		<b>20.6</b>	<b>11.9</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>7.5</b>		

Source: English Housing Survey 2013 data applied to 2018 Valuation Office Agency dwelling stock age

Note '\*\*' indicates sample size too small for reliable estimate

- 2.10 The 2019 household survey reviewed the extent to which households were satisfied with the state of repair of their accommodation. Overall 80.8% of respondents expressed satisfaction (39.3% were very satisfied and 41.5% were satisfied); 11.2% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. A total of 8.0% expressed degrees of dissatisfaction, of whom 6.3% were dissatisfied and 1.7% were very dissatisfied.
- 2.11 Table 2.8 considers how dissatisfaction with state of repair varies by tenure, property type, age and location. Dissatisfaction was highest amongst affordable renters (which is more reflective of tenant expectations of landlord responses to repairs rather than the actual state of repair), those in flats/apartments, in properties built before 1945 and from households living in SA2 Commercial Core/SA3 Suburban Birkenhead.

**Table 2.8 Dissatisfaction with quality of accommodation by tenure, property type and property age**

<b>Tenure</b>	<b>No. dissatisfied</b>	<b>% Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Base (households)</b>
Owner occupier	5,440	5.5	98,340
Private rented	2,590	10.5	24,765
Affordable	3,641	15.8	23,027
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,671</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>146,132</b>
<b>Property Type</b>	<b>No. dissatisfied</b>	<b>% Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Base (households)</b>
Detached house	1,153	5.3	21,802
Semi-detached house	5,109	8.7	58,427
Terraced house / town house	2,495	7.9	31,407
Bungalow	623	6.8	9,179
Maisonette	31	8.2	377
Flat / apartment	2,237	9.6	23,244
Caravan/park home / other (permanent)	24	5.5	438
<b>Total (all households)</b>	<b>11,671</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>144,874</b>
<b>Property Age</b>	<b>No. dissatisfied</b>	<b>% Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Base (households)</b>
Pre 1919	2,032	7.6	26,572
1919 to 1944	2,410	7.6	31,522
1945 to 1964	907	4.2	21,576
1965 to 1984	1,049	5.2	20,266
1985 to 2004	498	5.1	9,831
2005 onwards	353	4.3	8,132
Don't know	3,565	15.5	23,038
<b>Total (all households)</b>	<b>10,814</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>140,937</b>
<b>Settlement area</b>	<b>No. dissatisfied</b>	<b>% Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Base (households)</b>
SA1 Wallasey	1,464	5.2	27,946
SA2 Commercial Core/SA3 Suburban Birkenhead	5,294	12.4	42,601
SA4 Bromborough & Eastham	1,040	4.2	24,791
SA5 Mid-Wirral	2,193	9.2	23,710
SA6 Hoylake and West Kirby	694	6.1	11,392
SA7 Heswall	804	6.4	12,630
SA8 Rural Areas	181	5.9	3,061
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,671</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>146,131</b>

Note: Response rate variations result in slight differences between base levels.

Source: 2019 household survey

## Housing tenure

- 2.12 The 2011 Census tenure profile of settlement areas and the borough is presented in Table 2.9. Overall, 67.3% of occupied dwellings are owner-occupied, 16.9% are private rented (including tied accommodation and student housing) and 15.7% are affordable (including social rented from a council or housing association and shared ownership). Owner occupation is the dominant tenure across all settlement areas and exceeds 80% in SA6 Hoylake and West Kirkby and SA7 Heswall. Private renting exceeds 20% in SA1 Wallasey and SA2 Commercial Core/SA3 Suburban Birkenhead and is low in SA7 Heswall. Affordable stock exceeds 25% in SA2/SA3.

Settlement area	Tenure (%)			Total	Base
	Owner occupied	Private rented	Affordable		
SA1 Wallasey	63.1	24.9	12.0	100.0	27,945
SA2 Commercial Core/SA3 Suburban Birkenhead	52.7	21.6	25.7	100.0	42,601
SA4 Bromborough & Eastham	76.8	11.6	11.5	100.0	24,792
SA5 Mid-Wirral	69.8	11.3	18.9	100.0	23,711
SA6 Hoylake and West Kirby	81.7	13.6	4.8	100.0	11,391
SA7 Heswall	86.5	7.9	5.6	100.0	12,630
SA8 Rural Areas	79.3	15.4	5.3	100.0	3,061
<b>Wirral Borough</b>	<b>67.3</b>	<b>16.9</b>	<b>15.7</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>146,131</b>

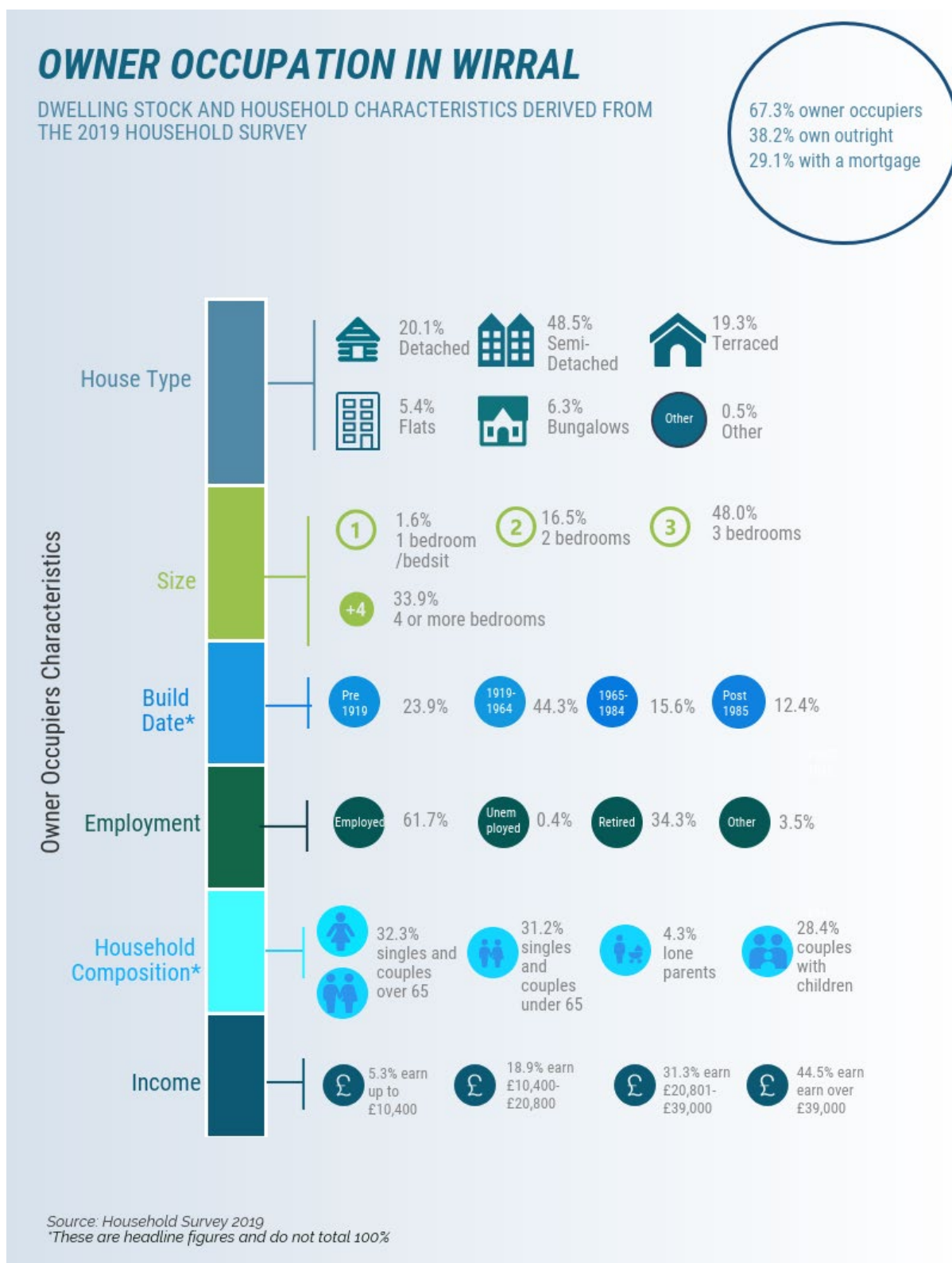
Source: 2019 household survey

## Tenure characteristics

### The owner-occupied sector

- 2.13 Figure 2.1 sets out the general characteristics of owner-occupied households and dwellings across Wirral Borough.

Figure 2.1 Characteristics of owner-occupied households and dwellings



2.14 An analysis of house prices and trends over time is presented in Chapter 3.

## Stakeholder views on the owner-occupied sector

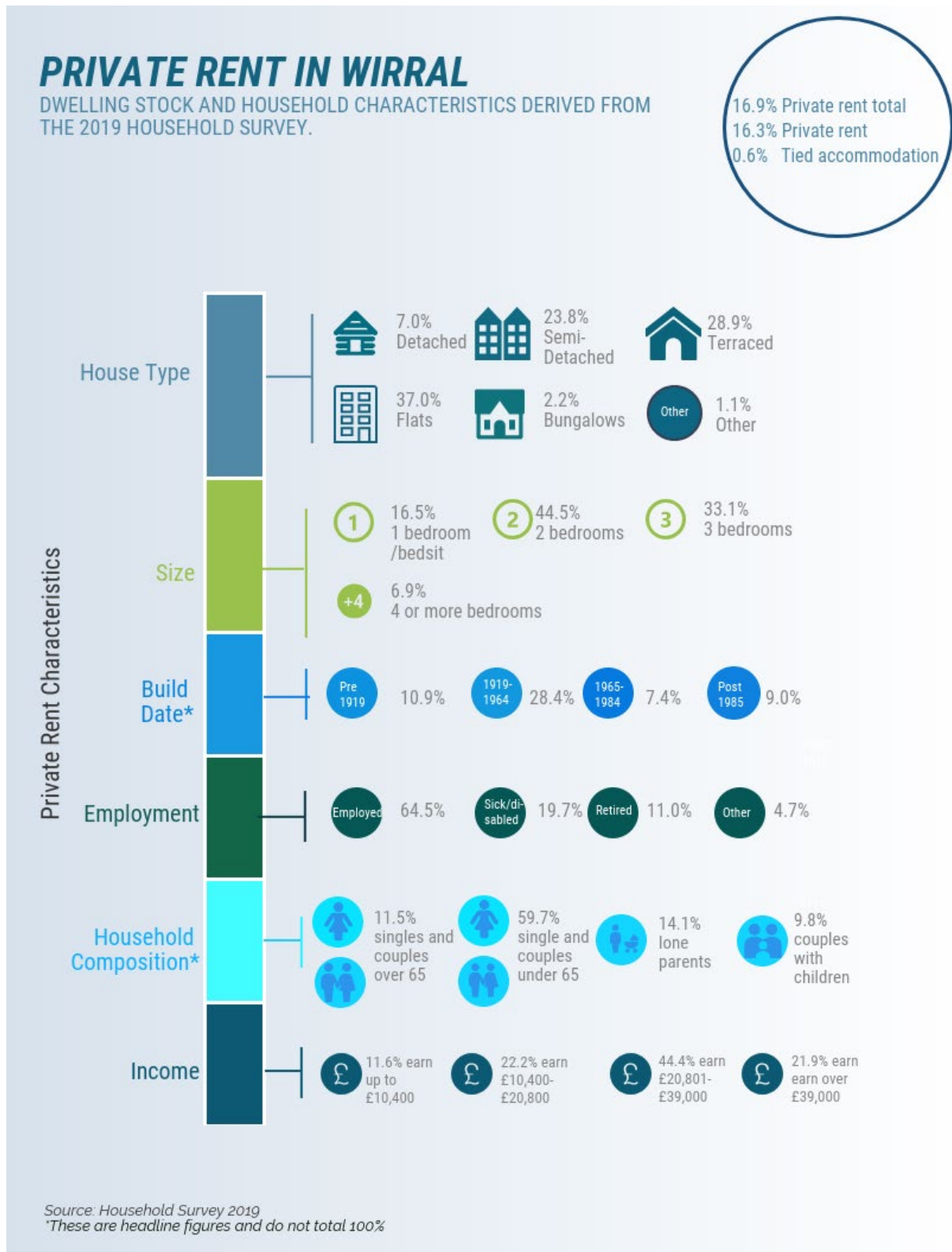
- 2.15 A full analysis of the findings of the online stakeholder survey and from discussions with estate agents is set out in Technical Appendix E. Key points raised by stakeholders include:
- High demand for market housing generally, particularly from first-time buyers and for family homes;
  - Market conditions differ considerably between East and West Wirral; and
  - Although there are low-value properties, particularly in the Birkenhead/Wallasey area, these can be difficult to sell and generally there is limited choice for those who can afford up to £120,000.

## The private rented sector

- 2.16 The private rented sector has become an important tenure in both meeting people's housing needs and providing flexible housing options for those moving for employment and to respond to changing circumstances. Across the borough, the proportion of households renting increased from 10.5% in 2001 to 16.9% in 2011. Increasing house prices pre-2007 and the struggling sales market when the downturn came are both factors that have underpinned the growth of the rental market for both 'active choice' renters and 'frustrated would-be' homeowners. Tenure reform and less accessible social rented housing are also likely to be an increasing factor to the growth in the private rented sector and the sector clearly now plays a vital role in meeting housing need, affordable need as well as providing an alternative to homeownership.
- 2.17 Local authorities have an important enabling and regulatory role in ensuring that the private rented sector helps to meet housing need. Balancing good quality supply with demand will help to stabilise rents and encouraging good quality management will improve the reputation of the sector and encourage longer term lets and lower turnover. However, this is a challenging task where existing partners need to be encouraged to participate and new partners and investors need to be identified. Wirral Council is addressing this in certain areas of low demand and poor property condition through the introduction of selective licensing of private rented properties, with the aims of raising both standards and management practices.
- 2.18 Figure 2.2 sets out the general characteristics of private rented households and dwellings across the borough based on the 2019 household survey. There are around 25,000 households privately renting in the borough, with around two-thirds in SA1 (Wallasey 28.1%) and SA2/3 (Commercial Core/Suburban Birkenhead 37.2%).



**Figure 2.2 Characteristics of private rented households and dwellings**



## Stakeholder views on the private rented sector

- 2.19 A full analysis of the findings of the online stakeholder survey is set out in Technical Appendix E. A short summary for the private rented sector is provided here.
- 2.20 Stakeholders commented that there are high rates of private rented sector housing in some areas. However it was also noted that there is an undersupply of private rented property particularly for single people.
- 2.21 Stakeholders raised concerns about the state of repair of some private rented properties. There were several comments about a need to encourage landlords to invest in their properties, to be more proactive supporting tenants and developing units of higher quality. In the main these related to bringing back direct payments of housing allowance to landlords, council tax relief and the cost of selective license fees. In general it was felt that selective licensing should be extended to more areas.

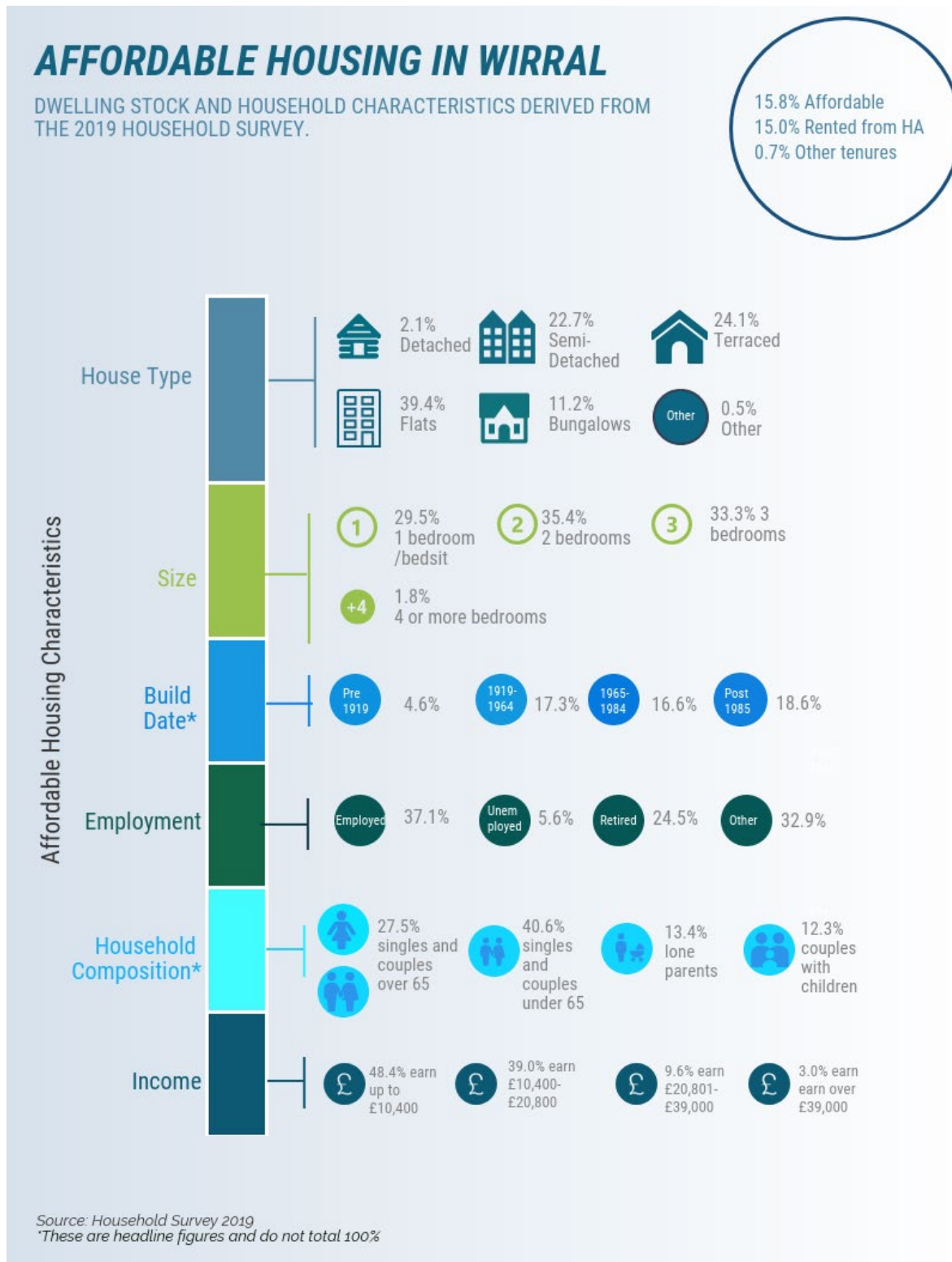
## Affordable housing

- 2.22 The 2019 Statistical Data Return (SDR) reports a total of 23,069 affordable dwellings across Wirral Borough (17,767 general affordable/social rented, 4,900 supported housing/housing for older people and 402 low cost home ownership).
- 2.23 Figure 2.3 sets out the general characteristics of affordable housing households and dwellings across the borough based on the 2019 household survey.

## Stakeholder views on affordable housing

- 2.24 A full analysis of the findings of the online stakeholder survey is set out in Technical Appendix E. A short summary for the affordable sector is provided here.
- 2.25 Stakeholders perceived the lack of affordable housing and the age of existing stock in the borough as a weakness to the housing market.
- 2.26 Registered Providers believed that there is a healthy demand for social and affordable rent in Wirral, although most supply is found in the major conurbations.
- 2.27 In relation to demand for intermediate housing products, stakeholders believed that shared ownership could help to meet the demand for affordable housing. Stakeholders stated that shared ownership works well in certain areas and can help people get into the housing market in high value areas. Also, stakeholders stated that there is strong demand for shared ownership due to high levels of recorded interest in this product.

**Figure 2.3 Characteristics of affordable housing households and dwellings**



## Past trends in housing delivery

- 2.28 Over the past 14 years (2006/7 to 2019/20) 5,755 net new dwellings have been built or converted across the borough (Table 2.10). In the past 5 years, an annual average of 588 net completions/conversions have been achieved and over the past three years the number has increased to 705. A comparison of annual completions with annual targets is presented in Figure 2.4.
- 2.29 Map 2.2 shows where new build sales activity has taken place over the period 2007-2018 by Lower Super Output Area. There are particular concentrations of development in the south east of the borough in Bromborough.

Year	Total	Market	Affordable	Target	Balance
2006/07	506	336	170	160	346
2007/08	564	530	34	500	64
2008/09	334	286	48	500	-166
2009/10	200	127	73	500	-300
2010/11	97	-62	159	500	-403
2011/12	22	-87	109	500	-478
2012/13	252	160	92	500	-248
2013/14	302	114	188	500	-198
2014/15	537	222	315	754	-217
2015/16	498	219	279	695	-197
2016/17	328	245	83	680	-352
2017/18	704	551	153	718	-14
2018/19	654	482	172	795	-141
2019/20	757	580	177	731	26
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,755</b>	<b>3,703</b>	<b>2,052</b>	<b>8,033</b>	<b>-2,278</b>
<b>Total (past 5 years)</b>	<b>2,941</b>	<b>2,077</b>	<b>864</b>	<b>3,619</b>	<b>-678</b>
<b>Annual average (past 5 years)</b>	<b>588</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>724</b>	<b>-136</b>

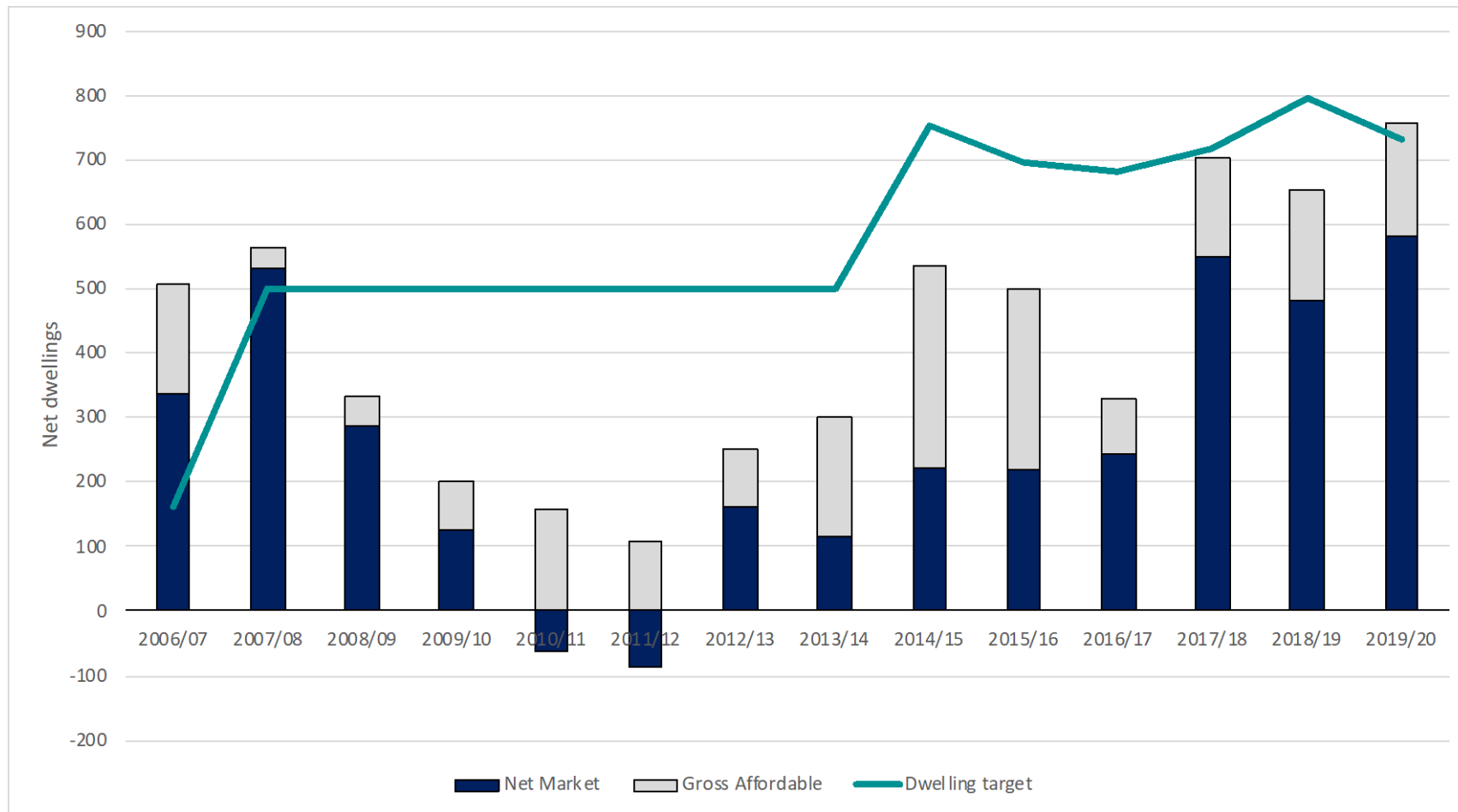
Notes:

Total completions include net conversions (assumed to be market housing). Gross affordable completions are shown.

