

Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update

Technical Appendices

Wirral Council

Final Report

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Table of Contents

List of Technical Appendices	7
Technical Appendix A: Research methodology	8
Overall approach	8
Baseline dwelling stock information and Household Survey sample errors	8
Technical Appendix B: Affordable housing definitions	10
Affordable housing definitions.....	10
Technical Appendix C: Housing need calculations	11
Introduction.....	11
Step A: Current unmet gross need	12
Step B: Future households in need	15
Step C: Affordable housing supply	18
Step D: Total annual need and breakdown by size, type and tenure	19
Dwelling type profile	21
Technical Appendix D: Dwelling mix and modelling	31
Introduction.....	31
Starting points.....	31
Aspiration scenario	36
Expectation scenario	36
Summary of scenarios.....	39
Overall dwelling mix by tenure.....	39
Dwelling mix by tenure under alternative proportions of affordable housing..	41
Technical Appendix E: Stakeholder consultation responses and agent review	43
Agent review synopsis.....	43
Stakeholder survey responses	46
Technical Appendix F: Specialist Housing Need	81
Introduction.....	81
Our understanding of specialist housing need.....	81
Planning Practice Guidance	83
Setting the Context for Specialist Housing Need on the Wirral.....	84
Source: Wirral Intelligence Service.....	87
Age-related housing need	90
Housing for older people	90
Future need for specialist older person accommodation and residential care provision	99
Adult Social Care Commissioning Priorities	105
Health-related housing need.....	105
Autism	113

Life-experience related housing need.....	115
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List of Tables

Table A.1	Survey responses by Settlement Area.....	8
Table C.1	Current gross unmet need (before affordability testing).....	13
Table C.2	Lower quartile house prices and rents by settlement area.....	14
Table C.3	Affordability of open market housing for households in need.....	15
Table C.4	Net and gross household formation 2020-2030	16
Table C.5	Total newly-arising affordable housing need.....	17
Table C.6	Affordable housing supply.....	18
Table C.7	Gross and net annual affordable need.....	19
Table C.8	Estimate of annual supply of affordable stock.....	19
Table C.9	Annual affordable need (%)	20
Table C.10	Comparison between current supply and annual gross need	20
Table C.11	Affordable dwelling type and size mix.....	21
Table C.12	Affordable dwelling mix by settlement area, number of bedrooms and dwelling type.....	22
Table C.13	Affordable tenure split.....	23
Table C.14	Ability of existing households in need and newly-forming households requiring affordable housing to afford intermediate tenure dwellings..	24
Table C.15	First Home prices and incomes required, actual incomes and comparison between incomes and prices.....	26
Table C.16	Actual incomes and comparison between incomes and prices.....	27
Table C.17	Overall tenure split calculation incorporating First Homes	29
Table C.18	Final affordable tenure split after taking into account First Homes. social rented need and apportioning need for affordable rented and other affordable home ownership options	30
Table D.1	Age groups, household type and dwelling types used	32
Table D.2A	Change in number of households by age group 2020-2037	34
Table D.2B	Change in number of households 2020-2037	35
Table D.3	Change in number of households by age group 2020-2037	35
Table D.4	Impact of change in households by age group on dwellings occupied	36
Table D.5	Impact of Change in households by age group on dwellings occupied: aspirations	36
Table D.6	Impact of Change in households by age group on dwellings occupied: expectations.....	37
Table D.7	Summary of dwelling type/mix scenarios.....	39
Table D.8	Overall annual dwelling type/size and tenure mix recommendations..	39

Table D.9	Overall annual dwelling type/size and tenure mix under recommendations (% data).....	40
Table D.10	Overall annual dwelling type/size and tenure mix under recommendations (% data by tenure).....	40
Table D.11	Overall annual dwelling type/size and tenure mix recommendations based on a 10% affordable housing target (number).....	41
Table D.12	Overall annual dwelling type/size and tenure mix recommendations based on a 10% affordable housing target (%).....	41
Table D.13	Overall annual dwelling type/size and tenure mix recommendations based on a 30% affordable housing target (number).....	41
Table D.14	Overall annual dwelling type/size and tenure mix recommendations based on a 30% affordable housing target (%).....	42
Table D.15	Overall annual dwelling type/size and tenure mix recommendations based on a 40% affordable housing target	42
Table D.16	Overall annual dwelling type/size and tenure mix recommendations based on a 40% affordable housing target (%).....	42
Table F.1	Selected health and wellbeing indicators at settlement area level	87
Table F.2	Population change in older age groups between 2020 and 2037	91
Table F.3	Older households (HRP 65 and over).....	94
Table F.4	Over 65s moving preferences by settlement area (%).....	95
Table F.5	Over 65s location and property type preferences (%).....	96
Table F.6	Older person households - main reason for moving	98
Table F.7	Older person rightsizing	98
Table F.8	Future housing choices of older households (downsizing/upsizing) ...	99
Table F.9	Categories of older person accommodation	99
Table F.10	Analysis of future need for specialist older person accommodation .	101
Table F.11	Dementia	102
Table F.12	Senior cohousing dwelling type and size preference	103
Table F.13	Future need for adapted properties	104
Table F.14	Long-term health problem or disability	106
Table F.15	Daily activity limitations	107
Table F.16	DLA claimants by age group	107
Table F.17	DLA claimants by disabling condition.....	109
Table F.18	Estimate of the number of people with a disability	109
Table F.19	Number of people stating illness/disability	110
Table F.20	Physical disability prevalence	110
Table F.21	Learning disability	112

Table F.22	Autistic spectrum disorders.....	113
Table F.23	Mental health prevalence.....	114
Table F.24	Estimated accommodation status is armed service veterans in Wirral aged 16+.....	116
Table F.25	Looked After Children placements, January 2019, Wirral.....	116
Table F.26	Self-build register, count of multiple preferences by area.....	122

List of Charts and Figures

Figure D.1	Change in HRP age groups 2020-2037.....	33
Figure D.2	Summary of current dwelling stock and dwelling mix under baseline demographic, aspiration and expectation scenarios.....	38
Figure F.1	Establishing need associated with age, health and life experience	82
Figure F.2	Establishing need associated with age, health and life experience	88
Figure F.3	Current housing profile (HRP over 65) by settlement area.....	93
Figure F.4	Current dwellings types compared to aspirations and expectations (over 65s).....	97

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List of Technical Appendices

- Technical Appendix A: Research methodology
- Technical Appendix B: Affordable housing definitions
- Technical Appendix C: Housing need
- Technical Appendix D: Dwelling type and mix analysis
- Technical Appendix E: Stakeholder consultation responses and agent review
- Technical Appendix F: Specialist housing need

Technical Appendix A: Research methodology

Overall approach

- A.1 A multi-method approach was adopted in order to prepare a robust and credible Strategic Housing Market Assessment for the Wirral Borough:
- A survey of households across Wirral. 17,390 households in the borough were selected using structured random sampling to complete a questionnaire between August 9th 2019 and September 23rd 2019. 2,586 valid questionnaires were returned and used in data analysis. This represents a 14.9% response rate overall resulting in a borough-level sample error of +/-1.9%;
 - An online survey of key stakeholders including representatives from district and county councils, district and parish councillors, housing associations, voluntary groups and some independent representatives;
 - Interviews with estate and letting agents operating within the borough; and
 - A review of relevant secondary data including the 2011 Census, house price trends, CORE lettings data and MHCLG Statistics.

Baseline dwelling stock information and Household Survey sample errors

- A.2 Table A.1 summarises total dwelling stock and the number of households contacted by survey area, achieved responses and sample errors.

Settlement Area	HOUSEHOLDS FROM 2019 Address data	SAMPLE SIZE 15% Response Rate	SAMPLING ERROR	
		Target	Result	
Settlement Area 1	27,946	221	±	6.6%
Settlement Area 2/3	42,601	385	±	5.0%
Settlement Area 4	24,791	277	±	5.9%
Settlement Area 5	23,710	405	±	4.8%
Settlement Area 6	11,392	613	±	3.9%
Settlement Area 7	12,630	383	±	4.9%
Settlement Area 8	3,061	302	±	5.4%

Source: Council Tax Data 2019

Sample error is based on the 95% confidence interval which is the industry standard to establish result accuracy.

Weighting and grossing

- A.3 In order to proceed with data analysis, it is critical that survey data is weighted to take into account response and non-response bias and grossed up to reflect the total number of households. Weighting for each survey area was based on:
- **Tenure** (the proportion of affordable (social rented and intermediate tenure) and open market dwellings based on 2011 Census data);
 - **Age of Household Reference Person** based on the proportions of household reference people aged under 65 and 65 or over living in affordable and open market provision derived from the 2011 Census; and
 - **Council Tax occupied dwellings** based on the number of occupied dwellings and used as a grossing factor in the weighting to ensure that there is a suitable uplift on the Census 2011 data.
- A.4 Ultimately, the survey element of the assessment is sufficiently statistically robust to undertake detailed analysis and underpin core outputs of the study down to the survey areas presented in Table A1. Furthermore, the survey findings are enhanced and corroborated through analysis of secondary data and stakeholder consultation.

Technical Appendix B: Affordable housing definitions

Affordable housing definitions

Definitions relating to affordable housing are presented in the NPPF 2019 (Annex 2):

Affordable housing: housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions:

- a) **Affordable housing for rent:** meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the government's rent policy for social rent or affordable rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable); (b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes, affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).
- b) **Starter homes:** is as specified in Sections 2 and 3 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and any secondary legislation made under these sections. The definition of a starter home should reflect the meaning set out in statute and any such secondary legislation at the time of plan-preparation or decision-making. Where secondary legislation has the effect of limiting a household's eligibility to purchase a starter home to those with a particular maximum level of household income, those restrictions should be used.
- c) **Discounted market sales housing:** is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.
- d) **Other affordable routes to home ownership:** is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low-cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and Rent to Buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision or refunded to government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.

Technical Appendix C: Housing need calculations

Introduction

- C.1 Identifying the scale of affordable housing need is a key consideration of planning practice guidance. This is a separate calculation to the overall housing need figure derived using the standard model and set out in PPG paragraphs 18 (Reference ID: 2a-018-20190220) to 24 (Reference ID: 2a-024-20190220). The affordable housing need analysis helps to establish the overall scale of affordable housing need by location, type, size and tenure and whether the council should plan for more dwellings to help meet the need for affordable housing.
- C.2 PPG states that ‘all households whose needs are not met by the market can be considered in affordable housing need¹. PPG then considers how affordable housing need should be calculated:
- ‘Strategic policy-makers will need to estimate the current number of households and projected number of households who lack their own housing or who cannot afford to meet their housing needs in the market. This should involve working with colleagues in their relevant authority (e.g. housing, health and social care departments).’²*
- C.3 The PPG focuses on the use of existing (secondary data). Where possible this is supplemented with primary household survey data. For Wirral, arc⁴ has access to a suite of primary and secondary data which informs the analysis of affordable need.
- C.4 There are four broad components to the needs assessment method. These have remained relatively unchanged through the different guidance issued by government and focus on:
- Step A. Existing household in need (current unmet gross need).
 - Step B. Future households in need.
 - Step C. Affordable supply.
 - Step D. Annual need for affordable housing.
- C.5 To be consistent with the standard method for calculating overall housing need, the affordable housing need is annualised over a ten-year period.

Affordability assumptions

- C.6 As part of the affordable needs assessment, the extent to which households in need cannot afford open market prices or rents is considered. PPG does not specify what household income should be spent for a property to be affordable although does state the ‘need to identify the minimum household income required to access lower quartile (entry level) market housing’³. The last

¹ PPG 2019 Paragraph: 018 Reference ID: 2a-018-20190220

² PPG 2019 Paragraph: 019 Reference ID: 2a-019-20190220

³ PPG 2019 Paragraph 021 Reference ID 2a-021-20190220

guidance to consider affordable prices/rents was published in the 2007⁴, which stated that gross household incomes should be used to assess affordability and:

- a household can be considered able to afford to buy a home if it costs 3.5x the gross income of a single earner or 2.9x the gross income for dual-income households; and
 - a household can be considered able to afford market renting where the rent payable was up to 25% of gross household income.
- C.7 The former guidance did note that local circumstances could justify higher figures being used for affordable renting and that allowances should be made for access to capital that could be used towards the cost of home ownership.
- C.8 Mortgage lending practices in 2020 would suggest that 4.75x a single or joint income could be considered⁵.
- C.9 Based on this data, the principle assumption considered by arc⁴ with reference to affordability is:
- for buying up to 3.5x gross household; and
 - for renting up to 25% gross household income.

Step A: Current unmet gross need

- C.10 PPG 2019⁶ states that 'strategic policy-making authorities can establish the unmet (gross) need for affordable housing by assessing past trends and current estimates of:
- the number of homeless households;
 - the number of those in priority need who are currently housed in temporary accommodation;
 - the number of households in over-crowded housing;
 - the number of concealed households;
 - the number of existing affordable housing tenants in need (i.e. householders currently housed in unsuitable dwellings); and
 - the number of households from other tenures in need and those that cannot afford their own homes, either to rent or to own if that is their aspiration.'
- C.11 PPG 2019 notes that care should be taken to avoid double-counting and to only include those households who cannot afford to access suitable housing in the market. Table C.1. Sets out the overall scale of current need before affordability of market housing is considered.

⁴ DCLG Strategic Housing Market Assessments Practice Guidance Version 2 August 2007

⁵ This is the maximum single or joint household income multiple offered by First Direct July 2020

⁶ Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 2a-021-20190220

Table C.1 Current gross unmet need (before affordability testing)			
Reason for need	Total in need	Comment	Source
A1 Homeless households	705	Number of households identified as homeless	MHCLG Live tables 2019
A2 Priority need / temporary accommodation	420+31	Households identified as threatened with homelessness in 2019 plus households living in temporary accommodation (based on quarterly average) in 2019	MHCLG Live tables 2019
A3 Overcrowded	3,153	2011 Census data households	2011 Census LC4108EW
	3,621	Used in analysis	Based on 2019 household survey
A4 Concealed household	1,302	Census definition refers to couples and lone parents living within another family unit.	2011 Census LC1110EW
	1,988	Used in analysis	2019 household survey
A5 Existing affordable tenants in need	1,592	Based on 2019 household survey	2019 household survey
A6 Other tenures in need	7,498	Based on 2019 household survey	2019 household survey
A7 Sum of households in A3 to A6 with one or more needs	14,699	Sum of A3 to A6 BOLD figures	
A8 Total in A7 adjusted to remove any double counting	13,709	This is the total number of households with one or more needs	
A9. All households in need (A1+A2+A8)	14,865		

Further Notes to Table C.1:

A3. Overcrowding

The extent to which households are overcrowded is measured using the 'bedroom standard'. This allocates a standard number of bedrooms to each household in accordance with its age/sex/marital status composition. A separate bedroom is allocated to each married couple, any other person aged 21 or over, each pair of adolescents aged 10-20 of the same sex and each pair of children under 10. Any unpaired person aged 10-20 is paired if possible, with a child under 10 of the same sex, or, if that is not possible, is given a separate bedroom, as is any unpaired child under 10. This standard is then compared with the actual number of bedrooms (including bedsits) available for the sole use of the household.

Note: higher levels of overcrowding were evidenced in the 2019 households survey and has been included in the total at A7. For consistency, the number of concealed households used in the model has been derived from the 2019 household survey.

A4. Concealed households

The number of couples and lone parents living within a household.

A5. Existing affordable tenants in need and A6. Other tenures in need

Households in need based on the numbers who have one or more of the following needs: under notice, real threat of notice or lease coming to an end; too expensive; too difficult to maintain; sharing facilities; unsuitable due to age/mobility impairment; lacking facilities; major disrepair; harassment/threat of harassment from neighbours.

A7 and A8. Sum of households

A7 is the sum of households who are overcrowded, concealed, are existing tenants in need or other tenures in need. A8 adjusts this total to remove double counting to give a figure for the total number of households with one or more housing need. This final figure takes account of any duplicates (so if the household is overcrowded and has another need, it is only counted once as a household in need).

Affordability of open market options

C.12 Table C.2 sets out settlement area level lower quartile prices and rents which are used as a basis for testing the affordability of open market options.

Table C.2 Lower quartile house prices and rents by settlement area		
Settlement area	Lower quartile price 2019 (£)	Lower quartile private rent 2019 (per calendar month)
SA1 Wallasey	£87,000	£451
SA2 Commercial Core/SA3 Suburban Birkenhead	£77,500	£425
SA4 Bromborough & Eastham	£136,000	£545
SA5 Mid-Wirral	£123,125	£542
SA6 Hoylake and West Kirby	£190,000	£598
SA7 Heswall	£178,000	£650
SA8 Rural Areas	£163,250	£676
Wirral Borough	£109,950	£451

Source: Data produced by Land Registry © Crown copyright 2020, Zoopla 2020

C.13 Table C.3 sets out the proportion of households in need who could not afford open market prices or rents. The principal affordability analysis uses data on ward-level lower quartile prices and rents and assumes that a property is affordable if up to 25% of household income is spent on rent and buying costs up to 3.5x household income.

- C.14 It is reasonably assumed that all households in A1 (homeless) and A2 (priority need/in temporary accommodation) cannot afford open market prices or rents given their housing circumstances (and income information is not available from secondary data source).
- C.15 The affordability of open market options is tested on the remaining households in need (rows A3 to A6 in Table C.1) based on 2019 household survey data.
- C.16 Principal analysis concludes that **8,726** households across Wirral are in housing need and cannot afford to buy or rent at lower quartile market prices.

Table C.3 Affordability of open market housing for households in need

Needs groups	Number of households	% cannot afford to buy or rent	Number cannot afford to buy or rent
Sum of A1 and A2 households	1,156	100%	1,156
Sum of households in A3 to A6 with one or more needs	13,709	55.22%	7,570
Total cannot afford to buy or rent			8,726

Step B: Future households in need

- C.17 PPG 2019⁷ states that ‘projections of affordable housing need will have to reflect new household formation, the proportion of newly-forming households unable to buy or rent in the market area, and an estimate of the number of existing households falling into need. The process will need to identify the minimum household income required to access lower quartile (entry level) market housing. It can then assess what proportion of newly-forming households will be unable to access market housing.’

New household formation

- C.18 The most useful data sources for assessing the level of new household formation are:
- MHCLG/ONS household projections, from which an annual net increase in households can be derived;
 - the English Housing Survey, from which a national gross household formation rate can be derived; and
 - household survey evidence, which provides local evidence of the extent to which households have formed and likely to form.
- C.19 Table C.4 presents a summary of data used to establish a view on household formation.
- C.20 Interestingly, gross formation rates derived from the 2017 household survey are very similar to the projections based applying national gross formation rates to

⁷ PPG Paragraph 021 Reference ID: 2a-021029190220

the 2014- and 2018-based household projections. The household survey showed a strong aspiration for households to form new households.

- C.21 PPG makes specific reference to the use of household projections and the English Housing Survey. Combining these sources results in gross household formation rates of 1,484 each year which is corroborated by the household survey which establishes a gross rate of 1,464.
- C.22 Based on the requirements of PPG, the gross formation rate used in analysis is **1,484**, whilst recognising that more households have expressed a desire to form. Through the standard method of calculating need, allowance is made for increasing the level of housing delivery to support household formation through the affordability adjustment.

Table C.4 Net and gross household formation 2020-2030

	Annual household formation	Notes	Source
A. MHCLG 2014-based household projections	685	6,847 NET increase between 2020 and 2030	MHCLG 2014-based household projections
B. ONS 2018-based household projections	501	6,074 NET increase between 2020 and 2030	ONS 2018-based household projections
C. Average gross household formation rate based on applying national rate to total households over the period 2020-2030 (2014-based projections)	2,170	Gross household formation rate of 1.439%	English Housing Survey 3- year average 2016/17 to 2018/19
D. Average gross household formation rate based on applying national rate to total households over the period 2020-2030 (2018-based projections)	2,130	Gross household formation rate of 1.439%	English Housing Survey 3 year average 2016/17 to 2018/19
E. Past rate of household formation	1,198	5,988 households identified as forming over preceding 5 years	2019 household survey
F. Households intending to form and remain in Wirral in the 5 years following survey	3,431	17,157 households identified as planning to form in next 5 years	2019 household survey
G. Blended rate of gross household formation (C, E, F)	2,266		

New households likely to be in affordable housing need

- C.23 Analysis of the incomes of households who have formed in the past 5 years concludes that 35.25% could not afford buying or renting lower quartile (entry

level) properties. Based on a gross formation rate of **2,170**, 766 households are estimated to be in affordable housing need.

Existing households expected to fall into need

- C.24 An estimate of the number of existing households falling into need each year has been established using the 2019 household survey evidence. This indicates that around 2,821 households moved into affordable/social renting because they fell into housing need in the preceding 5 years. This results in an annualised figure of 564.

Total newly arising affordable housing need (gross per year)

- C.25 Total newly arising need is therefore 1,128 each year as summarised in Table C.5.

A. Number of newly-forming households		2,170
B. Proportion unable to afford market housing	35.25%	765
C. Existing households falling into need		564
Total newly arising affordable need (B+C)		1,329

Step C: Affordable housing supply

C.26 PPG notes that ‘there will be a current supply of housing stock that can be used to accommodate households in affordable housing need as well as future supply.’⁸ There are three aspects to affordable supply to be considered:

Source of supply/stock loss	Data source	Data
The number of affordable dwellings that are going to be vacated by occupiers that are fit for use by other households in need	CORE lettings data over most recent 3-year period	Annual average of 1,515 general needs affordable dwellings have been let 2016/17 to 2018/19
Suitable surplus stock (vacant properties)	MHCLG vacant dwelling statistics	254 vacant PRP dwellings reported as vacant in 2019 representing 1.4% of total PRP stock. Below transactional rate of around 2% to allow movement in stock so no suitable surplus stock available
The committed supply of new net affordable homes at the point of assessment number and size)	Local authority planning data	At December 2020 there were 940 RP developments on site or in the pipeline. Modelling assumes that these will be built in the next three years with annual supply of 313
Units taken out of management	Local authority data	None identified
Total annual supply	Calculation	1,515 lettings + 0 vacant + 313 newbuild – 0 Units taken out of management = 1,828

Note: stock losses through right to buy are not referenced in PPG and not included in this table. Any losses through right to buy would increase the shortfall.

C.27 Overall, the model assumes a total affordable housing stock supply of **1,828** dwellings.

⁸ PPG Paragraph 022 Reference ID: 2a-022-20190220

Step D: Total annual need and breakdown by size, type and tenure

C.28 Table C.7 summarises the total annual need for affordable housing across Wirral which establishes a gross annual need of 2,202 and after taking into account supply, a net need of 374 affordable dwellings each year.

	Factor	Number	Data source/assumption
A1	Current gross unmet need (before affordability test)	14,865	Table C.1 row A9
A2	Current gross unmet need (after affordability test)	8,726	Table C.3
A3	Annualised need	873	Assume unmet need is cleared over a 10-year period for consistency with standard method calculation
B	Newly-arising annual need	1,329	Table C.5
TGN	Total gross need	2,202	A3+B
C	Affordable annual housing supply	1,828	Table C.6
	Total annual net need	374	TGN – C

C.29 A estimation of the likely annual supply of affordable stock by settlement area can be calculated based on the current proportion of stock in each settlement area (Table C.8). This estimate includes turnover in existing stock and new provision..

Settlement area	% of affordable stock	Estimated annual supply through turnover	Estimated Total onsite and pipeline newbuild supply 2020/21 to 2022/23	Estimated annual supply through newbuild	Total estimated annual supply
SA1 Wallasey	14.5	220	116	39	259
SA2 Commercial Core/SA3 Suburban Birkenhead	47.5	720	417	139	859
SA4 Bromborough & Eastham	12.4	188	134	45	233
SA5 Mid-Wirral	19.4	294	165	55	349
SA6 Hoylake and West Kirby	2.4	36	58	19	55
SA7 Heswall	3.1	47	50	16	63
SA8 Rural Areas	0.7	10	0	0	10
Wirral Borough	100%	1515	940	313	1828
Base: estimate of affordable units	23,026				

C.30 Table C.9 summarises the annual shortfall of affordable dwellings by number of bedrooms.