Targets are RSS targets to 2013/14 and Housing Delivery Test (HDT) numbers thereafter (based on annual average household growth). The 2019/20 HDT figure has been reduced from 791 to 731 due to COVID19

Source: Council Annual Monitoring Returns, HDT figures

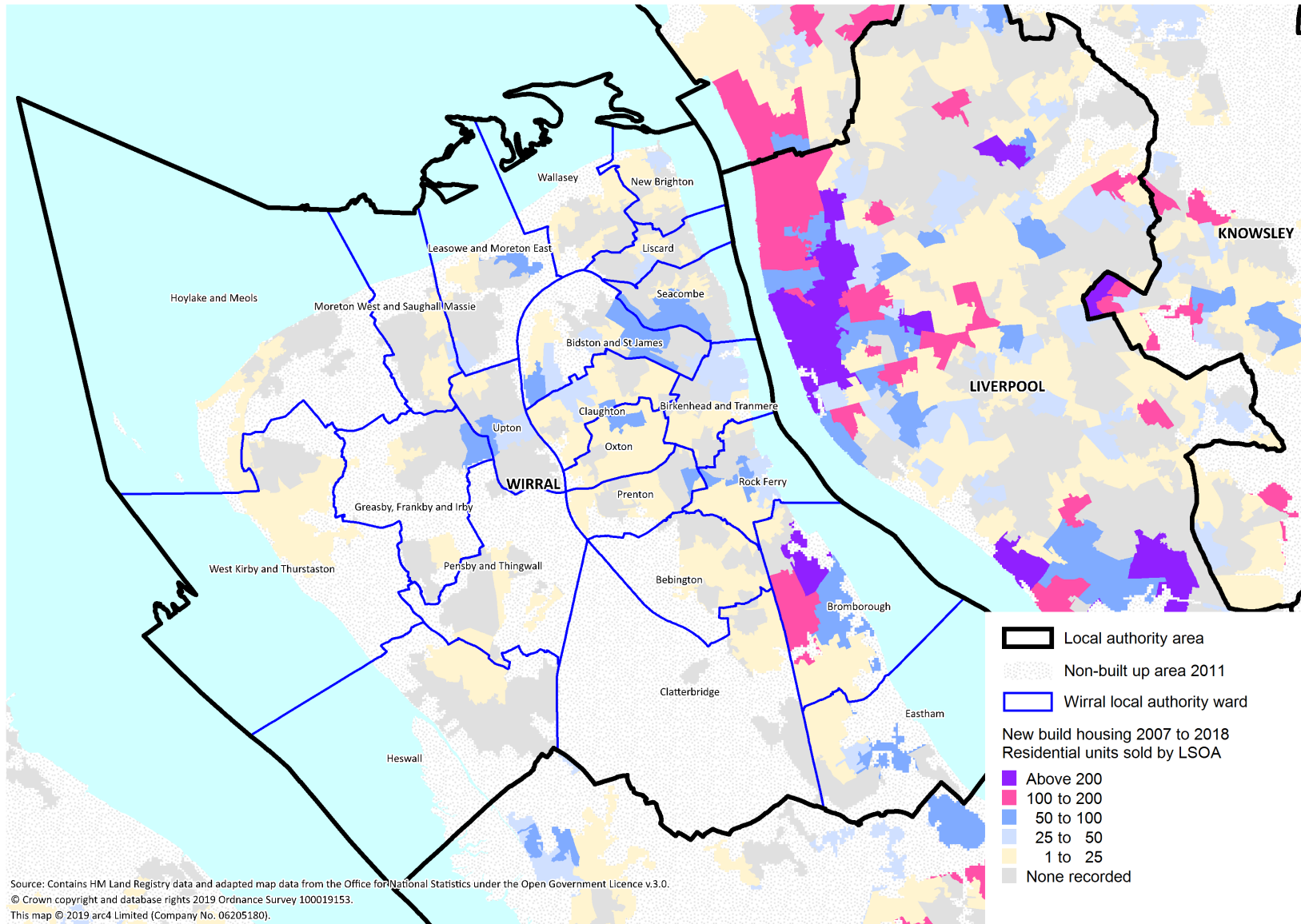
**Figure 2.4 Dwelling completions, by type, compared with the annual target, 2006/07 to 2019/20**



Note: 2009/10 gross completions is an adjusted figure made by the council after the original AMR had been published and appeared in later Annual Monitoring Returns (AMR).

Source: Council AMRs, RPG15 (2003), RSS (2008); Housing Delivery Test data

**Map 2.2 New build development in Wirral 2007-2018**



## Demographic drivers: population and households

### Population projections

- 2.30 The ONS produces population projections every two years. A principal projection is produced along with variant projections which consider alternative migration assumptions. The latest 2018-based principal ONS population projections report a 2020 population of 324,533 across the borough which is expected to increase by 8,215 (2.5%) to 332,748 by 2037 (Table 2.11 and Figure 2.7). There is a projected reduction in under 40 and 55-64 age cohorts. Older age groups are expected to increase the most, with a 28.9% increase in population aged 65 and over overall, and a 54.6% increase in population aged 85 and over.

Age groups	2020	2037	Change	% change
0-19	73,603	67,993	-5,611	-7.6
20-39	71,801	69,691	-2,111	-2.9
40-54	61,924	62,939	1,015	1.6
55-64	45,520	39,738	-5,783	-12.7
65-74	38,338	44,950	6,612	17.2
75-84	23,589	32,353	8,764	37.2
85+	9,758	15,086	5,328	54.6
All Ages	324,533	332,748	8,215	2.5

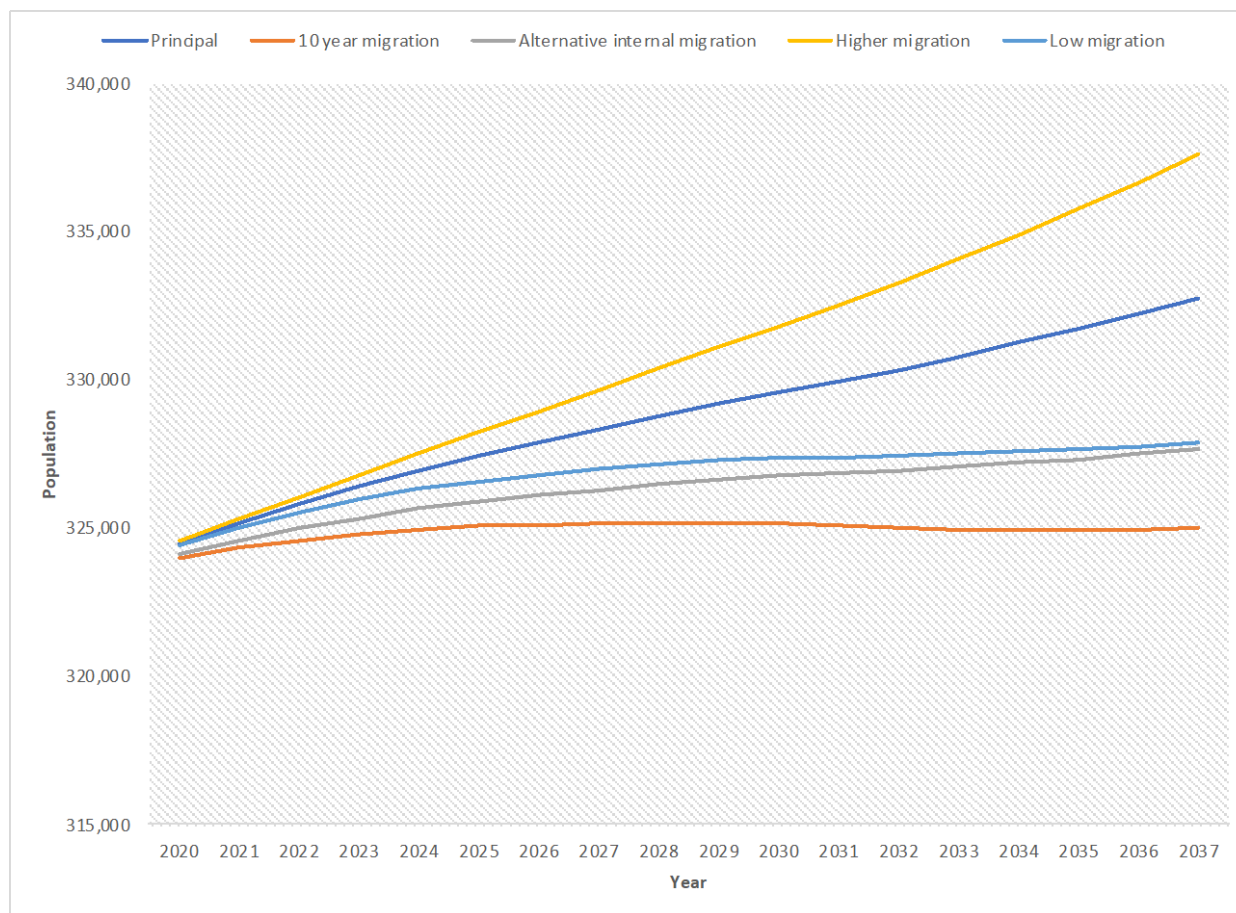
Source: 2018-based ONS population projections

- 2.31 The overall change in population 2020 to 2037 based on variant 2018-based population projections and earlier principal projections are shown in Figure 2.5 and summarised in Table 2.12. The principal projection indicates an overall population change of around 8,215 or 2.5% and the variant projections indicates population changes ranging between 0.3% and 4%.

Scenario	2020	2037	Change	% change
Principal	324,533	332,748	8,215	2.5
10-year migration	324,003	325,018	1,015	0.3
Higher international	324,607	337,598	12,991	4.0
Low international	324,459	327,892	3,433	1.1
Alternative internal migration	324,128	327,700	3,572	1.1

Source: 2018-based ONS population projections; see note under Table 2.16 for details of scenarios

**Figure 2.5 Variant population projections 2020 to 2037**



Source: 2018-based ONS population projections.

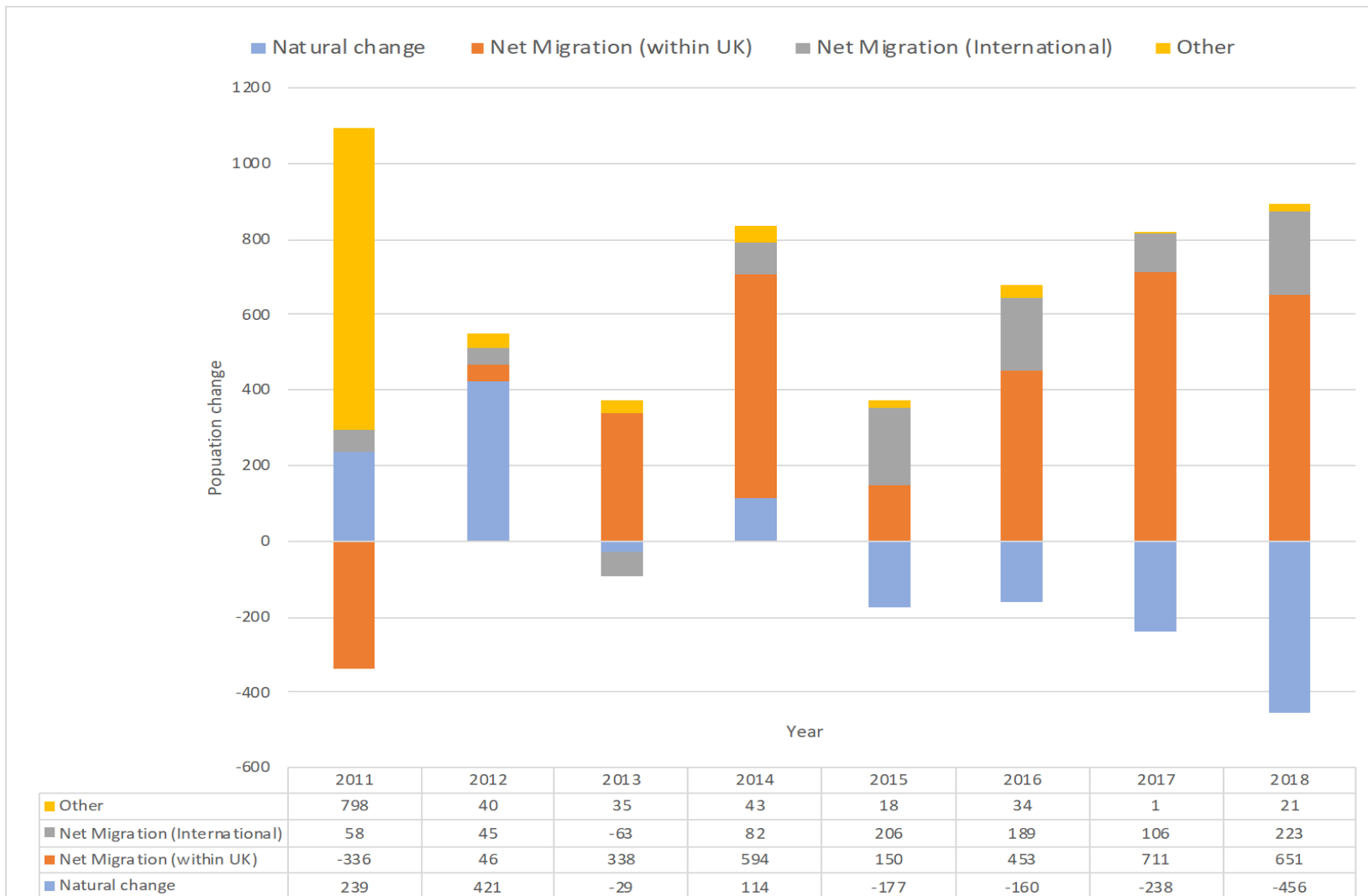
For full details of the alternative variant scenarios and background methodological notes please go to <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/datasets/components-of-change-births-deaths-and-migration-for-regions-and-local-authorities-in-england-table-5>

### Components of population change

- 2.32 The ONS publish mid-year population estimates at local authority level which includes an analysis of components of population change, that is natural change, national migration and international migration. The component analysis also includes ‘other’ change which can include boundary adjustments and military population moves. The data for Wirral 2011-2018 is shown in Figure 2.6. Note in 2011 the very considerable change attributed to ‘other’ reflects the amount of change between the previous mid-year estimates and the 2011 census that could not be attributed.
- 2.33 Over the period 2011 to 2014, the relative importance of components on population change was variable year on year. From 2015 onwards, three clear trends have been observed: reducing population through natural change and increasing population through internal (England and Wales) and international migration.



**Figure 2.6 Components of population change 2011 to 2018**



Source: ONS Components of Change

## Migration trends 2011-2019

- 2.34 Table 2.13 presents a detailed analysis of internal and international migration by year and Table 2.14 summarises the data by broad age and year groups. The base numbers may differ slightly from the ONS components of change analysis due to rounding but provides useful insight into the age group of migrants, their origins and destinations and the relative importance of international migration.
- 2.35 Key trends in migration over the period 2011 to 2019 include:
- From 2012 onwards there had been an overall net inflow of people into Wirral. The net inflow has been increasing annually since 2015 and in 2019 the net inflow was around 1,200. The net inflow has been mainly driven by internal migration flows although net international in-migration has been generally increasing;
  - Net migration from Liverpool has been sustained throughout the period and remains the dominant migration flow;
  - In terms of migration by age group:
    - There has been a net inflow of people aged under 30 between 2011 to 2019 from Liverpool (particularly 2011-2013) but an overall net outflow to elsewhere in the UK.
    - Net in-migration of the 30-64 age group has been a dominant trend throughout the period 2011 to 2019 and has been increasing. In 2017-2019, there was a net inflow of around 2,300 people, mainly from Liverpool and elsewhere in England.
    - Net in-migration of the 65+ age group has also been sustained through the period 2011 to 2019 and in the period 2017-19, there was a net inflow of around 590 mainly from elsewhere in England.
  - Regarding international migration:
    - Net international in-migration has been notable since 2015 with highest net in-migration reported in 2017 and 2018.
    - Is predominantly people aged under 65.
- 2.36 An analysis of migration flows indicates that net national and international migration inflows have helped to sustain the population of the borough and the levels of overall population growth attributed to migration have been increasing since 2015. Ensuring a diversity of dwelling opportunities for across all age groups will help to sustain the positive impact of migration on sustaining the population and help to retain younger people.

Table 2.13 National and international migration by year

YEAR	Wirral	LIVERPOOL CITY REGION						OTHER NEIGHBOURING AREAS / ELSEWHERE UK							TOTAL (UK internal)	International	TOTAL (internal & international)	
		Liverpool	Halton	Knowsley	Sefton	St. Helens	LCR sub-total	Cheshire East	Cheshire West and Chester	North West Region (rest of)	N.E. Wales	WALES (rest of)	ENGLAND (other regions)	SCOTLAND				NORTHERN IRELAND
2011	Migrated OUT to	970	73	104	239	70	1,457	0	267	1,672	369	302	2,783	213	57	7,120	713	7,833
	Migrated IN from	1,345	80	154	259	76	1,915	0	209	1,534	234	264	2,412	162	46	6,775	771	7,546
	NET	375	7	50	20	5	458	0	-58	-138	-134	-38	-371	-51	-11	-345	58	-287
2012	Migrated OUT to	1,172	70	122	249	93	1,706	88	996	1,010	343	321	2,977	184	50	7,676	546	8,222
	Migrated IN from	1,547	82	140	324	70	2,162	135	971	1,054	277	257	2,608	173	85	7,722	591	8,313
	NET	375	12	18	74	-24	455	48	-25	44	-66	-64	-369	-11	34	46	45	91
2013	Migrated OUT to	1,085	88	132	229	63	1,598	84	952	986	301	297	2,743	198	49	7,209	675	7,884
	Migrated IN from	1,547	78	187	293	88	2,194	86	985	1,020	296	280	2,466	189	32	7,547	612	8,159
	NET	462	-10	56	64	25	596	2	32	34	-5	-17	-277	-10	-17	338	-63	275
2014	Migrated OUT to	1,075	90	107	246	64	1,582	106	1,009	999	385	338	2,765	236	77	7,497	611	8,108
	Migrated IN from	1,580	94	216	307	81	2,278	79	1,016	1,064	370	273	2,784	180	46	8,091	693	8,784
	NET	505	5	109	60	17	696	-27	7	65	-15	-64	19	-56	-31	594	82	676
2015	Migrated OUT to	1,306	69	123	258	82	1,837	90	948	1,107	307	318	2,647	210	40	7,504	513	8,017
	Migrated IN from	1,412	90	154	288	81	2,026	77	993	1,086	332	250	2,644	183	62	7,654	719	8,373
	NET	106	22	32	31	-1	189	-13	44	-21	25	-68	-3	-26	22	150	206	356
2016	Migrated OUT to	1,190	98	115	216	92	1,710	86	982	1,018	384	316	2,559	206	43	7,304	507	7,811
	Migrated IN from	1,455	63	167	269	73	2,027	114	1,079	1,005	318	328	2,630	191	64	7,757	696	8,453
	NET	265	-35	52	53	-18	316	28	97	-13	-66	12	71	-14	21	453	189	642
2017	Migrated OUT to	1,335	90	131	321	104	1,981	129	1,067	1,138	344	311	2,888	164	58	8,080	647	8,727
	Migrated IN from	1,677	89	216	297	78	2,358	114	1,133	1,115	348	331	3,195	158	38	8,791	753	9,544
	NET	342	-1	85	-24	-26	377	-15	66	-23	4	20	307	-5	-20	711	106	817
2018	Migrated OUT to	1,317	79	151	305	86	1,938	100	1,225	1,106	381	300	2,871	190	63	8,174	719	8,893
	Migrated IN from	1,781	83	165	294	87	2,412	102	1,181	1,120	326	296	3,240	108	41	8,825	942	9,767
	NET	464	4	15	-11	1	474	2	-44	14	-56	-4	369	-82	-22	651	223	874
2019	Migrated OUT to	1,308	92	165	273	67	1,905	102	1,271	1,110	423	323	2,823	185	25	8,169	464	8,633
	Migrated IN from	1,898	77	194	362	106	2,637	89	1,113	1,165	326	316	3,270	160	32	9,107	724	9,831
	NET	590	-15	29	89	39	732	-14	-158	55	-98	-7	446	-25	6	938	260	1,198

## Sources:

**Internal:** ONS detailed estimates of by origin and destination by local authorities age and sex

**International:** ONS Detailed time series 2001 -2019 (Table: MYEB2)

Table 2.14 Summary of national and international migration by year group and age group

PERIOD	AGE GROUP	Wirral	LIVERPOOL CITY REGION						OTHER NEIGHBOURING AREAS / ELSEWHERE UK							TOTAL (UK internal)	International	TOTAL (internal & international)	
			Liverpool	Halton	Knowsley	Sefton	St. Helens	LCR sub-total	Cheshire East	Cheshire West and Chester	North West Region (rest of)	N.E. Wales	WALES (rest of)	ENGLAND (other regions)	SCOTLAND				NORTHERN IRELAND
2011-2013	<30	Migrated OUT to	131	124	189	339	131	913	84	1,006	4,153	416	522	5,720	296	83	13,193	948	14,141
		Migrated IN from	2,539	106	229	445	112	3,432	112	1,063	2,119	367	477	4,342	254	92	12,256	1,042	13,298
		NET	2,409	-18	40	106	-18	2,519	28	57	-2,034	-49	-45	-1,378	-42	8	-937	94	-843
	30-64	Migrated OUT to	1,117	97	143	318	83	1,757	74	997	1,205	486	330	2,300	257	69	7,474	928	8,402
		Migrated IN from	1,695	120	221	383	103	2,522	91	919	1,271	341	246	2,728	231	63	8,412	827	9,239
		NET	579	23	78	65	20	764	17	-78	66	-145	-84	429	-26	-6	938	-101	837
	65+	Migrated OUT to	34	11	57	23	44	170	14	213	230	89	90	483	44	5	1,338	58	1,396
		Migrated IN from	74	15	7	9	7	113	18	183	314	65	112	586	40	8	1,437	105	1,542
		NET	40	4	-50	-14	-37	-57	4	-30	83	-24	22	103	-4	3	100	47	147
2014-2016	<30	Migrated OUT to	2,311	139	185	344	115	3,094	118	1,273	2,063	441	570	5,272	340	89	13,260	873	14,133
		Migrated IN from	2,428	101	257	373	107	3,266	108	1,422	1,797	424	465	4,463	247	91	12,284	1,133	13,417
		NET	117	-38	72	29	-8	172	-10	149	-266	-17	-104	-809	-92	1	-976	260	-716
	30-64	Migrated OUT to	1,142	101	153	311	109	1,816	126	1,371	913	520	305	2,100	246	59	7,457	696	8,153
		Migrated IN from	1,762	129	238	405	107	2,641	132	1,357	1,157	459	268	2,962	250	80	9,306	852	10,158
		NET	620	28	85	94	-2	825	6	-14	244	-61	-38	862	3	21	1,849	156	2,005
	65+	Migrated OUT to	13	17	117	0	65	212	38	295	155	73	138	600	65	12	1,588	62	1,650
		Migrated IN from	0	18	0	0	4	22	30	309	453	8	155	827	51	0	1,854	123	1,977
		NET	-13	1	-117	0	-60	-190	-8	14	298	-65	17	227	-14	-12	266	61	327
2017-2019	<30	Migrated OUT to	2,480	106	230	397	114	3,328	124	1,633	2,130	441	483	5,593	265	70	14,068	1,017	15,085
		Migrated IN from	2,843	110	259	393	122	3,727	128	1,474	1,928	411	524	5,431	181	55	13,859	1,296	15,155
		NET	362	4	29	-4	8	399	4	-159	-203	-30	41	-162	-84	-15	-209	279	70
	30-64	Migrated OUT to	1,348	140	207	417	121	2,232	153	1,623	1,046	620	344	2,404	217	61	8,701	775	9,476
		Migrated IN from	2,224	126	285	457	124	3,216	144	1,565	1,234	468	305	3,584	201	49	10,766	1,003	11,769
		NET	876	-13	78	40	3	983	-9	-58	188	-153	-38	1,180	-16	-12	2,065	228	2,293
	65+	Migrated OUT to	64	16	88	25	66	259	55	306	183	68	126	586	56	16	1,654	38	1,692
		Migrated IN from	104	12	7	42	15	180	32	388	369	48	119	975	43	8	2,162	120	2,282
		NET	40	-3	-81	17	-51	-79	-22	82	186	-21	-7	389	-13	-8	508	82	590

## Sources:

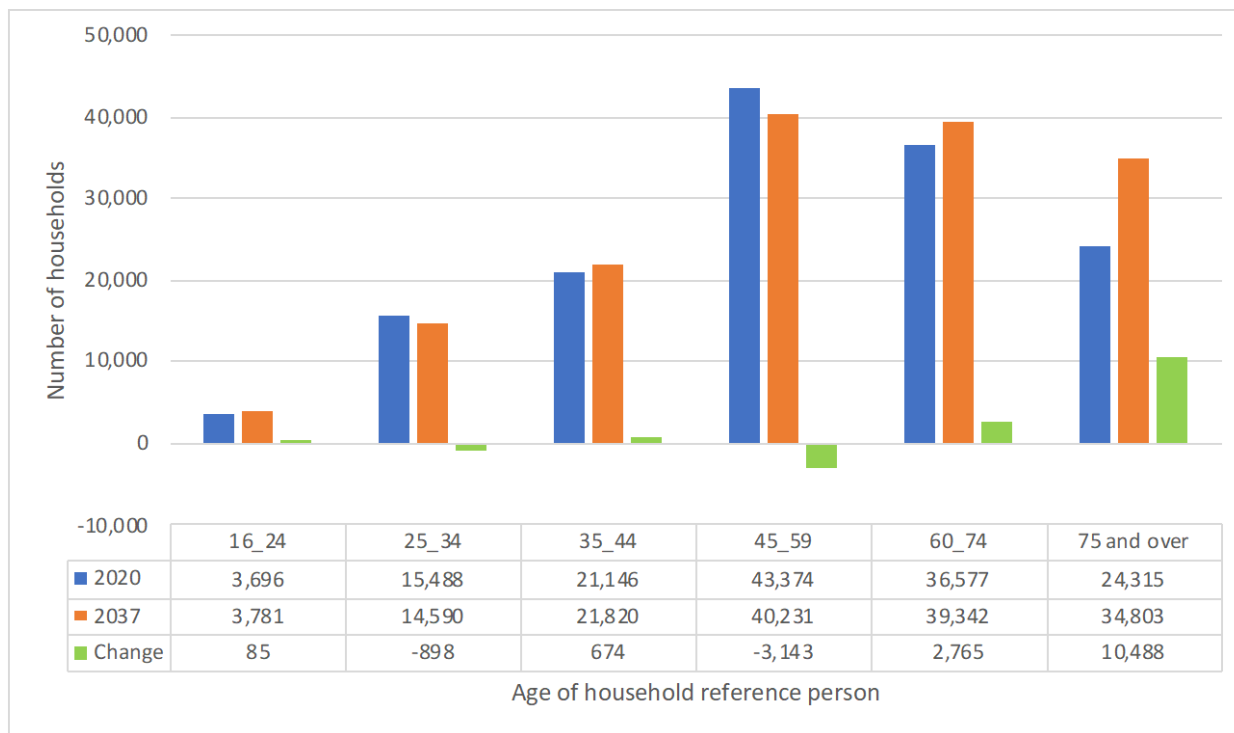
**Internal:** ONS detailed estimates of by origin and destination by local authorities age and sex

**International:** ONS Detailed time series 2001 -2019 (Table: MYEB2)

## Household projections

- 2.37 The ONS produces household projections which are based on population projections. The ONS estimates the proportions of people who are likely to be household reference people by age, gender and household type based on census data. Variant household projections are also produced.
- 2.38 According to the 2018-based principal ONS household projections there are 144,596 households across the borough in 2020 and this is expected to increase by 8,884 (6.1%) to 154,567 by 2037.
- 2.39 Table 2.15 provides a detailed breakdown of household type by the age of Household Reference Person. This shows that the overall household type profile is not expected to change over the 2020 to 2037 period, with the dominant household types being 'other households' with two or more adults and 'one person' households. However, as illustrated in Figure 2.7, there will be a marked increase in the number of households where the Household Reference Person is aged 60 or over.

**Figure 2.7 Profile of households by age of household reference person 2020 and 2037**



Source: 2018-based ONS household projections

<b>Table 2.15 Household types and change 2020 to 2037</b>									
<b>Year and household type</b>	<b>Age of household reference person (HRP)</b>								
<b>2020</b>	<b>15-24</b>	<b>25-34</b>	<b>35-44</b>	<b>45-59</b>	<b>60-74</b>	<b>75+</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>%</b>	
One Person	1,199	3,464	5,249	13,625	14,988	12,681	51,206	35.4	
Household with 1 dependent child	1,056	3,847	5,196	7,420	1,017	140	18,675	12.9	
Household with 2 dependent children	414	2,882	4,953	4,612	260	11	13,133	9.1	
Household with 3 or more dependent children	182	1,531	2,088	1,416	69	2	5,287	3.7	
Other households with two or more adults	845	3,764	3,660	16,302	20,244	11,481	56,295	38.9	
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,696</b>	<b>15,488</b>	<b>21,146</b>	<b>43,374</b>	<b>36,577</b>	<b>24,315</b>	<b>144,596</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
<b>2037</b>	<b>15-24</b>	<b>25-34</b>	<b>35-44</b>	<b>45-59</b>	<b>60-74</b>	<b>75+</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>%</b>	
One Person	1,213	3,266	5,498	12,564	16,273	17,824	56,637	36.6	
Household with 1 dependent child	1,097	3,635	5,357	7,116	1,034	199	18,438	11.9	
Household with 2 dependent children	427	2,672	5,070	4,528	253	14	12,964	8.4	
Household with 3 or more dependent children	189	1,418	2,112	1,357	65	3	5,143	3.3	
Other households with two or more adults	854	3,599	3,783	14,667	21,717	16,764	61,384	39.7	
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,781</b>	<b>14,590</b>	<b>21,820</b>	<b>40,231</b>	<b>39,342</b>	<b>34,803</b>	<b>154,567</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
<b>Change 2020-2037</b>	<b>15-24</b>	<b>25-34</b>	<b>35-44</b>	<b>45-59</b>	<b>60-74</b>	<b>75+</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>%</b>	
One Person	14	-198	250	-1,062	1,285	5,142	5,431	47.6	
Household with 1 dependent child	42	-211	160	-304	17	59	-237	7.1	
Household with 2 dependent children	13	-211	116	-84	-7	3	-169	4.3	
Household with 3 or more dependent children	8	-113	24	-59	-3	1	-143	1.7	
Other households with two or more adults	10	-165	123	-1,634	1,473	5,283	5,089	39.3	
<b>Total</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>-898</b>	<b>674</b>	<b>-3,143</b>	<b>2,765</b>	<b>10,488</b>	<b>9,971</b>	<b>100</b>	

Source: 2018-based ONS household projections

- 2.40 2014-based MHCLG household projections underpin the government's standard method to calculate overall housing need. Table 2.16 considers the overall household growth associated with projections over different base years and the 2018-based variant projections. Data covers the period 2020 to 2037 but change over the period 2020 to 2030 is specifically highlighted as this aligns with the standard method calculation.
- 2.41 Note that the annual household growth over the period 2020 to 2030 under the 2014-based projections was 685 compared with 607 under the latest 2018-based projections. The 2018-based projections also show variant growth of between 382 and 691.
- 2.42 The most recent data on components of population change and migration would suggest that rates of net in-migration from elsewhere in the UK and outside the UK have been increasing. This does not reflect longer-term trends and therefore suggests that the 10-year migration, low migration and alternative migration scenarios can be discounted. Note that 2018-based high migration scenario results in a similar household growth to that expressed in the 2014-based household projections.

**Table 2.16 Change in households 2020-2037 under different scenarios**

Scenario	2020	2030	2037	Change 2020-2037	% change 2020-30	Annual change 2020-30	Change 2020-2037	% change 2020-35
2014-based principal	146,891	153,738	157,647	6,847	4.7	685	9,637	6.6
2016-based principal	143,826	148,146	150,795	4,320	3.0	432	6,254	4.3
2018-based Principal	144,596	150,670	154,567	6,074	4.2	607	8,884	6.1
<i>2018-based Variant</i>								
10-Year migration	144,174	147,994	149,600	150,205	3,820	382	5,426	3.8
High migration	144,624	151,538	155,077	156,498	6,914	691	10,453	7.2
Low migration	144,568	149,801	151,880	152,632	5,233	523	7,312	5.1
Alternative migration	144,361	149,194	151,327	152,141	4,832	482	6,966	4.8

Sources: 2014-based MHCLG household projections, 2016-based ONS household projections, 2018-based ONS household projections and variant projections

#### Note on migration assumptions underpinning 2018-based scenarios

Principal	Based on internal migration over most recent 2 years, 5 years of cross-border and 5 years international migration
10-Year migration	Migration (internal, cross border and international) based on 10 years of data
High migration	Higher levels of net international migration but proportionate distribution by local authority remains the same
Low migration	Lower levels of net international migration but proportionate distribution by local authority remains the same
Alternative migration	Uses internal migration over most 5 years, 5 years of cross-border and 5 years international migration

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/articles/impactofdifferentmigrationtrendlengths/march2020>



## Defining the housing market area: household migration and travel to work

- 2.43 PPG asks councils to consider the extent to which their local authority area is a self-contained housing market area. This remains an important consideration for the council as the degree of interaction may require policy responses.

### Household migration

- 2.44 The 2011 Census reported that 79.1% of people living in Wirral, and had moved in the previous year, had originated in the borough, confirming a high degree of self-containment. The 2019 household survey indicated that of households moving in the past 5 years, 72% had originated from within Wirral and 28.2% had moved into Wirral.
- 2.45 Table 2.17 explores where households moving into the borough moved to and the tenure, dwelling type/size moved to by broad age group. Table 2.18 considers the household characteristics and incomes of in-migrant households.
- 2.46 For in-migrants under 30:
- most moved to SA1 (Wallasey) and SA2 Commercial Core/SA3 Suburban Birkenhead;
  - three-quarters moved into private rented accommodation, the rest into owner-occupation;
  - half moved into 3 or 4-bedroom houses and 24% into larger flats;
  - 85% were couples with no children and 14% were couples with children and only 1% were single;
  - there was a broad mix of income groups, with around half having an income of between £26k and £39k; and
  - around 60% could afford a property priced around £125,000 and around 30% could afford around £150,000
- 2.47 For in-migrants in the 30 to 64 age group, which is the largest of the in-migrant age groups:
- they have settled in a broader range of settlement areas, although around half have moved to SA1 and SA2/3;
  - 61% moved into owner occupation, 29.6% into private renting and 9.3% into affordable housing;
  - They have moved to a range of dwelling types and sizes;
  - 39% were couples with children or lone parents, 32.8% were singles, 27.3% couples with no children and 1.0% were other household types;
  - there was a broad mix of income groups, with around half having an income of less than £26k; and
  - around one-fifth could afford properties priced around £175,000 to £200,000.
- 2.48 For in-migrants in the 65 and over age group:

- they were more likely to move to settlement areas SA5 to SA8;
  - 74.7% moved into owner occupation, 15.4% into private renting and 9.9% into affordable rented;
  - they were more likely to move into bungalows (23.4%) and flats (31.8%);
  - they were mainly singles and couples with no children;
  - annual incomes were low with 91.1% receiving less than £26,000 each year; and
  - around 20% could afford a property priced around £100,000.
- 2.49 The main specified reasons for households moving into Wirral was to live closer to family or friends (33.9%) followed by needing to relocate for work (9.9%) and to reduce journey type/distance to work (9.7%).

### Households planning to move

- 2.50 The 2019 household survey found that 22,448 (17.7%) households plan to move in the next five years. A further 7,285 (5.8%) households would like to move but are unable to. 67.2% of these households said that this is because they cannot afford to move.
- 2.51 The household survey identified the following characteristics relating to those households planning to move in the next five years:
- 31.8% would like a two-bedroom dwelling and around 60.9% of households would like three or more bedrooms;
  - 37.0% of households would like a detached house, 21.7% would like a semi-detached house, 20% would like bungalow, 15.9% would like a flat or apartment, and 5.2% other dwelling types;
  - 69.6% stated they were most likely to move into owner occupation, 19.8% affordable housing (including social rented, shared ownership, shared equity, help to buy and rent to buy), and 10.6% private renting;
  - The main reasons why households plan to move are wanting a nicer house (15.7%), wanting to live in a nicer area (12.2%), unable to manage their house due to the size of the house or garden (7.0%). A further 17.4% selected the category 'other reasons' for wanting to move.
- 2.52 The majority of people (84.2%) want to remain living within Wirral Borough.

**Table 2.17 Households moving to Wirral: Location, tenure, dwelling size/type choices by age group**

Settlement area	Age group (%)			Total
	Under 30	30 to 64	65 and over	
SA1 Wallasey	34.2	28.8	9.5	26.2
SA2 Commercial Core/SA3 Suburban Birkenhead	47.4	28.3	20.0	29.0
SA4 Bromborough & Eastham	10.2	14.5	9.7	13.2
SA5 Mid-Wirral	0.0	12.3	17.3	11.8
SA6 Hoylake and West Kirby	2.5	9.7	15.8	9.9
SA7 Heswall	3.4	3.8	24.8	7.3
SA8 Rural Areas	2.3	2.6	2.9	2.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Tenure	Under 30	30 to 64	65 and over	Total
Owner Occupied	25.2	61.1	74.7	59.4
Private renting	74.9	29.6	15.4	32.3
Affordable	0.0	9.3	9.9	8.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Dwelling type/size	Under 30	30 to 64	65 and over	Total
1-3 bedroom detached house	0.0	4.8	4.4	4.2
4 or more bedroom detached house	0.0	13.3	3.8	10.1
1-2 bedroom semi-detached house	10.2	5.1	5.4	5.8
3 bedroom semi-detached house	38.4	10.4	8.9	13.4
4 or more bedroom semi-detached house	11.8	10.7	9.7	10.7
1-2 bedroom terraced house	15.9	16.8	5.8	14.8
3 or more bedroom terraced house	0.0	17.5	6.2	13.6
1-2 bedroom bungalow	0.0	1.5	12.2	3.2
3 or more bedroom bungalow	0.0	2.0	11.3	3.3
1 bedroom flat	0.0	5.5	10.8	5.8
2 bedroom flat	0.0	11.9	20.7	12.0
3 or more bedroom flat	23.7	0.0	0.3	2.8
Other	0.0	0.3	0.3	0.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>99.9</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Base (households moving into Wirral 5 years to 2019)	1,259	8,073	1,912	11,244

Source: 2019 household survey

<b>Table 2.18 Households moving to Wirral: Age group, household type and income</b>				
<b>Household type</b>	<b>Age group (%)</b>			<b>Total</b>
	<b>Under 30</b>	<b>30 to 64</b>	<b>65 and over</b>	
Single Adult	1.3	32.8	52.1	32.5
Couple only (both under 65)	84.4	26.5	0.0	28.5
Couple only (one or both over 65)	0.0	0.8	40.8	7.5
Couple with 1 or 2 child(ren) under 18	14.2	19.2	0.6	15.4
Couple with 3 or more children under 18	0.0	5.8	0.0	4.2
Couple with child(ren) aged 18+	0.0	3.7	0.0	2.7
Lone parent with 1 or 2 child(ren) under 18	0.0	5.4	0.0	3.9
Lone parent with child(ren) aged 18+	0.0	4.9	1.2	3.7
Other type of household	0.0	1.0	5.3	1.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Annual household income</b>	<b>Under 30</b>	<b>30 to 64</b>	<b>65 and over</b>	<b>Total</b>
<£15,600	22.4	26.2	39.1	27.8
£15,600 to £26,000	1.3	19.9	40.4	21.0
£26,001 to £39,000	48.0	16.9	9.1	19.5
£39,001 to £49,400	0.0	17.0	4.7	12.9
£49,401 or more	28.2	20.0	6.6	18.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Affordability threshold</b>	<b>Under 30</b>	<b>30 to 64</b>	<b>65 and over</b>	<b>Total</b>
Can afford up to £100,000	76.2	48.3	20.3	46.7
can afford up to £125,000	61.1	37.5	12.3	35.9
Can afford up to £150,000	28.2	36.6	9.8	31.1
Can afford up to £175,000	28.2	19.8	6.4	18.4
Can afford up to £200,000	28.2	17.9	5.8	17.0
Can afford up to £250,000	28.2	8.1	0.9	9.1
Can afford up to £300,000	0.0	5.2	0.9	3.8
Base (households moving into Wirral 5 years to 2019)	1,259	8,073	1,912	11,244

## Travel to work

- 2.53 The 2011 Census identified 140,681 economically active residents in Wirral. 61.1% lived and worked in Wirral Borough (including working from home), 32% worked outside the borough and 6.9% had no fixed place of work.
- 2.54 In terms of defining market areas, the ONS provides a definition of Travel to Work (TTW) areas as follows:

*'The current criterion for defining TTWs is that generally at least 75% of an area's resident workforce in the area and at least 75% of the people who work in the area also live in the area...however, for areas with a working population in excess of 25,000, self-containment rates as low as 66.7% are accepted'* <sup>12</sup>.

<sup>12</sup><https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/articles/commutingtoworkchangelstotraveltoworkareas/2001to2011>

- 2.55 This would suggest that despite Wirral having a relatively high proportion of home workers, nearly one-third commute out of the borough to work. This indicates strong economic linkages with other areas, notably Liverpool.

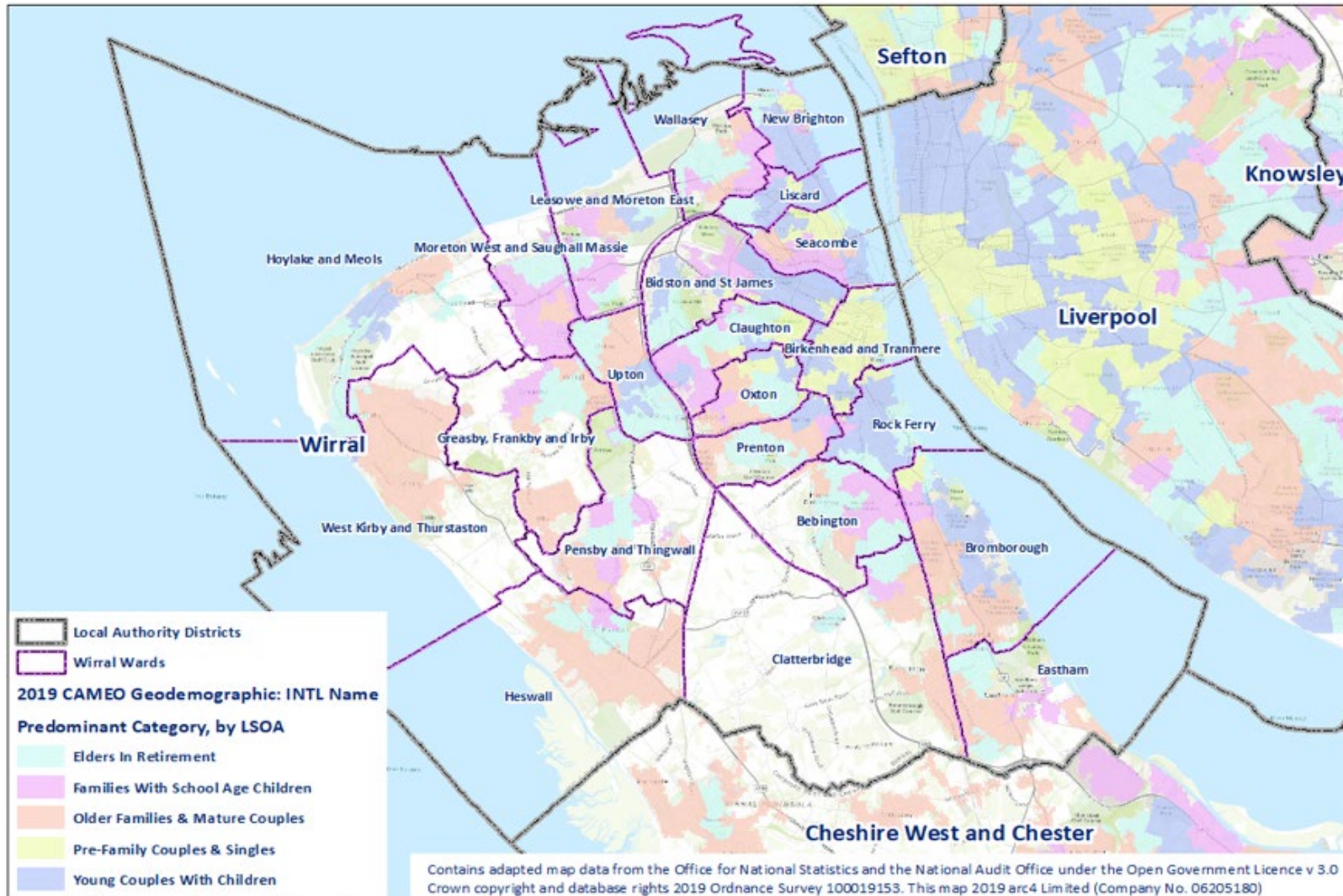
### Conclusions on housing market area

- 2.56 From this analysis, Wirral is self-contained in terms of migration but the strong economic linkages with Liverpool mean it is part of a wider functional economic area. Overall it is an appropriate market area for the purposes of Local Plan policy making.

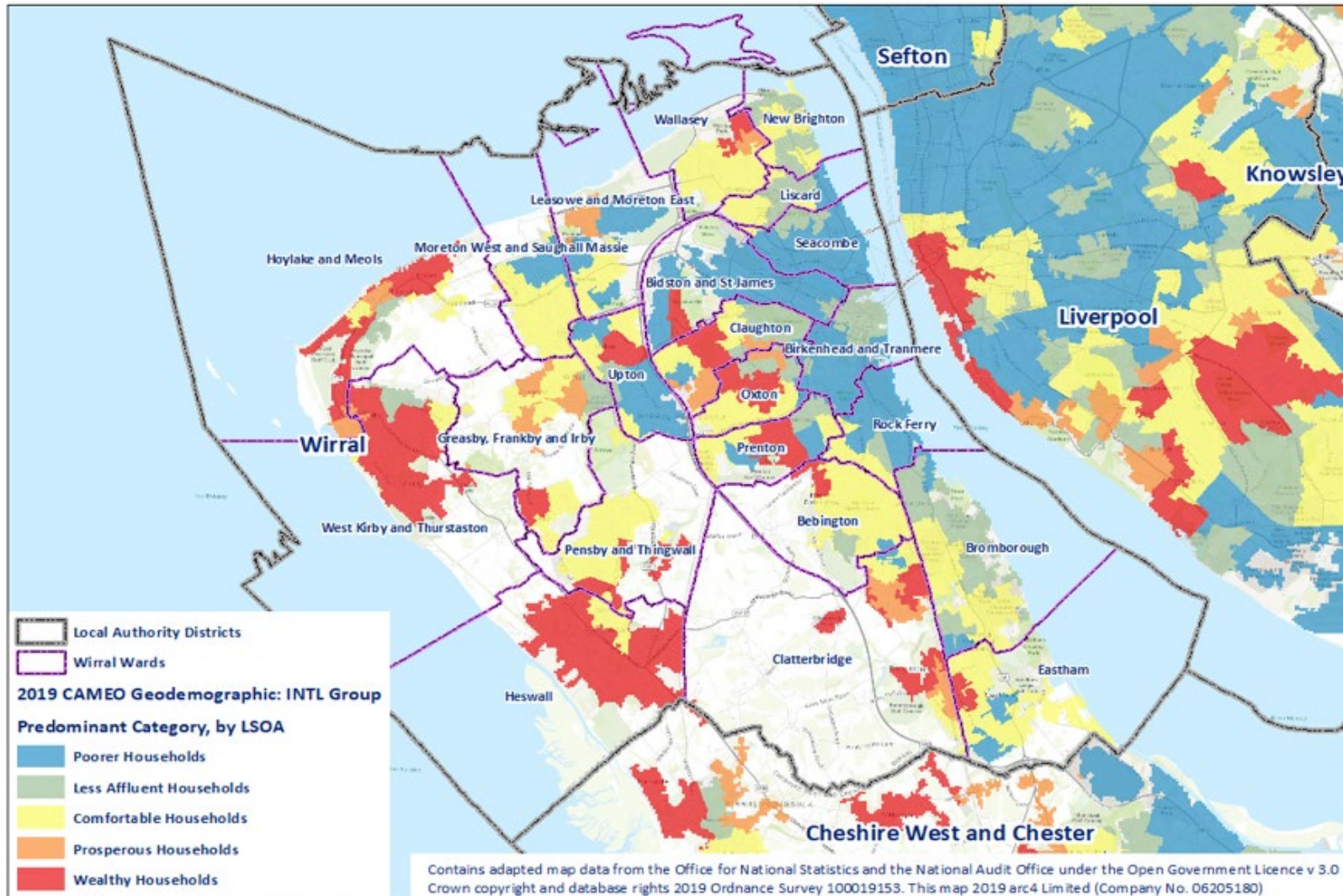
### Household characteristics

- 2.57 Having considered how the characteristics of households in different tenures varies, the range of households living in the borough is further illustrated in Maps 2.3 and 2.4. Map 2.3 illustrates the distribution of key household typologies and indicates a predominance of older households in suburban and rural areas, with younger households in the main urban centres. Map 2.4 focuses on income typologies and shows a predominance of wealthy and prosperous households in the suburban and rural areas in comparison to poorer households bordering the River Mersey.

**Map 2.3 Household characteristics: household type by LSOA, 2019**



**Map 2.4 Household characteristics: income type, by LSOA, 2019**



## Income data

- 2.58 There are a range of income data sources available to inform this study which are now summarised. The 2019 household survey and CAMEO income data provide range, quartile and average data of gross household income by ward. ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings data provides gross earnings of economically active residents at borough level.
- 2.59 Table 2.19 summarises gross income by settlement area from the 2019 household survey and indicates a borough-wide lower quartile household income of £14,300 and a median of £24,700. This is gross income from all sources for all households. Table 2.20 summarises gross income by ward using 2019 CAMEO UK data and indicates a borough-wide lower quartile household income of £15,000 and a median of £25,000. This is gross income from all sources for all households.
- 2.60 The 2020 Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings resident-based data indicates lower quartile earnings are £21,080, median earnings are £28,977 and average earnings are £34,224 across the borough.



Table 2.19 Gross household income by settlement area 2019: household survey data										
Settlement area	Annual gross household income						Total	Lower Quartile	Median	Average
	Under £10,400	£10,400 to under £20,800	£20,800 to under £26,000	£26,000 to under £39,000	£39,000 to under £49,400	£49,400 or more				
SA1 Wallasey	17.6	32.9	15.2	16.8	7.5	10.0	100.0	£11,700	£19,500	£26,027
SA2 Commercial Core/ SA3 Suburban Birkenhead	17.9	30.8	15.4	17.3	7.4	11.1	100.0	£11,700	£22,100	£26,308
SA4 Bromborough & Eastham	7.3	24.6	11.6	20.7	12.2	23.5	100.0	£16,900	£32,500	£36,392
SA5 Mid-Wirral	17.6	27.2	14.3	21.0	8.6	11.2	100.0	£11,700	£22,100	£27,525
SA6 Hoylake and West Kirby	7.8	20.4	11.8	22.1	9.5	28.3	100.0	£19,500	£32,500	£40,127
SA7 Heswall	6.9	23.4	10.9	17.1	14.6	27.0	100.0	£19,500	£32,500	£40,383
SA8 Rural Areas	6.6	18.1	12.0	20.8	12.0	30.4	100.0	£22,100	£32,500	£43,723
Total	14.0	27.8	13.8	18.8	9.4	16.2	100.0	£14,300	£24,700	£30,904

Source: 2019 household survey

Table 2.20 Gross household income by settlement area 2019: CAMEO UK data												
Settlement area	Annual gross household income							Total	Base	Lower Quartile	Median	Average
	<£10k	£10k to <£20k	£20k - <£30k	£30k- <£40k	£40k- <£50k	£50k- <£75k	£75k or more					
SA1 Wallasey	7.8%	45.7%	29.6%	11.7%	4.0%	1.1%	0.0%	100.0%	£26,661	£15,000	£15,000	£21,534
SA2 Commercial Core/ SA3 Suburban Birkenhead	14.3%	51.2%	18.2%	11.1%	3.5%	1.7%	0.1%	100.0%	£40,061	£15,000	£15,000	£20,330
SA4 Bromborough & Eastham	1.7%	28.0%	29.7%	27.3%	10.0%	2.9%	0.2%	100.0%	£24,258	£15,000	£25,000	£28,236
SA5 Mid-Wirral	9.0%	41.2%	26.2%	17.3%	4.7%	1.7%	0.0%	100.0%	£23,535	£15,000	£25,000	£22,607
SA6 Hoylake and West Kirby	0.7%	13.1%	25.7%	24.6%	16.1%	15.5%	4.3%	100.0%	£10,987	£25,000	£35,000	£40,489
SA7 Heswall	0.7%	12.8%	28.7%	26.6%	15.0%	14.3%	2.0%	100.0%	£12,735	£25,000	£35,000	£38,485
SA8 Rural Areas	2.9%	5.7%	21.5%	28.4%	23.2%	14.2%	4.2%	100.0%	£2,335	£25,000	£35,000	£38,127
Total	7.6%	37.2%	25.3%	17.8%	7.2%	4.2%	0.7%	100.0%	£140,777	£15,000	£25,000	£26,234

Source: CAMEO UK 2019

## Summary

- 2.61 Across Wirral Borough there are an estimated 148,810 dwellings and 144,596 households and 3.1% of dwellings are vacant.
- 2.62 In terms of occupied dwelling stock:
- 67.3% of occupied dwellings are owner occupied, 16.8% are private rented and 15.7% are affordable (including social/affordable renting and shared ownership);
  - 73.9% of dwellings are houses (36.3% are semi-detached, 26.6% are terraced and 11% are detached), 18.4% are flats and 7.7% are bungalows;
  - Most dwellings have 2 or 3 bedrooms, with 8.4% having 1 bedroom, 21.8% 2 bedrooms, 52.4% 3 bedrooms and 17.4% 4 or more bedrooms; and
  - 27.6% of dwellings were built before 1919, 40% between 1919 and 1964, 17.6% between 1962 and 1982 and 14.8% since 1982. An estimated 23.5% of all dwelling stock is non-decent.
- 2.63 Over the past 14 years, 5,755 net new dwellings have been built or converted across the borough. In the past 5 years to 2019/20, an annual average of 588 dwellings have been built across Wirral and over the past three years the number has increased to 705.
- 2.64 The population in 2020 was 324,533 and this is estimated to increase by 8,215 to 332,748 by 2037, with the largest increases across older age groups. Latest 2018-based ONS household projections suggest a total of 144,596 increasing by 9,971 (6.9%) to 154,567 by 2037, with largest increases in one person and other households with two or more adults, and households with a household reference person aged 60 and over.
- 2.65 An analysis of migration flows indicates that net national and international migration inflows have helped to sustain the population of the borough and the levels of overall population growth attributed to migration have been increasing since 2015.
- 2.66 Wirral is self-contained in terms of migration but the strong economic linkages with Liverpool mean it is part of a wider functional economic area. Overall it is an appropriate market area for the purposes of Local Plan policy making.