Table C.9 Annual affordable need (%)							
Settlement area	Number of bedrooms					Base (annual gross need)	Base (annual net need)
	1	2	3	4 or more	Total		
SA1 Wallasey	26.6	46.7	14.2	12.4	100.0	333	74
SA2 Commercial Core/SA3 Suburban Birkenhead	13.9	47.5	32.8	5.8	100.0	853	-6
SA4 Bromborough & Eastham	18.3	40.0	41.7	0.0	100.0	459	226
SA5 Mid-Wirral	13.1	51.9	25.3	9.7	100.0	261	-88
SA6 Hoylake and West Kirby	21.0	48.3	15.4	15.4	100.0	123	68
SA7 Heswall	6.8	49.3	43.9	0.0	100.0	137	74
SA8 Rural Areas	19.2	30.9	37.9	12.0	100.0	35	25
Wirral Borough	16.7	46.2	30.7	6.3	100.0	2,202	374

Comparison of current housing stock and current/future needs

C.31 PPG states that 'strategic policy-making authorities will need to look at the current stock of houses of different sizes and assess whether these match current and future needs.'⁹ Table C.10 sets out this comparison and shows that there are particular shortfalls of dwellings with 2 bedrooms and also larger 4 bedroom or more dwellings.

Table C.10 Comparison between current supply and annual gross need				
Number of bedrooms	Current supply estimate	%	Annual gross need %	Variance
1-bedroom	3,949	17.1	16.7	0.4
2-bedroom	7,387	32.0	46.2	-14.2
3-bedroom	10,720	46.5	30.7	15.7
4 or more -bedroom	1,013	4.4	6.3	-1.9
Total	23,069	100.0	100.0	

Source: 2019 SDR

Note: data on number of bedrooms only reported for 15,918 large PRP dwellings in so this profile has been weighted to the total of 23,069 dwellings.

⁹ PPG Paragraph 023 Reference ID: 2a-023-20190220. This is interpreted as all dwelling types and not just houses

Dwelling type profile

- C.32 The dwelling type of affordable housing has been derived from 2019 household survey data. Households in need were asked to state their aspiration and expectation for house type and analysis is based on a blend of aspirations and expectations by the number of bedrooms needed. This has been carefully applied to the settlement area needs analysis. The overall summary of dwelling type by bedroom need based on net need is presented in Table C.11 and by settlement area in Table C.12.

Table C.11 Affordable dwelling type and size mix					
Dwelling type	Number of bedrooms (number)				Total
	1	2	3	4	
House	0	89	97	24	210
Flat	56	40	5	0	101
Bungalow	6	39	12	0	57
Other	0	5	1	0	6
Total	62	173	115	24	374
Dwelling type	Number of bedrooms (Table %)				Total
	1	2	3	4	
House	0.1	23.8	25.8	6.3	56.1
Flat	14.9	10.8	1.4	0.0	27.1
Bungalow	1.6	10.4	3.2	0.0	15.2
Other	0.0	1.3	0.4	0.0	1.7
Total	16.7	46.2	30.7	6.3	100.0

Table C.12 Affordable dwelling mix by settlement area, number of bedrooms and dwelling type								
Dwelling type/size	Settlement area							Wirral Borough
	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	
1 -bedroom house	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.1	0.1
2--bedroom house	35.0	23.0	22.0	19.2	26.4	16.4	15.8	23.8
3 -bedroom house	8.5	28.4	37.2	24.0	13.0	27.9	29.9	25.8
4 or more-bedroom house	12.4	5.8	0.0	9.7	15.4	0.0	12.0	6.3
1-bedroom bungalow	0.2	3.1	0.0	2.2	0.1	1.3	0.1	1.6
2-bedroom bungalow	1.8	15.4	4.7	16.1	2.8	16.0	6.9	10.4
3 or more-bedroom bungalow	3.6	2.7	2.7	0.7	0.8	12.5	6.2	3.2
1-bedroom flat	26.3	10.7	18.3	10.9	19.4	5.5	19.0	14.9
2-bedroom flat	10.0	9.1	7.1	16.7	19.1	16.9	8.2	10.8
3 or more-bedroom flat	2.1	1.7	0.0	0.7	1.5	3.5	1.8	1.4
1-bedroom other	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
2-bedroom other	0.0	0.0	6.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.3
3 or more-bedroom other	0.0	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Annual Need (gross)	333	853	459	261	123	137	35	2,202
Annual Need (net)	74	-6	226	-88	68	74	25	374

Tenure mix

- C.33 Analysis has carefully considered the range of affordable tenures that may be appropriate for existing households in need and newly-forming households. Table C.13 summarises the overall tenure split between affordable rented options (social and affordable rent) and affordable home ownership solutions (including shared ownership, discounted for sale and other tenures as set out in Annex 2 of the NPPF).
- C.34 For need arising from homeless households and those in temporary accommodation, it is assumed they all require affordable rented accommodation. For newly-forming households and existing households in need, the split is based on the proportions who would consider affordable rented and affordable home ownership options.
- C.35 Analysis would suggest an overall tenure split of 70% affordable rented and 30% affordable home ownership across the Wirral.

Settlement area	Affordable Rented (%)	Affordable Home Ownership (%)	Total
SA1 Wallasey	90.6	9.4	100.0
SA2 Commercial Core/SA3 Suburban Birkenhead	67.6	32.4	100.0
SA4 Bromborough & Eastham	69.2	30.8	100.0
SA5 Mid-Wirral	55.6	44.4	100.0
SA6 Hoylake and West Kirby	87.4	12.6	100.0
SA7 Heswall	46.5	53.5	100.0
SA8 Rural Areas	66.1	33.9	100.0
Total	70.2	29.8	100.0

Source: 2017 Household Survey

- C.36 Table C.14 confirms that a reasonable proportion of households could afford intermediate tenure prices based on equity shares of between £80,000 and £120,000, with 40.9% able to afford a property priced at up to £100,000. There is clearly scope for expansion of the affordable home ownership market in Wirral as a component of affordable housing delivery.

Table C.14 Ability of existing households in need and newly-forming households requiring affordable housing to afford intermediate tenure dwellings

Price	% could afford		
	Existing households in need	Newly-forming households	Total
up to £80,000	40.1	61.5	49.2
up to £100,000	33.0	51.5	40.9
up to £120,000	22.4	29.7	25.5
up to £140,000	15.2	18.0	16.4
up to £160,000	8.8	10.2	9.4
<i>Base (annual need)</i>	757	564	1,321

Source: 2019 Household Survey

Note: Existing household in need base is from Table C.3 (7,570 annualised)

First Homes and overall tenure split

C.37 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) issued in May 2021 provided detail on First Homes and their implementation. (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/first-homes#first-homes-definition-and-eligibility-requirements>)

C.38 Key points are:

- First Homes are a discounted market sale housing and should be considered to meet the definition of 'affordable housing' for planning purposes.
- They must be discounted by a minimum of 30% against market value and no higher than £250,000 outside London.
- They must be sold to people meeting eligibility criteria which includes first time buyers and household incomes should not exceed £80,000.
- The discount is passed onto each subsequent purchaser.
- First Homes are the government's preferred discounted market tenure and should account for at least 25% of all affordable housing units delivered by developers.

First home products in the Wirral context

C.39 Table C.15 sets out the cost of First Homes based on 30%, 40% and 50% discount by settlement area using 2019 data from the SHMA and the household income required for a dwelling to be affordable. Table C.16 shows the actual incomes and the relative affordability of First Home options.

C.40 The overall Wirral-wide income required for a 30% discounted First Home is £29,250 which compares with £40,500 for a median priced open market property.

An affordability comparison based on lower quartile and median ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) data shows that First Homes are more appropriate for median earners. At a 30% discount, First Homes would be affordable based on a 5% deposit and 3.5x income multiple in several settlement areas. In higher value areas such as Hoylake and West Kirby, Heswall and the Rural Areas, affordability of First Homes is more challenging, even with higher discounts. In these areas and more generally, First Homes, as with all home ownership options, are more affordable with higher deposits and mortgages based either on higher income multiples or over a longer-term than 25 years.

Table C.15 First Home prices and incomes required, actual incomes and comparison between incomes and prices

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
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
First Homes (30% discount)	£91,000	£84,000	£122,500	£112,000	£182,000	£164,500	£175,000	£110,250
First Homes (40% discount)	£78,000	£72,000	£105,000	£96,000	£156,000	£141,000	£150,000	£94,500
First Homes (50% discount)	£65,000	£60,000	£87,500	£80,000	£130,000	£117,500	£125,000	£78,750

Income required*	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
Market Sale - Median	£33,429	£30,857	£45,000	£41,143	£66,857	£60,429	£64,286	£40,500
First Homes (30%)	£24,143	£22,286	£32,500	£29,714	£48,286	£43,643	£46,429	£29,250
First Homes (40%)	£20,429	£18,857	£27,500	£25,143	£40,857	£36,929	£39,286	£24,750
First Homes (50%)	£16,714	£15,429	£22,500	£20,571	£33,429	£30,214	£32,143	£20,250

*Assumes 10% deposit for market sale and 5% for First Homes. 3.5x household income multiplier used

Table C.16 Actual incomes and comparison between incomes and prices

Income measure	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
CAMEO 2019 household income								
LQ	£15,000	£15,000	£15,000	£15,000	£25,000	£25,000	£15,000	£15,000
Median	£15,000	£15,000	£25,000	£25,000	£35,000	£35,000	£35,000	£25,000
ONS 2019 ASHE*								
LQ	£21,080	£21,080	£21,080	£21,080	£21,080	£21,080	£21,080	£21,080
Median	£28,977	£28,977	£28,977	£28,977	£28,977	£28,977	£28,977	£28,977

Ratio of house prices to LQ ASHE income	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
Market Sale - Median	6.2	5.7	8.3	7.6	12.3	11.1	11.9	7.5
First Homes (30%)	4.3	4.0	5.8	5.3	8.6	7.8	8.3	5.2
First Homes (40%)	3.7	3.4	5.0	4.6	7.4	6.7	7.1	4.5
First Homes (50%)	3.1	2.8	4.2	3.8	6.2	5.6	5.9	3.7

Key: Green indicates an income multiple of less than 3.5x is required; red indicates a multiple of more than 3.5x

Ratio of house prices to median ASHE income	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
Market Sale - Median	4.5	4.1	6.0	5.5	9.0	8.1	8.6	5.4
First Homes (30%)	3.1	2.9	4.2	3.9	6.3	5.7	6.0	3.8
First Homes (40%)	2.7	2.5	3.6	3.3	5.4	4.9	5.2	3.3
First Homes (50%)	2.2	2.1	3.0	2.8	4.5	4.1	4.3	2.7

Key: Green indicates an income multiple of less than 3.5x is required; red indicates a multiple of more than 3.5x *Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings

Impact of First Homes on overall tenure split

- C.41 PPG sets out how First Homes should be addressed in local plans. Policies for First Homes should reflect the requirement that a minimum of 25% of all affordable housing units secured through developer contributions should be First Homes (**Paragraph 013 Reference ID: 70-013-20210425**). Then, PPG says 'once a minimum of 25% of First Homes has been accounted for, social rent should be delivered in the same percentage as set out in the local plan. The remainder of the affordable housing tenures should be delivered in line with the proportions set out in the local plan policy (**Paragraph 15 reference ID: 70-015-20210524**).
- C.42 The 2021 SHMA Update recommended an affordable tenure split of 70% affordable rented and 30% affordable home ownership. The SHMA did not differentiate between social and affordable rent on the assumption that a range of rental options would come forward. Additional analysis has been prepared which specifies the need for social and affordable rent. This has been achieved by considering the relative affordability of social and affordable rents (Table 3.8 of the SHMA) for households in need and newly-forming households (Table 3). This analysis concludes that across Wirral, 35% of affordable dwellings should be social rented, 35% affordable rented and 29.8% affordable home ownership. This accords with the overall 70% rented and 30% affordable tenure split in the 2021 SHMA Update.
- C.43 The introduction of First Homes changes the overall tenure split. Table C.17 sets out the calculation to derive a final tenure split which incorporates First Homes.

Table C.17 Overall tenure split calculation incorporating First Homes

Step 1	Total affordable %	Overall affordable	100				
Step 2			Affordable tenure split				First Homes
	This splits the 100% into 75% affordable tenures as stated in PPG	Affordable/First Homes Split	75				25
Step 3	2021 SHMA breakdown		Social Rent	Affordable Rent	Affordable Home Ownership	AR+AHO	
	The proposed tenure split is set out here. This is total split by SR, AR and AHO EXCLUDING FH		35	35	30	65	
	At this point, need to recognise that SR need and FH is ringfenced		RINGFENCED				RINGFENCED
	RINGFENCED % Split		35				25
Step 4	This step calculates how the remaining units are apportioned. To this, we need to calculate two things. 1. Rebase the AR and AHO to 100%. 2. Work out the base figure which is applied to						
	1. This the rebased AR and AHO split using 100% as a base			53.8	46.2		
	2. This is the remaining affordable tenure split which needs to be apportioned between AR and AHO. This is based on 100% - Social Rent Ringfenced - First Homes Ringfenced					40	
Step 5	Final affordable split is now set out		Social Rent	Affordable Rent	Affordable Home Ownership		First Homes
	Final position		35	21.5	18.5		25
	And then rounded to nearest whole number		35	22	18		25

- C.44 Table C.18 provides a final summary of the affordable tenure split by settlement area after taking into account 25% first homes, social rented need and apportioning the need for affordable rent and other affordable home ownership options. **This gives a final tenure split of 57% rented and 43% affordable home ownership across Wirral.** The introduction of First Homes has led to a reduction in the proportion of affordable/social rented dwellings.
- C.45 The Council will need to set a First Home discount to be applied at borough level. On the basis of relative affordability of median prices to incomes, a discount of **40%** would be appropriate for Wirral.

Table C.18 Final affordable tenure split after taking into account First Homes. social rented need and apportioning need for affordable rented and other affordable home ownership options

Settlement Area	Affordable tenure				
	Social rented (%)	Affordable rented (%)	Affordable home ownership (%)	First Homes (%)	Total
SA1 Wallasey	56.5	14.5	4.0	25.0	100.0
SA2 Commercial Core/SA3 Suburban Birkenhead	35.5	19.7	19.8	25.0	100.0
SA4 Bromborough & Eastham	23.1	31.1	20.8	25.0	100.0
SA5 Mid-Wirral	26.1	19.5	29.4	25.0	100.0
SA6 Hoylake and West Kirby	56.9	12.8	5.3	25.0	100.0
SA7 Heswall	24.6	14.7	35.8	25.0	100.0
SA8 Rural Areas	36.9	17.6	20.5	25.0	100.0
Total	35.2	21.5	18.3	25.0	100.0

Comparison between 2019 SHMA and 2021 SHMA housing need figure

- C.46 The updated housing need figure is different to that reported in the 2019 SHMA. The principal difference is the way in which the backlog clearance is addressed. In the 2019 SHMA, this was cleared over a 5 year period and in the 2020 SHMA it is cleared over a 10 year period to better align with the standard method which relates to a 10 year period. The 2020 SHMA also includes updated information on affordable dwellings either being built or pipeline development over the next 3 years.
- C.47 If the backlog need in the 2019 SHMA was cleared over a 10 year period, the net annual shortfall would have been 325 rather than the 705 quoted. .

Technical Appendix D: Dwelling mix and modelling

Introduction

- D.1 This technical appendix describes the method used by arc⁴ to establish future dwelling type and size mix across the borough. It presents the baseline data used as a starting point for the analysis and how data are interpreted to establish a reasonable view on dwelling type and mix.

Starting points

- D.2 There are four main data sources which underpin the analysis:
- household projections;
 - dwelling stock information
 - data identifying the relationships between households and dwellings derived from the 2019 household survey; and
 - data derived from affordable housing need analysis.

Household projections

- D.3 These are used to establish the number of households by Household Reference Persons (HRP) and household type using the 2014-based data, and how this is expected to change over the Local Plan period 2020 to 2037.
- D.4 The change in the number of households over this period can be established and, assuming that the dwelling needs of these households do not change significantly over the plan period, the potential impact on type and number of bedrooms of future dwellings can be determined.

Relationship between households and dwellings

- D.5 The relationship between the age of Household Reference Person, household type and dwellings occupied by type and size can be derived from the 2019 household survey.
- D.6 The data available is summarised in Table D.1. For each age group, the proportion of Household Reference Persons (HRPs) by household type living in different type/size and size of dwelling has been estimated.
- D.7 The 2019 household survey also provides data on household aspirations and what households would expect to move to. This data can also be broken down by HRP age group and household type.
- D.8 By combining this range of data, it is possible to model the likely change in dwelling type/size requirements with reference to:
- the current relationship between HRP/household type and dwelling type/size and this remains constant over the plan period (demographic baseline);
 - household aspirations by HRP/household type (aspirations); and
 - what households would expect by HRP/household type (expect).

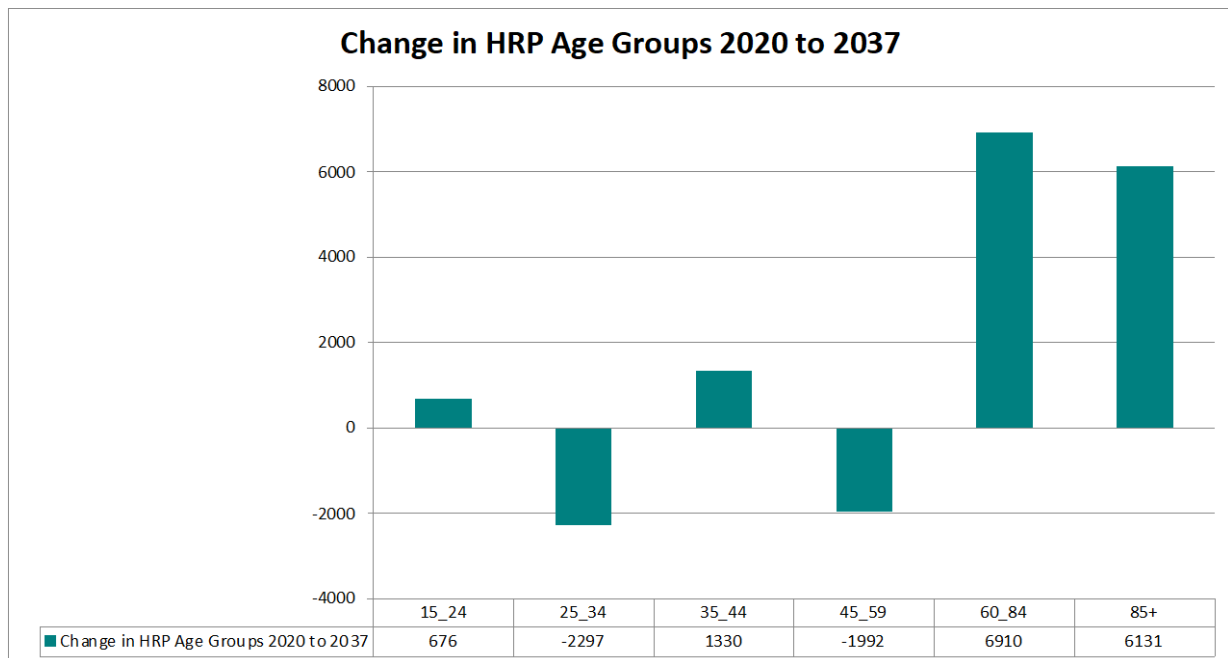
Age group of Household Reference Person	Household type	Dwelling type	Dwelling size
15 to 24	One-person household	1-bedroom house	1-bedroom
25 to 34	Couple only household	2-bedroom house	2-bedrooms
35 to 44	Household with 1 or 2-child(ren)	3-bedroom house	3-bedrooms
45 to 59	Households with 3-children	4 or more-bedroom house	4 or more-bedrooms
60 to 84	Other multi-person household	1-bedroom flat	All
85+	All	2-bedroom flat	
All		3 or more-bedroom flat	
		1 or 2-bedroom bungalow	
		3 or more-bedroom bungalow	
		All	

Source: Household survey 2019

Applying the data at borough level

- D.9 Applying the data at borough level is done in a systematic way. Firstly, the change in the number of households by age group and household type is established from household projections. Assuming that the dwelling needs of these households do not change over the plan period, the overall impact on type/size of dwellings can be determined.
- D.10 This is further explained by a worked example.
- In 2020, 23.8% of couples (852) with an HRP aged 25-34 are expected to be living in a two-bedroom house and there are a total of 3,578 households in this age and HRP cohort. By 2037, the number of households in this cohort is expected to reduce slightly to 3,354 and assuming that 23.8% live in a two-bedroom house, there will be 846 living in two-bedroom houses. There will be a net decrease in need by 6 from this particular cohort for two-bedroom houses.
 - In contrast, the number of couples aged 60-84 is expected to increase from 54,272 in 2020 to 61,182 in 2037. In 2020, 6.1% (1,277) are expected to be living in two-bedroom houses and this would increase to 1,509 in 2037. There would be a net increase in need of 232 from this particular cohort for two-bedroom dwellings.
- D.11 Tables D.2A and D.2B present the baseline demographic data for the borough. The total number of households is expected to increase by around 10,756 over the plan period 2020-2037 using 2014-based MHCLG household projections. Growth is mainly expected across older age cohorts, with absolute declines in HRPs aged 25-34 and 45-49. Figure D.1 illustrates how the number of households by HRP age is expected to change over the plan period 2020-2037.

Figure D.1 Change in HRP age groups 2020-2037



Source: 2014-based MHCLG household projections

Table D.2A Change in number of households by age group 2020-2037				
Age group	Household (HH) Type	Year		Change in households 2020-2037
		2020	2037	
15-24	One person	1,180	1,507	327
	Couple only	373	371	-2
	Household with 1 or 2-children	1,690	2,009	319
	Household with 3-children	108	117	9
	Other multi-person household	304	327	23
	Total	3,655	4,331	676
25-34	One person	3,504	2,580	-924
	Couple only	3,578	3,554	-24
	Household with 1 or 2-children	7,688	6,568	-1,120
	Household with 3-children	1,766	1,426	-340
	Other multi-person household	1,081	1,192	111
	Total	17,617	15,320	-2,297
35-44	One person	5,133	6,172	1,039
	Couple only	1,940	1,913	-27
	Household with 1 or 2-children	11,690	12,601	911
	Household with 3-children	2,492	1,891	-601
	Other multi-person household	1,081	1,089	8
	Total	22,336	23,666	1,330
45-59	One person	12,466	13,061	595
	Couple only	5,818	3,090	-2,728
	Household with 1 or 2-children	12,926	14,267	1,341
	Household with 3-children	1,472	1,591	119
	Other multi-person household	9,266	7,947	-1,319
	Total	41,948	39,956	-1,992
60-84	One person	22,851	23,781	930
	Couple only	20,939	24,743	3,804
	Household with 1 or 2-children	1,277	1,771	494
	Household with 3-children	64	76	12
	Other multi-person household	9,141	10,811	1,670
	Total	54,272	61,182	6,910
85+	One person	4,543	7,597	3,054
	Couple only	1,403	2,949	1,546
	Household with 1 or 2-children	47	137	90
	Household with 3-children	0	0	0
	Other multi-person household	1,068	2,509	1,441
	Total	7,061	13,192	6,131

Continued overleaf/...

Age group	Household Type	Year		Change in households 2020-2037
		2020	2037	
ALL	One person	49,676	54,698	5,022
	Couple only	34,053	36,621	2,568
	Household with 1 or 2-children	35,319	37,353	2,034
	Household with 3-children	5,904	5,099	-805
	Other multi-person household	21,940	23,876	1,936
	Total	146,891	157,647	10,756

Source: MHCLG 2014-based household projections (subject to rounding)

D.12 Table D.3 summarises the change in the number of households by age group.

Year and Household Type	Household Reference Person Age Group						
2020	15_24	25_34	35_44	45_59	60_84	85+	Total
One person	1,180	3,504	5,133	12,466	22,851	4,543	49,677
Couple only	373	3,578	1,940	5,818	20,939	1,403	34,051
Household with 1 or 2-child(ren)	1,690	7,688	11,690	12,926	1,277	47	35,318
Household with 3-children	108	1,766	2,492	1,472	64	0	5,902
Other multi-person household	304	1,081	1,081	9,266	9,141	1,068	21,941
Total	3,655	17,617	22,336	41,948	54,272	7,061	146,889
2037	15_24	25_34	35_44	45_59	60_84	85+	Total
One person	1,507	2,580	6,172	13,061	23,781	7,597	54,698
Couple only	371	3,554	1,913	3,090	24,743	2,949	36,620
Household with 1 or 2-child(ren)	2,009	6,568	12,601	14,267	1,771	137	37,353
Household with 3-children	117	1,426	1,891	1,591	76	0	5,101
Other multi-person household	327	1,192	1,089	7,947	10,811	2,509	23,875
Total	4,331	15,320	23,666	39,956	61,182	13,192	157,647
Change 2020-37	15_24	25_34	35_44	45_59	60_84	85+	Total
One person	-327	924	-1,039	-595	-930	-3,054	-5,021
Couple only	2	24	27	2,728	-3,804	-1,546	-2,569
Household with 1 or 2-child(ren)	-319	1,120	-911	-1,341	-494	-90	-2,035
Household with 3-children	-9	340	601	-119	-12	0	801
Other multi-person household	-23	-111	-8	1,319	-1,670	-1,441	-1,934
Total	-676	2,297	-1,330	1,992	-6,910	-6,131	-10,758

Source: MHCLG 2014-based household projections (subject to rounding)

D.13 Table D.4 applies household survey data on dwelling occupancy to the demographic trends across the borough over the period 2020-2037. The two right hand columns indicate the likely change in demand for dwelling types and sizes and how this translates to an overall percentage change in dwelling requirement. The majority of need will be for 3-bedroom (41.1%) followed by 2-bedroom (31.2%), 4 or more-bedroom (19.8%) and 1 -bedroom (8.0%).