## 3. Price, rents and affordability

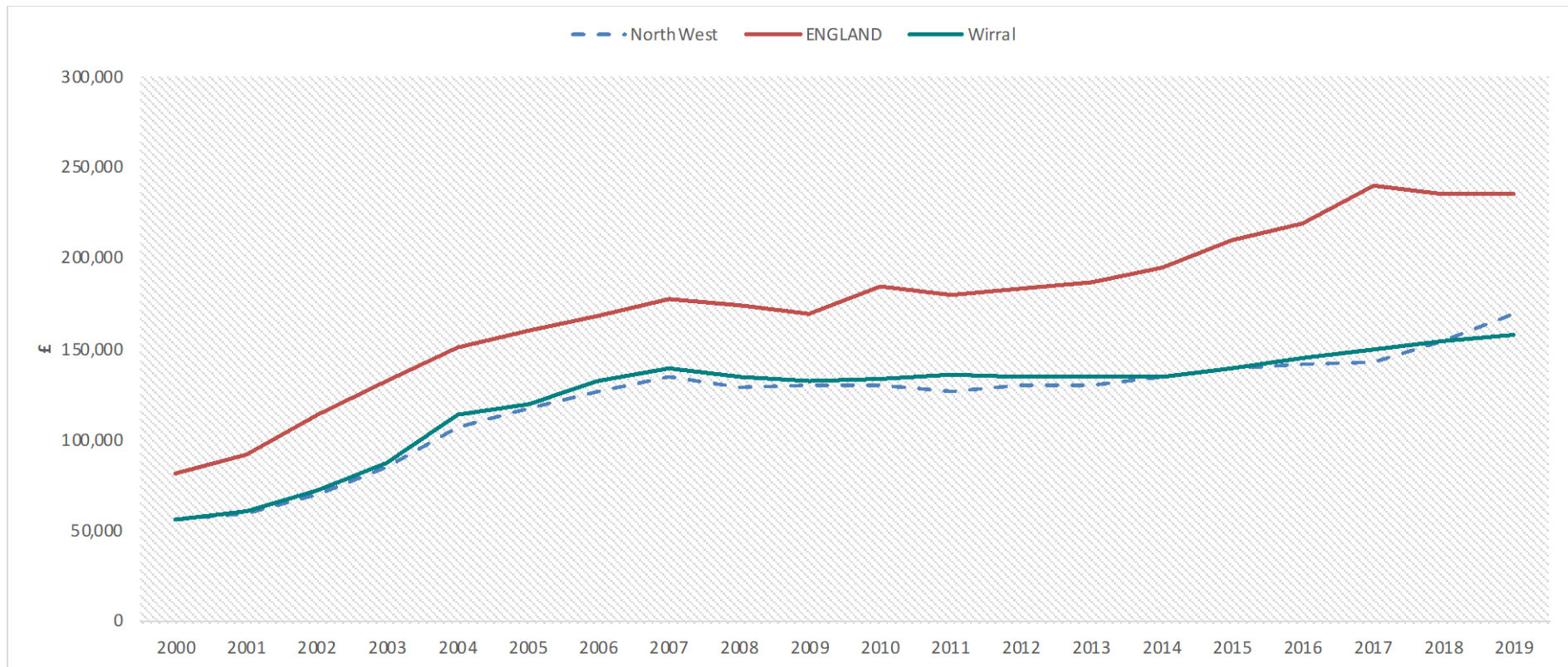
### Introduction

- 3.1 This chapter sets out the cost of buying and renting properties across the borough. The affordability of tenure options is then considered with reference to local incomes along with the incomes of key workers and households on minimum/living wages.

### House price trends

- 3.2 Figure 3.1 shows how house prices in the borough have changed over the years 2000 to 2018, based on full-year Land Registry price paid data. This is compared with the North West and England.
- 3.3 Median house prices across Wirral have tended to mirror regional prices since 2000. Compared to England, the borough's median prices have been consistently lower. Since 2009, England prices have risen faster than local and regional prices and the gap with England has widened over time. Overall, median prices have increased from £55,750 in 2000 to £157,500 in 2019, an increase of +182.5%. Tables 3.1 and 3.2 show how price change in Wirral compares with its neighbouring areas, the region and England.

**Figure 3.1 Median house price trends 2000 to 2019: Wirral, North West and England**



Source: Data produced by Land Registry © Crown copyright 2019

**Table 3.1 Comparative median house price change 2000-2019 with Liverpool City Region/neighbouring boroughs, North West and England**

Location	Median price (£)		% Change 2000-2019
	2000	2019	
England	82,000	235,000	186.6%
<b>Wirral</b>	<b>55,750</b>	<b>157,500</b>	182.5%
North West	56,250	170,000	202.2%
Sefton	60,000	182,500	204.2%
Liverpool	46,998	130,000	176.6%
St. Helens	49,973	129,993	160.1%
Knowsley	52,250	140,000	167.9%
Halton	53,950	133,000	146.5%
Cheshire West and Chester	n/a	195,000	n/a

Source: Data produced by Land Registry © Crown copyright 2019

- 3.4 LQ prices have increased from £37,000 in 2000 to £109,950 in 2019 and one of the highest percentage increases amongst the comparison areas.

**Table 3.2 Comparative lower quartile (LQ) house price change 2000-2019 with Liverpool City Region/neighbouring boroughs, North West and England**

Location	LQ price (£)		% Change 2000-2019
	2000	2019	
<b>Wirral</b>	<b>37,000</b>	<b>109,950</b>	197.2%
North West	37,000	120,000	224.3%
England	54,000	153,500	184.3%
Liverpool	30,000	88,000	193.3%
Sefton	45,000	135,000	200.0%
Halton	35,000	89,125	154.6%
Knowsley	39,500	97,000	145.6%
St. Helens	35,000	88,500	152.9%
Cheshire West and Chester	n/a	140,000	n/a

Source: Data produced by Land Registry © Crown copyright 2019

- 3.5 Table 3.3 sets out the change in house prices by settlement area over the period 2007 to 2019<sup>13</sup>. During this period, median prices increased by +12.5% overall but at settlement area level varies between 0% (SA2 Commercial Core/SA3 Suburban Birkenhead) and +25.6% (SA6 Hoylake and West Kirby). Table 3.3 also sets out LQ data for the same period, with an overall increase of +4.7% but an absolute decline in two settlement areas and highest growth in SA6 (Hoylake and West Kirby) (+24.2%).

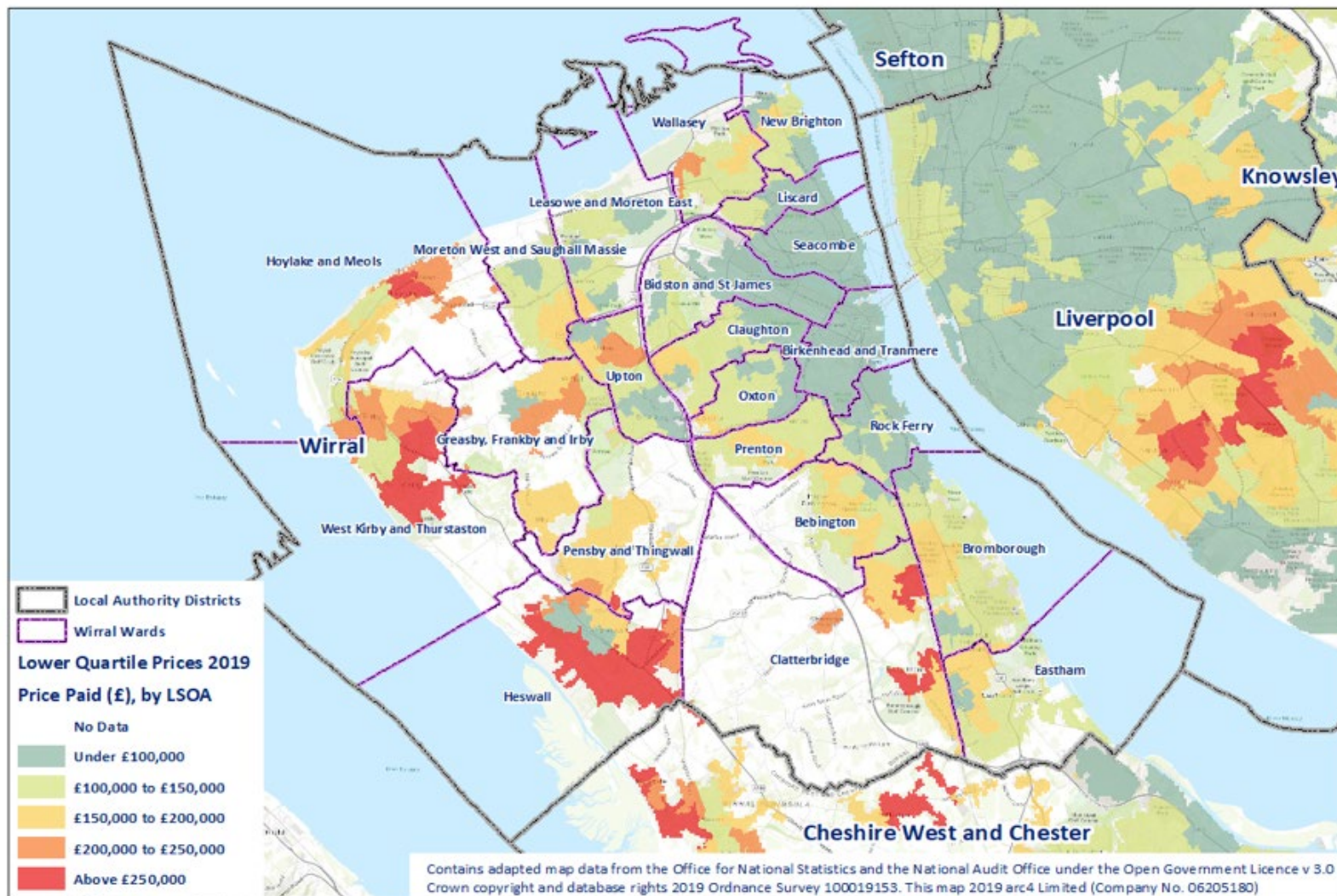
<sup>13</sup> Note Land Registry ward-level analysis is only possible from 2007

<b>Table 3.3 Comparative lower quartile and median house price change 2007-2019 for Wirral and settlement areas</b>						
<b>Settlement Area</b>	<b>LQ house price</b>			<b>Median house price</b>		
	2007	2019	% change	2007	2019	% change
SA1 Wallasey	£92,000	£87,000	-5.4	£119,950	£130,000	8.4
SA2 Commercial Core/SA3 Suburban Birkenhead	£87,500	£77,500	-11.4	£120,000	£120,000	0.0
SA4 Bromborough & Eastham	£124,000	£136,000	9.7	£149,000	£175,000	17.4
SA5 Mid-Wirral	£114,950	£123,125	7.1	£137,750	£160,000	16.2
SA6 Hoylake and West Kirby	£153,025	£190,000	24.2	£207,000	£260,000	25.6
SA7 Heswall	£163,000	£178,000	9.2	£205,000	£235,000	14.6
SA8 Rural Areas	£148,050	£163,000	10.1	£210,000	£250,000	19.0
<b>Total Wirral Borough</b>	£105,000	£109,950	4.7	£139,950	£157,500	12.5

Source: Data produced by Land Registry © Crown copyright 2019

- 3.6 Maps 3.1 and 3.2 provide an illustration of LQ and median prices using Lower Super Output Area. The maps show the east to west drift of increasing house prices, from the northern banks of the River Mersey towards Hoylake and West Kirby and Heswall.

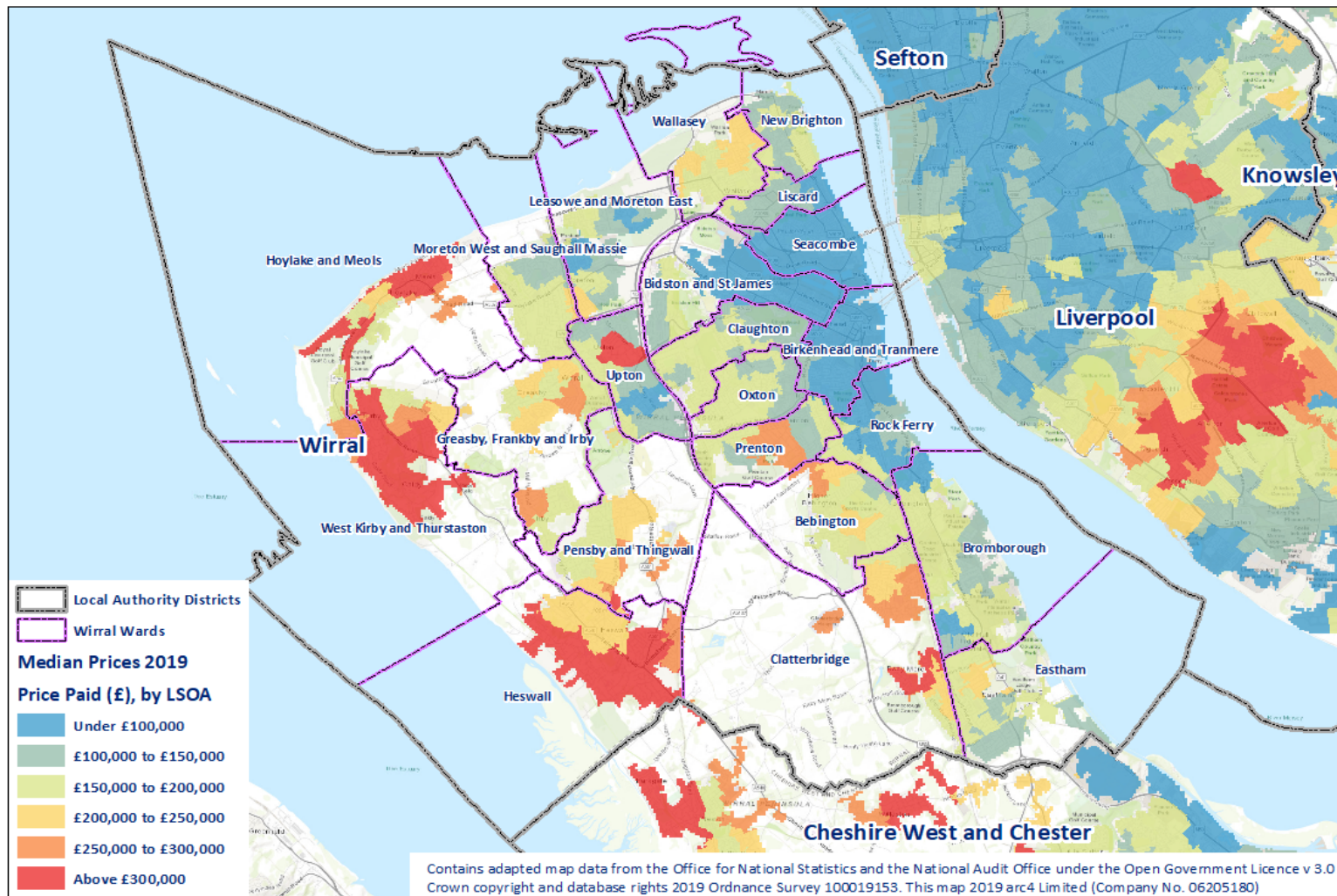
**Map 3.1** Lower quartile house prices 2019 by built-up areas within the LSOAs of Wirral



Source: Data produced by Land Registry © Crown copyright 2019



**Map 3.2 Median house prices 2019 by built-up areas within the LSOAs of Wirral**



Source: Data produced by Land Registry © Crown copyright 2019

## Private renting

- 3.7 Table 3.4 provides an overview of the cost of renting privately across Wirral Borough and compares prices with the North West and England over the period 2010 to 2019. Over this time lower quartile rents have increased by 6.1% and median rents have increased by 5%. The increase in median rents has been below that experienced across the North West and England. Table 3.5 summarises 2019 price data by settlement area.

Table 3.4 Comparative lower quartile and median rental price 2010-2019			
Location	Lower quartile price by year (£)		% change 2010-2019
	2010	2019	
<b>Wirral</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>451</b>	<b>+6.1</b>
North West	472	494	+4.7
England	598	667	+11.5
Location	Median price by year (£)		% change 2010-2019
	2010	2019	
<b>Wirral</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>+5.0</b>
North West	546	624	+14.3
England	893	1001	+12.1

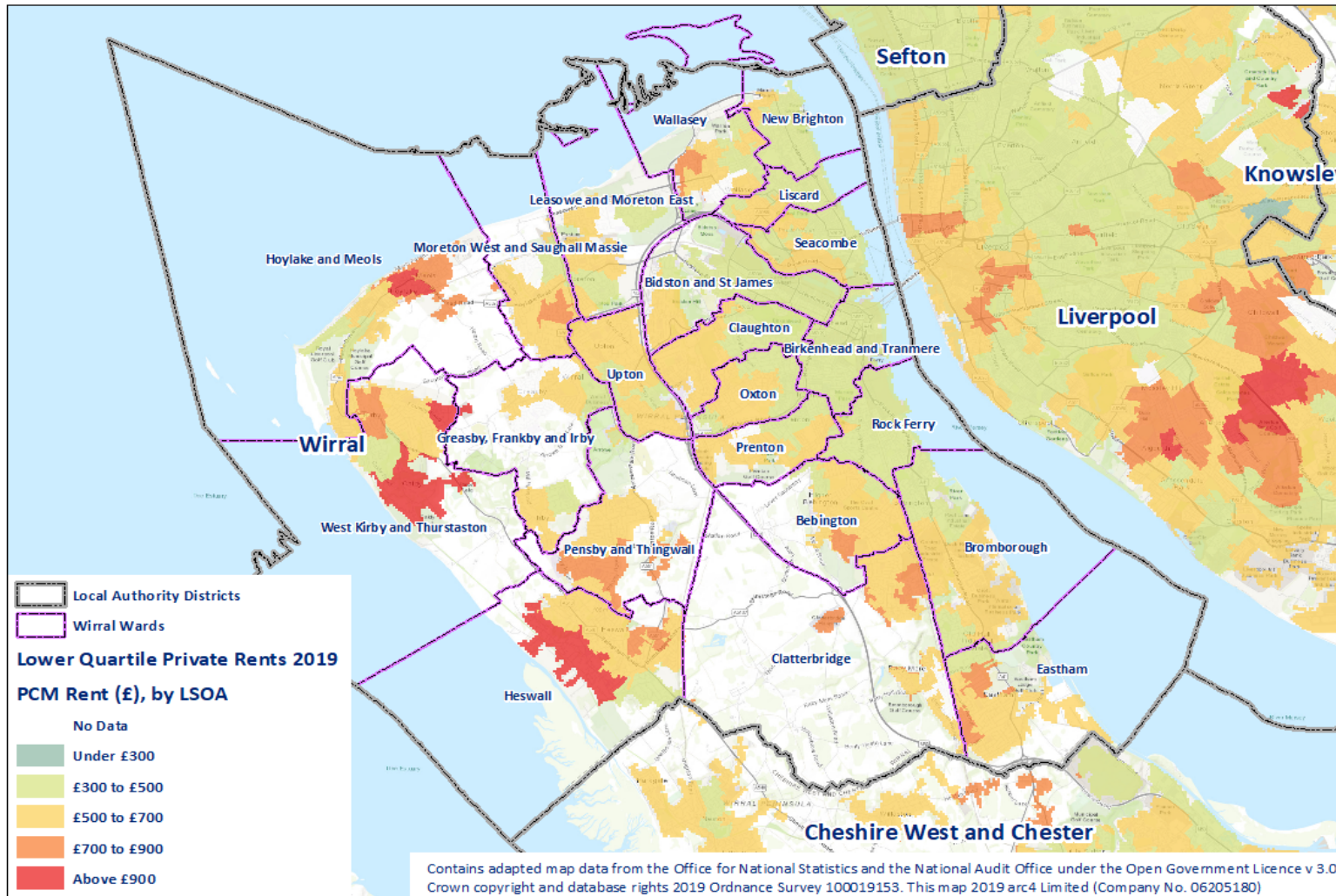
Source: Zoopla PPD 2019

Table 3.5 Lower quartile and median rents by settlement area 2019		
Settlement area	Lower quartile (£ each month)	Median (£ each month)
SA1 Wallasey	451	498
SA2 Commercial Core/SA3 Suburban Birkenhead	425	498
SA4 Bromborough & Eastham	545	624
SA5 Mid-Wirral	542	594
SA6 Hoylake and West Kirby	598	724
SA7 Heswall	650	748
SA8 Rural Areas	676	737
<b>Wirral Borough</b>	<b>451</b>	<b>550</b>

Source: Zoopla PPD 2019

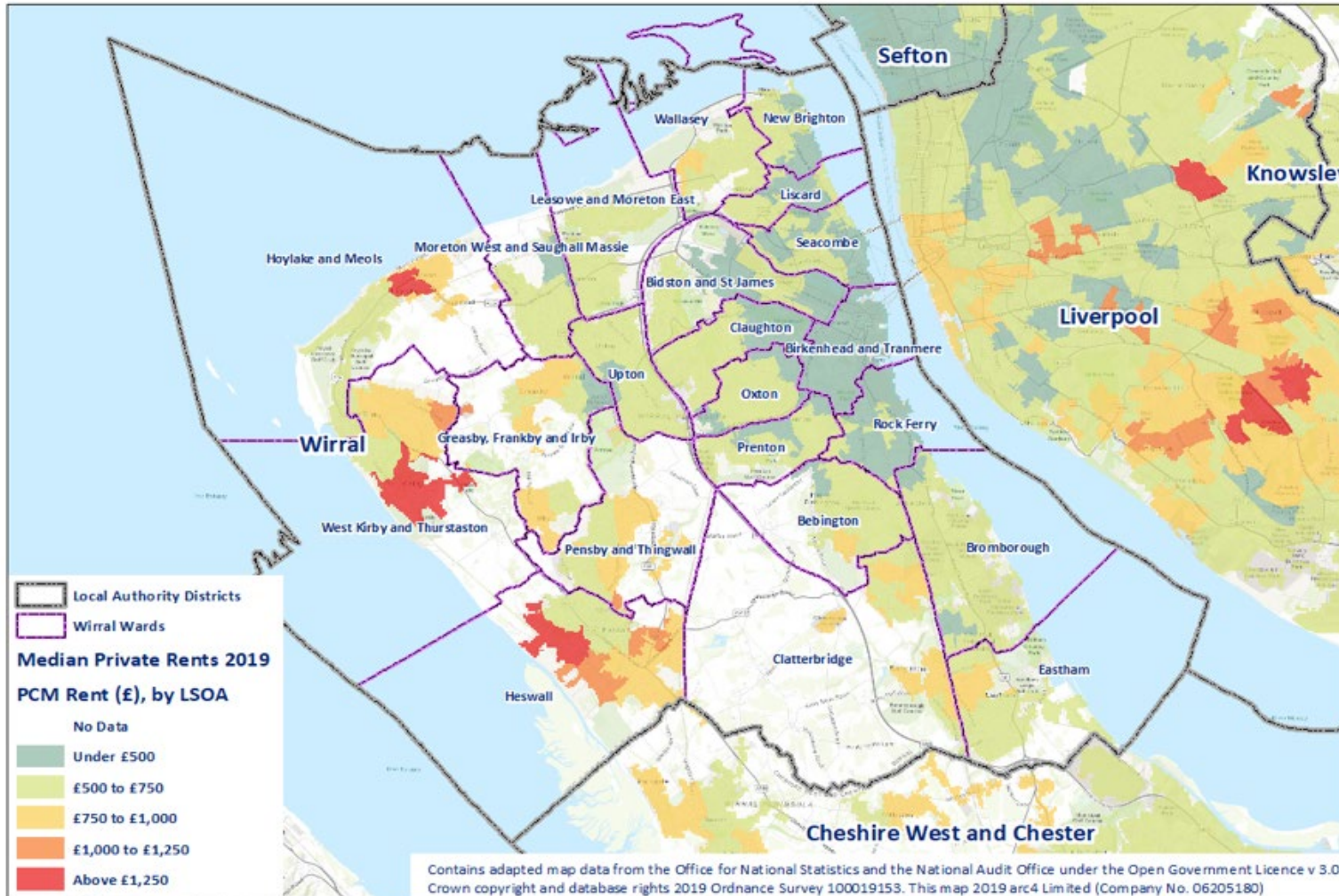
- 3.8 More detailed rental data within built-up areas at a small area level (Lower Super Output Areas) are presented in Map 3.3 (lower quartile) and Map 3.4 (median). This illustrates the relatively low rental values in Birkenhead and higher values in peripheral areas.
- 3.9 The private rented sector accommodates a proportion of low-income households that are eligible for assistance with rental costs. Map 3.5 illustrates the proportion of households in receipt of housing benefit assistance across the borough.

**Map 3.3 2019 lower quartile rents across Wirral and adjacent authorities by built up areas within LSOAs**



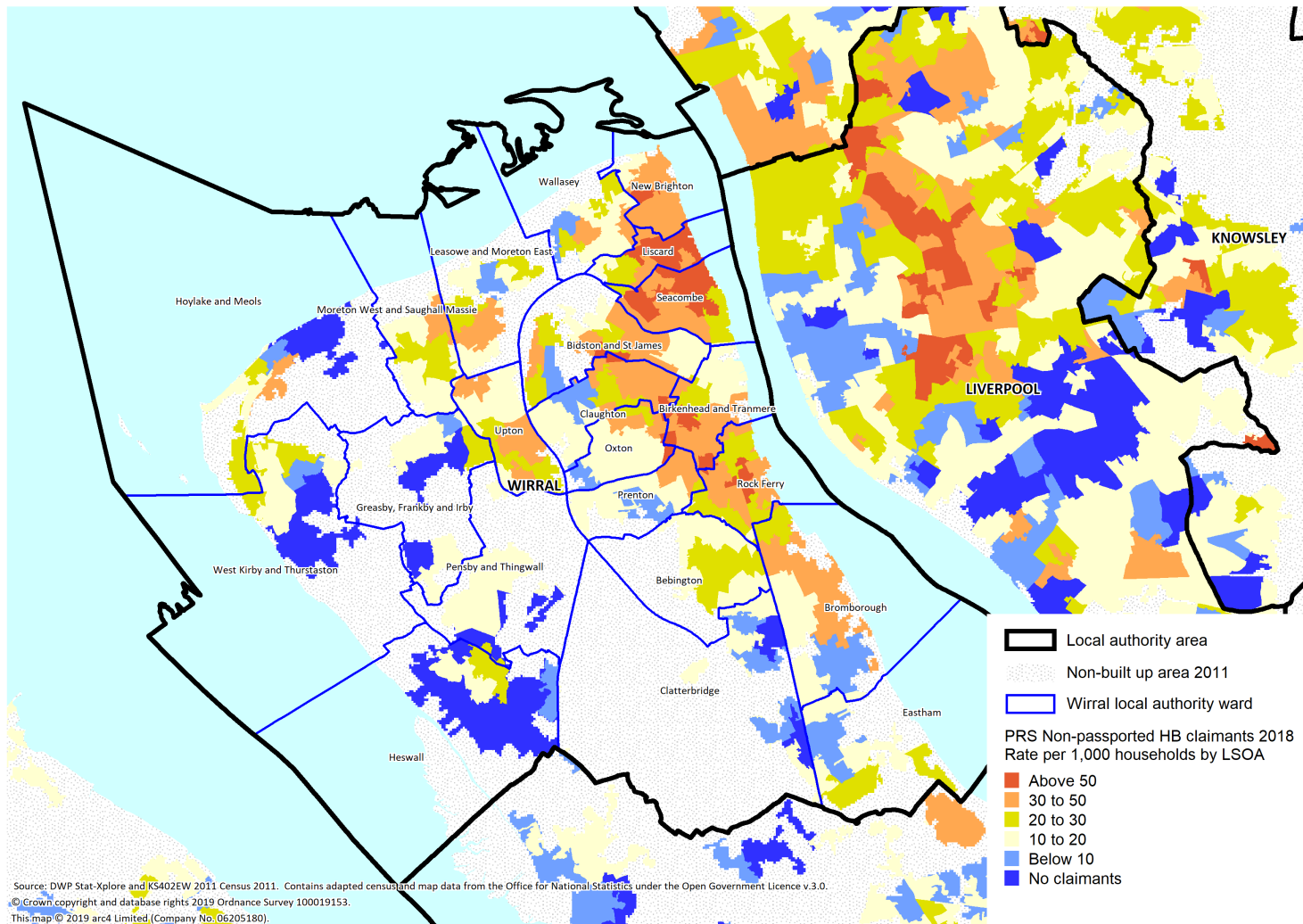
Source: Zoopla PPD 2019

**Map 3.4 2019 median rents across Wirral and adjacent authorities by built up areas within LSOAs**



Source: Zoopla PPD 2019

**Map 3.5 Private rented sector Non-Passported Housing Benefit 2018**



Source: 2018 DWP Stat explore

3.10 The amount that can be claimed for assistance with rental costs is capped to a local allowance that varies by area. The cap is estimated by the VOA and published in the form of a Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate for a broad market area (BRMA).

3.11 The Local Housing Allowance rates for Wirral are:

#### Wirral BRMA

- Shared accommodation rate - £55.02 per week;
- 1-bedroom rate - £86.30 per week;
- 2-bedroom rate - £102.73 per week;
- 3-bedroom rate - £126.58 per week; and
- 4-bedroom rate - £140.62 per week.

### Relative affordability

3.12 The ONS produces national data on the ratio of earnings to house prices. Two sets of data are available: workplace-based and resident-based. For each, lower quartile and median ratios are produced. The data are based on Land Registry Price Paid data and ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings data.

3.13 Table 3.6 sets out the 2019 lower quartile and median affordability ratios for Wirral and compares these with Liverpool City region authorities, neighbouring Cheshire West and Chester, the North West and England. Using workplace-based median ratios to illustrate the data, prices are 6.2x incomes. Wirral is the third most expensive behind Cheshire West and Chester and Sefton. Wirral also has a higher ratio than the North West but lower than England.

**Table 3.6 Relative affordability of lower quartile and median prices by local authority area, North West and England (workplace-based and residence-based)**

Locality	2019 Lower Quartile		2019 Median	
	Workplace-based	Residence-based	Workplace-based	Residence-based
<b>Wirral</b>	<b>6.28</b>	<b>5.74</b>	<b>6.20</b>	<b>5.59</b>
Halton	4.53	4.75	4.83	5.27
Knowsley	4.95	5.30	5.14	5.66
Liverpool	3.84	3.90	4.22	4.34
Sefton	6.63	6.21	6.59	6.21
St. Helens	5.01	4.58	4.88	4.69
Cheshire West and Chester	7.25	6.58	6.92	6.42
NORTH WEST	7.27	5.56	5.86	5.79
ENGLAND	5.58	7.27	7.83	7.83

## Relative affordability of housing tenure options and defining genuinely affordable housing

- 3.14 The relative cost of alternative housing options across the borough and settlement areas has been considered from two perspectives. Firstly, analysis considers prevailing prices at settlement area level across a range of market and affordable tenures and the incomes required to afford these properties. Secondly, analysis considers what is genuinely affordable to households based on local incomes and assumptions around the proportion of income that should be spent on renting and the multiples of income for buying. The analysis of what is genuinely affordable also considers the incomes of selected key workers and those on minimum and living wages.
- 3.15 The thresholds for what is affordable and not affordable are as follows:
- for renting, 25% of gross household income is used as the 'tipping point' for affordability, with properties not affordable if more than 25% of income is spent on rent. There is no official guidance on what proportion of income should be used but former CLG SHMA Practice Guidance (2007) used the 25% figure; and
  - for buying, affordability is based on a 3.5x gross household income multiple. Former CLG SHMA Practice Guidance (2007) recommended a 3.5x multiple for a household with a single earner and 2.9x for a dual earner.
- 3.16 Table 3.7 sets out the range of market and affordable tenures considered in analysis and any assumptions relating to the cost of properties. The cost of alternative affordable and market tenure options by settlement area is set out in Table 3.8. Table 3.9 shows the gross household incomes needed to afford the tenure based on the 25% rental and 3.5x income multiples. Table 3.10 considers the impact of deposits on sale price.

<b>Table 3.7 Summary of tenure (including affordable options), price assumptions and data sources</b>			
<b>Tenure</b>	<b>Tenure price assumptions</b>	<b>Affordability assumptions</b>	<b>Data Source</b>
Social rent	2019 prices	25% of income	Regulator of Social Housing Statistical Data Return 2019
Affordable Rent	80% of average market rent	25% of income	Regulator of Social Housing Statistical Data Return 2019
Market Rent – lower quartile	2019 prices	25% of income	Zoopla 2019
Market Rent – median	2019 prices	25% of income	Zoopla 2019
Market Sale – lower quartile	2019 prices	90% LTV, 3.5x income	Land Registry Price Paid
Market Sale – median	2019 prices	90% LTV, 3.5x income	Land Registry Price Paid
Market Sale – average	2019 prices	90% LTV, 3.5x income	Land Registry Price Paid
Shared ownership (50%)	Total price based on median price and 50% ownership. Mortgage based on 40%. 10% deposit required; annual service charge £395, Annual rent based on 2.75% of remaining equity	90% LTV, 3.5x income for equity and 25% of income for rental element	Assumptions applied to Land Registry Price Paid data
Shared ownership (25%)	Total price based on median price and 25% ownership. Mortgage based on 20, 5% deposit required, annual service charge £395. Annual rent based on 2.75% of remaining equity	90% LTV, 3.5x income for equity and 25% of income for rental element	Assumptions applied to Land Registry Price Paid data
Help to buy	Total price based on median price. Mortgage based on 75% equity. 20% loan and deposit of 5%. Loan fee of 1.75% in year 6 of outstanding equity loan increasing annually from yr7 at RPI+1%	70% LTV, 3.5x income	Assumptions applied to Land Registry Price Paid data
Discounted home ownership 30%	70% of median price (note this is comparable to the proposed government First Home tenure option). Mortgage based on discounted price, minus 10% deposit on discounted price.	Discounted home ownership 30%	Assumptions applied to Land Registry Price Paid data
Discounted home ownership 25%	75% of median price mortgage based on discounted price, minus 10% deposit on discounted price.	Discounted home ownership 25%	
Discounted home ownership 20%	80% of median price mortgage based on discounted price, minus 10% deposit on discounted price.	Discounted home ownership 20%	



Tenure option	Price (2019)							
	SA1 Wallasey	SA 2/3 Commercial Core/Suburban Birkenhead	SA4 Bromborough & Eastham	SA5 Mid- Wirral	SA6 Hoylake and West Kirby	SA7 Heswall	SA8 Rural Areas	Wirral Borough
Social Rent (average monthly)	£353	£353	£353	£353	£353	£353	£353	£353
Affordable Rent (monthly cost)	£424	£421	£509	£486	£670	£676	£698	£468
Market Rent - Lower Quartile (monthly)	£451	£425	£545	£542	£598	£650	£676	£451
Market Rent - Median (monthly)	£498	£498	£624	£594	£724	£748	£737	£550
Market Rent - Average (monthly)	£530	£526	£636	£607	£838	£845	£872	£585
Market Sale - Lower Quartile	£87,000	£77,500	£136,000	£123,125	£190,000	£178,000	£163,000	£109,950
Market Sale - Median	£130,000	£120,000	£175,000	£160,000	£260,000	£235,000	£250,000	£157,500
Market Sale - Average	£142,181	£138,343	£182,862	£177,667	£322,786	£280,397	£297,985	£184,479
Shared ownership (50%)	£65,000	£60,000	£87,500	£80,000	£130,000	£117,500	£125,000	£78,750
Shared ownership (25%)	£32,500	£30,000	£43,750	£40,000	£65,000	£58,750	£62,500	£39,375
Help to buy	£97,500	£90,000	£131,250	£120,000	£195,000	£176,250	£187,500	£118,125
Discounted Home Ownership (30%)	£91,000	£84,000	£122,500	£112,000	£182,000	£164,500	£175,000	£110,250
Discounted Home Ownership (25%)	£97,500	£90,000	£131,250	£120,000	£195,000	£176,250	£187,500	£118,125
Discounted Home Ownership (20%)	£104,000	£96,000	£140,000	£128,000	£208,000	£188,000	£200,000	£126,000

Source: Data produced by Land Registry © Crown copyright 2019, Zoopla 2019, MHCLG, RSH SDR 2019

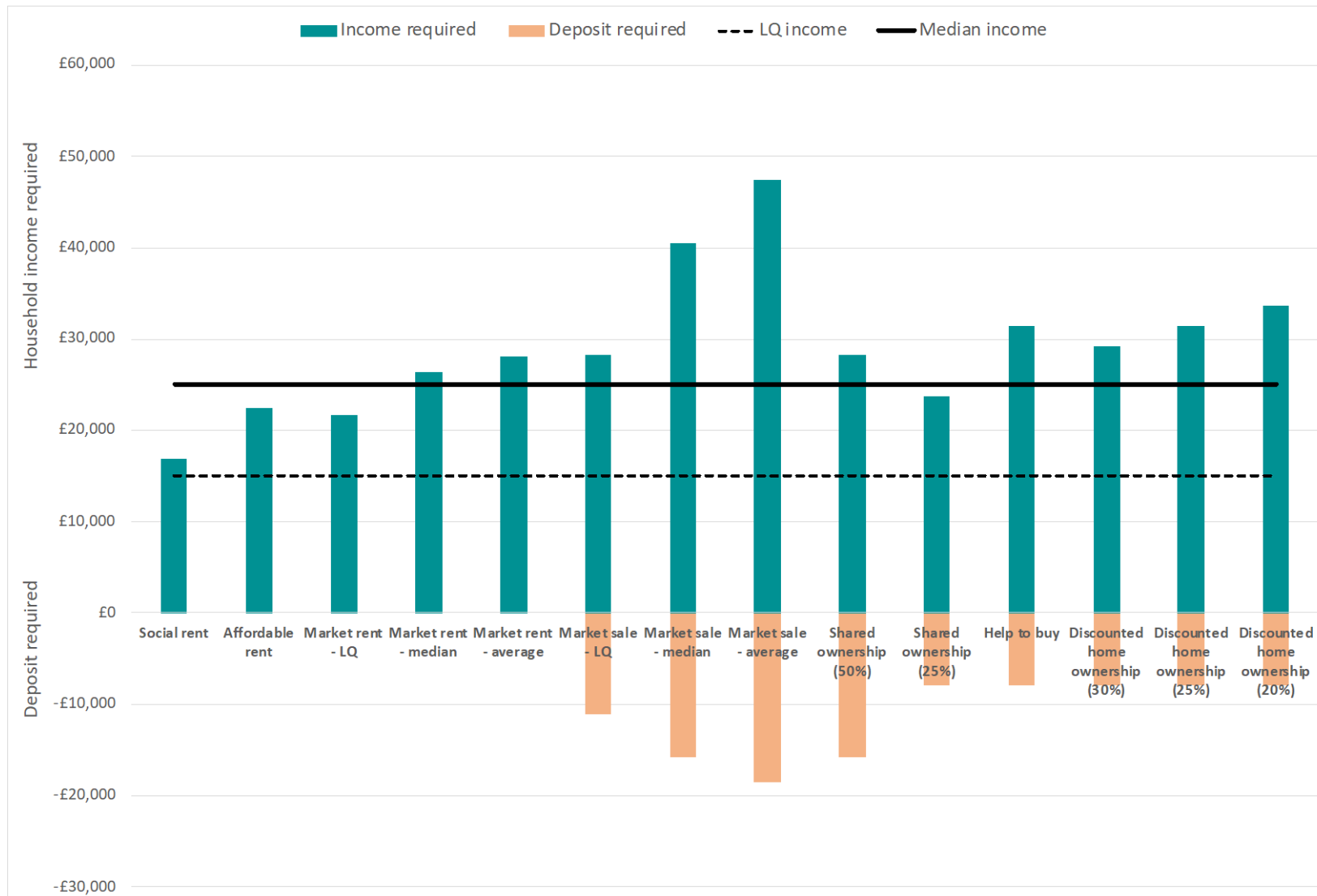
<b>Table 3.9 Household income required for tenure to be affordable (based on 25% of income for rents and 3.5x income for buying) by settlement area</b>								
<b>Tenure option</b>	<b>Income required (2018)</b>							
	<b>SA1 Wallasey</b>	<b>SA 2/3 Commercial Core/Suburb an Birkenhead</b>	<b>SA4 Bromboroug h &amp; Eastham</b>	<b>SA5 Mid- Wirral</b>	<b>SA6 Hoylake and West Kirby</b>	<b>SA7 Heswall</b>	<b>SA8 Rural Areas</b>	<b>Wirral Borough</b>
Social Rent (average monthly)	£16,923	£16,923	£16,923	£16,923	£16,923	£16,923	£16,923	£16,944
Affordable Rent (monthly)	£20,352	£20,198	£24,422	£23,309	£32,179	£32,448	£33,485	£22,464
Market rent - lower quartile	£21,648	£20,400	£26,160	£26,016	£28,704	£31,200	£32,448	£21,648
Market rent - median	£23,904	£23,904	£29,952	£28,512	£34,752	£35,904	£35,376	£26,400
Market sale - lower quartile	£25,440	£25,248	£30,528	£29,136	£40,224	£40,560	£41,856	£28,080
Market sale - median	£22,371	£19,929	£34,971	£31,661	£48,857	£45,771	£41,914	£28,273
Market sale - average	£33,429	£30,857	£45,000	£41,143	£66,857	£60,429	£64,286	£40,500
Shared ownership (50%)	£36,561	£35,574	£47,022	£45,686	£83,002	£72,102	£76,625	£47,437
Shared ownership (25%)	£23,687	£21,994	£31,305	£28,766	£45,694	£41,462	£44,001	£28,343
Help to buy	£19,834	£18,437	£26,118	£24,023	£37,987	£34,496	£36,591	£23,674
Discounted Home Ownership (30%)	£26,000	£24,000	£35,000	£32,000	£52,000	£47,000	£50,000	£31,500
Discounted Home Ownership (25%)	£24,143	£22,286	£32,500	£29,714	£48,286	£43,643	£46,429	£29,250
Discounted Home Ownership (20%)	£26,000	£24,000	£35,000	£32,000	£52,000	£47,000	£50,000	£31,500
<b>CAMEO<sup>14</sup> income data for information</b>								
<i>LQ gross household income</i>	<i>£15,000</i>	<i>£15,000</i>	<i>£15,000</i>	<i>£15,000</i>	<i>£25,000</i>	<i>£25,000</i>		<i>£15,000</i>
<i>Median gross household income</i>	<i>£15,000</i>	<i>£15,000</i>	<i>£25,000</i>	<i>£25,000</i>	<i>£35,000</i>	<i>£35,000</i>		<i>£25,000</i>

<sup>14</sup> CAMEO is a commercial data product which provides household income distribution estimates at a small area level. CAMEO is produced by TransUnion

<b>Table 3.10 Impact of alternative deposits on sale price and income required for open market properties</b>					
<b>Market sale price</b>	<b>Amount of deposit</b>				<b>Borough Average Price</b>
	10%	20%	30%	40%	
Market sale - lower quartile	£99,000	£88,000	£77,000	£66,000	£110,000
Market sale - median	£139,500	£124,000	£108,500	£93,000	£155,000
Market sale - average	£161,175	£143,267	£125,358	£107,450	£179,083
<b>Household income required (3.5x multiple)</b>	10%	20%	30%	40%	
Market sale - lower quartile	£28,286	£25,143	£22,000	£18,857	
Market sale - median	£39,857	£35,429	£31,000	£26,571	
Market sale - average	£46,050	£40,933	£35,817	£30,700	
<b>Household income required (5x multiple)</b>	10%	20%	30%	40%	
Market sale - lower quartile	£19,800	£17,600	£15,400	£13,200	
Market sale - median	£27,900	£24,800	£21,700	£18,600	
Market sale - average	£32,235	£28,653	£25,072	£21,490	

- 3.17 Figure 3.2 summarises in graphical form the relative affordability of alternative tenures at the borough level, setting out the incomes and deposits required for different options set against prevailing lower quartile and median earnings derived from 2018 CAMEO data.
- 3.18 This indicates that households on lower quartile incomes cannot afford any tenure option/product at the current borough prices, this equates to around 25% of households. For households on median incomes, social/affordable and lower quartile market rents are affordable, along with shared ownership at 25%. By comparison, households on median incomes cannot afford market sales at any of the price points or the majority of the intermediate tenure affordable products.
- 3.19 This comparison of local incomes with the cost of local house prices and rents illustrates the affordability challenge faced by residents within the borough. It shows the particular problem faced by households who do not have either existing equity or savings.

**Figure 3.2 Wirral Borough household income and housing costs**



Source: Data produced by Land Registry © Crown copyright 2019, Zoopla 2019, CAMEO (TransUnion) 2019, RSH SDR 2019

## What is genuinely affordable housing in the Wirral Borough context?

- 3.20 Having considered what a household needs to earn to afford alternative tenures, consideration is now given to the actual incomes of households across the borough and how this relates to prevailing prices. This analysis helps to establish what is genuinely affordable based on reasonable income multipliers for renting and buying. The analysis takes into account:
- settlement area 2019 lower quartile and median household incomes from CAMEO<sup>15</sup> data;
  - 2020 entry-level incomes from a range of key worker occupations;
  - incomes associated with 2020 minimum and living wages (using single, dual income and 1.5x income measures);
  - the proportion of income a household would need to spend on rent;
  - the extent to which affordable rental options are genuinely affordable to households; and
  - the extent to which households could afford home ownership based on multiples of household income, with up to 3.5x being affordable.

### *Genuinely affordable rents*

- 3.21 Having considered what a household needs to earn to afford alternative tenures, consideration is now given to the actual incomes of households across the borough and how this relates to current market prices and rents. The analysis helps to establish the extent to which different tenures are affordable and what are genuinely affordable prices and rents based on local incomes.
- 3.22 Table 3.11 focuses on the affordability of market renting and shows the cost of renting a lower quartile and median priced property by settlement area; how this compares with incomes; and what would be genuinely affordable based on local incomes. For example, lower quartile rents are £451 each month in Wallasey where the lower quartile income is £1,250. This means that a household is spending 36.1% of income on rent. To be genuinely affordable, that is, costing no more than 25% of gross income, a lower quartile rent should be £313 each month and a median rent £313 each month.
- 3.23 Table 3.12 focuses on the affordability of home ownership and shows the cost of buying a lower quartile and median-priced property. This shows that prices are in excess of 3.5x household incomes in all areas and borough-wide a property should cost no more than £52,500 to be affordable to households on lower quartile incomes and no more than £87,500 to be affordable to households on median incomes.
- 3.24 This analysis can help establish what would be a reasonable rent based on local incomes. Assuming that 25% of income is spent on housing, across the borough a genuinely affordable lower quartile market rent would be £313 based on local incomes and this would range between £313 and £729 at a settlement area level.

<sup>15</sup> CAMEO is a commercial data product which provides household income distribution estimates at a small area level. CAMEO is produced by TransUnion

**Table 3.11 Affordability of private rents by settlement area**

Settlement area	LQ Rent and Income				Median rent and income			
	Actual LQ rent 2019	LQ Gross household income 2018 (Monthly £)	% LQ income required to be spent on LQ rent	What would be an affordable rent based on actual LQ income	Actual Median rent 2019	Median Gross household income 2019 (Monthly £)	% median income required to be spent on median rent	What would be an affordable rent based on actual median income
SA1 Wallasey	£451	£1,250	36.1	£313	£498	£1,250	39.8	£313
SA 2/3 Commercial Core/ Suburban Birkenhead	£425	£1,250	34.0	£313	£498	£1,250	39.8	£313
SA4 Bromborough & Eastham	£545	£1,250	43.6	£313	£624	£2,083	30.0	£521
SA5 Mid-Wirral	£542	£1,250	43.4	£313	£594	£2,083	28.5	£521
SA6 Hoylake and West Kirby	£598	£2,083	28.7	£521	£724	£2,917	24.8	£729
SA7 Heswall	£650	£2,917	22.3	£729	£748	£2,917	25.6	£729
SA8 Rural Areas	£676	£2,083	32.4	£521	£737	£2,917	25.3	£729
Wirral Total	£451	£1,250	36.1	£313	£550	£2,083	26.4	£521

Key:

41.9	Rent costs more than 35% of gross income
26.4	Rent costs between 25% and 35% of gross income
24.1	Rent costs less than 25% of gross household income

**Table 3.12** Affordability of open market prices by settlement area

Settlement area	Actual LQ price 2019	LQ Gross household income 2019 (Annual £)	Income multiple required (assumes 10% deposit)	What would be an affordable property based on a 3.5x income multiple	Actual median price 2019	Median Gross household income 2019 (Annual £)	Income multiple required (assumes 10% deposit)	What would be an affordable property based on a 3.5x income multiple
SA1 Wallasey	£87,000	£15,000	5.2	£52,500	£130,000	£15,000	7.8	£52,500
SA 2/3 Commercial Core/Suburban Birkenhead	£77,500	£15,000	4.7	£52,500	£120,000	£15,000	7.2	£52,500
SA4 Bromborough & Eastham	£136,000	£15,000	8.2	£52,500	£175,000	£25,000	6.3	£87,500
SA5 Mid-Wirral	£123,125	£15,000	7.4	£52,500	£160,000	£25,000	5.8	£87,500
SA6 Hoylake and West Kirby	£190,000	£25,000	6.8	£87,500	£260,000	£35,000	6.7	£122,500
SA7 Heswall	£178,000	£25,000	6.4	£87,500	£235,000	£35,000	6.0	£122,500
SA8 Rural Areas	£163,000	£15,000	9.8	£52,500	£250,000	£35,000	6.4	£122,500
Wirral Total	£109,950	£15,000	6.6	£52,500	£157,500	£25,000	5.7	£87,500

Key:

5.2	Price is more than 4.5x household income (assuming 10% deposit)
3.9	Price is between 3.5x and 4.5x household income (assuming 10% deposit)
24.1	Rent costs less than 25% of gross household income

## Affordability of prices and rents to selected key workers and households on minimum/living wages

- 3.25 The extent to which borough-wide open market rents are affordable to selected keyworkers and households on minimum and living wages are explored in Table 3.13. Key workers on entry-level grades are generally having to spend more than 25% of their income on rent.
- 3.26 Table 3.14 considers the income multiples needed to buy a property based on the incomes of selected key workers and households on minimum/living wages. Analysis assumed that a 10% deposit was available and indicates that multiples in excess of 3.5 were generally needed when buying a property. Prices that are genuinely affordable were also considered based on a 3.5x income multiple.

### The affordability of affordable housing options

- 3.27 The final section of analysis considers the extent to which affordable housing options are genuinely affordable to households across Wirral Borough. This uses borough-wide data and is tested against 2019 CAMEO income data, the incomes of selected key workers and households where members are earning minimum and living wages. This analysis does not factor in benefits which may be available to households.
- 3.28 For social and affordable rented tenures, Table 3.15 shows that social renting would be affordable to most of the selected key worker households and households with multiple minimum/living wage earners. Affordable rent would be affordable to most of the key workers and dual full-time earning households on minimum and living wages.
- 3.29 Table 3.15 also shows the basic income multiples associated with the equity components of alternative affordable purchase options. The analysis specifically considers the relative affordability of the equity components of intermediate tenure options and therefore does not take into account any rental component. The data indicates that help to buy and discounted home ownership are less realistic options except where substantial deposits can be made.
- 3.30 This analysis clearly demonstrates that social and affordable renting remains the most affordable tenure option available to households. The affordability of the equity components of intermediate tenures is highly variable and the ability to access this market is challenging for the selected key workers and wage earners considered in analysis. Although the definitions in the NPPF have been widened to include a broader range of intermediate tenure options, these only remain affordable to a minority of households.