Table D.4 Impact of change in households by age group on dwellings occupied

Dwelling size	Age group of Household Reference Person						Total	% change
	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-59	60-84	85+		
1	60	-344	253	63	321	502	856	8.0
2	610	-590	554	-459	1,595	1,641	3,351	31.2
3	6	-963	265	-1,069	3,136	3,044	4,420	41.1
4 or more	1	-400	258	-530	1,857	944	2,130	19.8
Total	676	-2,297	1,331	-1,995	6,910	6,131	10,756	100

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

Source: MHCLG 2014-based household projections and 2019 household survey

Aspiration scenario

- D.14 Under the aspiration scenario, the relationship between HRP/household type and dwelling type/size is based on the aspirations of households who are intending to move in the next 5 years. The profile of dwellings is applied to changes in HRP/household type over the plan period. The impact of this on overall dwelling type/mix is shown in Table D.5. Analysis indicates that the highest level of need is for 3-bedroom (45.9%) and 2-bedroom (39.5%) dwellings followed by 1-bedroom (7.9%) dwellings and 4 or more-bedroom dwellings (6.7%).

Table D.5 Impact of Change in households by age group on dwellings occupied: aspirations

Dwelling size	Age group of Household Reference Person						Total change	% change
	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-59	60-84	85+		
1	0	-230	38	32	598	412	850	7.9
2	40	-105	139	-1,318	2,996	2,493	4,245	39.5
3	597	-598	1,120	-852	2,451	2,223	4,941	45.9
4 or more	40	-1,364	33	147	865	1,002	722	6.7
Total	676	-2,297	1,330	-1,992	6,910	6,131	10,758	100

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

Source: MHCLG 2014-based household projections and 2019 household survey

Expectation scenario

- D.15 Under the expectation scenario, the relationship between HRP/household type and dwelling type/size is based on what households would accept to move to if they are intending to move in the next 5 years. The profile of dwellings is applied to changes in HRP/household type over the plan period. The impact of this on overall dwelling type/mix is shown in Table D.6. Analysis indicates a shift in need towards 2-bedroom (54.9%) and 1-bedroom (20.9%) dwellings followed by 3-bedroom (16.7%) and larger 4 or more-bedroom dwellings (7.4%).

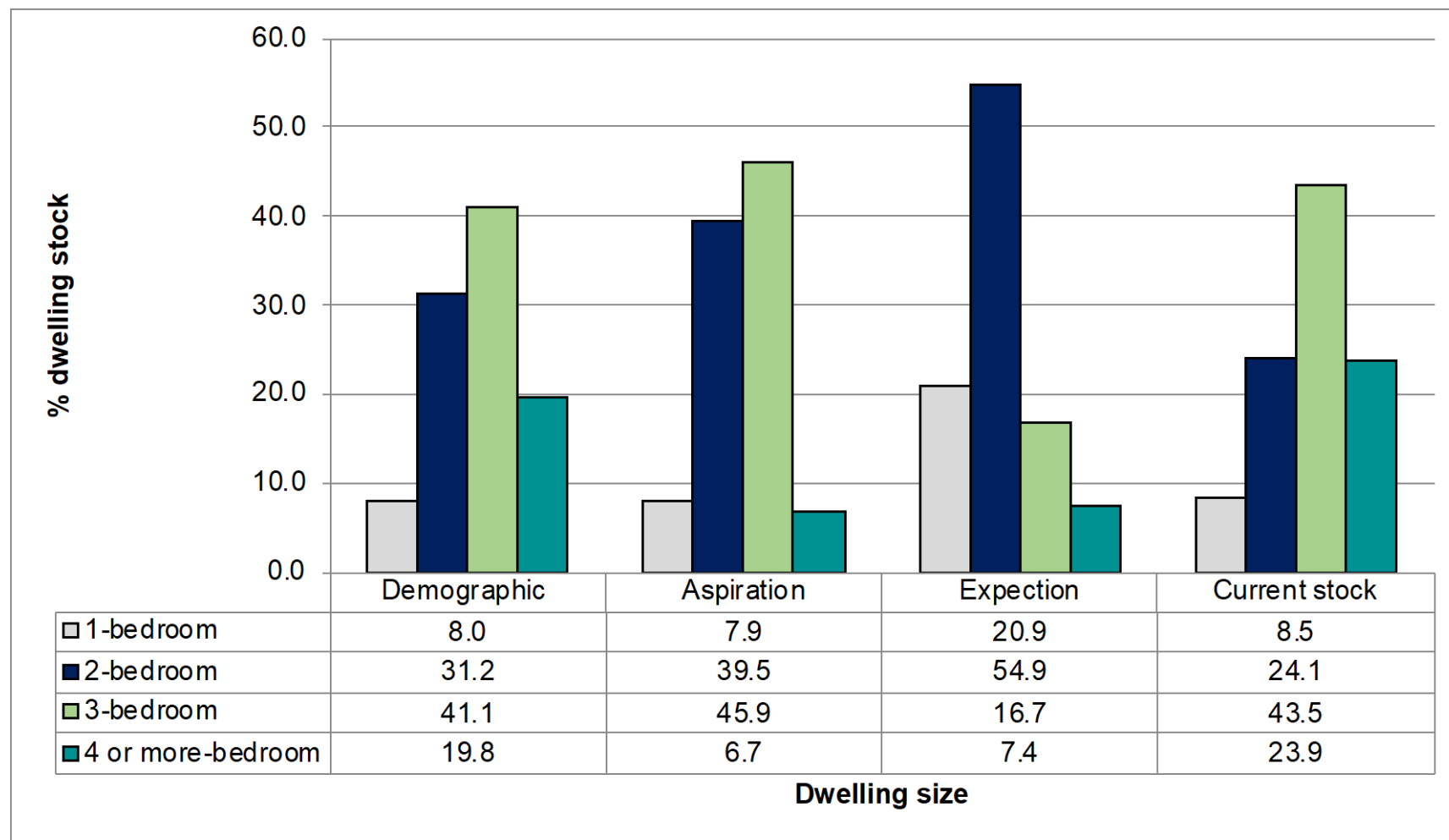
Dwelling size	Age group of Household Reference Person						Total change	% change
	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-59	60-84	85+		
1	0	-20	142	-347	920	1,552	2,246	20.9
2	390	-501	416	-454	3,240	2,820	5,911	54.9
3	247	-860	925	-1,098	1,963	624	1,800	16.7
4 or more	40	-917	-152	-93	787	1,136	801	7.4
Total	676	-2,297	1,330	-1,992	6,910	6,132	10,759	100

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

Source: MHCLG 2014-based household projections and 2019 household survey

D.16 Figure D.2 provides a further illustration of 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 D.2 Summary of current dwelling stock and dwelling mix under baseline demographic, aspiration and expectation scenarios



Source: 2019 household survey

Summary of scenarios

- D.17 Table D.7 summarises the outcome of the dwelling type/mix scenario analysis. The key message is by taking into account what people aspire to and what they expect to, there is an increased emphasis on smaller dwellings, although there continues to be a need for 3 or more bedroom dwellings.

Dwelling size (number of bedrooms)	Scenario			Current stock (%)
	Demographic baseline (%)	Aspiration (%)	Expectation (%)	
1	8.0	7.9	20.9	8.5
2	31.2	39.5	54.9	24.1
3	41.1	45.9	16.7	43.5
4 or more	19.8	6.7	7.4	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

- D.18 Table D.8 summarises dwelling type/size mix based on the demographic scenario and Table D.9 provides % data by tenure. Note that the only major difference under the aspiration and expectation scenario is a higher proportion of bungalows/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. 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.
- D.19 The analysis can be revised if annual targets and affordable housing delivery targets are updated.

Dwelling size (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	134	6	16	155
Total	628	89	68	785

Table D.9 Overall annual dwelling type/size and tenure mix under recommendations (% data)

Dwelling size (number of bedrooms)	Tenure			Total
	Market	Affordable/ Social Rented	Affordable home ownership	
Overall % split>>	80%	11%	9%	100%
1	6.5	16.6	10.1	8.0
2	28.0	46.3	40.4	31.2
3	44.2	30.8	26.2	41.1
4	21.3	6.3	23.3	19.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Base	628	89	68	785

D.20 Table D.10 provides further analysis which provides a further breakdown of dwelling mix by type and size.

Table D.10 Overall annual dwelling type/size and tenure mix under recommendations (% data by tenure)

Dwelling type/size	Tenure (%)			All tenures
	Market	Affordable/ Social Rented	Affordable home ownership	
Overall % split>>	80%	11%	9%	100%
1 and 2 -bedroom house	5.2	23.9	3.5	7.2
3-bedroom house	36.7	25.8	26.2	34.6
4 or more-bedroom house	21.3	6.3	23.3	19.8
1-bedroom flat	3.5	14.9	5.0	4.9
2-bedroom flat	14.9	10.8	17.0	14.6
3 or more-bedroom flat	1.2	1.4	0.0	1.1
1-bedroom level-access	3.1	1.6	3.3	3.0
2-bedroom level-access	7.6	10.4	19.9	9.0
3 or more-bedroom level-access	6.2	3.2	0.0	5.3
Other	0.2	1.7	1.8	0.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Dwelling type	Market	Affordable/ Social Rented	Affordable home ownership	All tenures
House	63.3	56.0	53.0	61.6
Flat	19.7	27.1	22.0	20.7
Level-access	16.9	15.2	23.1	17.2
Other	0.2	1.7	1.8	0.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of bedrooms	Market	Affordable/ Social Rented	Affordable home ownership	All tenures
1	6.5	16.6	10.1	8.0
2	28.0	46.3	40.4	31.2
3	44.2	30.8	26.2	41.1
4	21.3	6.3	23.3	19.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Base	628	89	68	785

Dwelling mix by tenure under alternative proportions of affordable housing

D.21 Overall dwelling mix by tenure using targets of 10%, 30% and 40% affordable housing delivery are show in Tables D.11 to D.16.

Table D.11 Overall annual dwelling type/size and tenure mix recommendations based on a 10% affordable housing target (number)

Dwelling size (number of bedrooms)	Tenure			Total
	Market	Affordable/ Social Rented	Affordable home ownership	
Overall % split>>	90%	5.7%	4.3%	100%
1	52	7	3	62
2	210	21	14	245
3	300	14	9	323
4	145	3	8	155
Total	705	45	34	785

Table D.12 Overall annual dwelling type/size and tenure mix recommendations based on a 10% affordable housing target (%)

Dwelling size (number of bedrooms)	Tenure			Total
	Market	Affordable/ Social Rented	Affordable home ownership	
Overall % split>>	90%	5.7%	4.3%	100%
1	7.3	16.6	10.1	8.0
2	29.7	46.3	40.4	31.2
3	42.5	30.8	26.2	41.1
4	20.5	6.3	23.3	19.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table D.13 Overall annual dwelling type/size and tenure mix recommendations based on a 30% affordable housing target (number)

Dwelling size (number of bedrooms)	Tenure			Total
	Market	Affordable/ Social Rented	Affordable home ownership	
Overall % split>>	70%	17%	13%	100%
1	30	22	10	62
2	142	62	41	245
3	255	41	26	323
4	123	8	24	155
Total	550	134	101	785

Table D.14 Overall annual dwelling type/size and tenure mix recommendations based on a 30% affordable housing target (%)

Dwelling size (number of bedrooms)	Tenure			Total
	Market	Affordable/ Social Rented	Affordable home ownership	
Overall % split>>	70%	17%	13%	100%
1	5.4	16.6	10.1	8.0
2	25.8	46.3	40.4	31.2
3	46.3	30.8	26.2	41.1
4	22.4	6.3	23.3	19.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table D.15 Overall annual dwelling type/size and tenure mix recommendations based on a 40% affordable housing target

Dwelling size (number of bedrooms)	Tenure			Total
	Market	Affordable/ Social Rented	Affordable home ownership	
Overall % split>>	60%	28%	12%	100%
1	19	30	14	62
2	107	83	55	245
3	232	55	35	323
4	113	11	31	155
Total	471	179	135	785

Table D.16 Overall annual dwelling type/size and tenure mix recommendations based on a 40% affordable housing target (%)

Dwelling size (number of bedrooms)	Tenure			Total
	Market	Affordable/ Social Rented	Affordable home ownership	
Overall % split>>	60%	28%	12%	100%
1	4.0	16.6	10.1	8.0
2	22.8	46.3	40.4	31.2
3	49.3	30.8	26.2	41.1
4	23.9	6.3	23.3	19.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Technical Appendix E: Stakeholder consultation responses and agent review

Agent review synopsis

- E.1 Visits and observations were undertaken to all of Wirral's main settlements, the designated neighbourhood plan areas and the industrial and commercial areas to the east of the borough. Eight in-depth interviews were obtained from local estate and letting agents. The aim was to understand how Wirral's housing market interacts between the tenures, whether there are local imbalances or gaps in supply, how settlements connect within Wirral and its neighbouring local authority areas.

Main findings

- E.2 At the time of our survey, we observed low volumes of new build under construction except on small sites and we were unable to obtain on site sales agent interviews on the small number of larger sites we came across. However, we observed that there had been a great deal of recent new build in many locations across the study area.
- E.3 The rural west of the borough has higher house prices than the urban area to the east and prices in the east are very weak in small areas.
- E.4 All agents told us that there was a significant gap between demand and supply of private rented sector housing across the study area particularly for good quality family housing;
- E.5 Most agents doubted the ability of the small investor to create the supply needed to meet demand for private rented sector housing in all areas and noted that there was some interest from foreign investors.
- E.6 There is some evidence of build to rent or commercial to residential conversions, but most are directed at the student market rather than the residential market.
- E.7 All agents reported a downturn in resale and re-let supply due to Brexit uncertainty.

More detailed findings by area.

- E.8 **Heswall** is a thriving town with an attractive retail offer. It attracts much higher house prices than other parts of the Wirral. Agents told us that the main market is £250,000 to £350,000 with asking prices of a small new build scheme over £400,000. We were told that the area attracts professionals especially and there was little scope for lower income groups getting a 'foot on the property ladder'. The agent said that the quality of primary schools and the existence of the grammar school were driving the market as well as quality of life factors. This applies to Heswall and the nearby settlements.

- E.9 Another agent with a larger rental portfolio across the Wirral said that in this area, investors were uncommon due to the high price of buying. Some of his clients across the Wirral were disinvesting.
- E.10 Travelling clockwise the settlements of **Caldy, West Kirby, Hoylake and Moreton** were visited but no agent interviews were obtained. We observed these to be smart residential areas some of which were situated on the west coast with high prices compared to the east of the borough. Map 3.3 confirms this and the fact that prices were similar across the western area. Although we attempted agent interviews it proved inconvenient for them to engage and we saw no reason to press for interviews given the nature of the area and the information we obtained from Heswall agents.
- E.11 We thought it more important to concentrate on the eastern part of the borough where the housing market was more complex.
- E.12 In the North-East tip of the borough we noted the character of the coastal area of **New Brighton** with an array of large Victorian residences and its street scene. However, prices were moderate compared to the above-mentioned eastern settlements (map 3.3). This local market area is serviced by agents situated in Liscard Village within Wallasey.
- E.13 The local housing market for **Wallasey, Leasowe and Seacombe** is a diverse area to the north of the Kingsway Tunnel. A wide range of price points exist with median averages being over £232,000 in the north west falling to £108,000 in the east as the area approaches the River Mersey.
- E.14 **Liscard Village** is a large service centre which supports a large suburban residential area. To its east and south, the housing changes in character, as older settlements were established to house shipbuilders and dockworkers. The East and West Float is a natural boundary between this area and Birkenhead.
- E.15 Agents at Liscard told us that the immediate area was sought after by incomers as housing was of decent quality at moderate prices. We were told that prices were not beyond the means of many first-time buyers. That said, the larger part of the market was driven by local churn – local households rightsizing. We were told that some elderly downsizers would have to re-locate as the local housing stock was mostly family housing. With the presence of the Kingsway Tunnel we enquired about travel to work and other connections with the City of Liverpool. We were told that this was very one-sided with local residents working, shopping and engaging in leisure facilities in Liverpool.
- E.16 To the east, up to the river, housing is mostly terraced housing with small rear gardens or yards. We were told that many of these were occupied as private lettings. There is occasional infill with 20th century local authority houses and flats. Starting prices are in the region of £55,000. Some offers are purely residential, some are part residential bundled with a ground floor vacant retail unit. the latter can be found in fronting main roads such as Brighton Street, with values below the lower quartile averages for the area. Lower quartile average prices will buy a decent 2-bedroom terraced house which are marketed by agents towards first time buyers rather than investors. For a similar price, more modern purpose built 1 and 2-bedroom flats and apartments in nicer residential areas are offered. It was noteworthy that to the east of Central Park entire blocks of newly built or recently built block of houses or flats were being marketed toward investors rather than being offered as individual plots. We also noted some

housing association lettings being advertised to the over 55s. A nearby agent explained that these were very small units in a development that otherwise let through the normal channels.

- E.17 A specialist letting agency in **Wallasey** provided a depth interview. The business owned 60 dwellings and managed a further 300 dwellings across the eastern part of the Wirral. We were told that there was a large gap in the market consisting of 3-bedroom family houses and dwellings suitable for people with disabilities. The agent explained that the gap of 3-bedroom homes was problematic due to landlords converting them into apartments. The agent thought that the Council should resist the conversion of family homes into flats. He went on to explain that there was currently a wave of foreign investors seeking to buy portfolios in the area. He thought that this investment was welcome due to many local clients reducing the size of their portfolio or leaving the market. However, these investors had high expectations regarding yields that were not being delivered. The agent told us that some small concentrations of vacant dwellings and occupied private rentals were in poor condition and some intervention or regeneration was needed especially where there were flats above unoccupied shops. He saw little prospect of build to rent investment in the immediate area west of the Mersey and East of the Central Park.
- E.18 Agents in **Birkenhead** were also concerned about dilapidation of dwellings and the street scene. We were told that in the Whetstone Lane area a run-down shopping area and the presence of hostel dwellers and street homeless meant there was little prospect of this area's housing market being lifted by investors or home owners that would help to address the failing local economy. With starting prices at £35,000 for a 2-bedroom terraced house or 1-bedroom converted flats the weakness of the local market was apparent. These prices were lower than seen at Wallasey. However, elsewhere in Birkenhead a large number of terraced dwellings were on offer at between £55,000 and £65,000. Marketing was aimed at both investors and first-time buyers.
- E.19 Two large developments under construction were noteworthy and were currently been offered to investors only. In the vicinity of Wirral Metropolitan College and the Hamilton Square station is the Hamilton Hub which is a leasehold commercial to residential conversion scheme with on-site management aimed solely at investors to be let as student accommodation. According to the developer's website, this will house 200 students and will supply the Liverpool student housing market at competitive prices. Market Court Birkenhead is also a commercial to residential conversion of 59 one and 2-bedroom apartments to be completed in 2021. This is being offered to investors 'off plan'.
- E.20 Toward the south east of the borough are the areas known as **Tranmere and New Ferry** which are typically densely developed terraced housing built originally to house dock workers and workers in other industries. Agents told us that these areas are of similar price and design to dwellings in Birkenhead and Wallasey
- E.21 To the south approaching the industrial area of **Bromborough Pool** is the **Port Sunlight Model Village** built by the Lever Brothers to house people working in their soap and detergent industry.
- E.22 Finally, agents at **Bromborough and Bebington** told us that terraced housing was less prevalent as you travel west from the Mersey the areas become similar in character to Wirral settlements on the west coast in terms of character and price.

Stakeholder survey responses

General stakeholder responses summary

- E.23 Stakeholders were invited to participate in a general questionnaire survey aimed at identifying a range of information, including establishing the key perceived housing market issues in Wirral. Stakeholders were asked to respond to any of the questions within the survey that they felt related to their area of knowledge or experience and certain sections of the survey related to certain stakeholder groups. A total of 56 separate responses to the stakeholder consultation were obtained. This is a qualitative summary of the views expressed by stakeholders responding to the online survey and is split into the different stakeholder groups.
- E.24 40.4% of stakeholders responding to the survey stated that they work within the Wirral Council area, 13.5% of stakeholders stated that work outside of the borough and 46.1% stated that they work in both of the above.

All stakeholders

- E.25 All stakeholders responding to the survey were asked to give their opinion in regard to the strengths and weaknesses of Wirral's housing market. Stakeholders gave a range of views on this, with the main strengths being that Wirral has a strong housing market with a diversity and range of housing on offer and is also an attractive place to live. However, the main weaknesses identified in the area was the continuous undersupply of housing and the lack of an up-to-date Local Plan to help meet these needs, including a necessary review of Green Belt opportunities. These are outlined below.

Strengths:

- A good range/diverse mix of housing available for all types and prices
- A significant demand for all types of housing across the borough, schemes that have come online have sold well and contributed to the local economy
- A diversified housing market with well-defined separate communities
- Wirral is an attractive place to live and work; the strong reputation of Wirral's towns and villages, as places where people aspire to live. Good schools and huge potential for regeneration.
- The value for money for developers that can be obtained from investment in low land value areas with high property demand.
- Good quality existing housing stock, attractive environments to west and south of Borough, good offering of high-end homes with attractive surroundings.
- More expensive houses are being built and sold bringing more money into the borough
- Wirral is popular due to its attractive coastal towns and villages and its proximity to the large cities of Manchester, Liverpool and Chester which provide a range of job opportunities within commutable distance.

- Parts of Wirral are amongst the strongest locations across the Liverpool City Region in terms of the level of demand for new homes, owing to a range of factors including good highways connectivity, access to employment opportunities and quality of life factors such as proximity to the coast and a network of attractive, vibrant town centres.
- Mid Wirral neighbourhoods such as Woodchurch and Moreton have become successful over the past few decades and are relatively affordable. Regeneration projects such as in Birkenhead have transformed an otherwise struggling neighbourhood.
- Strong housing market area.
- Wirral has areas of significant affluence, especially in the west of the Borough, where many people who work in Liverpool and Chester live
- The Wirral has a relatively high degree of self-containment with only relatively modest overlap with the Liverpool and Cheshire housing market areas. As such, it is imperative that Wirral Borough Council caters for the full extent of its own housing need and does not rely on adjacent districts to cater for some of its housing need.