**Table 3.13 Incomes of key workers and households on minimum/living wage and rental affordability**

Occupation/Wage	Gross household income 2019 (Annual £)	Gross household income 2019 (Monthly £)	% income required for LQ rent	% income required for median rent	Genuinely affordable rent
			LQ rent (monthly)= £451	Median rent (monthly) = £550	Monthly
<b>Police officer</b>					
Pay Point 0	£20,880	£1,740	25.9	31.6	£435
Pay Point 2	£25,269	£2,106	21.4	26.1	£526
Pay Point 4	£27,471	£2,289	19.7	24.0	£572
<b>Nurse</b>					
Band 1	£18,005	£1,500	30.1	36.7	£375
Band 3	£19,337	£1,611	28.0	34.1	£403
Band 5	£24,907	£2,076	21.7	26.5	£519
<b>Fire officer</b>					
Trainee	£23,366	£1,947	23.2	28.2	£487
Competent	£31,144	£2,595	17.4	21.2	£649
<b>Teacher</b>					
Unqualified (min)	£17,687	£1,474	30.6	37.3	£368
Main pay range (min)	£24,373	£2,031	22.2	27.1	£508
<b>Minimum/Living Wage</b>					
Age 21-24					
Single household	£14,760	£1,230	36.7	44.7	£308
1xFull-time, 1xPart-time	£22,140	£1,845	24.4	29.8	£461
Two working adults	£29,520	£2,460	18.3	22.4	£615
Age 25 and over					
Single household	£15,696	£1,308	34.5	42.0	£327
1xFull-time, 1xPart-time	£23,544	£1,962	23.0	28.0	£491
Two working adults	£31,392	£2,616	17.2	21.0	£654

**Key**

	More than 35% of income spent on rent
	Between 25% and 35% of income spent on rent
	Less than 25% of income spent on rent

Table 3.14 Incomes of key workers and households on minimum/living wage and open market prices				
Benchmark incomes	Gross Household Income 2019 (£)	Lower quartile price	Median price	Genuinely affordable price
		£109,950	£157,500	
		With 10% deposit=	With 10% deposit=	
		£98,955	£141,750	
		Income multiple required	Income multiple required	
<b>Police officer</b>				
Pay Point 0	£20,880	4.7	6.8	£73,080
Pay Point 2	£25,269	3.9	5.6	£88,442
Pay Point 4	£27,471	3.6	5.2	£96,149
<b>Nurse</b>				
Band 1	£18,005	5.5	7.9	£63,018
Band 3	£19,337	5.1	7.3	£67,680
Band 5	£24,907	4.0	5.7	£87,175
<b>Fire officer</b>				
Trainee	£23,366	4.2	6.1	£81,781
Competent	£31,144	3.2	4.6	£109,004
<b>Teacher</b>				
Unqualified (min)	£17,687	5.6	8.0	£61,905
Main pay range (min)	£24,373	4.1	5.8	£85,306
<b>Minimum/Living Wage</b>				
Single household (25 and over)	£15,696	6.3	9.0	£54,936
1xFull-time, 1xPart-time	£23,544	4.2	6.0	£82,404
Two working adults	£31,392	3.2	4.5	£109,872
Single household (21-24)	£14,760	6.7	9.6	£51,660
1xFull-time, 1xPart-time	£22,140	4.5	6.4	£77,490
Two working adults	£29,520	3.4	4.8	£103,320

	More than 4.5x income multiple required
	Between 3.5x and 4.5x income multiple required
	Less than 3.5x income multiple required

Table 3.15 Affordability of intermediate tenure options

Tenure option and price>>>			Social Rent (monthly cost)	Affordable Rent (monthly cost)	Shared ownership (50%)	Shared ownership (25%)	Help to buy	Discounted home ownership (30%)	Discounted home ownership (25%)	Discounted home ownership (20%)		
Occupation/Wage	Gross household income 2019 (Annual £)	Gross household income 2019 (Monthly £)	£353	£468	£78,750	£39,375	£118,125	£110,250	£118,125	£126,000		
			Household income required (assuming 25% spent on rent is affordable)		Income multiple required for equity component (Excluding deposit)							
			£1,412	£1,872								
<b>Police officer</b>												
Pay Point 0	£20,880	£1,740	£1,740	£1,740	3.8	1.9	5.7	5.3	5.7	6.0		
Pay Point 2	£25,269	£2,106	£2,106	£2,106	3.1	1.6	4.7	4.4	4.7	5.0		
Pay Point 4	£27,471	£2,289	£2,289	£2,289	2.9	1.4	4.3	4.0	4.3	4.6		
<b>Nurse</b>												
Band 1	£18,005	£1,500	£1,500	£1,500	4.4	2.2	6.6	6.1	6.6	7.0		
Band 3	£19,337	£1,611	£1,611	£1,611	4.1	2.0	6.1	5.7	6.1	6.5		
Band 5	£24,907	£2,076	£2,076	£2,076	3.2	1.6	4.7	4.4	4.7	5.1		
<b>Fire officer</b>												
Trainee	£23,366	£1,947	£1,947	£1,947	3.4	1.7	5.1	4.7	5.1	5.4		
Competent	£31,144	£2,595	£2,595	£2,595	2.5	1.3	3.8	3.5	3.8	4.0		
<b>Teacher</b>												
Unqualified (min)	£17,687	£1,474	£1,474	£1,474	4.5	2.2	6.7	6.2	6.7	7.1		
Main pay range (min)	£24,373	£2,031	£2,031	£2,031	3.2	1.6	4.8	4.5	4.8	5.2		
<b>Minimum/Living Wage</b>												
Single household (25 and over)	£15,696	£1,308	£1,308	£1,308	5.0	2.5	7.5	7.0	7.5	8.0		
1xFull-time, 1xPart-time	£23,544	£1,962	£1,962	£1,962	3.3	1.7	5.0	4.7	5.0	5.4		
Two working adults	£31,392	£2,616	£2,616	£2,616	2.5	1.3	3.8	3.5	3.8	4.0		
Single household (21-24)	£14,760	£1,230	£1,230	£1,230	5.3	2.7	8.0	7.5	8.0	8.5		
1xFull-time, 1xPart-time	£22,140	£1,845	£1,845	£1,845	3.6	1.8	5.3	5.0	5.3	5.7		
Two working adults	£29,520	£2,460	£2,460	£2,460	2.7	1.3	4.0	3.7	4.0	4.3		

## Concluding comments

- 3.31 In 2019, lower quartile house prices were £109,950 and median prices were £157,500. Wirral is the second most expensive borough in the Liverpool City Region to buy a home. Lower quartile private rents in 2019 were £451 and median rents were £550.
- 3.32 The relative affordability of dwellings to buy or rent was explored at settlement area level. Across the borough, minimum income required for entry-level/lower quartile renting was £21,648. For buying an entry-level/lower quartile property, the minimum income required is £28,080. These calculations assumed that a rent is affordable if no more than 25% of household income is spent on rent and if buying a property should cost no more than 3.5x household income.
- 3.33 Analysis considered the affordability of rents and prices at settlement area level. In most settlement areas, households had to spend at least 25% of income on rent. Across the borough, households on a lower quartile income had to spend 36.1% of their income on a lower quartile rent; and median income households had to spend 26.4% on a median rent. This indicates affordability pressures at the lower end of the private rented market.
- 3.34 For open market purchase, the ratio of lower quartile income to price was 6.6x and for median income to median price it was 5.7x. Both ratios are above the benchmark of 3.5x income and without substantial deposits the ability to buy is a challenge to many households.
- 3.35 Specific analysis of the affordability of renting and buying for key worker incomes and those on minimum/living wages was carried out. Private renting was generally affordable to key workers on entry-level grades and households with multiple minimum/living wages. For buying, analysis assumed that a 10% deposit was available but indicated that income multiples in excess of 3.5x were generally needed.
- 3.36 Using the evidence presented in this chapter, it is possible to establish what would be a genuinely affordable rent and purchase price across Wirral (Table 3.16). This is based on local incomes and assumes that no more than 25% of income is spent on rent and a household income multiple of 3.5x is applied to local household incomes.

**Table 3.16 Genuinely affordable rents and purchase prices by settlement area**

Settlement area	LQ rents (25% of income)	Median rents (25% of income)	LQ purchase (3.5x income multiple)	Median purchase (3.5x income multiple)
SA1 Wallasey	£313	£313	£52,500	£52,500
SA 2/3 Commercial Core/ Suburban Birkenhead	£313	£313	£52,500	£52,500
SA4 Bromborough & Eastham	£313	£521	£52,500	£87,500
SA5 Mid-Wirral	£313	£521	£52,500	£87,500
SA6 Hoylake and West Kirby	£521	£729	£87,500	£122,500
SA7 Heswall	£729	£729	£87,500	£122,500
SA8 Rural Areas	£521	£729	£52,500	£87,500
Total	£313	£521	£52,500	£87,500

- 3.37 It is clear that at the present time there is significant change in patterns of ownership and investment. Local investors are withdrawing from the market. Ex-rental dwellings coming onto the market can be problematic especially if involving shop units and prices are very weak. International investors are entering the market but generally agents are of the view that the gap between supply and demand will widen due to shortage of supply. The problem is not so apparent at the moment as supply for both market and rental housing is suppressed because of Brexit uncertainty.
- 3.38 Potentially build to rent and commercial to residential conversions can fill the gap and there is evidence of this in Birkenhead (commercial to residential) and Wallasey (build to rent) where specific schemes are being marketed to investors only, some 'off plan'. However, the larger scheme in Birkenhead is being targeted on the student rather than the residential market.

## 4. Overall housing need and affordable housing need.

### Introduction

- 4.1 This chapter considers the future number of dwellings needed across Wirral. It reviews need based on official government methodologies. The chapter also summarises work carried out by Liverpool University concerning the demographics of the borough and whether alternative approaches to assessing need should be considered.
- 4.2 The NPPF expects authorities to follow the standard method in PPG for assessing local housing need, which was updated in December 2020. PPG defines housing need as ‘an unconstrained assessment of the number of homes needed in an area’<sup>16</sup>.
- 4.3 The council has received a number of representations on the Local Plan Issues and Options Document<sup>17</sup> concerning overall housing need and this chapter also considers the key issues raised.

### Establishing housing need using the ‘standard method’

- 4.4 The 2019 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Paragraph 60) states ‘to determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance - unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach which also reflects current and future demographic trends and market signals. In addition to the local housing figure, any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for’.
- 4.5 PPG comments that ‘the standard method uses a formula to identify the minimum number of homes expected to be planned for, in a way which addresses projected household growth and historic under-supply. It identifies a minimum annual housing need figure. It does not produce a housing requirement figure.’<sup>18</sup>
- 4.6 In December 2020, Planning Practice Guidance updated the standard methodology for assessing overall housing need which involves: setting a baseline; adjusting for affordability; capping increases where necessary and applying uplifts in some urban areas; and considering if it is appropriate to plan for a higher housing need figure.
- 4.7 The plan period being considered in this SHMA is the period 2020 to 2037 (17 years).
- 4.8 PPG states ‘any method which relies on using household projections more recently published than that 2014-based household projections will not be

---

<sup>16</sup> PPG Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 2a-001-20190220

<sup>17</sup> The Local Plan Issues and Options Document was subject to consultation under Regulation 18 between January and April 2020.

<sup>18</sup> PPG Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 2a-002-20190220

considered to be following the standard method<sup>19</sup>. It is also expected that the council will keep the housing need figure under regular review in response to changing information up to the submission of the Local Plan.

## Step 1: Setting the baseline

- 4.9 Planning Practice Guidance<sup>20</sup> states that a baseline should be set using 2014-based national household projections for the local authority area. The projections are used to calculate the average annual household growth over a 10-year consecutive period.
- 4.10 As 2020 is the first year of the plan period, the period 2020 to 2030 has been chosen to set the baseline for this SHMA. Over the period, the total number of households under the 2014-based household projections is set to increase by 6,847 or 685 each year (Table 4.1).

Projection		2020 Households	2030 households	2020-30 household change	Annual Change
DCLG based	2014-	146,891	153,738	6,847	685

## Step 2: An adjustment to take account of affordability

- 4.11 The average annual projected household figure from Step 1 is the adjusted based on the affordability of the area using median workplace-based affordability ratios published by the ONS.

$$\text{Adjustment factor} = 1 + ((\text{Local Affordability Ratio} - 4)/4)*0.25$$

- 4.12 The latest affordability ratio (2019) and associated affordability uplift is set out in Table 4.2.

Year	Median price to income affordability ratio	Adjustment factor*
2019	6.2	1.1375

\* Adjustment factor is  $1 + ((\text{Local Affordability Ratio} - 4)/4)*0.25$

Source: ONS Ratio of house price to workplace-based earnings

<sup>19</sup> PPG Paragraph 015 Reference ID: 2a-015-20190220

<sup>20</sup> PPG Paragraph 004 Reference ID: 2a-004-20201216

4.13 The reason for the affordability adjustment is set out in PPG :

*‘An affordability adjustment is applied as household growth on its own is insufficient as an indicator of housing demand because:*

- *household formation is constrained to the supply of available properties – new households cannot form if there is nowhere for them to live; and*
- *people may want to live in an area in which they do not reside currently, for example to be near to work, but be unable to find appropriate accommodation that they can afford.*

*The affordability adjustment is applied in order to ensure that the standard method for assessing local housing need responds to price signals and is consistent with the policy objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes. The specific adjustment in this guidance is set at a level to ensure that minimum annual housing need starts to address the affordability of homes.’<sup>21</sup>*

4.14 Table 4.3 sets out the components of the dwelling need calculation using 2020 as a base and applying the latest available (2019) affordability ratios. The basic demographic need under the 2014-based DCLG household projections are presented along with the affordability adjustment to establish the total annual dwelling need using the standard methodology.

Base Year 2020		Baseline demographic need	Affordability Adjustment	Total annual minimum dwelling need under standard methodology
DCLG based	2014-	685	94	779

### Step 3: Capping the level of any increase

4.15 PPG states that ‘the standard methodology may identify a minimum local housing need figure that is significantly higher than the number of homes currently being planned for. The cap is applied to help ensure that the minimum local housing need figure calculated using the standard methodology is as deliverable as possible’<sup>22</sup>. The PPG continues ‘the cap reduces the minimum number generated by the standard method but does not reduce housing need itself. Therefore, strategic policies adopted with a cap applied may require an early review and updating to ensure that any housing need above the capped level is planned for as soon as is reasonably possible’<sup>23</sup>

<sup>21</sup> PPG Paragraph 006 Reference ID: 2a-006-20190220

<sup>22</sup> PPG Paragraph 007 Reference ID: 2a-007-20190220

<sup>23</sup> PPG Paragraph 007 Reference ID: 2a-007-20190220



- 4.16 How the cap is calculated ‘depends on the current status of relevant strategic policies for housing’<sup>24</sup>.
- 4.17 The last officially endorsed annual dwelling target for Wirral, from 2003 to 2021, was 500 this was based on the 2008 Regional Spatial Strategy, which was revoked in May 2013.
- 4.18 The PPG states ‘where the relevant strategic policies for housing were adopted more than 5 years ago (at the point of making the calculation), the local housing need figure is capped at 40% above whichever is higher of:
- A. the projected household growth for the area over the 10-year period identified in Step 1 (685) or;*
- B. the average annual housing requirement figure set out in the most recently adopted strategic policies (500)’<sup>25</sup>*
- 4.19 The 40% cap which would therefore apply to Wirral Borough would be based on A (685) and would be 959 dwellings each year (685+ (40% x 685)).
- 4.20 Under the parameters set out in the PPG no cap on delivery needs to be applied.

## Step 4: Cities and urban centres uplift

- 4.21 A 35% uplift is then applied for those urban local authorities in the top 20 cities and urban areas list devised by ONS<sup>26</sup>. As at December 2020, no localities within Wirral are on this list and so this step is not relevant to Wirral.

## Housing need using the standard methodology

- 4.22 Based on the MHCLG standard methodology and 2019 affordability ratios, the minimum local housing need for Wirral Borough, from 2020, is currently **779** dwellings each year.

## Potential adjustments to the standard method

### Overview

- 4.23 Having identified the minimum housing need under the standard model, further analysis considers alternative demographic scenarios. A review of alternative demographic scenarios provides the evidence to confirm if the standard method provides an appropriate base for the assessment of need.
- 4.24 There is also provision in PPG to adjust the minimum housing need:
- ‘The standard method for assessing local housing need provides the minimum starting point in determining the number of homes needed in an area. It does not*

<sup>24</sup> PPG Paragraph 004 Reference ID: 2a-004-20201216

<sup>25</sup> PPG Paragraph 004 Reference ID: 2a-004-20201216

<sup>26</sup> PPG Paragraph 004 Reference ID: 2a-004-20190220

*attempt to predict the impact that future government policies, changing economic circumstances or other factors might have on demographic behaviour. Therefore, there will be circumstances where it is appropriate to consider whether actual housing need is higher than the standard method indicates.*

*This will need to be assessed prior to, and separate from, considering how much of the overall need can be accommodated (and then translated into a housing requirement figure for the strategic policies in the plan). Circumstances where this may be appropriate include, but are not limited to situations where increases in housing need are likely to exceed past trends because of:*

- *growth strategies for the area that are likely to be deliverable, for example where funding is in place to promote and facilitate additional growth (e.g. Housing Deals);*
- *strategic infrastructure improvements that are likely to drive an increase in the homes needed locally; or*
- *an authority agreeing to take on unmet need from neighbouring authorities, as set out in a statement of common ground.*

*There may, occasionally, also be situations where previous levels of housing delivery in an area, or previous assessments of need (such as a recently produced Strategic Housing Market Assessment) are significantly greater than the outcome from the standard method. Authorities will need to take this into account when considering whether it is appropriate to plan for a higher level of need than the standard model suggests.<sup>27</sup>*

#### 4.25 To inform this analysis:

- Edge Analytics have reviewed variant population scenarios, alternative migration scenarios, housing-led and employment-led scenarios and different rates of household formation.
- A report has been prepared by Liverpool University which considers the underlying demographics of the borough.
- The council has provided details of any relevant growth strategies and strategic infrastructure developments and any decisions to meet unmet need from neighbouring local authorities.

4.26 The results of the Edge Analytics work is summarised in Table 4.4. This sets out alternative demographic scenarios and the resulting dwelling requirements using 2014- and 2018-based projections and alternative Household Representative Rates (HRRs). HRRs are defined as the probability of anyone in the particular demographic group being classified as a household representative.

4.27 Further details of the analysis carried out is available in the Edge Analytics 'Wirral SHMA Update – Demographic Evidence December 2020' report.

<sup>27</sup> PPG Paragraph 010 Reference ID: 2a-010-20201216

Table 4.4 Summary of alternative demographic scenarios			
Scenario	Description	Annual dwelling need under alternative Household Representative Rates	
		2014-based	2018-based
Standard Method	PPG December 2020	779 (of which 685 is demographic and 94 is an affordability uplift)	
SNPP 2014-based	Replicates the ONS 2014-based SNPP <i>Principal</i> population projection, using historical population evidence for 2001– 2014.	656	473
SNPP 2018-based	Replicates the ONS 2018-based SNPP <i>Principal</i> population projection, using historical population evidence for 2001– 2018.	804	608
SNPP-2018-HIGH	Replicates the ONS 2018-based SNPP <i>Higher Migration</i> population projection, using historical population evidence for 2001–2018. This variant assumes higher levels of net international migration.	927	722
SNPP 2018-LOW	Replicates the ONS 2018-based SNPP <i>Lower Migration</i> population projection, using historical population evidence for 2001–2018. This variant assumes lower levels of net international migration.	681	493
SNPP-2018-10YR	Replicates the ONS 2018-based SNPP <i>Alternative Internal Migration</i> population projection, using historical evidence for 2001– 2018. This variant uses 10 years of all migration data to inform the projection.	550	364
SNPP-2018-ALTERNATIVE	Replicates the ONS 2018-based SNPP <i>Alternative Internal Migration</i> population projection, using historical population evidence for 2001–2018. This variant uses five years of internal migration data to inform the projection, two years using ONS' new estimation methodology and three years using its previous methodology.	666	477
Employment-led_OE_SNPP2014	Models the impact of an average annual employment growth of +82 per year, detailed in an Oxford Economics forecast. The forecast is underpinned by demographic assumptions from the ONS 2014-based SNPP projection.	785	588
Employment-led_OE_SNPP2018	Models the impact of an average annual employment growth of +82 per year, detailed in an Oxford Economics forecast. The forecast is underpinned by demographic assumptions from the ONS 2018-based SNPP projection.	691	498

Source: Edge Analytics Table 2 Wirral SHMA Update Demographic Evidence December 2020

## Alternative demographic evidence

- 4.28 Within PPG<sup>28</sup>, there is provision to use an alternative to the standard method where exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach which also reflects current and future demographic trends and market signals. Representations made to the council during the emerging Local Plan consultation process have proposed there are exceptional circumstances relating to the demographics of Wirral which need to be taken into account. A report prepared by the University of Liverpool<sup>29</sup> has carefully considered the representations and claimed areas of Wirral exceptionalism. The issues raised related to:
- the choice of projection, application of the household projection methodology and incorrect inputs; and
  - claimed areas of exceptionalism including comparator areas, birth rates, natural change and internal migration.
- 4.29 The report considers these challenges thoroughly and concludes that ‘many of the submissions to the Local Plan consultation identify shortcomings in the inputs and calculations used in the Standard Method which align with well-documented critiques of the calculation. However, whilst there is validity in many of these criticisms of the Standard Method itself, we remain unable to find any persuasive evidence that these shortcomings in the Standard Method apply to Wirral in a way that is exceptional compared to the way in which they also apply to other local authorities. On this basis, and under the current government guidance, we find it hard to envisage making a successful case for deviating from the Standard Method approach to estimating housing need using the official 2014-based projections as outputs’<sup>30</sup>.
- 4.30 Edge Analytics have also considered alternative demographic scenarios and the resulting dwelling requirements using 2014- and 2018-based projections as set out in Table 4.4. Although 2018-based projections cannot be used in the calculation of housing need, the analysis indicates a dwelling need in the range of 550 to 927 under variant 2018-based projections. The dwelling need to support economic growth is also considered and under 2014-based projections a need for 785 dwellings is identified.

## Regeneration strategies and strategic infrastructure improvements

- 4.31 There are no specific regeneration strategies currently in place across the Borough. However, as part of the preparation of the Local Plan the Council has recently completed the draft Birkenhead Regeneration Framework (BRF). This provides the context for the comprehensive regeneration of Birkenhead during and beyond the Local Plan period including key strategic infrastructure improvements. The BRF has identified significant potential for the delivery of

---

<sup>28</sup> PPG 2019 Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 2a-001-20190220

<sup>29</sup> *Review of consultation submissions regarding H6 – Exploring the Computation of Housing Need in Wirral 2020*, Centre for Sustainable and Resilient Cities, University of Liverpool, September 2020

<sup>30</sup> *ibid* para 4.55.

new homes and residential and mixed use neighbourhoods across Birkenhead. The regeneration of Birkenhead will be a key part of the Local Plan strategy.

- 4.32 The council is working with strategic partners to identify funding and develop delivery mechanisms for this ambitious regeneration project. Significant investment in new infrastructure and site remediation will enable the commencement of housing delivery at Wirral Waters during the early part of the Local Plan period.
- 4.33 The Council has also commissioned or completed masterplans for Liscard Town Centre, New Brighton and New Ferry which will seek to promote regeneration and will include the identification of new residential development opportunities for inclusion in the Local Plan.
- 4.34 As these regeneration strategies are intended to meet local needs and do not seek to increase the population above trend across the borough as a whole, there are currently no specific strategies or strategic infrastructure investments which warrant a consideration of an uplift to the minimum housing need.

### Meeting unmet need from other local authorities

- 4.35 The borough has not been asked to meet unmet need from other local authorities and therefore no further uplift is necessary.

### Affordable housing need

- 4.36 A detailed analysis of affordable housing need in accordance with PPG is presented at Technical Appendix C. This establishes an overall gross affordable need of 2,202 and after taking into account affordable lettings and newbuild the net shortfall is 374 each year. This is a revised figure from that published in the 2019 SHMA and there are two main reasons for the reduction in need. Firstly, the time taken to reduce the backlog of need has been changed to 10 rather than 5 years to provide consistency with the standard method for calculating overall housing need. Secondly, updated information on newly built and pipeline affordable dwellings has been included in the model.
- 4.37 Without First Homes, the overall affordable tenure split is 35% social rented, 35% affordable rented and 30% affordable home ownership options. Including First Homes, the affordable tenure split is 35% social rented 22% affordable rented, 18% affordable home ownership and 25% First Homes. Including First Homes gives an overall affordable tenure split of 57% affordable/social rented and 43% affordable home ownership across Wirral.
- 4.38 The overall mix of affordable housing (rented and affordable home ownership) is summarised in Table 4.5.
- 4.39 Delivery to help address affordable housing need is expected through the application of existing affordable housing policies, subject to viability. There is clear evidence of affordable housing need which supports a robust affordable housing policy. As at December 2020 there were 940 affordable dwellings either onsite or in the pipeline for development (80% rented and 20% affordable home ownership). This will make considerable contribution to affordable supply,

boosting existing stock by 4%. Given the scale of ongoing affordable housing delivery, it is considered that it is not necessary at this time to recommend any further uplift to the housing number to help meet affordable housing need.

**Table 4.5 Affordable housing need by tenure, dwelling type and number of bedrooms across Wirral**

<b>Social/Affordable rented</b>					
<b>Dwelling type</b>	<b>Number of bedrooms (Table %)</b>				<b>Total</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	
House	0.1	23.8	25.8	6.3	56.1
Flat	1.6	10.4	3.2	0.0	15.2
Level-access	14.9	10.8	1.4	0.0	27.1
Other	0.0	1.3	0.4	0.0	1.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>16.7</b>	<b>46.2</b>	<b>30.7</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Affordable home ownership</b>					
<b>Dwelling type</b>	<b>Number of bedrooms (Table %)</b>				<b>Total</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	
House	0.0	3.5	26.2	23.3	53.1
Flat	5.0	17.0	0.0	0.0	22.0
Level-access	3.3	19.9	0.0	0.0	23.1
Other	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>40.4</b>	<b>26.2</b>	<b>23.3</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## Housing to support Economic growth

- 4.40 The extent to which the existing population can support economic growth needs to be considered. The 2020 Employment Land Needs Assessment indicates that employment is not expected to grow significantly in Wirral over the period to 2040. Overall employment is forecasted to increase from 124,082 to 124,289 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs between 2020 and 2040, an increase of only 206 FTEs or 0.2%.
- 4.41 Edge Analytics have considered economic growth projections, labour force requirements and implications for the number dwellings needed. This would suggest that the number of dwellings needed (785) is slightly higher the standard method outcome. It is therefore recommended that a slight upwards adjustment to the minimum housing need figure is made.

## Older and specialist housing need

- 4.42 The SHMA has evidenced a need for around 3,481 additional units of older persons accommodation including 2,332 C3 planning use class units such as extra care and sheltered/retirement housing. This is need over the period 2020 to 2037 (17 years) and translates to an annual need for around 137 units of older person C3 accommodation. It is anticipated that this need will be delivered as part of the housing need figure and no further adjustments are necessary. There is also likely to be an ongoing need for a small number of specialist housing units for people with additional needs which is expected to be accommodated within the housing need figure.

### Previous delivery levels

- 4.43 As shown previously in Table 2.10, overall net housing completions over the period 2006/7 to 2019/20 have fallen short of annual targets in most years since the market downturn in 2008.
- 4.44 Over the past 5 years, delivery has improved and is moving towards the level of delivery required under the standard method. This represents a significant step-change in delivery and no further uplift to the standard method is required.

### Concluding comments on housing need

- 4.45 The 2020 standard method establishes an annual need for 779 dwellings. It is recommended that this is uplifted slightly to 785 to support economic growth in the borough. No further uplifts are suggested based on available evidence.
- 4.46 This compares with an average net delivery of 588 dwellings over the past 5 years and over the past three years the number has increased to 705.
- 4.47 Research by Liverpool University concluded there was no evidence of exceptional circumstances to justify that an alternative approach to assessing housing need across Wirral.

## 5. The needs of different groups

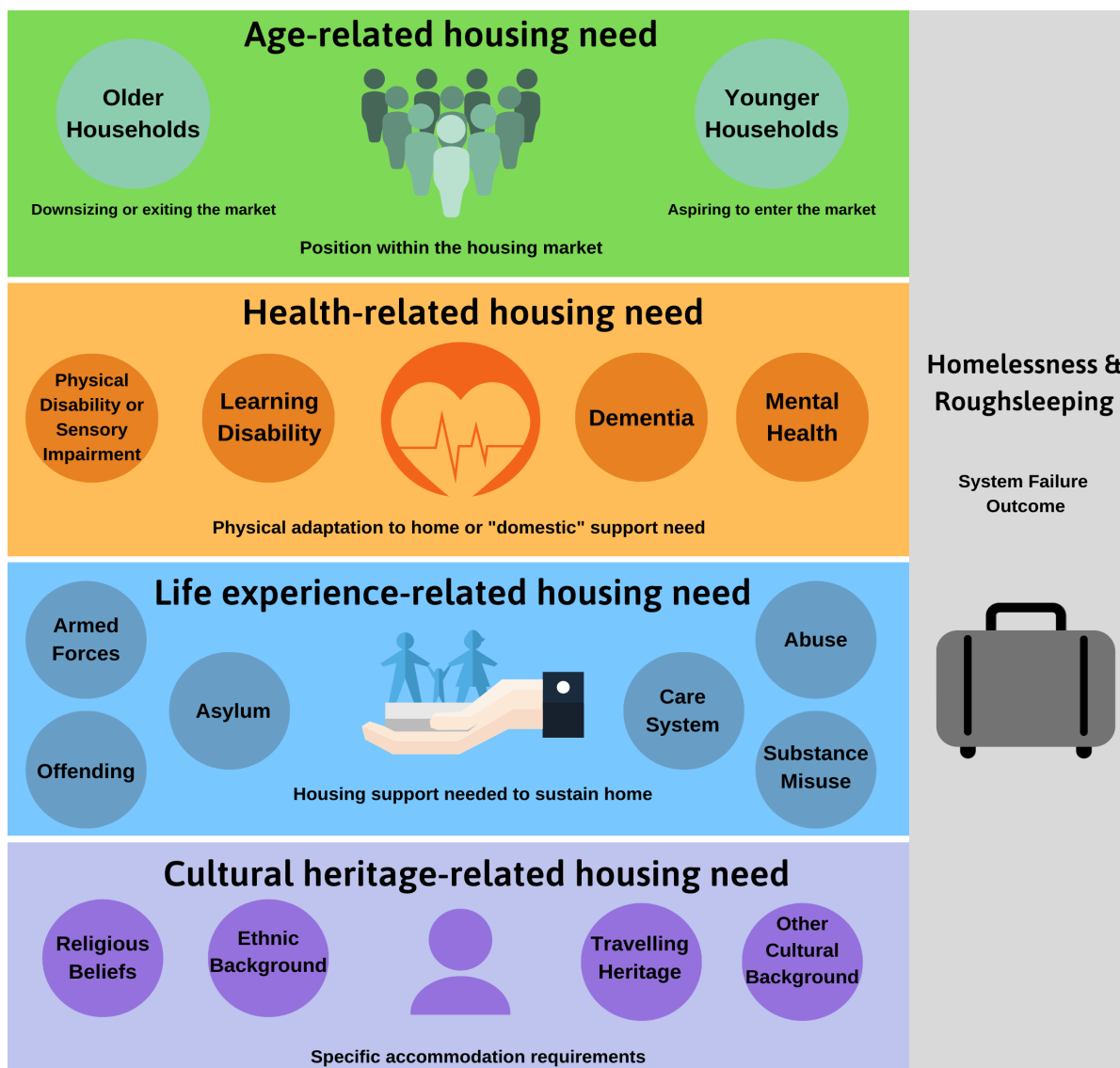
### Introduction

5.1 Paragraph 61 of the NPPF refers to housing needs for different groups in the community and these fall into two broad groups: housing for people with additional needs and housing for specific household types. This chapter provides a summary of material presented in Technical Appendix F Specialist Housing Need.

### Housing for people with additional needs

5.2 This groups includes older people and accommodation for people with disabilities which are further sub-divided into those with health-related and life-experience related needs as summarised in Figure 5.1.

**Figure 5.1** Establishing need associated with age, health and life experience





- 5.3 The evidence base has been established based around these broad principles:
- people with additional needs are generally accommodated in mainstream housing and provided with care and support when needed;
  - some people will have complex and multiple needs and therefore may fall into several different categories of need;
  - some people require long-term accommodation to provide support for ongoing needs; and some require short-term supported housing which aims to support people for a period of time before moving on/back into mainstream housing; and
  - most people with additional needs will not need specialist supported housing but they may need adaptations to their homes and/or care and support provided in other ways.

## Age-related housing need

- 5.4 Age-related housing need relates to the needs of specific age groups in the housing market due to life events and the impact this has on the need for dwellings of particular sizes/types and affordability. For older households this includes 'rightsizing' and adaptation of existing dwellings. For younger households, affordability is a particular concern and this has been considered elsewhere in the report. For this section we therefore focus upon the needs of older persons for particular unit types.

## Housing for older people

- 5.5 The NPPF Annex 2 defines older people as '*people over or approaching retirement age, including the active, newly-retired through to the very frail elderly; and whose housing can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing through to the full range of retirement and specialist housing for those with care and support needs.*'
- 5.6 PPG recommends the following are considered in an assessment of older persons need:
- The future need for specialist accommodation (including but not restricted to age-restricted general market housing, retirement living or sheltered accommodation, extra-care or housing with care), broken down by type and tenure.
  - The need for care in residential care and nursing homes (C2).
  - The need for co-housing communities.
  - The role of general housing and in particular bungalows and homes that can be adapted to meet a change in needs.
- 5.7 PPG notes that '*plan-making authorities will need to count housing provided for older people against their housing requirement*'<sup>31</sup>.

---

<sup>31</sup> PPG June 2019 Paragraph: 016 Reference ID: 63-016-20190626

- 5.8 Over the period 2020 to 2037, the number of people aged 65 and over is expected to increase by 28.9% by 2037 there will be an additional 14,316 households headed by someone aged 65 or over. The majority of older people (79.1%) want to remain in their current home with help and support when needed (Table 5.1). There is also interest a range of options including sheltered, Extra Care, co-housing (with different tenure options being considered) and open market accommodation.

**Table 5.1 Older persons' housing preferences by age group**

Housing option	65-74 (%)	75-84 (%)	85+ (%)	All 65+ (%)
Continue to live in current home with support when needed	67.9	84.5	96.1	79.1
Buying a property in the open market	15.4	9.4	5.8	11.5
Rent a property from a private landlord	3.8	0.7	2.3	2.4
Rent from a council or housing association	10.9	5.6	5.4	8.0
Sheltered Accommodation – Renting	21.3	14.2	22.3	18.9
Sheltered Accommodation – Buying	19.1	17.3	11.1	16.9
Sheltered Accommodation - Shared ownership	6.4	6.6	5.3	6.3
Extra Care Housing – Renting	18.0	13.8	18.8	16.6
Extra Care Housing – Buying	8.7	14.4	10.6	11.1
Extra Care Housing - Shared ownership	5.4	7.4	5.3	6.1
Supported Housing	3.9	0.0	0.0	1.8
Residential Care Home	7.1	10.7	20.9	10.9
Co-housing	13.4	15.9	10.7	13.8
Go to live with children or other relatives	7.8	8.0	3.0	7.0
Other	2.5	1.5	1.5	2.0
<i>Base (total households responding)</i>	<b>6,112</b>	<b>4,831</b>	<b>2,464</b>	<b>13,406</b>

- 5.9 The 2019 household survey identified that 10.3% (3,086) of households with an HRP aged 65 and over were planning to move in the next 5 years and 5.2% (1,570) would like to move but felt unable to. Main reasons for moving included not being able to manage their existing home (40.1%) and wanting to live closer to family and friends (12.8%) and health reasons (9.1%). The majority wanted and expected to move to a smaller property (Table 5.2).

**Table 5.2 Future housing choices of older households (rightsizing)**

Housing choice	Aspiration (%)	Expectation (%)
Downsizing (moving to a smaller property)	59.5	70.6
Staying same	30.6	21.1
Upsizing (moving to larger property)	9.9	8.3
Total	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>Base (households responding)</i>	<b>2,908</b>	<b>2,153</b>

## Future need for specialist older person accommodation and residential care provision

- 5.10 Across the borough, there are around 8,238 units of specialist older persons accommodation comprising 5,519 specialist older accommodation (C3 planning use class) and 2,719 units of residential care (C2 use class). Map 5.1 shows the current older persons provision across the borough.
- 5.11 Given the ageing of the population, the need for specialist older person accommodation is expected to increase. Based on population projections to 2037, there is an additional need for 3,481 additional units of specialist older persons' accommodation (Table 5.3). Note that the annual housing need number includes C3 need but does not include C2 need.

Current provision (and planning use class)	Number of units 2019	Number aged 75 and over 2030	Number aged 75 and over 2037 (projected)	Change in need
		<b>33,347</b>	<b>47,439</b>	
		<b>Ratio of population to current provision</b>	<b>Ratio applied to 2037 population</b>	
Specialist older person (C3)	5,519	0.165502144	7,851	2,332
Residential Care (C2)	2,719	0.08153657	3,868	1,149
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,238</b>		<b>11,719</b>	<b>3,481</b>

Source: EAC data, 2018-based population projections

## Stakeholder views on older persons' housing

- 5.12 A theme which emerged from the online stakeholder survey was a lack of suitable older person's housing. However, respondents commented that there was possibly an oversupply of sheltered accommodation (evidenced by the number of voids) as some schemes do not meet expectations of older people in terms of size and location.
- 5.13 The gaps in provision were listed as older persons bungalows and apartments with particularly high demand for two-bedroom bungalows to accommodate informal and formal carers. Accessible housing was considered to be generally lacking across the borough and there is demand for older person's Extra Care housing.
- 5.14 The Wirral Health and Care Commissioning team are working jointly with developers and housing associations to develop Extra Care schemes across the borough to meet the future demand of Wirral residents.

## Senior cohousing communities

- 5.15 Senior cohousing is specifically mentioned in PPG as a housing option for older people: 'Senior co-housing communities are created and run by residents, based

on the intention to live with a group of people of a similar age. The sites often consist of self-contained private homes as well as shared community space. Some communities offer an additional option for informal care.

- 5.16 The household survey identified a total of 1,973 older person households interested in cohousing, with a particular interest in 1- and 2-bedroom flats and 2-bedroom bungalows.

### The role of general housing and in particular bungalows and homes that can be adapted to meet a change in needs

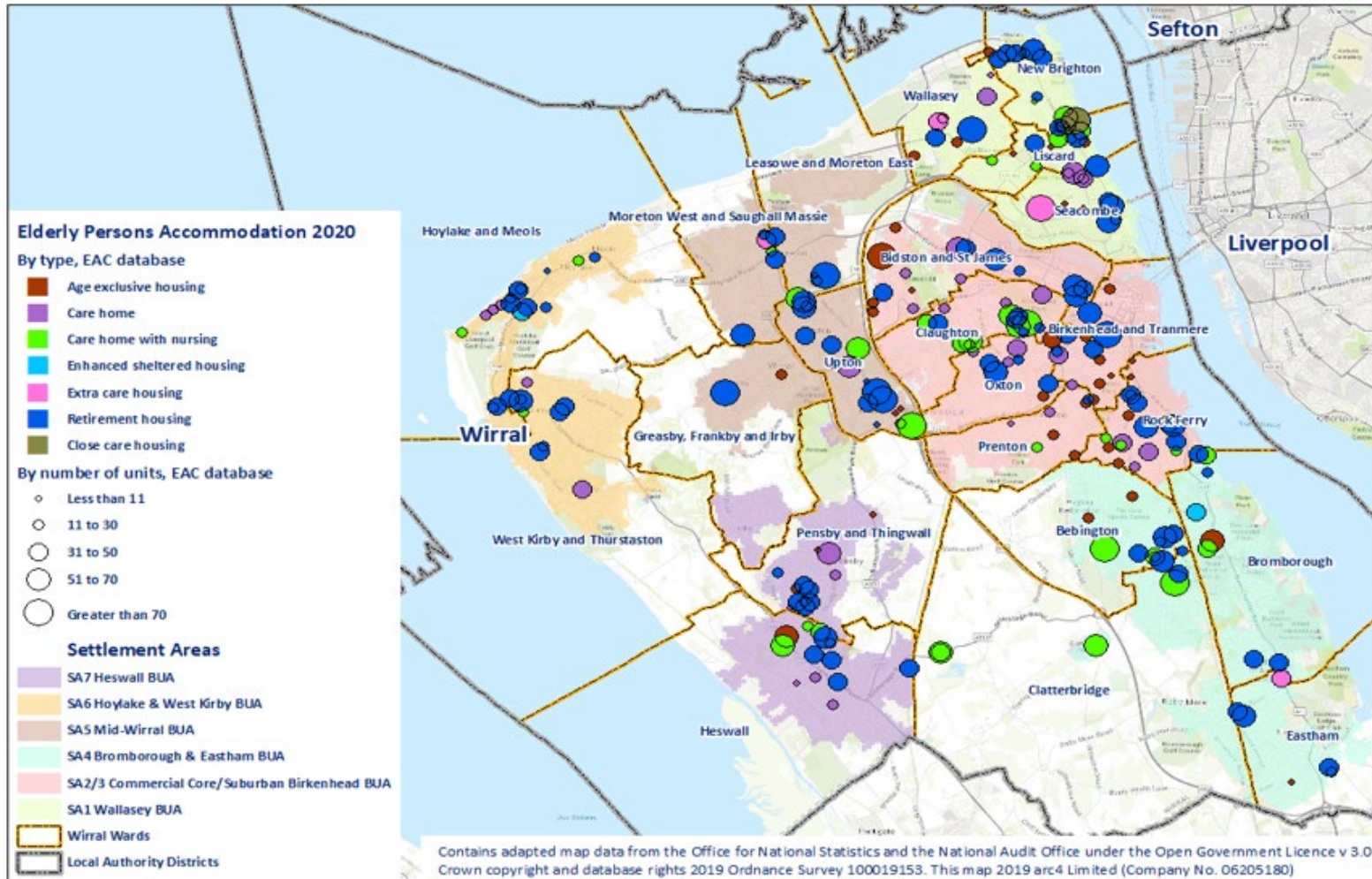
- 5.17 The profile of dwellings occupied by households aged 65 and over by age group is summarised in Table 5.4.
- 5.18 There are also around 11,840 bungalows in Wirral accounting for 8.0% of overall stock and 26,940 flats accounting for 18.3% of stock which will be providing accommodation for older people.
- 5.19 The provision of appropriate adaptations to existing dwelling stock can help people lead independent lives. Given that the majority of older people want to remain in their own homes with help and support when needed, the extent to which their properties need to be adapted needs careful consideration. Additionally, the need to adapt properties for households generally needs to be considered.
- 5.20 Table 5.4 shows data from the household survey 2019. It shows how many homes in each settlement area have already been adapted, whether care and support are required and whether there is sufficient space for a carer to stay overnight if needed.

**Table 5.4 Adaptations, support requirements and space for carer to stay by settlement area**

	Current home has been adapted or purpose-built for a person with a long-term illness, health problem or disability	You or other members of your household require care or support to enable you/them to stay in this home	Sufficient space in your home for a carer to stay overnight, if this was needed, is available
Settlement area	% yes	% yes	% yes
SA1 Wallasey	11.3	9.2	62.4
SA 2/3 Commercial Core/ Suburban Birkenhead	9.1	10.3	60.4
SA4 Bromborough & Eastham	7.1	3.9	66.8
SA5 Mid-Wirral	10.6	9.4	58.5
SA6 Hoylake and West Kirby	8.9	6.9	73.3
SA7 Heswall	6.4	8.6	73.5
SA8 Rural Areas	5.5	5.2	72.8
Total	9.1	8.3	64.0
Base	146,131	146,131	146,131

Source: 2019 household survey

Map 5.1 Current older persons accommodation across Wirral



Source: Elderly Accommodation Counsel

- 5.21 The 2019 household survey asked whether adaptations were required by households (Table 5.5), in line with the PPG which asks councils to consider the extent to which existing dwelling stock can help meet the needs of older people<sup>32</sup>. When asked about adaptations and home improvements required in the home now, households aged under 65 focused more on the house itself, specifically, more insulation, better heating and security alarms. However, households aged over 75 needed assistance in the home, including a downstairs WC, internal and external handrails, adaptations to bathrooms and a stair lift. These requirements are self-determined by residents responding to the household survey and may not necessarily reflect actual requirements following an independent assessment in the home.
- 5.22 Resources for aids and adaptations remain limited, particularly for households in the private sector (owner occupation or privately rented accommodation). However, the provision of appropriate adaptations is essential to older households in maintaining independent living. Alternative sources of funding, such as equity loans, could be considered to finance remedial measures required by older person households. It should be pointed out that whilst local authorities will assess anyone's needs, assistance is currently means tested and some older person households will self-fund.

### Estimating future need for adaptations

- 5.23 The 2019 Household Survey indicates that 9.1% of households live in properties that have been adapted or purpose built for those with an illness/disability. Analysis of demographic data (Technical Appendix F Table F.13) would suggest that the number of generally adapted properties will need to increase by around 2,000 over the plan period. This figure has been derived from data on the number of households with adaptations by age group of the Household Reference Person; how the number of households by HRP age group is expected to change; and applying the proportion of adapted properties to future household numbers by age group.

---

<sup>32</sup> PPG 2019 Paragraph: 017 Reference ID: 2a-017-20190220

<b>Table 5.5 Adaptations and home improvements required by age group</b>				
<b>Adaptation/improvement required</b>	<b>Age group (% of households)</b>			<b>Total</b>
	<b>Under 65 years</b>	<b>65-74 years</b>	<b>75+</b>	
<b>Home improvement</b>				
More insulation (loft, wall cavities)	28.5	19.7	9.9	25.3
Security alarm	28.3	15.0	11.4	24.7
Community alarm service	3.8	4.1	12.2	4.8
Better heating	24.2	22.1	12.3	22.6
Double glazing	22.2	20.2	9.5	20.5
Improved ventilation	14.4	9.3	4.6	12.7
Sound proofing	13.0	11.4	7.1	12.1
Downstairs WC	9.6	13.1	25.9	11.9
Additional entrances / exits	2.7	0.0	4.6	2.6
Increase the size of property (e.g. extension, loft conversion)	12.3	3.4	5.6	10.4
<b>Adaptations</b>				
Adaptations to bathroom	19.5	36.0	29.8	22.8
Internal handrails / grab rails	13.9	17.0	23.9	15.4
Adaptations to kitchen	10.7	4.6	9.2	9.7
External handrails /grab rails	4.5	15.2	23.0	7.9
Support with keys / fob access to property	6.8	2.0	13.0	6.8
Stair lift / vertical lift	4.6	7.5	20.0	6.7
Adaptations relating to sensory needs	5.4	5.9	3.7	5.3
Improvements to access (e.g. level access in and around home)	3.7	3.9	12.2	4.7
Opening or closing front door / accessing communal entrance	4.2	3.5	3.8	4.0
Wheelchair adaptations (including door widening and ramps)	2.3	3.1	9.5	3.2
Lever door handles	2.1	1.4	5.0	2.3
Room for a carer	1.9	1.0	3.9	2.0
Base (all households)	100,789	22,477	17,330	146,131

Source: 2019 household survey

## Assistance in the home

5.24 The 2019 Household Survey provided information on a range of practical assistance required from households by age group (Table 5.6). Overall, the highest level of need is for help with repair and maintenance of the home, help with gardening and help with cleaning the home. For all types of assistance, the level of need increases with age. Company and friendship is selected as needed now or in the next 5 years by around one in five households aged 85 years and over.

Type of help needed now or in next 5 years	% households needing help by age group of HRP					
	Under 55	55-64	65-74	75-84	85+	All
Help with repair and maintenance of home	21.0	30.7	39.0	42.9	54.6	29.8
Help with gardening	11.2	19.7	34.0	47.5	62.7	22.4
Help with cleaning home	11.3	15.9	21.3	36.7	57.2	18.0
Help with other practical tasks	10.1	13.1	15.3	23.0	51.5	14.4
Help with personal care	8.0	11.9	10.7	14.3	30.5	10.9
Want company / friendship	4.6	5.7	5.9	5.7	18.5	5.7
Base (all households)	61,744	43,013	23,362	13,001	5,011	146,131

Source: 2019 Household Survey

## Health-related housing need

- 5.25 A range of sources can be drawn upon to establish the overall scale of disability/support needs across the borough and this is presented in detail at Technical Appendix F. In summary:
- The 2011 Census reported that across the borough 78.8% were in very good or good health, 13.9% were in fair health and 7.3% in bad/very bad health (particularly across older age groups). A total of 67,100 residents (21.2%) were in fair/bad/very bad health which compares with 18.3% across England.
  - 11.3% of residents reported that their daily activities were limited 'a lot' and 10.6% 'a little' which compares with 8.3% and 9.3% respectively across England. This is mainly associated with older age groups.
  - 4.3% of the population receive Disability Living Allowance;
  - The ONS Family Resources Survey 2016/17 estimates that 22.7% of the population nationally has a disability. This translates to around 74,300 people across Wirral now and is expected to increase to around 82,400 by 2037.
- 5.26 The 2019 household survey data considered illness/disability. Table 5.7 shows the number of people stating an illness/disability and the type of condition. This suggests a higher number than national estimates. The most frequently mentioned illness/disability was longstanding illness or health condition (11.0%) followed by physical/mobility impairment (8.6%).



<b>Illness/disability</b>	<b>Number of people</b>	<b>% of population</b>
Physical / mobility impairment	27,728	8.6
Learning disability / difficulty	7,417	2.3
Mental health issue	24,082	7.4
Visual impairment	8,889	2.7
Hearing impairment	16,374	5.1
Long standing illness or health condition	35,609	11.0
Older Age-related illness or disability	5,937	1.8
Other	20,477	6.3
<i>Base (Number of people with illness/disability)</i>	<b>92,329</b>	28.5

Source: 2019 household survey

### Physical disability

- 5.27 POPPI and PANSI<sup>33</sup> data provide data on the likely prevalence in 2020 and how this is expected to change by 2035<sup>34</sup> (see Technical Appendix F Table F.20). In 2020, there were an estimated 24,245 people with mobility issues across all age groups which is projected to increase to 26,169 by 2035 mainly due to an increase in the number of people aged 65 with mobility issues.
- 5.28 Housing priorities expressed in Wirral's All Age Disability Ability Strategy include:
- Widening the range of housing options for people with disabilities including home ownership;
  - Delivery of additional Extra Care homes; and
  - Increasing the use of equipment/adaptation to enable people to remain independent in their own home.
- 5.29 Stakeholders commented there is a lack of disabled adapted living spaces, homes that can manage transition to older age.

### Learning disability and autism

- 5.30 The number of people across all age groups with moderate or severe learning disabilities is estimated to be around 1,220 in 2020 rising to 1,240 by 2035<sup>35</sup>, with a notable growth in the number of people age 65 and over with learning disabilities (see Technical Appendix F Table F.21). Around 2,500 people have autistic spectrum disorders in 2020 and this is expected to increase slightly by 2035.
- 5.31 Housing priorities for people with learning disabilities expressed in Wirral's All Age Disability Ability Strategy include:

<sup>33</sup> Projecting Older People Population Information/Projecting Adult Needs and Service Information, Oxford Brookes University/Institute of Public Care

<sup>34</sup> Note that POPPI/PANSI projections are based on 5 year intervals, with the closest to 2037 being 2035

<sup>35</sup> *ibid*

- a move towards actively improving the outcomes for people who live in shared supported living settings by working with providers to promote independent living and operate a positive risk-taking approach;
- decommission shared accommodation services where they are not delivering the best outcomes for the people who live there; and
- commission apartment style schemes where people live with 'their own front door' and can have access to background support when needed.

#### 5.32 Stakeholders report:

- Increasing numbers of people with learning disabilities over the past decade.
- A lack of housing options for people with learning disabilities for younger people and others under the age of 55.
- No planning from age 14 for suitable housing options.
- More newbuild is required rather than the use of old and inflexible accommodation.
- An issue with letting specialist supported accommodation for those with learning disabilities which results in excessive void loss for housing providers. There needs to be a consistent, accessible way of dealing with vacancies to minimise void loss. Something similar to the previous Learning Disability Panel could be re-established to give confidence to housing providers that their homes will be let quickly which may encourage them to provide more of this type of accommodation. The issue of voids is partly attributed to care models for schemes costing the same regardless of the number of people living in the schemes.
- Long-term accommodation options for people living with ageing parents is an issue.
- New developments should be framed around the concept of residents having their own front door.

## Mental health

5.33 The number of people with a common mental disorder is estimated to be around 35,000 in 2020 rising to around 34,000 by 2034<sup>36</sup>. A key finding from the Wirral homeless review was a growing level and complexity of support needs amongst homeless households.

#### 5.34 Comments from stakeholders included:

- Accommodation for people with complex needs is a key issue.
- Housing in the community based on a 'hub and spoke' model can be helpful and tailored to need but care costs can be high, particularly if a client requires high levels of care

---

<sup>36</sup> ibid

- Recommendations include accommodation so residents can have their own front door and some shared space.
- Care should be taken to ensure that people who have difficulty sharing are appropriately accommodated.
- Use of technology (such as alarms for assistance), appropriate access and appropriate locations of new development should be considered. Accommodation should be in locations where noise disturbance is minimised (for instance avoiding locations next to railways).

### Accessible and wheelchair standard housing

5.35 PPG states that ‘it is better to build accessible housing from the outset rather than have to make adaptations at a later stage – both in terms of cost and with regard to people being able to remain safe and independent in their homes.’ PPG continues ‘where an identified need exists, plans are expected to make use of the optional technical housing standards (footnote 46 of the NPPF). To help bring forward an adequate supply of accessible housing. In doing so planning policies for housing can set out the proportion of new housing that will be delivered to the following standards:

- *M4(1) Category 1: Visitable dwellings (the minimum standard that applies where no planning condition is given unless a plan sets a higher minimum requirement);*
- *M4(2) Category 2: Accessible and adaptable dwellings; and*
- *M4(3) Category 3: Wheelchair user dwellings*

*‘Planning policies for accessible housing need to be based on evidence of need, viability and a consideration of site-specific factors’.*<sup>37</sup>

5.36 Regarding evidencing the need for accessible housing, PPG states:

*‘Based on their housing needs assessment and other available datasets it will be for local planning authorities to set out how they intend to approach demonstrating the need for Requirement M4(2) (accessible and adaptable dwellings), and/or M4(3) (wheelchair user dwellings), of the Building Regulations. There is a wide range of published official statistics and factors which local planning authorities can consider and take into account, including:*

- *the likely future need for housing for older and disabled people (including wheelchair user dwellings).*
- *size, location, type and quality of dwellings needed to meet specifically evidenced needs (for example retirement homes, sheltered homes or care homes).*
- *the accessibility and adaptability of existing housing stock.*
- *how needs vary across different housing tenures.*

<sup>37</sup> PPG Paragraphs: 008 Reference ID: 56-008-20160519 & 009 Reference ID: 56-009-20150327

- *the overall impact on viability.*<sup>38</sup>

5.37 Optional accessibility standards for dwellings were introduced by the government in 2015 to provide a mechanism for improving accessibility of housing for those with additional needs. National standards have been established and contained within Part M Volume 1 of the Building Regulations<sup>39</sup> as set out in Table 5.8. Only one accessible housing standard can apply to any dwelling. The M4(2) accessible and adaptable dwelling standard is based on, and in 2015 effectively replaced, the ‘Lifetime Homes’ standard.