Weaknesses:

- Too many poor-quality lower end housing and old affordable housing stock. Insufficient affordable/social housing and starter homes. Undersupply of private rented property particularly for single people
- Whilst variation may be a strong point, some of the high-end properties that are available/under construction do not take into account local affordability issues and this creates problems for the housing market.
- There is a general lack of housing offer across the borough for elderly residents which raises concerns given the ageing Wirral population. However, one respondent stated: We have an oversupply of Housing for Older People (sheltered accommodation) and therefore carry a number of voids at all times within Wirral.
- Limited availability of family homes across the borough. Limited availability of starter homes and small family homes to keep younger families and couples in the borough, leads to a loss of these demographics. Insufficient availability of mid-market 4/5 bed detached properties to retain family's/high and mid earners/employees within the borough.
- There are some awful private landlords who do not keep properties fit for purpose
- Any good quality but cheaper "new" accommodation being built is snapped up either by RSLs (to rent) or private sector Buy-to-Let investors, often stepping in before genuine first-time buyers can get to it. It is difficult for first time buyers to get on the housing ladder.
- Market failure in some areas, crime and general ASB not tackled effectively, low wage economy and poverty affecting housing standards.
- The viability of developments in the more deprived areas

- The continuous undersupply of housing to meet the identified need in the area.
- The most efficient way of significantly increasing the delivery of affordable housing is by allocating an appropriate level of housing land on viable and deliverable sites to meet needs. Poor planning.
- There is an identified need to release land from the Green Belt to deliver new homes in the area
- There are housing markets to the west and centre of the Borough, as well as parts of Birkenhead and Wallasey where the situation is more challenging – Indices of Multiple Deprivations (2019) highlights the stronger and weaker market areas.
- The desirability to live in Wirral combined with relatively low wages has led to a number of challenges relating to affordability, with many residents struggling to access the housing market. This is acknowledged in the 2016 SHMA, with clear contrasts between east and west Wirral, with much of the lower value properties and land being in the east.
- Complete absence of new build homes for many years. Under delivery against the number of homes requires. Absence of sustainable proportional development of appropriate growth to maintain dynamic, vibrant communities
- A fundamental weakness of the Wirral's housing market stems from a failure to progress a Local Plan. The Wirral's Unitary Development Plan was adopted in 2000 and no substantial progress has been made in the preparation of a new Local Plan since. The result of the above is that there has been a failure to strategically plan for new housing.
- Wirral is tightly constrained by the existing Merseyside Green Belt which represents a significant barrier to sustainable housing growth. This has partly contributed to an overall lack of supply of housing land to meet the future needs of the borough and low completion rates in recent years.
- Wirral has a great number of contrasts in its housing market. Extremely expensive areas and deprived areas in need of investment and regeneration.
- A misdirected council. Lack of proper programmes for (i) regeneration; (ii) return of 'empty houses' to occupancy; (iii) encouragement of Peel at 'Wirral Waters'; (iv) delivery of new homes, mainly of smaller type for starter homes, downsizing and 'affordable' homes; and (v) site assembly including for shared homes for those needing varying degrees of support.
- Over inflated land values on available land making it extremely difficult to deliver specialist supported housing for vulnerable adults. Almost impossible to find sustainable sites to deliver extra care at sensible land values because of the lack of land supply.
- In some areas there is disparity between the kind of properties residents want, and what there is available.
- There is a lack of cross-party political support to address the housing demand issues which appears to result in a dysfunctional approach to planning policies and restrictions on building new homes despite the known needs.

Wirral Waterfront proposals would be highly beneficial to Wirral, however it has not delivered despite the 10-year time period.

- Furthermore, in places such as Birkenhead there are very high levels of benefit dependant private and social renters which consolidates poverty and social deprivation problems. The Spare Room Subsidy has caused serious issues regarding demand for the large numbers of three bed properties in Birkenhead North.
- Across Wirral the employment offer has failed, and the borough is largely a dormitory for those working elsewhere.
- Although there are plenty of sites for building new affordable houses, demand overall is very weak, so no incentive for developers. In any case most would prefer to build much more expensive houses to maximise returns.
- A lack of medium price properties circa £180/260k which could possibly be fulfilled by the release of some small area of green belt subject to the usual release via the Local Plan
- New Ferry has a broken market – house quality is poor, house prices are low, and there is a need to build zero-carbon, affordable, social housing there for the existing community.
- Tenure divide between East and West of the borough reflected via affordability of rent levels and property prices. Limited availability of stock for smaller households i.e. 1/2 bed properties, for those under 35 affected by LHA rates and adapted properties. Low demand areas affected by social issues.
- The area and the values of housing are outside the economic reach of many. Wirral also has pockets of significant deprivation and a large part of the north-eastern area of the borough falls within the top 10% most deprived parts of the country – including areas in Wallasey and Birkenhead. Much still needs to be done in these areas to re-invigorate the housing market and investment opportunities.
- The fact that Wirral has such a polarised economy and wealth areas means there are significant affordability issues when it comes to housing. The latest Office for National Statistics (ONS) figures show that the median workplace-based affordability ratio was 6.28 as of 2018, the fifth consecutive year that it has risen.
- The first question to be considered in answering the above is what housing market area Wirral falls within. Cooperation on strategic housing issues, and plan making to meet the economic aspirations of the LCR across all the Combined Authority boroughs will be vital. The future strength or weakness of the Wirral housing market will be greatly influenced by whether the borough seeks to plan for housing growth on an insular basis of a Wirral HMA or an outward looking LCR HMA; the latter being the correct approach.
- Significant under-provision of affordable housing in Wirral as evidenced by ONS affordability ratios.

E.26 Stakeholders were then asked whether there are any gaps in the supply of types of housing in Wirral. From the gaps identified below, it is evident that lack of supply relates to a wide range of housing types and sizes:

- Larger good quality houses to rent
- Not enough social housing, we have a lack of 2 bed houses for rent. High demand for 3 bed houses.
- 1 bed flats at LHA rates
- More affordably priced/low cost properties aimed at first time buyers so they can afford to get on the property ladder
- The Wirral Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2015) concludes that the need for family accommodation remains high, as well as a chronic lack of new affordable homes.
- There tends to be extremes in the housing market and we believe there is a demonstrated need for quality housing products, in the right areas that are affordable for a wider range of people. In particular, we believe there is a gap in the market for new build Rent-to-Buy properties that help people obtain a foot on the property ladder in a way that they could not achieve on the open market.
- A range of modern, new-build homes of different types, sizes and tenures, in a range of locations.
- Gap in the supply of family homes, starter homes and homes for downsizing in attractive markets. Need for 2/3/4/5 bed properties. Delivery of affordable housing, regeneration and apartment housing appears to be key driver in the Borough, these schemes are more common than the delivery of family homes 2/3/4 and 5 bed properties as highlighted as a weakness.
- Affordable places for under 25's. Affordable houses for people to buy not just for landlords to buy and rent out
- Provision for accommodation for elderly residents is missing. Supported living accommodation which allows people to continue to live independently but with support when required needs to be targeted across all parts of the borough.
- Single person rented accommodation
- Smaller homes – bedsit/ 1/ 2 bed properties in rental market and owner-occupied market.
- Mainly regeneration of the run-down areas of the north and east of Wirral; also, 'empty houses' returned to occupancy
- Extra Care, specialist supported housing for vulnerable adults. Older persons bungalows and apartments. Housing and environmental design suitable for the ageing demographic. Affordable and sheltered retirement housing. High demand for, but lack of two bed bungalows (to accommodate informal and formal carers). Insufficient accessible housing generally. All-inclusive models (more suited to younger people). Re-provision (low rise flats with lifts) to address likely fall in demand for high rise accommodation as part of wider housing strategy
- There is strong demand for shared ownership in Wirral.
- Although there has been some improvement recently there remain a lack of quantity and variety of longer-term housing available for care leavers.

- We need a good supply of zero-carbon housing, modern energy efficient homes especially affordable and social housing. Existing housing needs major upgrades, especially in older housing types.
- Limited availability of adapted properties to meet the need of physically disabled and bariatric households. The LHA rate restricts access to accommodation unless shared or bedsit however limited availability of stock. Limited availability of affordable large properties to meet the needs of large families affected by the benefit cap.
- Providing a range of dwelling sizes specifically to match the quantitative need may not address people's aspirations and could discourage more affluent households from moving to/remaining in the borough. Greasby has a relatively elderly population, which suggests that many of the people living in these semi-detached and detached homes are likely to be aged 65+. Should they wish to downsize in the future, there needs to be a supply of smaller homes (for example, 1-bed/2-bed properties) in Greasby and the wider District. But given this proportion of the older demographic, it is important that young people and families are attracted to the area to balance the demographic profile, providing homes to create a more sustainable and balanced community, made up of all age groups. Housing supply therefore needs to focus not only on sites that can meet the need for younger cohorts of the population, but elderly people too.
- Those who have physical disabilities tend to have to wait longer for appropriate accommodation – the provision is not coping with the demand.
- A degree of caution needs to be addressed that the council does not become fixated on delivering an overall quantum of housing at the expense of delivering the right type and mix of housing in area that people want to live. It is vital that the Council identifies and releases an appropriate level of housing to meet the needs of all Wirral residents. It is important that the Council does not overly rely on the delivery of high density apartments at Wirral Waters in particular but also units being delivered on high density small sites in the urban area by the Wirral Growth Company. We have significant concerns with regard to the assumed delivery rates claimed by the Council and the developers on these sites. To address these issues, it is imperative that the Council does not overly rely on these sites to meet their affordable housing needs and the only mechanism to addressing the significant affordable housing need in Wirral is by allocating suitable and deliverable sites throughout the Borough.
- As well as meeting its own housing needs, the SHMA should consider the role that Wirral plays in the future of the LCR. It is vitally important that Wirral, and its neighbouring authorities, demonstrate with evidence the extent to which the housing needs for all types of housing have been met through the identified supply. For example, within Liverpool City, the vast majority of housing commitments (and identified supply) involve the redevelopment of previously developed land to provide city centre apartment (or edge of centre) development designed towards meeting the needs of smaller households. The majority of the schemes identified within the Local Plan for residential development will result in high density development of a similar style (i.e. mainly 1 and 2 bed apartments with a modest number of 3 bed units). Neither Liverpool City Council or the LCR Combined Authority are clear on

how the qualitative need for three bedroom (i.e. 16,612 new households) and four-bedroom properties or larger (i.e. 4,965 new households) set out within Liverpool's evidence base will be provided for. We consider that Wirral, along with other boroughs within LCR have a combined role to play in identifying new greenfield sites (as well as a proportion of suburban sites) to provide larger and higher value aspirational housing required within the City Region.

E.27 Stakeholders were asked what can be done to improve the housing market in Wirral. Stakeholders identified a wide range of improvements, including:

- More building and restore council tax relieve between lettings so landlords can repair and improve the houses
- More social housing providers
- Limit the number of homes in the borough that can be owned by one person who is not an RSL. Much stronger powers needed to ensure that private sector rented homes are kept in A1 condition - there are too many private sector landlords who allow their properties to deteriorate and expect tenants to live with damp walls, non-working boilers, dodgy electrics, etc.
- There are too many homes sitting empty across the borough which should be brought back into use (and shops!). There should be levy against owners of homes that sit empty in these times when people are crying out for a home.
- Bring back direct payments of LHA to landlords. This will reduce arrears and allow landlords to invest in their properties and encourage them to accept benefits clients.
- Improve passage of information so that landlords and agents know more about the background of the people applying for their properties. Too often the Council refuse to give information on tenants despite the tenants signing to allow this under GDPR and DP regulations.
- Encourage development on brownfield land across the borough, but certainly in the more deprived areas, by eliminating affordable housing requirements and ensuring brownfield run off rates are applied for surface water run off rates
- A Local Plan clearly setting out locations for sustainable new development, providing for a balanced mix of housing across the Wirral.
- Improve the supply of housing to increase the demand. Provide more certainty in plan-led system. This will give developers security to build and give those looking for properties assurance that they do not need to look elsewhere for a property to meet their needs.
- More effective management from the council. Better planning.
- Refurbish the houses that are empty and improve poorer areas
- Regeneration projects should be supported by planning gain payments charged for new residential developments in the stronger more expensive parts of the Borough.
- Incentivise landlords or developers to develop smaller more affordable units of a higher quality.

- Wirral needs to look beyond meeting its own immediate housing needs and should seek to contribute towards meeting the wider economic growth aspirations of the LCR.
- Really major on Regeneration and let the Market deal with the small need beyond this. Take advantage of the huge funds available through 'Homes England' and other resources, including its own. Follow NPPF Guidance and insist on development in the right places of good design quality and high standard density, making best use of available land. Redesignate and develop for housing suitable sites which are not currently designated for housing and which have remained undeveloped for many years and have low potential for the current designation.
- Allocate extra care and supported living requirements in strategic land S106.
- Flexible approach to S106 affordable housing tenures.
- There is a compelling need for the release of some Green Belt land for residential development, without which it will not be possible to meet the needs of the local population and the economy.
- The pace of new developments could be increased with alternative construction methods e.g. modular build. Alongside this, an environmental strategy to support the green agenda for older homes would help to convert existing properties that better meet modern demand. It would be important to keep abreast of changing aspirations in addition to fully utilising customer insight data (eg Arc4) to inform planning. An economic strategy to create employment opportunities in East Wirral would help to create a more active and buoyant housing market. Addressing the cost of 24/7 access to Wirral (e.g. Mersey Tunnel, Train links, Ferry...) as part of the Housing Strategy would make the Wirral a more attractive place to live.
- Provide more jobs for people
- Build more social housing for rent and cheap starter homes on brownfield sites using modern modular construction methods.
- Reduce the inflationary rent guarantee of Housing Benefit, that will slowly reduce house process as rents decline.
- Encourage the development of sites which already have outline approval, including infrastructure help.
- Listen to the needs of the residents of Wirral
- The Council should be looking at brownfield sites, near to employment opportunities, so that suitable accommodation can be built on them which younger couples and individuals can afford to either buy or rent. The transport infrastructure also needs to be more efficient so that people can live in these areas and get to work easily.
- Limited tested release of some green belt sites via Local Plan procedure.
- Use urban sites, which usually have good public transport and other infrastructure, to build new zero-carbon homes. Upgrade existing stock wherever possible. Keep a tight Green Belt to force investment into places like New Ferry. Put minimum density on all new development, and minimum requirements for green space, to drive developers towards smaller units, not

luxury homes. Make sure Wirral's standards are as high as those in adjacent boroughs.

- Detailed market-driven assessment of likely requirements and review of that appears deliverable in the market. Robust assessment needed to ensure that any aspirational objectives are deliverable and provide the best prospects of delivering an appropriate quantum of good quality homes that meet the needs of families.
- Investment in infrastructure, environmental and social amenities
- Many of the residents moving into our sheltered accommodation are moving on from hostels or more drug and alcohol issues. We therefore require a support package to come with these residents.
- Wirral as a whole has seen an increase in people aged 65+, which highlights the importance of rebalancing the District's age profile by attracting more people in the 16-64 age bracket to the area. Addressing the need for 3 and 4-bed family housing that this age group traditionally requires, will be important. Wirral should not focus on delivering family housing in one location and small apartments in another. Large sites with a critical mass have the potential to deliver a mix of housing to address a wider need, and provide a more sustainable and robust community
- To improve the housing market, you need to be able to understand where the gaps are and getting RPs and other stakeholder consultation involved in the wider strategy planning would be useful.
- Investing in regeneration and potential for selective demolition where required would impact on desirability of brownfield sites. Important that new growth and protecting existing stock needs to be considered hand-in-hand. This would impact on the demand for greenbelt and would complement wider regeneration priorities.
- The Council need to identify more deliverable sites for open market and affordable housing.
- Protect the greenbelt and protect the environment. Utilise Brownfield sites or identify and redevelop of vacant housing in the Borough, especially in the more deprived areas of private renting there would seem to be an abundance of vacant properties.

E.28 Stakeholders were then asked what they think the council needs to consider when assessing the future requirements and need for market, affordable and specialist housing in the borough. Stakeholders provided a range of answers to this question, which include:

- Location
- Less focus on buying properties, more on rent.
- Improve the planning process within the Council to ensure swift assessment of applications, especially for change of use from commercial to residential. This will free up more property for residential use. Accept the recommendations of numerous previous town centre regeneration plans and relax the requirements of commercial to resi development, especially in tertiary areas outside Birkenhead centre.

- There has to be a balance of housing delivery across the Borough to ensure that the significant gaps across all tenure types and levels of affordability are catered for.
- To make full use of existing brownfield sites
- Access to transport links and amenities. Infrastructure: schools, doctors, buses, hospitals etc
- That any assessment of future requirements is matched by sustainable land releases which are suitable, deliverable and viable.
- The Council needs to consider the requirement of maintaining a five-year housing land supply, with an appropriate buffer. In line with the National Planning Policy Framework, to maintain the supply of housing the Council should monitor progress in building out sites which have permission.
- We understand that Wirral are planning on pursuing a housing requirement in line with the minimum figure derived using the LHN method. However, we do not consider that this is appropriate and in fact the housing requirement figure for Wirral should be significantly in excess of this. We would advocate that the figure derived utilising the LHN figure is only used as the starting point in assessing what the housing requirement in Wirral should be an appropriate upward adjustments need to be made to cater for past under-delivery, take positive steps to address worsening affordability issues and addressing issues such as concealed households and provision of appropriate levels of affordable houses of various tenures.
- The Council will need to assemble a robust evidence base in accordance with National Planning Policy and Practice Guidance. For specialist housing, Market Position Statements should be prepared.
- Assessment of local income levels and affordability issues will be key, ensuring new entrants to the housing market are not priced out of provision. The needs of an ageing population should be considered both in design standards of new build properties but also in location (near to local amenities and creating mixed communities where older people are not isolated from mainstream market provision). We are acutely aware of the lack of specialist housing provision across all areas for customers with specialist needs e.g. leaving care provision for young people, support for those with mental conditions and learning disabilities, adapted properties for those with mobility issues and short term move-on accommodation for transitional housing support.
- The importance to Wirral of sustainable economic growth; to contribute to health and wellbeing; to ensure that value creation through development is reinvested back into the Wirral. To ensure that Wirral is not dependent upon unsustainable public subsidies in order to deliver the housing that it needs. An integrated Wirral-wide approach to provide for long term prosperity. A move away from the historical, unsuccessful reliance on an unrealistic politically motivated approach, and the adoption of a pragmatic, realistic and deliverable approach.
- That there is a direct correlation between jobs, housing and an improved economy. If a range of housing is provided in Wirral, there will be no need for existing residents to meet their housing needs in competing authorities.

- A proper understanding of need is required. This must take account of backlog and future requirements and these need to be addressed, in full, within borough boundaries.
- Viability and its relationship to site-specific circumstances should be a key consideration as part of the assessment of the requirement for market (rent and sale), affordable and specialist housing. It is not considered that blanket requirements are appropriate when they would render a proposal unviable to deliver, thereby preventing the development of sustainable sites.
- Quantity and quality of available properties.
- The Council needs to consider a range of important factors when assessing the future requirements and need for particular types of housing in the borough including, but not limited to, family size, age profile, household income and affordability ratios.
- Starter homes and assistance for people under the age of 25. All too often residents are living too long at home at a time when should be moving into their first home.
- Meeting needs of all housing types as identified in the NPPF and PPTS
- The Council needs to consider and understand that housing is only part of a solution to change people's lives they require much more support than a roof over their head.
- How to prevent the nimbys from applying pressure on local members, resulting in delays to the Strategic officers efforts to make actual progress.
- Demand for affordable home ownership properties is commonly found from households experiencing relationship breakdown and from people living in the private rented sector (often expensive and poor quality) who are unable to afford home ownership without assistance. Enabling these groups to access homeownership is something that the LA should consider.
- The amount of brownfields sites in the borough; the absolute requirement not to build on green belt, examine all site however unlikely - some out of the box thinking required.
- In order to assess future housing requirements, the Council needs to consider market signals such as the proportion of households which are unable to access market housing and examine areas where private rents are highest. There is significant pent-up and unmet demand for housing in west Wirral where the supply of housing has been suppressed for many years.
- Use objective, accurate figures. Identify the real need from its own statistics
- With environmental concerns so high on the political agenda, there is growing pressure for energy efficient and zero-carbon homes. Key considerations specifically in relation to specialist housing might be: Mapping of current supply (and demand) to ensure non-saturation of specialist housing (at local and LCR levels); Infrastructure, particularly transport, amenities and local facilities ; Preventing the need for Wirral citizens to leave the area to access specialist housing e.g. residential facilities for those with specialist needs; Develop general needs accessible accommodation suitable to the needs of young disabled people; Wirral is two miles from a university city. Work with

stakeholders to address the river barrier and develop student accommodation and economy to regenerate Birkenhead/Seacombe; Encourage Liverpool universities to extend into Wirral (e.g. similar to Chester Univ.); Development of accommodation for provision of forensic services; Decline in demand for high rise

- Needs much more scoping of the number of young people coming through care in Wirral and homelessness at 16 & 17 so that sufficient quantity and variety of housing can be planned for and provided not just short term but move-on and longer-term tenancies. Existing hostel accommodation may actually be masking the housing need and changing nature of the type of accommodation and quantity of accommodation required.
- Needs to undertake comprehensive study of population growth or decline relative to the age groups. There needs to be a comprehensive study of school places available with G P surgery numbers and other essential family services researched.
- All development needs to achieve net biodiversity gain (NPPF 2019) and probably net environmental gain (proposed in Environment Bill). Any building on greenfield and/or in rural areas with poor public transport will struggle to achieve these
- The Council should have a clear understanding of the types of housing it wants to encourage, both in terms of market units and affordable units. The viability impacts of delivering these different products vary widely, so it will be important that the Council should have full regard for the viability implications which would arise as a consequence of those requirements.
- Increase opportunities for families to relocate to housing most appropriate for their needs.
- Evidence based assessment of housing need, ensuring that calculations are accurate and up to date
- More supported accommodation linked to tenants with mental health issues.
- Needs to be based on a needs assessment of the local population and set within current legislation and policy contexts i.e. welfare benefits due to the large areas of deprivation in Wirral. Consider new build specifications for properties that are able to meet the changing needs of households i.e. 'future proofing' as households age/ health/ mobility needs change over time. Expansion of the selective licensing scheme area to ensure property and management standards
- The ageing population needs to be factored into the analysis, along with the implications this will have for specialist housing. At the same time, the Borough needs to get more people moving to the area who are of working age, meaning the need assessment for 3 and 4-bed properties will be critical. The 2016 SHMA suggests demand for this type of housing will be exceeded by demand for smaller homes. This position needs to be reassessed, especially when it comes to looking at the need for market and affordable housing.

- WBC need to look at the demographics and income of its citizens. People should have choices and not be forced to opt for what is available when it might not be affordable or appropriate.
- Alignment with economic growth areas / transport infrastructure. Need to balance regeneration of existing areas with any potential greenbelt release. Supply and demand of accommodation and social care priorities / numbers of people receiving care along with demographics / trends in service demand.
- Wirral must be to seek to fulfil its role in supporting the growth of the LCR as well as seeking to resolve its own borough wide housing supply issues. Both of those roles require the boosting of supply for housing above the bare minimum of housing supply required by the SMOAN.

E.29 Stakeholders were then asked what should be considered when setting future housing standards, such as accessibility, size and quality for new housing in the borough. Considerations include:

- Developments should have a mix of housing types as there are gaps in the market
- More 2 bed properties
- There should be an assumption against that single people living alone should be forced to live in one-bedroom flats. People like open space of their own - a garden - even though small. Single person housing with gardens should be more prevalent. There should also be a mix of approaches to whether new housing should have provision for car spaces.
- Apply the national standards and don't try and gold plate every requirement that comes our way. We already have much stricter enforcement of HMO standards, for example, than other Merseyside boroughs. It deters outside investment.
- That the cost of applying any new standards does not render potential housing schemes un-deliverable and that such standards take into account practicalities of how people use and live in their homes.
- Provision of infrastructure, roads, schools etc.
- More properties suitable for disability access.
- The size and type of new housing should be transparently set out in policy and justified based on SHMA and other evidence. Whilst these policies need to be robust, consideration should be given to building in flexibility to take account of: (i) SHMA and other evidence changes over time; and (ii) future NPPF and other changes.
- It would be helpful to provide clear standards however there is a danger that if standards are more restrictive or impose too great a cost when compared with other Local Authorities developers could be deterred from investing in the area
- To improve affordability we would request the Council considers designing out restrictive and often hidden estate management charges from new build commercial developments.

- Climate change, Modern techniques, Human welfare, Health and wellbeing , Creating beautiful places
- National space standards serve a purpose in new housing developments however not all properties delivered need to accord with the standards as developers only build what they know they can sell. Any requirement for space standards should be accounted for in any local plan viability report. Quality should be a key consideration with concerns that some volume builds require substantial maintenance over the duration of ownership. Quality in new builds should not be a second consideration and the market should be balanced between volume (PLC) and private housebuilder products for variety, choice and flexibility in the market.
- Viability and its relationship to site-specific circumstances should be a key consideration as part of the wording of planning policy requirements for matters in relation to housing standards. It is not considered that blanket requirements are appropriate when they would render a proposal unviable to deliver, thereby preventing the development of sustainable sites. Accessibility as per paragraph 8, 9 and 20 of the Planning Practice Guidance
- The people you let live in them
- Smaller estates of houses rather one large one. More help for disabled people to enable them to live independently
- Setting future housing standards is important to ensure that future housing developments are of a high-quality design and offer good living standards for residents. However, it is vital that such standards, which may be set out in Local Plan development management policies or Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), are not too restrictive / prescriptive in their requirements. This is important to ensure that they do not impact negatively on development viability and thus threaten the delivery of much needed homes on suitable sites.
- A better balance needs to be struck between building reg standards and the implication on the cost of construction. The cost of complying with codes is one reason new housing is so expensive. A better balance and a better consideration of what the cost of implications are for new standards is required.
- Identified local housing needs - see footnote 46 of NPPF
- Average incomes, homes that are flexible to become lifetime homes for people with accessibility requirements.
- It is not considered to be the role of the SHMA to set housing and accessibility standards or to specify size or quality of new housing. Those considerations are to be undertaken as part of the Local Plan process and should have regard to, but should not replicate, external standards such as Building Regulations and nationally prescribed space standards. However, the Local Plan must consider the acceptability of any standards with regard to other factors that are vital in plan making, such as density expectations, borough wide constraints, the availability of land and viability considerations. Whilst we encourage the SHMA to identify what the housing market needs for housing are across the borough, including where larger, smaller or specialist homes are needed (or even where higher quality housing is needed), we do

not consider the SHMA should seek to take on the role of planning for those needs.

- The Council confirmed that future surveys inputs (which includes this one) would be able to be copied/saved by the responder. I cannot see how this can be done unless you have an undisclosed confirmation routine.
- Ageing population need at least 25% disability compliant dwellings. The land values on Greenbelt land can easily absorb it.
- Viability and market demand versus identified needs
- The importance of ensuring that new homes are of the requisite quality and are accessible. It is important, however, that any such standards are applied flexible to recognise that these important objectives can be achieved in different ways or that developments in particularly challenging market conditions may need to prioritise some aspects over others (whilst still achieving good quality housing overall) . In addition, flexibility rather than prescriptive standards, would enable developers to deliver innovation. A 'comply or justify' approach is therefore recommend whereby exceptions to standards may be permissible where robust justification is advanced.
- The markets are quite capable of setting the requirements based on whether or not they can sell property.
- The Council should focus on the delivery of high-quality family housing in the western half of the Borough, where demand for homes is greatest, including sustainable areas such as Heswall.
- Decreasing / static population and older population
- Building for Life standards; The National Space standard; Secure by Design; Equal sized bedrooms are more desirable to prospective buyers/renters; Code for Sustainable Homes; In terms of future proofing it would be good to consider an in-built exit strategy for property type conversion to address changing demand/aspirations through use of modular build/pods; For certain tenure types reduced the garden size (green space) as unkempt gardens are an increasing problem. People cannot afford equipment, or they are too vulnerable to maintain gardens. This also has a wider impact upon communities; Install wifi (5g) as standard; Provision built in for future use of technology (remote monitoring/lifestyles/health & welfare/prevention)
- Brownfield first
- Reality
- Standards of design and suitability for reducing carbon footprint need vast improvement. At present this is ignored as the numbers game is played out.
- Listen to the views of the 35,000 signature petition that has so far been collected
- Obviously eco standards should be considered.
- The current and projected future demographics; access to local services and shopping; shift in age categories; rental and sale properties made available to retain and encourage young families to live in Wirral with a disclosed vision for future improvements in family leisure opportunities.

- If we are to meet local, LCR and national targets for climate change reduction, then all new development from 2020 must be zero-carbon. Green areas that can absorb carbon must be rigorously protected e.g. woodlands, peatlands, marshes, properly-managed grasslands.
 - The Council should have consideration of their objectives in terms of delivering quality homes, but also to have full regard for the viability implications which would arise as a consequence of those requirements. This approach provides a greater confidence that Plan-led housing delivery can be achieved and that expectations of affordable housing can be met.
 - Focus should be given towards to accessibility to public transport infrastructure. The size and type of dwellings developed should reflect locally assessed requirements.
 - 'Future proofing' to ensure that a property can be adapted around the changing needs of a household. Welfare benefit considerations and limitations to certain age groups to ensure rental stock can meet needs.
 - Accessibility – M4(2) for a large percentage of new-build will be crucial going forward to allow adaptability of properties of future occupants. The LA is coming across a considerable number of new-build properties where the costs to adapt are high, impacting upon adaptations budgets. There is also a need for affordable / social rented properties to have level access into the property as well as wet rooms or level access showers.
 - Alignment of housing & planning legislation to provide clear guidance for landlords of HMOs.
 - Hard-wiring for assistive technology.
 - Future housing standards should not be overly restrictive in order to ensure that the supply of housing is maximised. Standards should be flexible to allow for decision-making to respond effectively to housing need.
- E.30 The next part of the survey instructed stakeholders to either go through all of the questions in the consultation or to move through specific sections targeted at particular stakeholder groups.

Registered providers

- E.31 Stakeholders were asked about their main concerns surrounding affordable and specialist housing provision. Specifically, whether there is enough, too much or whether it is of the right size, and whether it is of good quality and in the right location. Stakeholders responding to this question believed that the main concerns lie within specialist housing provision, to which they commented:
- We clearly don't have enough bungalows being built in this country for people for whom stairs in a home is an issue. Not all people like living in flats without their own piece of outdoor space.
 - There is a healthy demand for social and affordable rent properties in the Wirral area and there is a lack of specialist provision. We would like to see Extra Care housing given a higher priority but believe there is room for improvement in the commissioning models for these services (with rents being set too low, making new provision unviable). The sites that come

forward for new development tend to be concentrated around the major conurbations whilst there is a lack of affordable rented housing / intermediate housing e.g. Rent to Buy in some of the smaller settlements.

- Viability is a key concern. The lack of and future instability of revenue and capital funding means that specialist housing is high risk to build. This needs to be addressed or delivery will be limited. There is a lack of support and political opposition for specialist housing in west Wirral which means that east Wirral has a higher density and concentrates too many problems in too little an area. There is no even spread of specialist housing provision across the Borough.
- Affordable is not affordable to some people. People of working age who require specialist accommodation e.g. bungalows, sheltered, extra care in receipt of Universal Credit do not have the cost of Intensive Housing Management to deliver tenancy support. Such people will be therefore be precluded from access to suitable accommodation as they are unable to sustain a tenancy without support. There are only two types of specialist accommodation for older people that will be funded through the new Sheltered Rent (as per consultation on funding for supported Housing) i.e. sheltered and extra care. However, basic and accessible accommodation (with lifts) with integral technology for future remote monitoring should be developed within new low-rise schemes for individuals. The more expensive extra care model with multiple communal areas should become the hub. There are no real housing options for people with learning disabilities under the age of 55 years of age although physically, many are beyond this age due to their mental disability and related issues. The quality of some schemes is poor due to the nature of the buildings. More new build schemes are required rather than trying to utilise old and inflexible accommodation.
- Our main concern is the low level of support that residents with alcohol and drug dependency issue have when moving into the sheltered schemes. If these applicants could come with a personalised package of support to help them settle into their new home this would be very helpful. We do receive a small amount of SP, which is beneficial towards the costs of the scheme managers, and it is appreciated that the SP has not been withdrawn.
- Given there is an ageing demographic in Wirral, there is inevitably going to have to be a need to accommodate suitable housing that can meet such needs. There are various forms and models including specialist, dedicated care homes (such as dementia homes), retirement apartments, large scale care villages, bungalows, accessible homes (designed in accordance with relevant building regulations, and also smaller scale houses (with gardens) that allow existing older households to down size and draw out equity from their larger home for retirement. In short, there is no single solution that will address all needs. Indeed, the ageing population will all have different aspirations, levels of independence, care requirements and levels of equity/access to funds. This means any planning related policies should not be too rigid or prescriptive in terms of how such needs are met. The market will understand the relevant needs in an area and so long as there is sufficient land made available, those needs will be met. However, the Council might wish to allocate certain specific sites for certain types of housing if that is being promoted by the landowners or the site is deemed sufficiently suitable.

For instance, there might be some relatively small urban sites that would not be large enough to accommodate a viable amount of standard family housing, or even standard apartments with sufficient car parking. However, they could be deemed suitable for mid-rise retirement apartments that do not need to provide as much car parking. We would suggest that such sites and proposals are considered as part of the Council's SHLAA/urban capacity assessment going forward.

- There is possibly an oversupply of sheltered accommodation as some schemes do not meet expectations of older people in terms of size and location. There is a need to map what we have and assess whether there could be a change of use to meet demand for other groups e.g. mental health, learning disabilities etc.

E.32 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. One stakeholder commented that the mid to higher cost markets are particularly popular for intermediate market homes. Provision of such products can help people get on the housing ladder, who otherwise wouldn't be able to. Another stakeholder stated that they are finding that registered providers are pressing for a higher number of shared ownership products rather than affordable rent due to its demand and viability.

E.33 Stakeholders were asked what they think needs to happen to improve the provision of affordable housing for rent and sale in Wirral. Responses included:

- More affordable housing to be provided;
- Refund the costs of selective licence fees to landlords who let to benefits tenants. Take properties on long term tenancies yourselves and let them to vulnerable people as other Councils currently do.
- Investigate the stance taken by other local authorities in the Merseyside area and look to produce standardised Section 106 Agreements (with eligibility criteria aligned with Homes England standards). Greater access to Council held information on housing waiting lists and other intelligence on local demand issues would be beneficial to providers looking to invest in new provision in the area.
- Affordable home ownership products work best when part of market sale developments. This can be S106 delivery of with support from Homes England.
- There needs to be grant subsidy and a new round of grant funding agreed. There also needs to be impartial political desire for affordable housing, both at a local and a Planning Committee level. We have seen Officers recommendations rejected by politicians and schemes purposefully delayed because of local objections to affordable housing. The use of specific greenbelt site to deliver affordable housing would also be helpful.
- The number of homes being delivered in Wirral on an annual basis needs to increase and additional viable land needs to be made available. If the Council continue to simply focus on brownfield sites in less affluent areas that require remediation and are subject to high development costs, the easiest component to not deliver on is genuine affordable housing. Viable sites in

better value areas will more often than not be able to deliver a much higher proportion of affordable homes. The brownfield sites would not only struggle to bring forward affordable houses, but on the east of the Borough, there are already many more affordable properties. It is those central areas around Greasby and the western areas of the Borough that greatly require affordable housing, to rebalance the current availability of stock, which is overpriced for the majority of the Borough's population.

- The 2016 SHMA states that changes to the benefits system (especially the Government's fiscal penalty for under-occupancy) is incentivising households to move to smaller properties in order to avoid a reduction in the level of housing benefit they receive. Registered Providers are indicating that the under-occupancy penalty is having a significant impact on household's requirements, with a substantial increase in the number of respondents wanting 2-bed properties and a commensurate reduction in the number of households asking for 3-bed properties. This is presenting significant problems for Registered Providers as there is insufficient 1 and 2 bed stock to meet this affordable demand. As such, in our opinion, specific to affordable provision, there should be a great provision of shared ownership 1 and 2 bedroom to inform Locally Planning Policy.

E.34 The survey then asked stakeholders responding to the registered provider-specific questions, whether they have any significant housing developments proposed in the Wirral Council area. Two stakeholders responded in the negative, and five stakeholders mentioned the following developments:

- The New Ferry Community Land Trust is hoping to purchase dilapidated buildings in New Ferry's precinct (Bebington Road) to renovate for use as ground floor commercial uses with flats on upper floors. These flats will be offered for rent by the CLT to local people in need of housing.
- We currently have 8 developments in the Wirral area comprising of 270 new homes (of varied size and tenure). Of these developments, 145 are currently on site (in construction phase) and the remainder are due to commence before the end of 2020. The majority of the sites are located in the Birkenhead area with two in Wallasey and one in the Pensby area.
- Yes, between 100 and 200 affordable homes p.a. across East and West Wirral
- Yes. We control Land East of Pump Lane, Greasby which is capable of delivering circa 750 new homes, 3-4-bedroom family homes, 1-3-bedroom smaller properties for elderly people and younger people; and affordable homes.
- 20 units of accommodation at the Candle Factory in Bromborough for general needs and those with a learning disabilities. We are committed to c.30 units pa and will focus this on Wirral.

Developers and housebuilders

E.35 Stakeholders were asked what the main challenges were facing the delivery of new homes in Wirral. The main challenges mentioned were the lack of suitable, available and deliverable land; the tight constraint of the area by Green Belt; and

the absence of an up-to-date Local Plan which allocates new sites for development. Further comments made include:

- Getting the balance right between rented and owned taking into account affordability.
- Wirral's existing adopted Local Plan is significantly outdated, and the settlement boundaries are tightly constrained by Green Belt and have been for many decades. Housing developers are therefore having to turn to other sources of land including employment land, areas of valued open space which the Council might have otherwise preferred to keep such sites for those uses.
- An under resourced planning team, partisan Planning Committee decisions rather than impartial decisions to deliver new homes, lack of government grant funding for affordable homes and an unclear housing strategy and definitions of what's wanted/needed.
- The delivery of many brownfield sites will be significantly delayed due to the required remediation work and viability constraints. It is therefore imperative that sufficient land within the presently defined Green Belt is released in order to ensure that Wirral's housing needs are met in full.
- The viability of housing developments in the urban area of Wirral to the east of the M53 is very challenging due to low land values which make development difficult to work from a financial perspective. This issue is particularly acute as many of the housing sites are brownfield and have significant contamination issues which further adversely affect the viability.
- Large parts of Wirral, to the east of the M53 have suffered from historic industrial decline and as such face significant deprivation issues. Such areas are not attractive to many developers. In these cases, development can only proceed with substantive public sector support, either in terms of grant funding or where public sector bodies bring forward development on their own land.
- It is vital that the SHMA provides a 'policy-off' assessment of the needs of the borough (and its potential contribution to supporting the wider growth of the LCR) and its identification of those needs is not limited in any way by the perception of the availability of land. It is for the Local Plan to undertake any planning balancing exercise related to the delivery of the homes (or otherwise) that the SHMA identifies as being needed.
- Many areas in Wirral have high land values which makes delivering viable schemes a challenge.
- There is an abundance of Sites with developers ready to move forward. The lack of an up to date plan is seriously frustrating the ability meet the housing needs of the borough.
- Lack of certainty in the local plan process, significant delay and uncertain timescales for delivery. This requires housebuilders and developers to agree long-term options with landowners to account for the possibility of further delays. This is not only costly but is also an unattractive option to landowners reducing the availability of land.
- We have found the Wirral area to be highly competitive and this is pushing up land valuations as well as competition for 106 allocations on major sites. We

have also found that the Local Housing Allowance rates are set too low to make some new developments unviable.

- It would also be prudent for Wirral when considering the release of land from the Green Belt that sufficient levels of safeguarded land to meet needs beyond the plan period. In the event that Wirral Waters does not deliver in line with current expectations, this would provide a ready supply of land to fall back on and ensure sufficient delivery of homes. We would reiterate that Wirral should not place all their eggs in the Wirral Waters basket as there is a strong likelihood that the overall site may encounter delivery issues over the course of the Local Plan
- Remediation of brownfield land, slow planning permission for COU to resi, building on flood plains
- The lack of a Green Belt review and the absence of an up-to-date local plan.

E.36 Stakeholders believed that all types of housing are in great demand in Wirral, but specifically affordable family housing.

- Homes for first time buyers and family homes under £400,000
- The Wirral Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Housing Needs Survey (2015) outlines that the need for family accommodation remains high. It also sets out that there is currently an insufficient supply of general needs and specialist housing for older people, with a particular need for Extra Care and Residential Care.
- There is a significant demand for all types of housing in Wirral but in particular, the most recent evidence (SHMA 2016) suggests that there is a need for 40% of future housing to be 1/2 beds with the remaining 60% to be 3/4 bed units. It is unlikely that the housing need in Wirral has changed dramatically over the past 3 years and it is fair to assume that approximately 60% of the future supply in Wirral needs to be larger 3 and 4 bed properties. The SHMA also concludes that 25% of future homes need to be detached. Just 10% of future housing needs to be flatted type developments according to the Council's own evidence. Going forward, it is imperative that Wirral Council aligns its supply with its deliverable units and ensures that the right quantum of homes are delivered in the right sustainable locations across Wirral.
- We believe there is a shortage and therefore a higher demand for smaller units of one and two bedroom size.
- High quality family housing (3/4/5 beds) with appropriate outdoor space and parking provision in attractive market areas and elderly care provision, retirement housing to free up existing housing stock.
- Starter homes at an affordable price in locations other than the poor performing market areas.
- Our Client notes the Council's evidence base for the Local Plan and its keenness to utilise brownfield resources in the borough (as set out within the Local Plan Action Plan – April 2019), in particular through the delivery of Wirral Waters. Our Client urges caution from the Council in establishing an over-reliance on the delivery of apartment living and associated higher density accommodation to meet its housing needs. Whilst the promotion of development on previously developed land is to be encouraged, we consider

the SHMA will demonstrate that such development only deals with a part of the need and delivery of those schemes will be limited by demand for apartments which is considered unlikely to be sufficient to deliver Wirral Waters, for example, within the plan period

- Across Wirral there is pent-up market demand for all types and tenures of housing due to the long-standing housing delivery issues. It is clear that a mix of housing types and tenure is required to reflect the different character and sub-markets within Wirral. Similarly, provision for housing of all types across all of the communities needs to be identified to ensure that the distinct needs of all areas can be met. This is an important objective to ensure a balanced approach to housing delivery.
- There is a shortage of homes for first-time buyers and families across the Borough, which is evidenced by the fact that between 2001 and 2011, ONS/Census data shows that the proportion of concealed families within Wirral increased to a greater extent than in Central Liverpool City Region Housing Market and across the North West as a whole. It is clear therefore that more needs to be done to address this growing issue of a lack of supply of affordable family housing in the area.
- Demand is neighbourhood dependant and it is difficult to identify a particular property type in greatest demand across the borough. However, particular groups are best suited to particular property types, for example in Specialist Housing there is greatest demand for two-bedroom accommodation, particularly bungalows. Affordable Rent disabled adapted bungalows for Affordable Rent are always the most popular, irrespective of location. After that, Older persons 'extra care light' housing for Affordable Rent similar to traditional sheltered housing seems increasingly popular with the aging population. Demand for family houses for Shared ownership or Affordable near to good schools is very high.
- Demand is mixed but we must account for the young with limited mortgage loan facilities of circa £80/120k. If we lose the interest of young professional and indeed all committed workers then they will migrate to other areas. Affordable housing should mean that developers are required to either build out units on larger new estates or create additional smaller estates to make up the numbers. No payments in lieu of non delivery should be considered
- The 2016 SHMA projects that the number of smaller homes (1/2-bed units) will exceed the need of larger family homes in Wirral in the long-term. In particular, it predicts a decline in the number of 4-bed homes. There is a risk in taking forward this view, in that not building enough larger family homes means that Wirral may not be able to attract economically active people to the area, and a shortage of larger homes could exacerbate the already significant issue of affordability. The 2016 SHMA acknowledges that research by CABE shows that semi-detached and detached houses are the preferred house type for the majority of households, particularly families. Older couples also aspire to live in detached houses. The SHMA informs that there is a general aspiration of households across Wirral for larger 4+ be properties rather than smaller 1 and 2-bed units. The more recent Liverpool City Region SHELMA highlights the importance of meeting demand for affordable homes across the entire City Region area, while also noting that specialist housing options for an ageing population will be important. Given the messages to

emerge from the Wirral SHMA and Liverpool City Region SHELMA, it is critical that the right balance is struck in terms of the housing offer for current and future residents of Wirral.

E.37 In relation to the question asking stakeholders to identify significant housing developments proposed in the Wirral Council area, the following schemes were mentioned:

- 257 homes on the former Burton Biscuit site Moreton 127 homes on the former Wirral Business Park site, Arrowe Brook Road, Greasby
- Mill Lane Estates is promoting the allocation of site SP050 (West of Rivacre Road, Eastham) for up to 960 new homes in the emerging Local Plan. SP050 (West of Rivacre Road, Eastham) has limited constraints; is east of the M53; is well served by public transport and there is clear evidence that housing completions will begin within two years.
- Redrow Homes does not currently have an active development site in Wirral but is very interested in delivering homes in the area. We have been promoting a site known as Storeton Garden Village since the last round of consultation on the Wirral Local Plan in November 2018. We consider that a high quality Garden Village can be delivered at Storeton if allocated and released from the Green Belt. A Delivery Statement was produced to support the allocation of the site and submitted to Wirral Council in 2018. This Statement sought to demonstrate the suitability and deliverability of the site and formulated an illustrative masterplan for the area. The masterplan proposed the delivery of a Garden Village comprising in the region of 1,500 new homes, with extensive green space and potential education, community and retail facilities as well as appropriate provisions of onsite affordable housing. We are committed to the delivery of the site at Storeton Hall Farm and consider that it should be released from the Green Belt to contribute towards meeting Wirral's housing needs over the course of the plan period. The development of this site could deliver a wide range of market and affordable housing of various size types and tenures to complement the existing housing in the area.
- Hampstead Investments owns land on the edge of Eastham which it wishes to bring forward for housing development
- We currently have 8 developments in the Wirral area comprising of 270 new homes (of varied size and tenure). Of these developments, 145 are currently on site (in construction phase) and the remainder are due to commence before the end of 2020. The majority of the sites are located in the Birkenhead area with two in Wallasey and one in the Pensby area.
- Story Homes are promoting land south of Brimstage Road and south of Old Clatterbridge Road, Bebington for up to 900 high quality homes. We are proposing a range of tenure types in a sustainable location which will present a neighbourhood for starter homes, family homes and retirement homes. Our proposals include an element of commercial space and currently earmark land for a primary school.
- We are promoting land at Lowfields Avenue / Kingsley Avenue, Hooton. The wider parcel is referenced in the Council's Green Belt study as Site SP049

- My client has been promoting two sites for development in the Wirral, Land East of Manor Bakeries, Reeds Lane, Moreton and Land East of Typhoo, Reeds Lane, Moreton. Whilst located adjacent to each other, these areas of land have been promoted as two separate parcels. Initial technical evidence for both sites has been undertaken to help inform the potential quantum on the sites. Land East of Typhoo is capable of delivering 100 residential units and 37,000 sqft of employment premises. Land East of Manor Bakeries is capable of delivering 38,000sqft of employment space. There is therefore no evidence at this stage that suggests the site cannot come forward for development.
- Taylor Wimpey has and continues to actively promote the following sustainable sites for removal from the Green Belt and allocation for housing through the Local Plan process: Land at Barnston Road, Heswall (approx no. of units: 189) ; Land at Irby Farm (approx. no. of units: 260); Land at Lever Causeway (approx. no of units: 207); Land at Saughall Massie (approx. no. of units: 180). All of the above sites present exceptional opportunities to meet the future housing needs of Wirral Borough in highly sustainable locations that forms natural and logical extensions to the existing urban areas. The release and allocation of these sites for residential development will deliver the type, quantity and quality of open market and affordable housing that will contribute to meeting the future growth needs of Wirral Borough and the wider Liverpool City Region.
- An urban extension site on Irby Road, Irby.
- Our Client has control of the land to the west of Birkenhead Road, Meols, Wirral. Our Client's site comprises SHLAA Site 904 and part of 1936 and is also assessed by the Council as part of the overall Green Belt Parcel SP015 within its Green Belt Assessment.
- Our Clients have land interests at March Lane, Higher Bebington. Our Client's Site comprises SHLAA Site Reference 1779 and is also assessed by the Council as part of the overall Green Belt Parcel SP035 within its Green Belt Assessment, even though we consider our client's site should be considered as a separate green belt parcel to the wider SP035 as it has very different characteristics to the wider parcel. The 'Development Statement' confirms that the Site can deliver 200 dwellings within the first five years of the Local Plan at an anticipated rate of 66dpa which could potentially increase to nearly 100dpa depending on the type and tenure of product to be provided.
- Our Clients have land interests at Land off New Chester Road, Eastham. Our Client's Site comprises SHLAA Site Reference 891 and is also assessed by the Council as part of the overall Green Belt Parcel SP049 within its Green Belt Assessment.
- Peel is delivering housing development as part of Wirral Waters. Outline planning permission for over 13,000 new homes was granted in 2012 and work is due to start on site in November 2019 to remediate the 'Northbank' area of East Float which will accommodate over 1,000 new homes over the next 5 years. Commencement of development of a number of schemes which have full planning permission is expected to start thereafter (in

2020). In total c. 4,500 homes are expected to be delivered across East Float over the next 15 years. The balance of the dwelling approved through the outline will be delivered beyond 2035. Peel has also promoted a number of smaller sites, at Eastham, for residential development through the Local Plan Development Options Review, which can help meet the need for family and affordable homes in that part of the Borough.

- Barratt David Wilson proposes the comprehensive development of around 390 dwellings on a 28 hectare parcel of land to the north west of Chester Road in Heswall. The site represents a suitable and deliverable opportunity to accommodate much-needed new housing in Heswall in a sensitive manner, without harming the purposes of the Green Belt.
- Approx. 150-200 affordable homes p.a. across all the Wirral.
- West Kirby, Grange Hill Farm. A 3 acre site currently in discussions with Wirral B C to resolve a long standing Restrictive Covenant and if agreed then to be submitted for residential development for circa 14/20 units.
- Russell Homes control Land East of Pump Lane, Greasby which is capable of delivering up to 750 new homes including affordable homes and homes favoured by the elderly, albeit we would see it being developed primarily for family housing.
- 20 units of accommodation at the Candle Factory in Bromborough for general needs and those with a learning disabilities. We are committed to c.30 units pa and will focus this on Wirral.
- Land off Brookhurst Avenue. The site is capable of delivering approximately 370 dwellings.