<b>Standard Label</b>	<b>Standard title</b>	<b>Level of accessibility provided</b>	<b>Mandatory or optional</b>
M4(1)	Visitable dwellings	Level access not necessarily provided into the dwellings – few accessibility features	Mandatory
M4(2)	Accessible and adaptable dwellings	Level access is provided into the dwelling – easy to adapt to make more accessible – not suitable for most wheelchair users	Optional
M4(3)	Wheelchair user dwellings	Dwellings suitable for wheelchair users: either wheelchair accessible or wheelchair adaptable	Optional

5.38 It should be noted that Part M of the Building Regulations sets a distinction between wheelchair accessible (a home readily useable by a wheelchair user at the point of completion) and wheelchair adaptable (a home that can be easily adapted to meet the needs of a household including wheelchair users) dwellings<sup>40</sup>

5.39 The 2019 household survey has indicated that residents in 1,236 households (0.8%) require wheelchair adaptations to their homes (Table 5.9). Over the plan period, this number is expected increase by a further 242 resulting in an overall need for 1,478 wheelchair adapted dwellings. This will be achieved through the adaptation of existing properties and through newbuild. Of households requiring wheelchair adapted dwellings, 53.9% are owner occupiers, 16.5% private renters and 29.6% live in affordable housing.

5.40 In order to establish an appropriate target for M4(3) dwellings, Table 5.10 sets out a series of assumptions regarding wheelchair use and the resulting annual need for newbuild wheelchair accessible or adaptable properties.

5.41 According to PPG<sup>41</sup> ‘Local Plan policies for wheelchair accessible homes should be applied only to those dwellings where the local authority is responsible for allocating or nominating a person to live in that dwelling.’ This would imply that the onus on wheelchair accessible housing delivery is with the Local Authority/Registered Providers but private developers should also be

<sup>38</sup> Para: 007 Reference ID: 56-007-20150327

<sup>39</sup>[https://www.planningportal.co.uk/info/200135/approved\\_documents/80/part\\_m\\_-\\_access\\_to\\_and\\_use\\_of\\_buildings](https://www.planningportal.co.uk/info/200135/approved_documents/80/part_m_-_access_to_and_use_of_buildings)

<sup>40</sup> PPG Paragraph: 009 Reference ID: 56-009-20150327

<sup>41</sup> PPG Paragraph: 009 Reference ID: 56-009-20150327

encouraged to build to M4(3) wheelchair accessible or adaptable homes where appropriate. Any final targets should be set within the context of likely levels of delivery.

**Table 5.9 Future need for wheelchair adapted properties**

Age Group	Year			% households needing wheelchair adaptations	Number of wheelchair adapted properties required by age group		
	2020	2037	change		2020	2037	Change
16-24	3,696	3,781	85	0.0	0	0	0
25-34	15,488	14,590	-898	0.2	35	33	-2
35-44	21,146	21,820	674	0.0	0	0	0
45-59	43,374	40,231	-3,143	1.2	511	474	-37
60-74	36,577	39,342	2,765	0.4	147	158	11
75-84	17,276	23,798	6,522	1.1	190	262	72
85+	7,039	11,005	3,966	5.0	353	551	199
Total	144,596	154,567	9,971	0.8	1,236	1,478	242
Source	ONS 2018-based household projections			2019 Household Survey	2019 survey applied to ONS 2018-based household projections		

**Table 5.10 Wheelchair use assumptions and resulting annual need**

Assumption	% requirement	Number each year (based on target of 779)
Wheelchair use from the English Housing Survey 2014/15 – households using wheelchair all the time	1%	8
Wheelchair use from the English Housing Survey 2014/15 – households using wheelchair either indoor or outdoors	3.6%	28
Aspire report on wheelchair accessible housing <sup>42</sup>	10%	78
Wirral 1,478 need over plan period (divided by 17 years) assuming all met through newbuild	11.2%	87
Average of indicators	6.3%	50

5.42 Table 5.11 considers the profile of wheelchair accessible or adaptable dwellings needed by number of bedrooms and age group of the household reference person.

<sup>42</sup> Wheelchair Accessible Housing: Waiting for appropriate housing in England, Aspire October 2014 recommends that the national government should set a minimum requirement of 10% of all new build properties across all tenures to be wheelchair accessible

<b>Table 5.11 Wheelchair dwellings needed by age group and number of bedrooms</b>				
<b>Age group</b>	<b>Number of bedrooms (Table %)</b>			<b>Total</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	
Under 65	24.6	11.1	2.2	37.9
65 and over	55.5	6.6	0.0	62.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>73.2</b>	<b>23.0</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Age group</b>	<b>Number of bedrooms (needed each year by age group)</b>			<b>Total</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	
Under 65	12	6	1	19
65 and over	28	3	0	31
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>50</b>

Source: 2019 household survey

Note: The annualised figure of 50 is based on the average of indicators in Table 5.10

- 5.43 Table 5.12 considers where households stating a need for wheelchair adapted property live, indicating that over half live in Settlement Areas 1 to 3.

<b>Table 5.12 Wheelchair dwellings needed by settlement area</b>	
<b>Settlement area</b>	<b>% households having wheelchair adaptation need</b>
SA1 Wallasey	13.7
SA 2/3 Commercial Core/ Suburban Birkenhead	39.8
SA4 Bromborough & Eastham	16.1
SA5 Mid-Wirral	13.4
SA6 Hoylake and West Kirby	5.6
SA7 Heswall	10.1
SA8 Rural Areas	1.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Base (annual need)</b>	<b>50</b>

- 5.44 Given the ageing population in the borough and the identified levels of disability amongst the population, it is recommended that a policy to provide new homes built to accessibility standards is included in the Local Plan. On the basis of available evidence on the likely future need; size, type, location of dwellings needed; the adaptability of the existing stock; and how need varies across different tenures, taking into account of the guidance on setting optional technical standards in PPG<sup>43</sup>, it is suggested that:

- A range of between 1% (minimum) and 11.2% (maximum) of new dwellings are built to M4(3) wheelchair accessible standard (this would imply an average target of around 6% or 50 each year); and

<sup>43</sup> PPG Para: 007 Reference ID: 56-007-20150327

- All remaining new dwellings are built to M4(2) accessible and adaptable standard to take account of the ageing demographics of the borough. This will ensure that new dwellings can be occupied and also visited by people needing accessible/adaptable dwellings.
- 5.45 It should be noted however that any percentage requirements for accessible housing are subject to cumulative viability testing. It is also recommended that needs are monitored closely given the ageing population over the Plan Period.

## Stakeholder views on specialist housing

- 5.46 Stakeholders comment that there is not enough specialist housing in Wirral. In particular, there is a shortage of specialist supported housing, Extra Care schemes, sheltered housing, move on accommodation for people leaving care or temporary accommodation. Financial viability is a key concern, with unstable revenue and capital funding meaning that specialist housing is high risk to build. Land also needs to be made available at a reasonable price. Existing specialist housing provision is not evenly spread across the borough. The full range of comments received from stakeholders is presented in Technical Appendix E.

## Life experience-related housing need

### Armed forces

- 5.47 Wirral Council was an early signatory to the Armed Forces Covenant which seeks to provide support in a range of areas including housing to in-service and ex-service personnel. The JSNA estimated that around 3% of street-homeless population has a service history, around 23% of ex-service personnel rent their home and in 2018/19 20 households were leaving the armed forces and were going to be homeless.

### Young Care Leavers

- 5.48 Stakeholders comment there remains a lack of quantity and variety of longer-term housing for care leavers. During 2018/19 29 households were owed a homeless duty by the borough had a support need due to being a care leaver.

### Substance misuse

- 5.49 During 2018/19 147 households were owed a homeless duty by the borough had a support need due to drug or alcohol dependency. The MainStay support service assessment and referral database revealed that 1060 clients had support needs due to current or former substance misuse.

## Cultural heritage related housing need

- 5.50 For those from a minority ethnic background there may be cultural heritage or religion related determined needs which impact on the type of accommodation

required. This would include the specific needs of particular BAME<sup>44</sup> households as well as those from Travelling communities.

## BAME households

- 5.51 The BAME population increased from 3.5% in 2001 to 5.5% in 2011 and this is likely to have continued during the 2010s. The annual School Census (2017) reported that BAME pupils accounted for 8.1% of the overall school population. The distribution of BAME households within Wirral is shown in Table 5.11. Half of BAME households live in SA2/3 (Commercial Core/Suburban Birkenhead).

Settlement Area	BAME households	% of households in settlement area that are BAME	% of BAME households in each settlement area	All households
SA 1	739	2.6	12.3	27,946
SA 2/3	3023	7.1	50.3	42,601
SA 4	542	2.2	9.0	24,791
SA 5	707	3.0	11.8	23,710
SA 6	448	3.9	7.5	11,392
SA 7	477	3.8	7.9	12,630
SA 8	71	2.3	1.2	3,061
Total	6008	4.1	100.0	146,131

Source: 2019 household survey

- 5.52 Regarding housing need, BAME households were twice as likely to be in housing need compared with all households (17.5% compared with 9.4%) , with overcrowding, insecurity of tenure and difficulty in maintaining the home as key reasons for being in need.

## Gypsy and Traveller Households

- 5.53 Wirral Borough has no pitch provision for Gypsies and Travellers nor yard provision for Travelling Showpeople. An updated Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment was prepared during 2019 which showed no current need for any additional specific specialist provision but did identify some more specific needs which could be addressed through the normal housing register.

## Other groups with particular housing requirements

- 5.54 This chapter concludes with a summary of the other household groups who have particular housing requirements in Wirral.

<sup>44</sup> Households not identifying as 'White British'



## People who rent their homes

- 5.55 Chapter 4 presents a range of data on the characteristics of households who rent their homes – either privately or from a social housing provider.

## Self-build and custom housebuilding

- 5.56 The NPPF 2021 set out that the government wants to enable more people to build their own homes and wants to make this form of housing a mainstream housing option. During the period March 2016 to November 2018 there were 186 households on the Self-build register (see Technical Appendix F for full analysis). Data indicated a particular preference for 2 to 4-bedroom dwellings, with the Hoylake/West Kirby, Heswall, mid-Wirral and the Rural Area most frequently mentioned as preferred areas to live.

## Student housing need

- 5.57 In the 2011 Census there were 16,249 students in Wirral Borough. There were 4 communal establishments associated with education with 52 people living in them.
- 5.58 The stakeholder survey received one comment on student housing. It was highlighted that Wirral is two miles from a university city. It was suggested that the council needs to:
- Work with stakeholders to address the river barrier and develop student accommodation and the student economy to regenerate Birkenhead/Seacombe; and
  - Encourage Liverpool Universities to extend into Wirral.

## Conclusion

- 5.59 In accordance with PPG, the SHMA has considered the future need for specialist accommodation, the need for residential care and considered the role of general housing in meeting needs, in particular bungalows and homes that can be adapted to meet a change in needs.
- 5.60 The number of households headed by someone aged 65 or over is expected to increase by 14,316 (+29.9%) by 2037. The majority of older people 65 and over (79.1%) want to continue to live in their current home with support when needed according to the household survey, with help with repair/maintenance, gardening, cleaning and other practical tasks, which would help people remain in their own home (the need for this key support is discussed in the next section). However, the household survey also points to a need to deliver a range of smaller dwellings (particularly bungalows/level access accommodation) for older people in the general market and specialist older persons housing provision.
- 5.61 Across the borough, there are currently around 8,238 units of specialist older persons accommodation. This includes 2,719 units of residential care (C2) dwellings and 5,519 specialist older persons dwellings (C3). It is estimated that an additional 2,332 units of specialist older person (C3) and 1,149 units of

residential care (C2) will be required by 2037. The SHMA does not specify the precise nature of specialist older person dwellings to be built. This is to allow flexibility in delivery and PPG states that *'any single development may contain a range of different types of specialist housing'*<sup>45</sup>

- 5.62 A key conclusion is that there needs to be a broader housing offer for older people across the borough and the SHMA has provided evidence of the scale and range of dwellings needed.
- 5.63 A wealth of information has been assembled from various sources which helps to scope out the likely level of disability across the borough's population. Although it is a challenge to quantify the precise accommodation and support requirements, the SHMA has helped to scope out where needs are arising and has provided indicators of specific needs across various needs groups.
- 5.64 Regarding **housing for people with disabilities**, the household survey (2019) indicates that 21.8% of all residents have an illness/disability. Around 9.1% of households live in properties which have either been purpose-built or adapted for someone with an illness or disability. There is expected to be an increase of around 907 dwellings needing major adaptation across all households to 2037.
- 5.65 Given the ageing population of the borough and the identified levels of disability amongst the population, it is recommended that 6% of new dwellings are built to wheelchair accessible and adaptable M4(3) standard. All remaining new dwellings are built to M4(2) accessible and adaptable standard to take account of the ageing demographics of the borough.

---

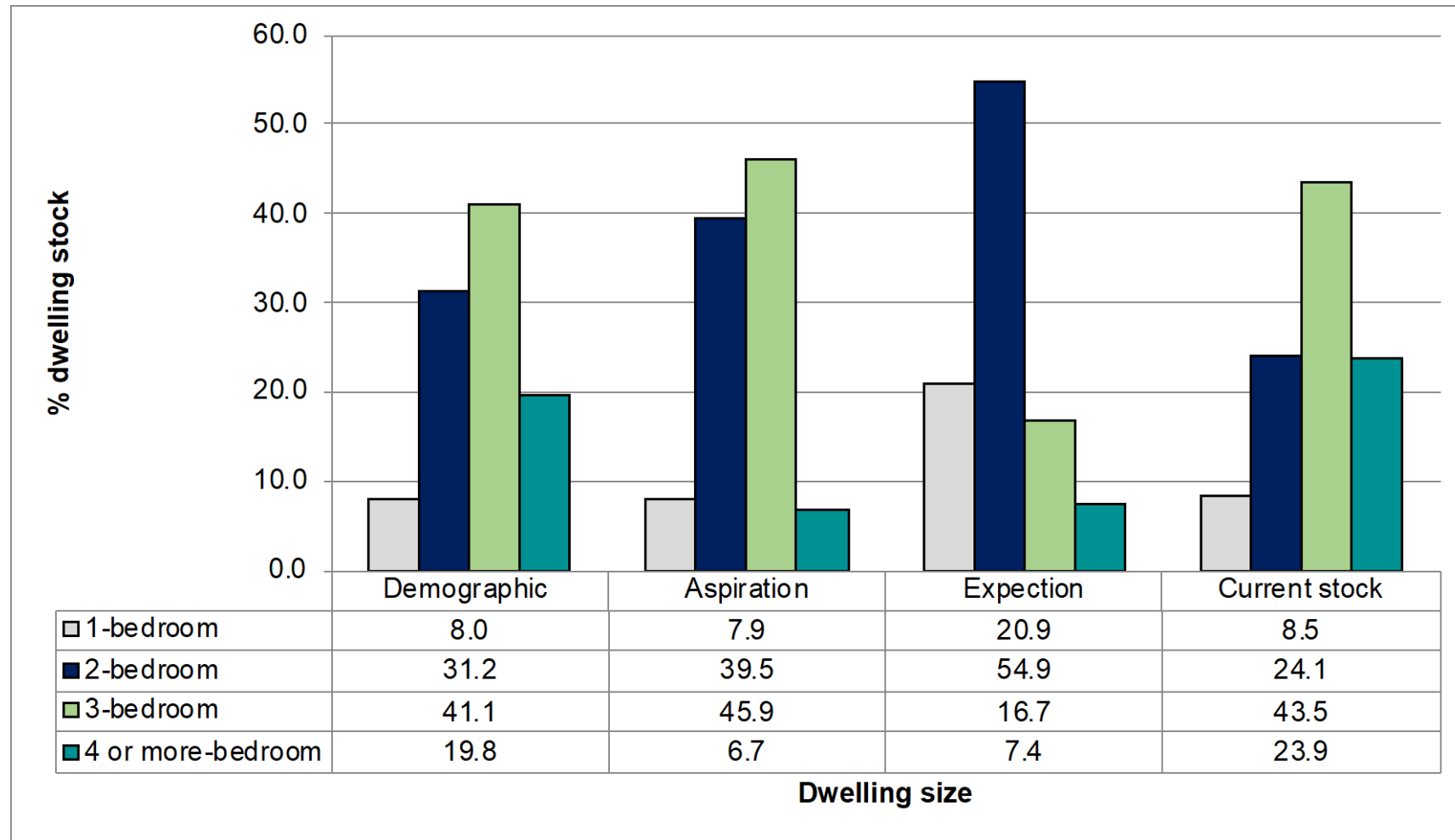
<sup>45</sup> PPG June 2019 Paragraph: 010 Reference ID: 63-010-20190626

## 6. Overall dwelling type and mix

### Introduction

- 6.1 Having considered the overall housing need, affordable need and the needs of particular groups, this chapter establishes an overall dwelling type, size and tenure mix for Wirral Borough. The detailed analysis underpinning this chapter is presented in Technical Appendix D.
- 6.2 In summary, the analysis uses the following data sources:
- household projections;
  - dwelling stock information;
  - national estimates of the relationships between households and dwellings derived from the 2019 household survey; and
  - data from the affordable housing need calculation.
- 6.3 The analysis considers overall dwelling type and mix under three scenarios:
- A **baseline demographic** scenario which assumes the relationship between households and the dwellings they occupy remains the same over the plan period;
  - An **aspirations** scenario which looks at the aspirations of households by age group and household type; and
  - An **expectations** scenarios which considers what households expect to move to by age group and household type.
- 6.4 The results of the scenarios are then compared with the current dwelling stock profile.
- 6.5 Figure 6.1 illustrates the variance between current stock and the alternative dwelling mix scenarios. Under the baseline demographic scenario, the main focus is 3-bedroom dwellings followed by 2 bedroom, 4-bedroom and 1-bedroom. Under the aspiration scenario, the main dwelling sizes are 2- and 3-bedroom and under the expectation scenario there is a shift towards smaller 1- and 2-bedroom dwellings.

**Figure 6.1 Summary of current dwelling stock and dwelling mix under baseline demographic, aspiration and expectation scenarios**



Source: 2019 household survey

## Summary of scenarios

- 6.6 Table 6.1 summarises the outcome of the dwelling mix scenario analysis. Overall, around 60% of new dwellings should have 3 or more bedrooms based on the demographic baseline scenario. Households generally aspire towards 2 and 3 bedroom dwellings and higher proportions expect to move to smaller 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings. Regarding dwelling types, the SHMA recommends that the council encourages innovative dwelling design, particularly in regeneration areas. It is expected that a broad range of houses, apartments and level-access accommodation will be developed across the borough.

Number of bedrooms	Demographic baseline (%)	Aspiration (%)	Expectation (%)	Current stock (%)
1	8.1	9.0	19.7	8.5
2	31.7	37.5	54.4	24.1
3	40.9	45.4	16.8	43.5
4 or more	19.3	8.1	9.0	23.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note totals by age group may vary slightly due to rounding errors

Source: 2019 household survey

## Overall dwelling mix by tenure

- 6.7 Table 6.2 summarises dwelling type/size mix based on the demographic scenario by the annual number of dwellings needed by tenure. Note that the only major difference under the aspiration and expectation scenarios would be a much higher proportion of level-access dwellings. This analysis assumes an annual target of 785 dwellings based over the period 2020-2030, an overall affordable housing delivery of around 20% in line with current planning policy and an assumed 57% affordable/social rented and 43% affordable home ownership split including First Homes (which translates an annual need for 11% of all new dwellings to be affordable/social rented and 9% to be affordable home ownership). The analysis factors in the dwelling type/size analysis carried out as part of the affordable housing needs calculation and also the realistic dwelling type/size choices of households in need considering affordable home ownership solutions. Table 6.3 presents the percentage breakdown of the dwelling type/size and tenure mix.

Table 6.2 Overall annual dwelling size and tenure mix recommendations				
Number of bedrooms	Tenure			Total
	Market	Affordable/ Social Rented	Affordable home ownership	
Overall % split>>	80%	11%	9%	100%
1	41	15	7	62
2	176	41	27	245
3	277	27	18	323
4 or more	134	6	16	155
<b>Total</b>	<b>628</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>785</b>

Table 6.3 Overall annual dwelling size and tenure mix under recommendations (% data by tenure)				
Number of bedrooms	Tenure (%)			All tenures
	Market	Affordable/ Social Rented	Affordable home ownership	
1	6.8	18.4	10.1	8.4
2	27.7	44.9	40.4	30.8
3	44.1	30.4	26.2	41.0
4 or more	21.3	6.3	23.3	19.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Base</b>	<b>628</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>785</b>

6.8 Table 6.4 sets out an overall dwelling size and tenure mix based on the data in Table 6.3 rounded to the nearest 5% for policy making purposes.

Table 6.4 Overall annual dwelling size and tenure mix under recommendations (% data by tenure)				
Number of bedrooms	Tenure (%)			All tenures
	Market	Affordable/ Social Rented	Affordable home ownership	
1	5	20	10	10
2	30	45	40	30
3	45	30	25	40
4 or more	20	5	25	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Base</b>	<b>628</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>785</b>

6.9 The current affordable target based on previous viability studies is 20% on newbuild and 10% within areas that are less viable to develop. Given the level of affordable need identified, it is recommended that the minimum affordable target is 20% and the council should seek a higher proportion of affordable housing delivery on sites, where possible, based on viability evidence. This marks a

change in affordable housing targets but represents a pragmatic response to the level of affordable need identified across the borough, recognises the need to deliver at least 10% of homes on larger sites as affordable home ownership products (NPPF para 64) and reflects the increasing level of affordable housing being delivered across the borough. An affordable policy should therefore continue to support the ongoing delivery of affordable housing and diversify the affordable products available to local residents to reflect identified needs. The impact of higher levels of affordable housing delivery on overall dwelling mix are considered in Technical Appendix D.

## Conclusions

- 6.10 The purpose of this chapter has been to explore the relationship between households and dwellings occupied to establish an indication of appropriate dwelling mix for Wirral Borough over the plan period.
- 6.11 Having established future household change and the implications this has for dwelling type, size and tenure mix, the council can make an informed strategic decision on the range and size of dwellings that will need to be built to meet need and aspiration over the plan period.

## 7. Conclusion: policy and strategic issues

- 7.1 This document has been prepared to equip the council and their partners with robust, defensible and transparent information to help inform strategic decision-making and the formulation of appropriate housing and planning policies. The work also takes account of existing and emerging government policy and guidance.
- 7.2 The Wirral SHMA 2021 update will help the council plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community. Specifically, the SHMA identifies the size, type and tenure of housing required by considering current market demand relative to supply; and also identifies a continued affordable housing imbalance across the borough.
- 7.3 This concluding chapter summarises key messages from the research findings, structured around a commentary on the current and future housing markets and key local strategic issues.

### Overall Housing need

- 7.4 The December 2020 PPG standard method establishes an annual need of 779 dwellings each year. It is recommended that this is adjusted upwards to 785 dwellings each year to support economic growth. Over the past five years, net delivery has averaged 588 each year and over the past three years the number has increased to 705. The council has had economic growth strategies in place, is developing infrastructure to facilitate housing delivery in Birkenhead and there is a shortfall in affordable housing.
- 7.5 PPG<sup>46</sup> allows authorities to take these circumstances into account and establish a higher level of need that the standard method suggests. It is recommended that the housing need figure is adjusted upwards to 785 dwellings each year to support economic growth.

### Dwelling type, tenure and mix

- 7.6 The relationship between household change and dwelling type/size and tenure requirements have been fully explored. The evidence will help the council deliver an appropriate range of dwelling stock for residents over the plan period. The baseline demographic scenario, which considers the relationship between household type, age and dwelling stock, indicates the following overall dwelling mix: 1-bedroom (10%), 2-bedroom (30%), 3-bedroom (40%) and four or more bedroom 20%.
- 7.7 Alternative scenarios which consider household's aspirations and expectations are driven by the ageing population profile of the borough and point to a higher need for smaller 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings.
- 7.8 Regarding affordable need, there is an annual imbalance of 374. An appropriate affordable tenure split for Wirral Borough would be around 57% rented and 43%

---

<sup>46</sup> PPG 2019 Paragraph 010 Reference ID: 2a-010-20190220



affordable home ownership tenures which takes into account the need to develop First Homes as part of affordable housing delivery along with other types of affordable home ownership as set out in Appendix B.

- 7.9 Appropriate dwelling profiles are:
- Affordable rented: 20% one-bedroom, 45% two-bedroom, 30% three-bedroom and 5% four or more-bedroom.
  - Affordable home ownership including First Homes: 10% one-bedroom, 40% two-bedroom, 25% three-bedroom and 25% four or more-bedroom.
- 7.10 The current affordable target is 20% and 10% within areas that are less viable to develop. Given the level of affordable need identified, it is recommended that the minimum affordable target is 20% and the council should seek a higher proportion of affordable housing delivery on sites, where possible, based on viability evidence.

## Meeting the needs of older people and those with disabilities

- 7.11 There is evidence to support a programme of accommodation delivery to help meet the needs of older people and those with disabilities. Although the vast majority of older people want to remain in their own home with support when needed, there is a need to diversify options available to older people wanting to move to more appropriate accommodation.
- 7.12 Currently there are around 8,238 units of specialist older person accommodation comprising 2,719 units of residential care (C2 use class) dwellings and 5,519 units of specialist older person dwellings (C3 use class) such as sheltered and Extra Care. Analysis of demographic change would suggest a need for an additional 1,149 additional units of residential (C2) units and 2,332 units of specialist (C3) units by 2037. The C3 units should be included in the overall housing figure of 785 each year, so 137 or 17.5% of new dwellings built each year should be specialist older persons accommodation but provision of C2 will need to be made in addition.
- 7.13 A key conclusion is that there needs to be a broader housing offer for older people across Wirral Borough and the SHMA has provided evidence of scale and range of dwellings needed.
- 7.14 A range of information has been assembled from various sources which helps to scope out the likely level of disability across Wirral's population. Although it is a challenge to quantify the precise accommodation and support requirements, the SHMA has helped to scope out where needs are arising.
- 7.15 Given the ageing population of the borough and the identified levels of disability amongst the population, it is recommended that 6% of new dwellings are built to M4(3) wheelchair accessible and adaptable standard and all remaining new dwellings are built to M4(2) accessible and adaptable standard to take account of the ageing demographics of the borough.
- 7.16 It is expected that some of this need will be met through the development of C3 accommodation and there is overlap between affordable, specialist older person and M4(3) need. For instance the development of an older person's level access,

wheelchair accessible affordable dwelling would help address three aspects of housing need.

- 7.17 It is also assumed that there will be ongoing adaptation of existing dwellings to support those with additional needs.

## Final comments

- 7.18 The evidence presented in this SHMA suggests that there are three main policy areas that require particular attention from both a planning policy and social policy perspective:

- the challenge of enabling the quantity and mix of housing that needs to be delivered, including an appropriate level of affordable housing;
- the challenge of ensuring that the housing and support needs of older people are met going forward; and
- the challenge of ensuring that the needs of people with disabilities is properly addressed.