E.38 The survey asked stakeholders to describe the typical customers for new homes:

- A varied customer base. First time buyers, second stage movers, and down sizers.
- Customers for new build properties tend to be first time buyers using the help to buy scheme, although the average age of this group is 42. Most buyers are moving from the private rented sector but there is also a smaller number of older owners who are looking to 'right-size' into smaller accommodation.
- A new build is attractive for energy reduction and provides security to homeowners that do not have the skills, budget or time to upgrade a second hand property especially given the costs to do.
- Typically new homes sales would be to second stage movers, the cost of a new home often is too much for a first time buyer to be able to afford.
- Typical customers for new homes reflect the housing product that is being offered at any given site which, in turn, is reflected by site specifics such as location and site type. Existing sales figures and demographic of house buyers is not an effective planning tool for measuring demand or housing need but is more reflective of the availability of sites within the borough
- Typically first-time buyers, including those forming part of overcrowded or concealed families (where there are multiple households living in a single

dwelling), as well as second stage upsizers who are looking to accommodate growing families.

- Relationship breakdowns and first-time buyers for shared ownership. Young families for Affordable Rent family houses. Working low income families and individuals.

E.39 Stakeholders were then asked whether these customers are looking for rent or sale. Most responses concluded that customers are mainly looking to purchase properties. However, it was noted that there is a good market for both tenures. Several stakeholders mentioned the fact that shared ownership and rent-to-buy products have proved popular.

E.40 In regard to build to rent housing products, stakeholders were asked what the role and main issues are regarding its delivery in the housing market area. Comments included:

- Sites of sufficient size to generate the economies of scale needed to make the proposal work in this area of low house prices.
- There is certainly a role for build to rent housing products, however, while Help to Buy is still available home ownership is more attractive and cost effective. Build to rent products are delivered by only a handful of developers
- In the North West of England, the authorities with the greatest potential to accommodate the build to rent model are Trafford, Stockport and Manchester where an appropriate land value can be generated. §12.38 of the 2016 SHMA indicates that Wirral could be a potentially viable location for low rise development if unit sizes and capital delivery costs are reduced. Build to rent may form a small portion of Wirral's overall housing supply but should not be overly relied upon. Any reliance on Built to Rent would need to be supported by sound and reasoned viability assessments justifying its deliverability in Wirral before it can be relied upon.
- The availability of suitable sites and ability to secure grant funding are obvious issues (not necessarily peculiar to the Wirral area).
- It is considered that such products are typically delivered in urban centres on previously developed land. Those schemes are generally funded by investor led schemes who are seeking a longer-term yield on investment. The build to rent model is not likely to be feasible or viable outside of major urban centres. Such development will not meet the needs or demands of the borough and, in particular, will not meet market demands for conventional high-quality suburban family housing.
- Built to rent development is happening in Wirral through the Legacy / Wirral Waters One scheme. It is an important component of the housing market and offers a level of choice, management and security for those who rent. It appeals to a wide range of demographics but particularly those entering the housing market for the first time or who are downsizing. Its importance in delivering housing choice is recognised by the Government in the National Planning Practice Guidance and Local Planning Authorities are required to take into account the specific need for build to rent when planning for housing needs

- Many people aspire to own their own home and build up equity in bricks and mortar.
- 3 bed houses have become less popular because of the Spare Room Subsidy. Potential future depopulation could cause further future demand problems for existing properties as new homes suck the demand out of older products. Environmental sustainability and cost to heat and power are also key considerations. In West Wirral in particular there is usually political and resident opposition to affordable rented homes whilst in the East Wirral there isn't.
- It should provide for new units in west Wirral as well as the cheaper land areas around east Wirral. This can be achieved by compulsory affordable housing requirements for rental. This retains young people in the area with the opportunity of becoming a buyer later as they progress in careers etc. and possibly save the required deposit.
- Providing suitable accommodation for those who are not looking purchase their own property.
- We have provided built to rent properties on previous schemes, for example for Halton Housing Trust and other providers. However, we are finding that due to demand and the structure of their funding models Housing Associations are increasingly requesting properties for shared ownership or sale, rather than for rent.

E.41 The survey then went on to ask stakeholders if they had any suggestions about what would help developers/housebuilders to deliver new homes across the Wirral housing market. Comments included:

- Speed up the planning process, reduce fees, bring back free advice from housing officers to developers looking to invest in the area.
- Increased availability of housing land and an up to date local plan.
- Wirral needs to allocate land released from the Green Belt to meet the identified shortfall of 5,894 homes over a plan period of 15 years. When reviewing Green Belt sites, the need to promote sustainable patterns of development should be taken into account and where it has been concluded that it is necessary to release Green Belt land for development, plans should give first consideration to land which has been previously-developed and/or is well-served by public transport (138, NPPF). SP050 (West of Rivacre Road, Eastham) is located within walking distance to Eastham Rake and Hooton train stations and is off the A41, which is well served by buses (every 15mins). The proposed vehicle main access into the site is from the A41, which is in close proximity to junction 5 of the M53. The proposed site access has been tested on the basis of the 960 new homes proposed and the potential allocation of other sites in and around Eastham (sites SP048 to SP055 inclusive (but excluding SP051).
- A sea change is required in the delivery of housing over the coming plan period to meet identified needs. The housing requirement should be in excess of 803 dpa for a variety of reasons which will be covered in greater detail through our representations to the emerging Local Plan. Regardless of the actual housing requirement, it cannot be met within the existing urban area due to the limited and constrained levels of supply as well as issues over

viability. The full LHN, including affordable housing can only be delivered by allocating sufficient amounts of Green Belt land to be released for housing. It is imperative that the Council prepares a robust Local Plan which does not seek to artificially and unjustifiably constrain the level of Green Belt release to meet future development needs. This will only result in significant delays at the Examination stage and could result in the Plan being found unsound.

- There is a need to bring forward more land for housing through the planning system
- On big commercial sites we would like to see Section 106 properties released in smaller tranches rather than hundreds of properties at a time (which ties up finance commitments, is a higher risk and may take longer to complete and therefore longer to pay back on investments).
- It is critical for the Council to progress quickly with their Local Plan, ensuring the housing needs are appropriately addressed within borough boundaries.
- New housing allocations in a new Local Plan are required following the stagnation of the emerging Local Plan in order to address a key weakness of the Wirral's Housing Market in order to ensure that there a range of housing options available and that the Wirral's housing need is met.
- In order to deliver new homes across the Wirral housing market area, it will be necessary to unlock suitable sites for development to enable the borough's future housing needs to be met. A key aspect of this should be the sensitive removal of suitable sites from the Green Belt that do not contribute to the 5 purposes of the Green Belt set out in national policy and are sustainable, accessible and well-related to existing settlements. This will be enabled through the Local Plan process and based upon robust evidence prepared by the Council.
- Release sites in sustainable locations and locations away from the poor performing market areas and use planning gain payments to support the regeneration projects required in the market areas which are struggling.
- The key to the delivery of development across the whole of the Wirral Borough is the availability of sites to do so. Those sites need to comprise a quantity and variety of sites in existing urban centres, including previously developed land and urban infill sites, but also edge of settlement sites capable of delivering development to meet the housing needs of other settlements or providing opportunities for investment to areas of deprivation. To enable the Council to identify and release the quantity and variety of sites required to meet the housing needs of Wirral, the SHMA must provide the Local Plan with a suitably robust evidence base to set a suitably ambitious housing requirement which goes beyond the bare minimum needs of the SMOAN. Importantly, as well as setting out the overall level of housing needs required across the borough (and to support the growth of the LCR) the SHMA should identify areas of the housing market, both geographically and in terms of market sectors, which are required to meet identified needs. Furthermore, a key consideration in the preparation of the Local Plan is the viability and feasibility of meeting all of the boroughs housing and infrastructure needs for the plan period. The delivery of a variety of sites for housing development prevents an over-reliance on brownfield land which commonly has issues in relation to viability and is unable to deliver the physical and social

infrastructure (including affordable housing) that is required across the borough.

- Leadership, commitment and resourcing within the Council is necessary to work with developers and public sector bodies to create the conditions necessary to fix the housing market and create the right conditions for a substantial increase in housing delivery. This involves supporting co-ordinated and effective regeneration strategies and initiatives. This will necessitate working to secure public sector funding that would support housing delivery in challenging market areas, and co-ordinating public sector and other agencies to ensure that the necessary infrastructure and services to support housing development are provided in the right place and the right time.
- A comprehensive review of the Green Belt in Wirral is urgently required, with the aim of identifying suitable sites that can be released for residential development without harming the purposes of the Green Belt. The Council will be unable to deliver sufficient housing across the whole plan period, in locations where there is considerable demand, unless an appropriate mix of brownfield and greenfield sites is released across all parts of the Borough.
- More residential land. Grant availability for affordable homes. Planning Committee impartial decisions.
- The Council needs to urgently conduct a Green Belt review and adopt a local plan.

Specialist housing providers

- E.42 Stakeholders believe 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.
- E.43 With regard to supply and demand issues for particular types of specialist housing products in the area, the following was mentioned:
- Lack of disabled adapted living spaces, homes that can manage transition to older age
 - The uncertainty of short-term commissioning means there will never be long term investment as this is too risky for smaller providers
 - Availability of land – availability at a reasonable value which is allocated for such and therefore not at the mercy of the private housing market
 - insufficient suitable housing to meet the ageing demographic.
 - With regards to learning and disability there is no planning from age 14 years for suitable housing options. There are also supply issues for housing suitable for young disabled people.
 - There is 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

- E.44 In relation to evidence of the need for specialist housing, one stakeholder said that they had 626 young people come through their services from January to September 2019 and were able to accommodate 349 of these. All of these young people present with some kind of support issue from mental health, abuse, relationship breakdown, drugs, alcohol etc. The problem is a lack of move on accommodation once they have resettled their lives. Another stakeholder said that out of their remaining 25% of vacancies, they consider 'management moves' for urgent cases. At present there are 50 approved Management Moves of which 30% are for accessible housing. Families (and professionals) contact them and other housing providers for information and advice on how to access specialist housing for their relatives. This is because they struggle to identify options available to them. They fail to register with PPP mainly because what they are looking for does not exist or they are planning ahead to meet the needs of a relative which does not fit with the PPP process. This has been an ongoing problem for a number of years. We do however spend approximately £500k pa on adaptations in its properties which does not appear to be reducing.
- E.45 In terms of proposed significant specialist housing developments in the Wirral Council area, the following were mentioned:
- We have a refurbishment project in Hamilton Square to create 8 additional flats for move on from hostel accommodation.
 - Extra care on Broad Lane in Heswall and we are considering the inclusion in a masterplan of an extra care scheme on proposed greenbelt release land Off Chester Road in Heswall.
 - Extra care 'light' - this is commercially sensitive

Wirral Local Authority staff

- E.46 The main challenges facing the local authority in delivering new homes were identified as the cost, availability of land, upping of fees and reducing performance of planning department, preservation of existing brown and green belt land, staffing resources/revenue to work with developers to bring sites forward for development, lack of capacity within Development Control and within other sections of the council when moving applications through to a timely decision, land-banking by land-owners, and providing decent quality accommodation across the borough that meets the needs of households.
- E.47 Stakeholders were asked what the main challenges are with their existing housing stock. These challenges were identified as:
- Low income/benefits tenants – payments are slow to arrive, inconsistent.
 - PRS sector is affected by welfare reform and landlords wishing to exit the market due to higher levels of regulation and risk to income via Universal Credit.
 - Ageing housing stock (high proportions of this) and property standards.

- New homes are built on small sites in high densities leading to very small sized accommodation provision.
 - Selective licensing is limited to a small number of areas.
 - Large concentrations of low demand housing coterminous with areas of deprivation
 - High rates of private rented sector housing in some areas
 - Unaffordability of housing in the south and west of the borough for renters and first-time buyers.
- E.48 Stakeholders gave ways in which these identified challenges can be met, such as, increasing the number of handlers in the UC helpline call centres; reintroduce direct payment of the housing element of UC and LHA to landlords; review welfare reform; improved passage of information between stakeholders; free up affordable sites in the west of the borough for social housing; extend selective licensing areas to drive improvements in PRS stock; consider remodelling or building smaller units and adapted units to meet needs of population; large-scale replacement of older unfit housing stock with new-build, side-by-side with refurbishment of private housing, through an HMRI-style initiative; greater revenue streams for the expansion of Selective Licensing of the PRS to more areas; and ensure resources are balanced geographically to provide new-build affordable/social rented properties in those areas where provision is low.
- E.49 In terms of cross-boundary issues facing the Wirral housing market area, one stakeholder identified that Wirral is in competition with other areas for inward investment and there is risk of investors going elsewhere. Another stakeholder identified that blanket policy of selective licensing in Liverpool may have driven some PRS landlords to develop stock in Wirral. Property Pool Plus allocation policy is regional and does not necessarily meet the local need.
- E.50 One stakeholder identified the following proposed significant housing developments in Wirral Council area:
- Wirral Growth Company sites, incl. the Birkenhead Regeneration Framework area – potential housing numbers still being finalised.
 - Woodside Regeneration Area - potential housing numbers still being finalised.
 - Wirral Waters.

Neighbouring or adjacent local authority staff

- E.51 The survey asked stakeholders to state the name and date of adoption of their Local Plan and to state the SHMA or housing needs evidence it is based upon. Those who responded gave the following details:
- Local Plan as adopted on 20th April 2017 – Strategic Housing Market Assessment, 2014.
 - Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy (Jan 2016) Joint Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan (2013) Saved Policies of the Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan (2006) - Knowsley SHMA 2010. Also, Technical Report on Planning for Housing Growth

- Unitary Development Plan, 2002. Liverpool City Council submitted its Local Plan in May 2018 and is now at Examination stage – SHMA 2016
 - Local Plan (Part One) 29 Jan 2015 and Local Plan (Part Two) 18 July 2019, plus any made neighbourhood plans – Arc4
- E.52 All those who responded stated that they are not reviewing their Local Plan. One respondent stated that they will be undertaking a new or updated SHMA or HNS to support a new Plan in early 2020.
- E.53 No stakeholders identified any significant housing developments, infrastructure developments, regeneration projects, or proposals to develop or extend accommodation based special care facilities for adult social care clients or young people that would impact on the Wirral Council area.
- E.54 In terms of cross-boundary issues between Wirral and other local authority areas, stakeholders commented:
- Knowsley is currently planning to meet its own housing needs and does not require any needs to be met in Wirral, nor can it accommodate unmet need from neighbouring boroughs. Nevertheless, Wirral Council should have regard to the shared housing market in preparing its policies for housing growth.
 - Cross-boundary issues are set out in the Liverpool City Region Statement of Common Ground
 - No, as we are both separate self-contained housing market areas

Selling and lettings agents

- E.55 Stakeholders were asked whether the sales market is reaching its potential in terms of supply volumes. One stakeholder commented ‘probably’ whilst another stakeholder commented ‘no’.
- E.56 It is regarded that there are current gaps in supply in terms of good quality larger terraced housing, 1 bed flats and small decent quality houses in affordable areas. Another supply and demand issue in Wirral was raised in relation to disabled adapted properties.
- E.57 Respondents believe the rental market to be fairly buoyant and if accommodation is reasonably priced, in good condition and close to amenities, they will let easily. One respondent noted that there is a lot of crime and ASB in some areas leading to housing market failure.
- E.58 No specific issues regarding blocks in the sales market in certain areas were recorded. However, one stakeholder noted that there are many low value properties here that are difficult to sell if the valuers down value them for mortgage purposes. The slow legal and mortgage process was a barrier in speeding things up.
- E.59 East Wirral was regarded as a popular area for cheaper investment purposes, whilst West Wirral was seen as a least popular area due to price.

Summary

E.60 From all of the challenges facing the Wirral housing market, stakeholders were asked what the key priority is for themselves or their organisation. The key priorities identified were:

- Better and quicker planning process
- To get new homes built in New Ferry as quickly as possible, to bring new tenants into the area who will use the local shops
- Reintroduce direct payment of LHA / UC to landlords. This will substantially reduce tenant arrears and allow LL to invest in their properties (they are being hammered by various tax and legislative changes currently). This will in turn support LL who may then consider renting to benefits claimants again.
- In significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land for housing can come forward where it is needed. Over a period of 15 years, Wirral has a shortfall of land, which will need to be allocated on land released from the Green Belt.
- Our key priority is to deliver good quality homes that meet local housing need, in the right locations at the right price. To deliver on this aim we appreciate that good working relationships with the Council will be integral and we appreciate this opportunity to contribute to the future direction and strategic housing planning in the area.
- Sensible dialogue and effective partnership working to deliver great, aspirational and achievable solutions
- Local Plan certainty and reduced delays in decision making.
- To unlock suitable sites from the Green Belt to provide sustainable housing development to meet the future needs of the borough.
- Longer term investment and commissioning so a long term plan can be developed.
- The support of the Council and other public sector organisations is essential. Only by co-ordinated, collaborative working with these organisations, alongside private sector developers, will the structural failings of Inner Wirral's housing market be addressed. Delivery of the supporting infrastructure and securing public sector funding are the two most important factors for Peel in respect of Wirral Waters.
- Retention of green belt - no green belt land to be released. Respect all of Wirral's 26 Conservation Areas. Ensure proper provisions for services (schools, surgeries etc)
- Development is severely constrained within the Borough due to the presence of a high proportion of Green Belt, predominantly in the western part of Wirral. The demand for housing is also markedly greater in settlements within the western half of the Borough. This leads to a significant discrepancy in house prices between settlements within the Borough, which in turn forces people to look elsewhere to meet their housing requirements. We believe the key priority is the identification of an appropriate portfolio of housing sites to adequately meet needs across all housing markets within the Borough. To ensure this happens, the Council must identify sufficient, suitable sites to

release from the Green Belt, which was defined as long ago as 1983 and has not been subject to review since then.

- That objectively assessed housing requirements are used and not the Government's standard method. Avoiding the release of Green Belt for housing.
- The Council should identify a residential land supply to meet the housing need
- Brownfield development first protect green belt and green field sites. Construct the necessary associated infrastructure
- Preventing unnecessary building of unneeded luxury houses on the green belt. The housing no. for the local plan accepted by the council of 12,045 dwellings is nonsense given the latest ONS data; the ONS own analysis of future household size in the UK; the recent downgrading of nonsense ONS migration statistics to 'experimental'; the housing forecasts produced by Prof. Simpson of Manchester FOR WMBC with an 'effective demand' of ~3,700 houses; the report provided to WMBC by myself in 2018 suggesting ~3,300 houses and my 2019 work reported to WMBC suggesting an upper housing bound of ~3,000; forecast results from Wirral administrative data of the same order.
- Keeping the open spaces as a source of food production and necessary leisure and CO2 reduction. ONLY develop on brownfield and then ONLY if actually needed.
- That Wirral Council looks carefully at the available sites and provides suitable homes for many of the younger members of the population who wish to have their own place but cannot find an affordable option. Simply building four and five bedroom upmarket homes - potentially on the Green Belt - will not solve the issue and will result in younger people having to move away from the Wirral. Although it may generate more income for the Council in the very short term, the net result will be more problems as the younger members of the potential workforce move away and Wirral's population becomes ever older.
- Tackling global climate change and adapting to the already-happening changes. The Climate emergency is a major cause of the Ecological emergency. Protecting existing wildlife from destruction by poorly designed housing that is not zero-carbon. Therefore tackling all our housing stock, old and new, to upgrade it to zero-carbon is essential. This will considerably reduce fuel poverty.
- Facilitating new development without threatening or destroying the existing character of the Borough - protecting the strategic Green Belt areas and Conservation Areas.
- Matching need to supply.

E.61 In terms of further comments that stakeholders would like to make about this research, these include:

- The Council have had to make significant cash savings over the past 5 years. The Housing Standards team (HST) are all well-meaning decent people but there is an increasing perception they are targeting LL as cash cows with their selective licensing fees and fines, taking a much tougher line than other

Councils. HST, agents and LL have had a good relationship for many years, but this is being fractured as all parties come under increasing financial pressure. My concern is that this symbiotic relationship will fail, and the process becomes much more confrontational than it has been.

- We reserve the right to make further comments as the SHMA progresses.
- Re-emphasise no incursion into the green belt. Ensure that increased traffic from development is properly channelled onto main roads.
- We welcome the swift progression of a sound and robust Local Plan for Wirral which is properly evidenced and adequately plans for and seeks to deliver sufficient housing to meet all needs across the Borough in full.
- It would be good to see real transparency in the workings of the Council. It's a pity that there was not a specific section in the questionnaire for resident type organisations.
- The current grant funding for development ends in March 21 which will put on hold plans for affordable homes without a replacement
- The 50 site green belt parcel release list of earlier this year totalled ~5,000 acres. This could accommodate around 70,000 houses at approved gov. densities. Only a few % of this would be needed in the worst case of a 12,045 need. Given the known brownfield sites and realistic total housing needs (eg Professor Simpson's 3,700) NO green belt at all need be released. Effort should be concentrated on urban regeneration and lower cost housing needs.
- The Council should work with the Minister and point out why the figures presented from Central Government do not apply to Wirral with its declining and ageing population. BM55
- Talk to Liverpool City Region and the Cheshire local authorities, and upgrade the intentions for Wirral to match theirs for tackling the climate and ecological emergencies, and thereby the public health emergency. We see New Ferry, because our Butterfly Park nature reserve is there. There will be no regeneration in such areas unless the Green Belt is kept tight and developers are forced to build what we need, not what will give them best profits. So not luxury houses, but practical, zero-carbon, easy-to-heat affordable homes in locations where there is good public transport and other infrastructure.

Technical Appendix F: Specialist Housing Need

Introduction

- F.1 The NPPF (2019) (Paragraph 61) acknowledges that there are a range of household groups who have particular housing requirements. It sets out that the needs of different groups should be assessed and reflected in planning policy in terms of the size, type and tenure of housing. It states that these households include but are 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.
- F.2 The PPG¹⁰ states, 'The need for housing for particular groups of people may well exceed, or be proportionally high in relation to, the overall housing need figure calculated using the standard method. This is on the basis that the needs of particular groups will often be calculated having consideration to the whole population of an area as a baseline as opposed to the projected new households which form the baseline for the standard method. When producing policies to address the need of specific groups strategic policy-making authorities will need to consider how the needs of individual groups can be addressed within the constraint of the overall need established'.
- F.3 Whilst a Strategic Housing Market Assessment is concerned with accommodation-based needs, i.e. providing an appropriate unit of accommodation, a comprehensive assessment of specialist housing need must also reflect upon the support which is required in this accommodation in order to enable the stay in that accommodation to be sustainable.
- F.4 arc⁴ recognise that this is a complex area requiring discussion with social care and health commissioners and service managers. This is a development area for us, and the content of this appendix is the result of some exploration of these issues, although we recognise that there is scope for this to be explored in much greater depth in a standalone assessment.

Our understanding of specialist housing need

- F.5 Figure F.1 begins to explore our understanding of the various elements of specialist housing need and population groups which should be considered:
- **Age-related housing need** – this concerns the position of particular age groups in the housing market due to life events and the demand this creates for accommodation units of a certain size or affordability.
 - **Health-related housing need** – a household's health may be a determining factor in the type of accommodation they require or the support they need to receive. For most in this group the need for specialist accommodation or support is likely to be a lifelong need.
 - **Life-experience related housing need** – supported accommodation may be needed by those affected by life experiences which may have disadvantaged

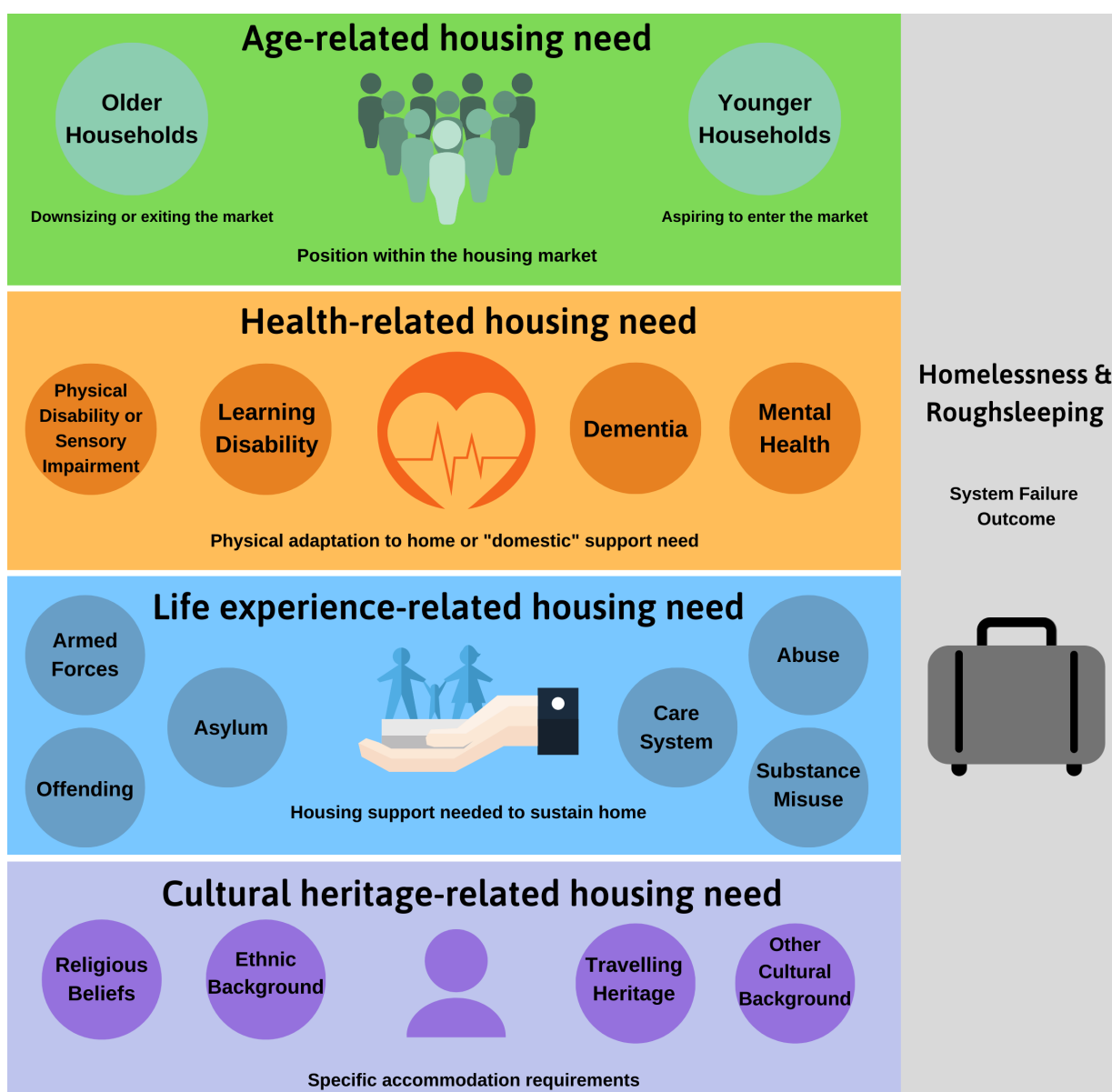
¹⁰ 2019 PPG Paragraph: 017 Reference ID: 2a-017-20190220

their ability to live independently. The support required here may be shorter term with the intention of promoting independence in the longer term.

- **Cultural heritage related housing need** – 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.

F.6 For all of the above groups the prevalence of homelessness can indicate a deficit of both appropriate and affordable accommodation options and support availability. This goes beyond the presence of households rough sleeping, reflecting the broad statutory definitions of homelessness to include those in inadequate or inappropriate accommodation who may be hidden from society’s view.

Figure F.1 Establishing need associated with age, health and life experience



- F.7 For the purpose of this Strategic Housing Market Assessment we have brought together intelligence from a range of different sources:
- primary data from our household survey data set;
 - national secondary data sets;
 - a review of the strategic and commissioning context locally; and
 - discussions with key stakeholders where this has been possible.
- F.8 Our primary focus has been to fulfil the requirements of the PPG, hence greater detail being given on the needs of older person households and those with physical disabilities. We do however provide some context to the other groups locally.

Planning Practice Guidance

- F.9 The February 2019 Planning Practice Guidance 'Housing and economic needs assessment' says that *'The health and lifestyles of older people will differ greatly, as will their housing needs. Strategic policy-making authorities will need to determine in relation to their plan period the needs of people who will be approaching or reaching retirement as well as older people now'*. It continues *'Strategic policy-making authorities will need to consider the size, location and quality of dwellings needed in the future for older people in order to allow them to live independently and safely in their own home for as long as possible, or to move to more suitable accommodation if they so wish. Supporting independent living can help to reduce the costs to health and social services and providing more options for older people to move could also free up houses that are under occupied.'*
- F.10 In June 2019, additional Planning Practice Guidance was issued which guides councils in preparing planning policies on housing for older and disabled people. The PPG also includes advice on accessible and adaptable housing. Regarding older people, the PPG says *'The need to provide housing for older people is critical. People are living longer lives and the proportion of older people in the population is increasing...Offering older people a better choice of accommodation to suit their changing needs can help them live independently for longer, feel more connected to their communities and help reduce costs to the social care and health systems. Therefore, an understanding of how the ageing population affects housing needs is something to be considered from the early stages of plan-making through to decision-taking'*¹¹
- F.11 Regarding people with disabilities, the PPG says *'The provision of appropriate housing for people with disabilities, including specialist and supported housing, is crucial in helping them to live safe and independent lives. Unsuitable or unadapted housing can have a negative impact on disabled people and their carers. It can lead to mobility problems inside and outside the home, poorer mental health and a lack of employment opportunities. Providing suitable housing can enable disabled people to live more independently and safely, with greater choice and control over their lives. Without accessible and adaptable housing, disabled people risk facing discrimination and disadvantage in housing. An*

¹¹ PPG June 2019 Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 63-001-20190626

*ageing population will see the numbers of disabled people continuing to increase and it is important we plan early to meet their needs throughout their lifetime.'*¹²

- F.12 The PPG notes that *'for plan-making purposes, strategic policy-making authorities will need to determine the needs of people who will be approaching or reaching retirement over the plan period, as well as the existing population of older people.'*¹³

Setting the Context for Specialist Housing Need on the Wirral

- F.13 As a metropolitan district council, both the housing and social care functions sit with Wirral Council. Key strategic observations and priorities are highlighted here to set a context to specialist housing needs within the borough and the likely commissioning intentions of the authority. Key data relating to specific groups contained in these documents is used to inform the following sections of these technical appendix.

Wirral Housing Strategy 2016 ¹⁴

- F.14 The Wirral Housing Strategy sets out how the ambition for housing, set out in the Wirral Plan, will be achieved. The Housing Strategy contains the targets of delivering at least 3,500 new homes, including 1,000 new homes at Wirral Waters and developing 300 new Extra Care units, both by 2020.

- F.15 The strategy contains three priorities:

- Building more homes to meet our economic growth ambitions:

We want to ensure housing in Wirral is affordable for households in the owner-occupied, social and private rented sectors and will therefore explore housing development opportunities for a range of different housing tenures and requirements, including affordable and starter homes.

- Improving the quality of housing available to our residents:

Significant improvements have been made to the borough's social housing, however there is still further work to be done the responsibility for maintaining private housing standards rests first and foremost with the homeowner; however, the Council and its partners have a key role to support our most vulnerable residents where serious hazards have been identified in the home that affect an individual's health and wellbeing.

- Meeting the housing and support needs of our most vulnerable people to enable them to live independently:

The needs of homeless people are becoming increasingly complex, with high incidences of unresolved mental health problems, alcohol and substance misuse, anti-social and offending behaviour. We will continue to support our homeless residents to address these challenges in order that they can access

¹² PPG June 2019 Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 63-002-20190626

¹³ PPG June 2019 Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 63-001-20190626

¹⁴ <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/sites/default/files/all/About%20the%20Council/Wirral%20Plan/Housing%20Strategy.pdf>

both temporary homeless services and future accommodation. We know welfare reform changes are impacting on many groups including disabled people, lone parents, families and young people. We will continue to review the impact of welfare reform on our residents and consider packages of support required.

F.16 The 2019-20 Action Plan¹⁵ outlines the following action in relation to specialist housing needs:

- identify opportunities to design and plan the introduction of 'assisted' technology to improve wellbeing and safety and promote independence;
- complete homelessness review following introduction of Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and develop strategy to target service to respond to challenge;
- work with Registered Providers and private companies to deliver 300 additional Extra Care homes;
- align domiciliary care services to pilot enhanced sheltered schemes and evaluate effectiveness for future commissioned services;
- implement the 'Housing First Model' in conjunction with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority;
- implement training and awareness programme for stakeholders and partners regarding the Homeless Reduction Act and their responsibilities under the duty to refer; and
- in partnership with the NHS undertake a feasibility study into 'step up, step down' scheme to provide accommodation and services.

Wirral Homelessness Strategy

F.17 arc⁴ is supporting Wirral Council with the development of its next Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, informed by a detailed review of accommodation and support services. At the time of preparing the SHMA, the strategy is being prepared for formal consultation and we are able to share the emerging priorities and findings.

F.18 The strategy recognises that homelessness can be understood to mean different things to different people. Whilst rough sleeping (those who sleep or live on the streets) is often the most visible and concerning form of homelessness, the definitions of homelessness extends much wider than this. It also include anyone who cannot access suitable accommodation and maybe staying with friends of family (sofa surfing) or living in temporary accommodation provided by the council.

F.19 Wirral's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy sets out how we will prevent homelessness, including rough sleeping and support those who face homelessness or those at risk of becoming homeless over the next 5 years. The vision of the document is that the council:

¹⁵

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/sites/default/files/all/About%20the%20council/Wirral%20Plan/Action%20Plans/Pledge%2018%20Good%20Quality%20Housing%20that%20meets%20the%20needs%20of%20Residents%20-%202019-20%20Action%20Plan%20update.pdf>

“will work in partnership to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping across the Borough; ensuring that those who require support are assisted to access appropriate, affordable accommodation and services tailored to individual needs”

F.20 Emerging priorities include:

- providing a joined-up approach to early intervention and homeless prevention;
- ensuring that housing-related support services meet the diverse and complex needs of customers;
- preventing and ending rough sleeping;
- ensuring an adequate supply of temporary accommodation is available; and
- improving access to and developing more settled accommodation solutions.

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment¹⁶

F.21 The Wirral Joint Strategic Needs Assessment is intended to be a systematic review of the health and wellbeing needs of the local population, informing local priorities, policies and strategies that in turn informs local commissioning priorities that will improve health and wellbeing outcomes and reduce inequalities throughout the borough. A series of sections focus on specific needs groups and are referred to in the relevant section of this chapter. More generally, the Wirral life course statistics 2019 (Figure F.2) provide a useful snapshot comparison of the borough against England as a whole. Highlights here include:

- Worse levels of:
 - Long term conditions/disability affecting day to day activity a lot
 - Life expectancy at 65
 - Injuries due to falls (aged 65+)
 - Respiratory and cancer deaths <75
- Better levels of:
 - Cancer screening
 - Older people still at home 91 days after hospital discharge.

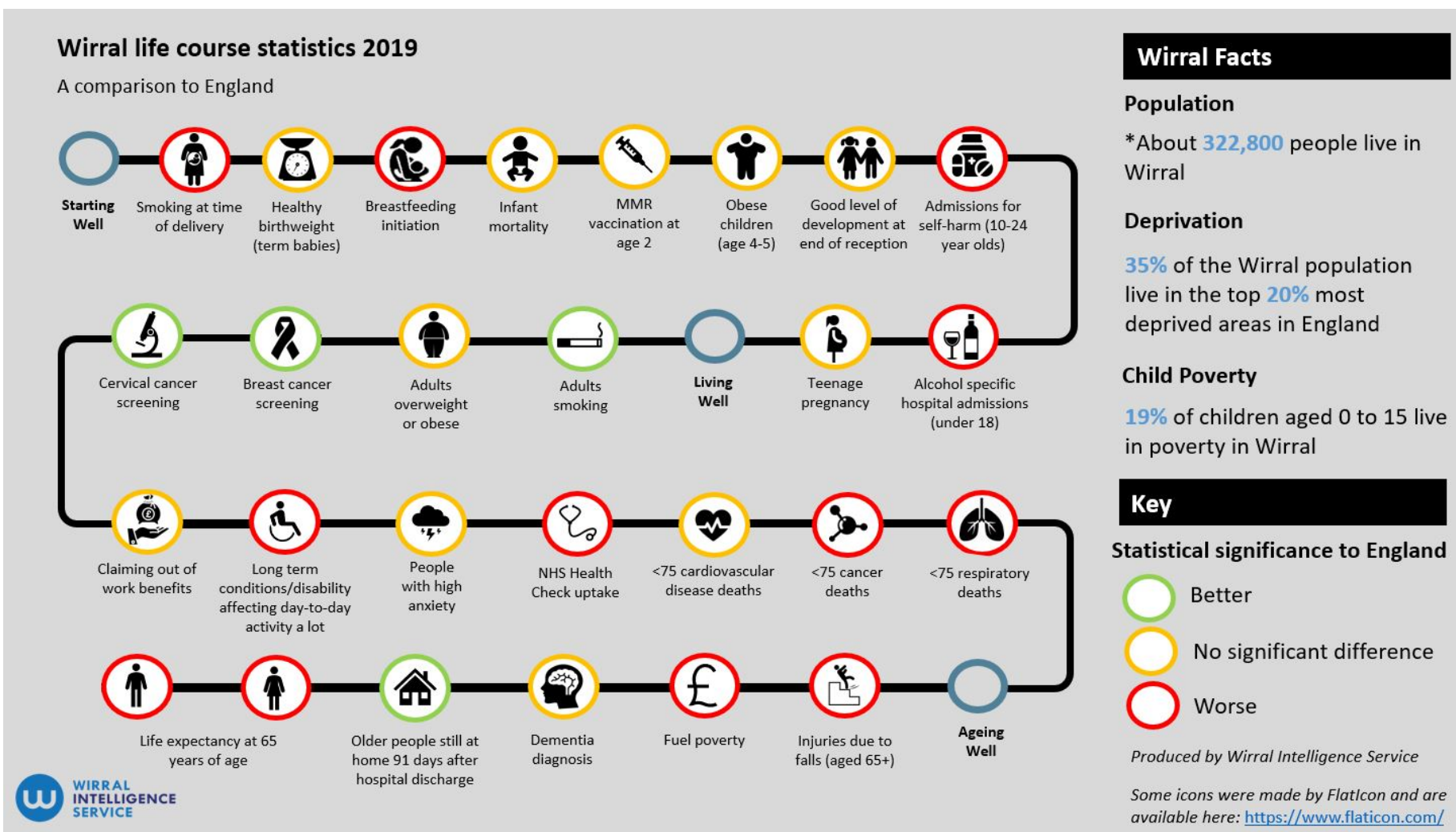
F.22 Area profiles for settlement areas reveal variations at a local level (Table F.1). Birkenhead and Wallasey see far greater levels of poverty and deprivation than the rest of the borough, whilst Wirral South and West see the highest life expectancy.

¹⁶ <https://www.wirralintelligenceservice.org/isna/>

Table F.1 Selected health and wellbeing indicators at settlement area level					
Indicator	Birkenhead	Wallasey	Wirral South	Wirral West	Wirral
Population classed as living in most deprived areas in England (IMD, 2015)	55%	38%	8%	13%	31%
Rate of children in poverty	34%	27%	12%	14%	24%
Rate of people on workless benefits (people aged 18-64)	22%	18%	10%	10%	16%
Life expectancy	74 years old for men 80 years old for women	76 years old for men 81 years old for women	79 years old for men 83 years old for women	79 years old for men 83 years old for women	76 years old for men 81 years old for women

Source: Wirral Intelligence Service

Figure F.2 Establishing need associated with age, health and life experience



Wirral Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013-15 ¹⁷

F.23 For this document, the Health and Wellbeing Board's vision was to enable local people to live healthy lives, to tackle health inequalities and increase wellbeing in the people and communities of Wirral. Now due for renewal, this strategy recognised a number of key challenges which remain relevant:

- Many of the people who live in Wirral enjoy an outstanding quality of life, with excellent housing, schools and a high-quality environment. However, there is a strong contrast between the older, highly urbanised areas of Birkenhead and Wallasey, which contain some of the poorest communities in England and the wealthier commuter settlements in the west of Wirral. Wirral's neighbourhoods range from the most deprived in the country to one of the most affluent, or least deprived, less than six miles away.
- The most deprived parts of the borough generally have a younger population profile than the Wirral average.
- The wealthier west of the borough has an older population profile. Life expectancy in these areas is above the Wirral average, with people living as much as 11.6 years longer than those in the east of borough.
- The contrast between the most affluent and most deprived areas is also apparent in the neighbourhood issues that matter to residents such as levels of anti-social behaviour and the quality of the local environment.

Healthy Wirral ¹⁸

F.24 Wirral's Integrated Health and Care System recognises that it will only be through collective actions as an integrated care system that they will deliver the best population health and wellbeing outcomes. In order to meet the mission of 'Better health and wellbeing in Wirral by working together' Healthy Wirral partners have agreed a broad vision which is:

- *'To enable all people in Wirral to live longer and healthier lives by taking simple steps of their own to improve their health and wellbeing. By achieving this together we can provide the very best health and social care services when people really need them, as close to home as possible'*

F.25 This vision stresses the importance of preventing ill health and our people being in the right place at the right time. Recognising also the need to live within our means as a system, we also aim to maximise the value of the Wirral pound, by ensuring that this is invested in place-based care that will deliver evidenced based, quantifiable quality outcomes for the population of the Wirral.

¹⁷ <https://www.wirralintelligenceservice.org/media/1176/wirralhealthwellbeingstrategy2013-2015.pdf>

¹⁸ <https://www.wirralccg.nhs.uk/healthy-wirral/>

Market Position Statement 2019-2024 ¹⁹

- F.26 From May 2018, Wirral Council Adult Social Services Commissioners and the Local Clinical Commissioning Group have come together under the brand “Wirral Health & Care Commissioning” to work together as one to deliver improved outcomes for people who live in Wirral.
- F.27 The Market Position Statement describes to the market what the commissioning intentions of the group and what they will consider to be their main priorities. Key messages include:
- *our first offer will always be to take people home from acute settings where possible;*
 - *we will always aim to keep people at home and not admit to residential or nursing settings including hospitals ; and*
 - *we will have a robust domiciliary care market offer, which is flexible and responsive.*

Age-related housing need

- F.28 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 chapter we therefore focus upon the needs of older persons for particular unit types.
- F.29 Affordable housing need is primarily the concern of younger households entering the market and is considered fully elsewhere in this assessment. For this chapter we therefore focus upon the needs of older persons for particular unit types.

Housing for older people

- F.30 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.’
- F.31 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.

¹⁹

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/sites/default/files/all/Health%20and%20social%20care/adult%20social%20care/Market%20Position%20Statement%20WhaCC%20-%202019-2024.pdf>

- 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.
- F.32 PPG notes that ‘*plan-making authorities will need to count housing provided for older people against their housing requirement*’²⁰.
- F.33 A major strategic challenge for the council is to ensure a range of appropriate housing provision, adaptation and support for the borough’s older population. Table F.2 indicates that the number of people across Wirral Borough aged 65 or over is projected to increase from 71,685 in 2020 to 92,389 by 2037 (a 28.9% increase). The level of increase is highest amongst the 85+ age group (a 54.6% increase).

Older age groups	2020	2037	Number change	% change
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 65+	71,685	92,389	20,704	28.9

Source: ONS 2018-based subnational population projections

- F.34 According to 2014-based household projections²¹, the number of households headed by someone aged 60 and over is expected to increase by 13,041 (+21.3%) over the period 2020 to 2037.
- F.35 The 2014-based household projections indicate that in 2020 32.9% of Household Reference People²² (HRP) are projected to be aged 65 and over, with 16.6% aged 65-74, 11.5% aged 75-84 and 4.8% aged 85 and over.

Type and size of dwellings occupied

- F.36 Figure F.3 shows the type and size of property currently occupied by older households by settlement area. According to the 2019 household survey, households with a HRP aged 65 and over live in a range of dwelling types and sizes. 60.2% of HRPs 65 years and over, currently live in a house with 3 or more bedrooms and 17.1% live in 1 and 2-bedroom flats.
- F.37 At a settlement area level, it is notable that SA7 has a large proportion of older households living in larger bungalows; 15.7% of 65 and over live in bungalows in SA7 compared to a borough average of 5.2%. A higher proportion of older households than the borough average in areas SA6 and SA1 are living in flats

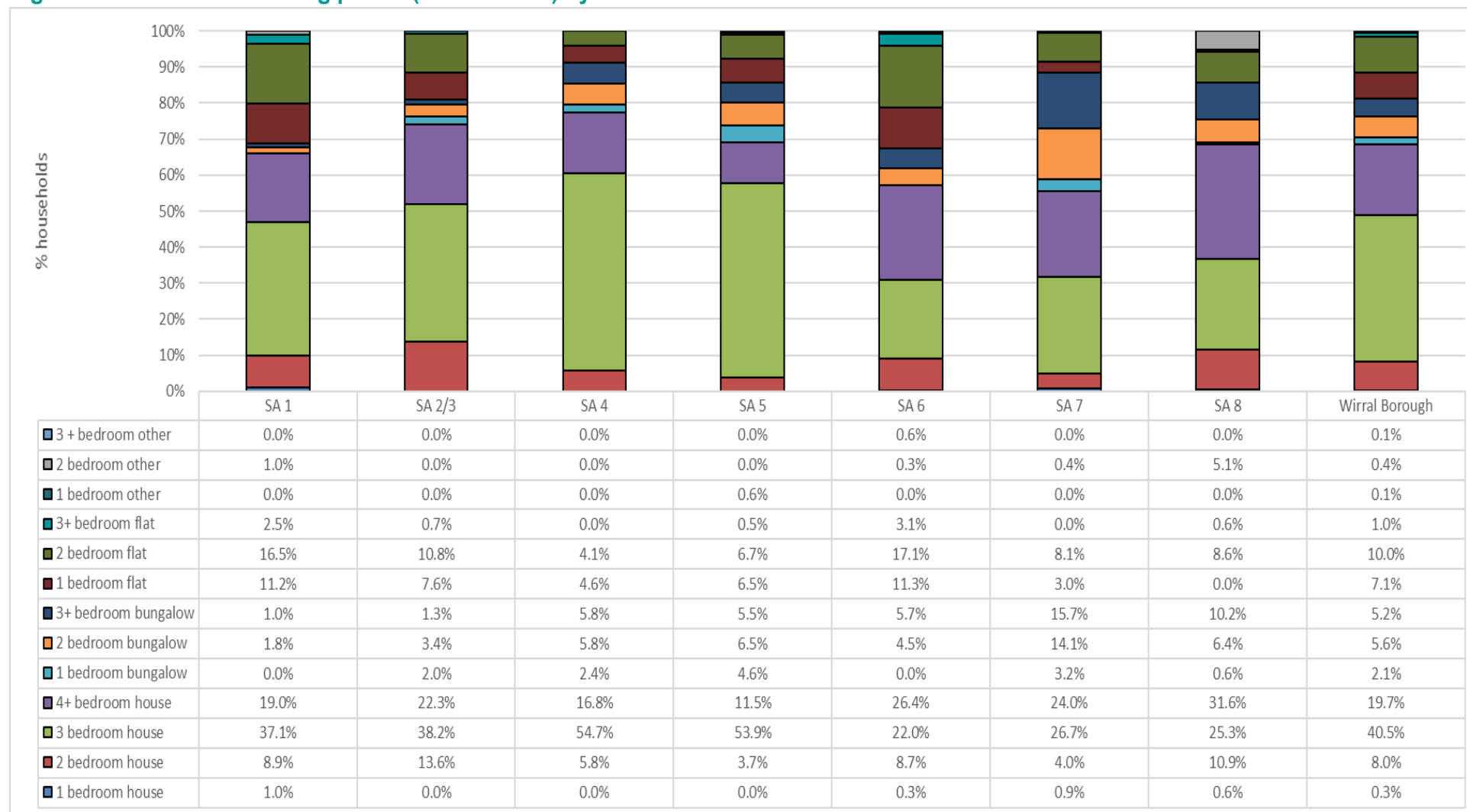
²⁰ PPG June 2019 Paragraph: 016 Reference ID: 63-016-20190626

²¹ CLG 2014-based household projections are the latest available recommended for use by the Government at the time of drafting this report

²² ²² The term Household Reference Person (HRP) has replaced the traditional term ‘head of household’ in ONS outputs

with up to 2-bedrooms – the borough average is 17.1% which increases to 27.7% in SA1 and 28.4% in SA6.

Figure F.3 Current housing profile (HRP over 65) by settlement area



- F.38 The type and size of the property currently occupied by older people also varies by age group. Overall:
- For those aged 65-74, 73.8% live in houses, 17.1% in bungalows, 8.9% in flats and 0.4% in other property types;
 - For those aged 75-84, 62.8% live in houses, 18.7% in bungalows, 18.4% in flats and 0.1% in other property types; and
 - For those aged 85 and over, 58.8% live in houses, 21.2% in bungalows, 18.1% in flats and 1.9% in other property types.
- F.39 Table F.3 explores where the 65 years and over population currently live in Wirral. Around two out of five of 65 and over households live in two settlement areas; 22.9% in SA2/3 and 19.1% in SA4. Across Wirral, 65 and over households make up over one quarter (28.9%) of all households, however in SA7 the proportion of households aged over 65 rises to one in five at 40.8%.

Settlement area	No. 65 and over	% of 65 and over	% of 65 and over households within settlement area
SA1 Wallasey	7,230	17.1	25.9
SA 2/3 Commercial Core/Suburban Birkenhead	9,678	22.9	22.7
SA4 Bromborough & Eastham	8,064	19.1	32.5
SA5 Mid-Wirral	7,106	16.8	30.0
SA6 Hoylake and West Kirby	4,048	9.6	35.5
SA7 Heswall	5,149	12.2	40.8
SA8 Rural Areas	992	2.3	32.4
<i>Total</i>	<i>42,268</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>28.9</i>

Older person households considering moving home

- F.40 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.
- F.41 Further analysis on the current location of households aged over 65 compared with their location choice should they wish to move is shown in Table F.4. The results show that the majority of older people would choose to remain in Wirral, with more than nine out of ten choosing to remain in SA5 (Mid-Wirral) and SA6 (Hoylake and West Kirby). The proportion of those choosing to remain drops to around two-thirds in SA2/3 (Commercial Core/Suburban Birkenhead), SA4 (Bromborough & Eastham) and SA7 (Heswall). Households in these settlement areas stated the main reason they needed to move was because they could not manage their existing home and wanted to live closer to family and friends.
- F.42 Of households unable to move, the main reasons were; cannot afford to, 67.2%; 27.2% said there was a lack of suitable accommodation in the area wanted; and

18.1% stated there was a lack of suitable accommodation of the type they wanted. Note that households could pick more than one option.

Move to	Current location							Total
	SA 1	SA 2/3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	
Within Wirral	72.3	67.6	67.7	92.3	90.5	66.7	83.4	74.1
Outside Wirral	27.7	32.4	32.3	7.7	9.8	33.3	16.6	25.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

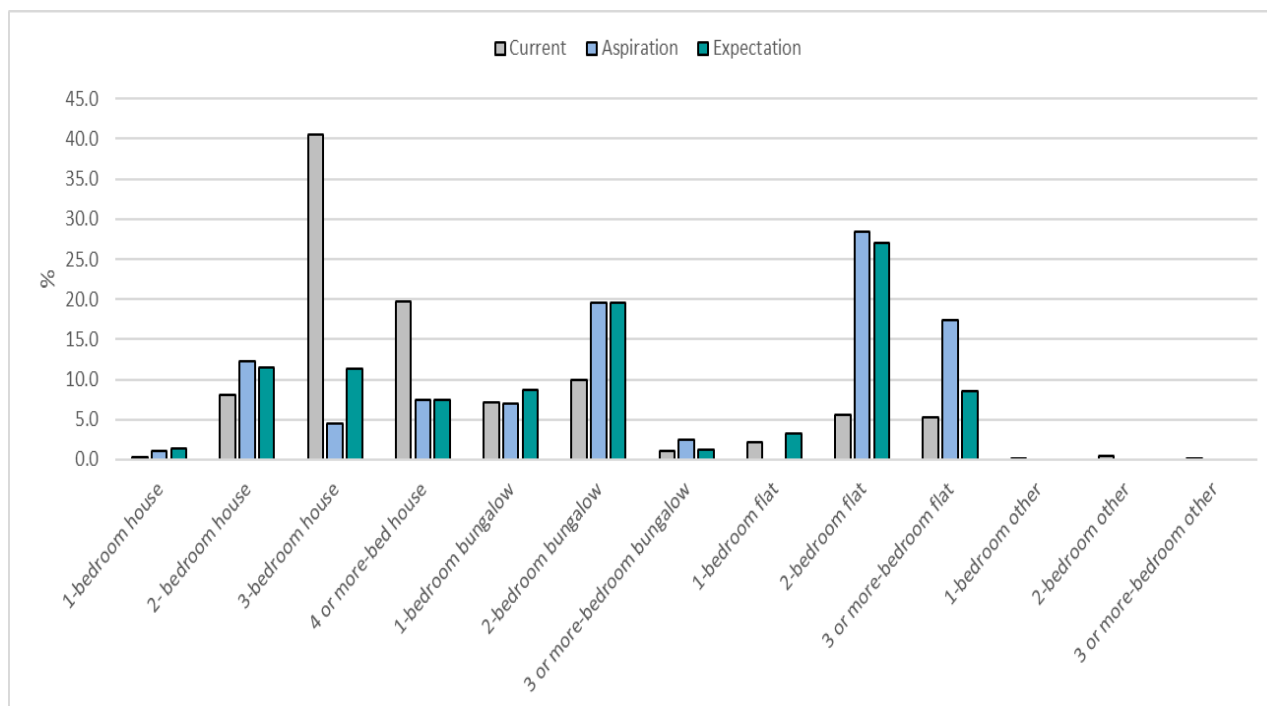
F.43 Analysis of the type of housing required (based on expectation) in the future by older households and by the location required is summarised in Table F.5. Older households wanting to move suggested that they expect a mix of dwelling types but particularly 2-bedroom flats (27.0%) and 2-bedroom bungalows (19.6%). Flats are a leading choice for those looking to move to South East and South West Wirral and for those wanting to move to Wallasey, 2-bedroom flats are expected. Bungalows were also a popular choice for older households looking to move to the areas of South East and North West Wirral.

Table F.5 Over 65s location and property type preferences (%)

Property type preference	Location preference											
	Wallasey	Birkenhead	South East Wirral	Mid Wirral	North West Wirral	South West Wirral	Rural Areas	Elsewhere within the Liverpool City Region	Cheshire West and Chester	North Wales	Other (further afield)	Total
1-bedroom house	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.3
2-bedroom house	0.0	19.3	6.9	21.2	0.0	1.7	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	31.9	11.5
3-bedroom house	20.0	38.4	0.0	0.0	7.1	6.1	0.0	0.0	13.6	0.0	13.0	11.4
4 or more-bedroom house	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	17.8	1.7	0.0	0.0	39.5	0.0	0.0	7.5
1-bedroom bungalow	0.0	0.0	14.8	0.0	39.2	9.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.7
2-bedroom bungalow	20.0	23.0	31.5	20.7	28.7	17.1	0.0	0.0	13.6	6.0	10.2	19.6
3 or more-bedroom bungalow	3.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.7	0.0	0.0	3.7	0.0	2.8	1.2
1-bedroom flat	0.0	19.3	0.0	16.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.2
2-bedroom flat	30.7	0.0	46.8	20.7	5.7	30.9	0.0	0.0	29.6	94.0	20.0	27.0
3 or more-bedroom flat	6.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.4	32.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	22.1	8.5
1-bedroom other	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2-bedroom other	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
3 or more-bedroom other	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<i>Numbers wanting to move to each location</i>	365	331	378	184	421	363	6	64	162	200	430	2,905

F.44 The difference in older households’ current accommodation, their aspirations and their expectations are shown in Figure F.4. The 2019 household survey data indicates that older people are particularly living in 3 and 4 or more-bedroom houses. Of those who intend to move in the next five years, these households have strong aspirations and expectations for flats and bungalows; 45.8% aspire to live in flats with two or more bedrooms. Given the anticipated increase in older person households, it is important that the council recognises the impact this will have on the range of dwelling types and sizes that should be developed over the plan period.

Figure F.4 Current dwellings types compared to aspirations and expectations (over 65s)



Reasons or moving

F.45 Households with an HRP aged 65 and over and planning to move in the next 5 years were also asked their main reasons for moving. The most frequently mentioned reasons were being unable to manage their existing house (40.1%), 12.8% wanting to be closer to family/friends and 9.1% health reasons. Reasons varied by age group as shown in Table F.6.

Reason for moving	Age Group			Total
	65-74	75-84	85+	
Forced to move	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.7
Cannot manage existing house - could not afford	0.0	1.3	0.0	0.4
Cannot manage existing house - cannot manage the stairs	10.7	15.0	12.5	12.0
Cannot manage existing house - house/garden too big	33.3	19.9	0.0	27.7
Health problems and/or need housing suitable for older/disabled person	5.1	17.2	18.8	9.1
Want a nicer house	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.7
Want to live in a nicer area	13.1	0.0	0.0	8.8
Want a garden or bigger garden	0.0	6.8	0.0	1.9
Want to live closer to family or friends	15.1	0.0	45.8	12.8
Want to move away from neighbours	2.3	16.1	0.0	5.9
Want to live closer to shops or doctors or other services	5.3	9.7	0.0	6.2
Other reason	13.0	13.9	22.9	13.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Base	1124	453	96	1673

Older person rightsizing

F.46 Table F.7 considers the number of older person households who want to downsize to a smaller property, remain in the same size of property or upsize. The table shows the number of bedrooms the household currently has and the number they would like.

Current property size	Number of bedrooms would like				Total
	One	Two	Three	Four	
One	126	76	73		275
Two	63	494	70		627
Three	80	1,079	190	81	1,430
Four		68	309	80	457
Five or more			191	125	316
Total	269	1,717	833	286	3,105

Base: 3,105 households with a HRP aged 65 and over planning to move in the next 5 years

Key:

	Downsize
	Remain same size
	Upsize

Source: 2019 Household Survey

F.47 Table F.8 considers the future housing choices being considered by older households within the next 5 years by reference to their current number of bedrooms and the number of bedrooms they would like to move to and expect to

move to. This shows that around 61.7% would like to downsize and of these 70.9% expect to do so. Although some aspire to move to a larger property, fewer expect to do so.

Housing choice	Aspiration (%)	Expectation (%)
Downsizing (moving to a smaller property)	61.7	70.9
Staying same	28.7	20.5
Upsizing (moving to larger property)	9.7	8.6
Total	100.0	100.0
<i>Base (households responding)</i>	3,105	2,211

Source: 2019 Household Survey

Future need for specialist older person accommodation and residential care provision

- F.48 Table F.9 sets out the categories of specialist older person accommodation, as shown on the Elderly Accommodation Counsel (EAC) website²³. PPG recognises that *'there is a significant amount of variability in the types of specialist housing for older people. The list provided provides an indication of the different types of housing available but is not definitive. Any single development may contain a range of different types of specialist housing'*²⁴.

Category	Current number of units	Description
Age-exclusive housing	937	<p>EAC definition: Schemes or developments that cater exclusively for older people, usually incorporate design features helpful to older people and may have communal facilities such as a residents' lounge, guest suite and shared garden, but do not provide any regular on-site support to residents.</p> <p>PPG definition: This type of housing is generally for people aged 55 and over and the active elderly. It may include some shared amenities such as communal gardens but does not include support or care services.</p>
Care homes	1,072	<p>EAC definition: A residential setting where a number of older people live, usually in single rooms, and have access to on-site care services. Since April 2002 all homes in England, Scotland and Wales are known as 'care homes', but are registered to provide different levels of care. A home registered simply as a care home will provide</p>

²³ www.housingcare.org

²⁴ PPG June 2019 Paragraph: 010 Reference ID: 63-010-20190626

Table F.9 Categories of older person accommodation		
Category	Current number of units	Description
		<p>personal care only - help with washing, dressing and giving medication.</p> <p>PPG definition: These have individual rooms within a residential building and provide a high level of care meeting all activities of daily living. They do not usually include support services for independent living. This type of housing can also include dementia care homes.</p>
Care home with nursing	1,647	A home registered as a care home with nursing will provide the same personal care but also have a qualified nurse on duty twenty-four hours a day to carry out nursing tasks. These homes are for people who are physically or mentally frail or people who need regular attention from a nurse.
Enhanced sheltered/close care	100	Sheltered housing that provides more in facilities and services than traditional sheltered housing but does not offer the full range of provision that is found in an Extra Care housing scheme
Retirement/Sheltered housing	717 R 3,550 S	<p>EAC definition: Sheltered housing (S) means having your own flat or bungalow in a block, or on a small estate, where all the other residents are older people (usually over 55). With a few exceptions, all developments (or 'schemes') provide independent, self-contained homes with their own front doors. Retirement housing (R) means housing developments of a similar type to sheltered housing (see below), but built for sale, usually on a leasehold basis.</p> <p>PPG definition: This usually consists of purpose-built flats or bungalows with limited communal facilities such as a lounge, laundry room and guest room. It does not generally provide care services but provides some support to enable residents to live independently. This can include 24-hour on-site assistance (alarm) and a warden or house manager.</p>
Extra Care housing or housing with care	215	EAC definition: Extra Care Housing is housing designed with the needs of frailer older people in mind and with varying levels of care and support available on site. People who live in Extra Care Housing have their own self-contained homes, their own front doors and a legal right to occupy the property. Extra Care Housing is also known as very sheltered housing, assisted living, or simply as 'housing with care'. It comes in many built forms, including blocks of flats, bungalow estates and retirement villages. It is a popular choice among older people because it can sometimes provide an alternative to a care home.

Category	Current number of units	Description
		<p>PPG definition: This usually consists of purpose-built or adapted flats or bungalows with a medium to high level of care available if required, through an onsite care agency registered through the Care Quality Commission (CQC). Residents are able to live independently with 24-hour access to support services and staff, and meals are also available. There are often extensive communal areas, such as space to socialise or a wellbeing centre. In some cases, these developments are known as retirement communities or villages - the intention is for residents to benefit from varying levels of care as time progresses.</p> <p>Note Extra Care can also provide accommodation for people with additional needs who are not older people</p>
Total	8,238	

Source: EAC database www.housingcare.org

- F.49 Across the borough, there are around 8,238 units of specialist older persons accommodation. This includes 2,719 units of residential care (C2 planning use class) and 5,519 units of specialist older person accommodation (C3 planning use class).
- F.50 Table F.10 considers the current ratio of older people to current provision and then applies this ratio to future population projections. This results in a need for 3,481 additional units of specialist older persons accommodation comprising 2,332 units of additional units of specialist older persons accommodation (C3) and 1,149 additional units of residential care provision (C2) over the plan period to 2037.²⁵ 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
		33,347	47,439	
		Ratio of population to current provision	Ratio applied to 2037 population	
Specialist older person (C3)	5,519	0.165502144	7,851	2,332
Residential Care (C2)	2,719	0.08153657	3,868	1,149

²⁵ 2019 PPG Paragraph: 016 Reference ID 63-016-20190626 states ‘...for residential institutions, to establish the amount of accommodation released in the housing market, authorities should base calculations on the average number of adults living in households, using the published Census Data. 2011 Census table QS421EW reported 2,210 residents in older persons residential accommodation: 1,019 residents in care homes with nursing, 1,101 in care homes without nursing and 0 in sheltered communal establishments and therefore the EAC data is used as a basis for a more up to date calculation

Total	8,238		11,719	3,481
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Source: EAC data, 2018-based population projections

People with dementia and early onset dementia

- F.51 The PPG makes specific reference to dementia and that *‘there should be a range of housing options and tenures available to people with dementia, including mainstream and specialist housing. Innovative and diverse housing models should be considered where appropriate’*²⁶
- F.52 The PPG also outlines the characteristics of a dementia- friendly communities:
- easy to navigate physical environment;
 - appropriate transport;
 - communities shaped around the views of people with dementia and their carers;
 - good orientation and familiarity;
 - reduction in unnecessary clutter; and
 - reduction in disorienting visual and auditory stimuli.
- F.53 2020 POPPI/PANSI data estimates there are 92 people with early onset dementia and 5,091 people aged 65 and over dementia (Table F.11). By 2035, the number of people aged 65 and over with dementia is projected to increase by 34.1%, with an increase of 43.3% amongst the 85+ age group. The number with early onset dementia is expected to decrease.

Dementia	2020	2035	% Change 2020-2035
Early onset dementia (30-64)	92	84	-8.7
Dementia (65-74)	905	1,058	16.9
Dementia (75-84)	1,924	2,526	31.3
Dementia (85 and over)	2,262	3,242	43.3
Dementia (total 65+)	5,091	6,826	34.1

Source: POPPI/PANSI (note sources do not report data for 2037)

- F.54 Wirral Dementia Strategy Board’s vision for the Dementia Strategy ²⁷ is: *‘To engage with people living with dementia, including carers, and healthcare professionals in order to improve support and services to enable people to live healthy, safe and fulfilling lives. We want Wirral to be a borough which supports and is inclusive of people with dementia and their carers so they can enjoy the best possible quality of life and remain independent longer. When people do need care, this will be high quality, person centred and delivered seamlessly across the health and social care system.’*

²⁶ June 2019 PPG Paragraph: 019 Reference ID: 63-019-20190626

²⁷ <https://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/documents/s50063535/Dementia%20Strategy%20Appendix%201.pdf>

As the number of people living with dementia on Wirral increases, there will be adequate dementia friendly housing provision that will meet this need in order to support people to live well with dementia in their community.'

- F.55 The key action includes a pledge for Wirral to have greater availability of community housing options suitable for people with dementia. Future housing or community development plans (such as the planned regeneration of Birkenhead town centre) should include consideration of dementia friendly housing options including dementia care homes and dementia friendly buildings.
- F.56 The JSNA on dementia concludes that there are gaps in provision in the community, particularly post diagnostic support. There is a need to design quality environments with green spaces, in line with PPG recommendations.

Senior co-housing communities

- F.57 Senior co-housing 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.'*
- F.58 According to the 2019 household survey, a total of 1,973 older person households were interested in cohousing as a residential option:
- 88.2% were owner occupiers , 10.3% private renters and 1.5% social renters; and
 - 41.14% had a household income of less than £300 each week, 37.5% between £300 and £500 each week and 21.4% at least £500 each week.
- F.59 Table F.12 sets out the dwelling type and size preferences.

Dwelling type/size	Like (%)	Expect (%)
1-bedroom house	0.0	0.0
2-bedroom house	11.0	0.0
3-bedroom house	0.0	10.5
4 or more-bedroom house	9.2	0.0
1- bedroom flat	1.7	31.0
2- bedroom flat	22.9	14.3
3 or more-bedroom flat	0.9	0.0
1-bedroom bungalow	0.0	15.4
2-bedroom bungalow	36.3	19.5
3 or more-bedroom bungalow	18.0	0.0
1-bedroom other	0.0	0.0
2-bedroom other	0.0	9.2
3 or more-bedroom other	0.0	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0
Base (valid responses)	694	609

Source: 2019 household survey

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

- F.60 PPG comments that ‘Many older people may not want or need specialist accommodation or care and may wish to stay or move to general housing that is already suitable, such as bungalows, or homes which can be adapted to meet a change in their needs. Local authorities will therefore need to identify the role that general housing may play as part of their assessment.’ There are also around 11,190 bungalows in Wirral accounting for 7.7% of overall stock and 26,770 flats accounting for 18.4% of stock and some of these will be occupied by older people.
- F.61 Given that the majority of older people want to remain in their own homes with help and support when necessary, there will be an increasing need to adapt existing homes.
- F.62 The current scale of adapted properties has been assessed using 2019 household survey evidence. Applying data from the household survey to MHCLG 2014-based household projections (Table F.13) allows us to estimate the future number of adapted properties required by age group across the borough. Analysis indicates that over the period 2020 to 2037, an additional 907 households will require general adaptations, either through the adaptation of existing properties or through new build.

Age Group	Year			% properties with adaptations	Number of adapted properties required by age group		
	2020	2037	change		2020	2037	change
15-24	3,696	3,781	85	2.3	85	87	2
25-34	15,488	14,590	-898	0.0	0	0	0
35-44	21,146	21,820	674	3.0	634	655	20
45-59	43,374	40,231	-3,143	8.8	3817	3540	-277
60-74	36,577	39,342	2,765	10.9	3987	4288	301
75-84	17,276	23,798	6,522	13.7	2367	3260	894
85+	7,039	11,005	3,966	26.3	1851	2894	1043
Total	144,596	154,567	9,971	9.1	13,158	14,066	907
Source	ONS 2018-based household projections			2019 Household Survey	2019 survey applied to ONS 2018-based household projections		

Source: 2015 Household Survey and MHCLG 2014-based household projections

Note: The baseline for this analysis is with existing adaptations rather than those who may need them now

Adult Social Care Commissioning Priorities

- F.63 Key message for older people commission from the market position statement²⁸ include:
- continue to develop Extra Care accommodation to meet the growing demand;
 - to ensure that this accommodation is the first option for people with disabilities; and
 - review technology to ensure that we keep up to date with new equipment.
- F.64 Wirral's Market Position Statement²⁹ records that Wirral already have 200 units of Extra Care accommodation in operation. This accommodation has been developed as an alternative to residential care and is a valued resource in the borough.
- F.65 The Wirral Plan: A 2020 Vision includes a target of an additional 300 Extra Care units for older people and people with learning disabilities and/or autism by 2020. Wirral Health and Care Commissioning board are working jointly with developers and housing associations to develop Extra Care schemes across the borough to meet the future demand of Wirral residents.

Health-related housing need

- F.66 February 2019 PPG comments that '*The provision of appropriate housing for people with disabilities, including specialist and supported housing, is crucial in ensuring that they live safe and independent lives*'³⁰. The NPPF and PPG provide definitions of people with disabilities.
- F.67 The NPPF Annex 2 defines people with disabilities as people who '*have a physical or mental impairment, and that impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. These people include, but are not limited to, people with ambulatory difficulties, blindness, learning difficulties, autism and mental health needs. The PPG notes that these disabilities, may generate a range of housing requirements which can change over time. Local planning authorities may also wish to consider groups outside of the scope of this definition in order to meet specific needs within their community. To enable disabled people to live more safely and independently, local planning authorities will need to consider their variety of needs in both plan-making and decision-taking*'.
- F.68 Figure F.1 earlier in the chapter has established a framework for considering the needs of people with disabilities and additional needs.

²⁸

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/sites/default/files/all/Health%20and%20social%20care/adult%20social%20care/Market%20Position%20Statement%20WhaCC%20-%202019-2024.pdf>

²⁹

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/sites/default/files/all/Health%20and%20social%20care/adult%20social%20care/Market%20Position%20Statement%20WhaCC%20-%202019-2024.pdf>

³⁰ PPG February 2019 Paragraph: 017 Reference ID: 2a-017-20190220

Data sources

- F.69 A range of data has been collected which sets out the likely scale of residents who have particular disabilities and additional needs; and then considers any evidence regarding the nature of dwelling stock required to help meet the needs of different groups.
- F.70 The data assembled falls into the following categories:
- national sources including the census;
 - national disability prevalence rates applied to the borough population, and
 - feedback from stakeholders.
- F.71 There can be variation in the estimates of residents with particular disabilities and additional needs. There are several reasons for this, for instance a person may self-report as having an illness/disability on the 2011 Census but not be known to service providers; and some data may be collected for specific administrative purposes, for instance when someone presents themselves to service providers for assistance. There are also variations in the timescales for data reported across different groups. Therefore, the data is not necessarily consistent across each of the needs groups, but a genuine attempt has been made to compile available data from published sources and primary research and consider the accommodation needs of particular groups.

Establishing the overall level of disability/support needs across Wirral

- F.72 A range of sources can be drawn upon to establish the overall scale of disability/support needs across the borough. The extent to which specific accommodation for different groups may be required is then explored using available data and specific gaps in understanding are also highlighted.

Census 2011 data

- F.73 The census records a baseline of broad measures of disability across the population. Table F.14 reports that across Wirral Borough, 7.3% of residents stated they were in bad or very bad health; particularly amongst older age groups. A further 13.9% were in 'fair' health. The majority, 78.8%, were in 'very good or good health'. Overall, the 2011 Census estimates that around 67,100 residents were in fair or bad/very bad health and this represents 21.2% of residents. This compares with 18.3% for England.

Table F.14 Long-term health problem or disability

Age Group	Measure of health (%)		
	Very good or good health (%)	Fair health (%)	Bad or very bad health (%)
Age 0 to 15	96.9	2.3	0.8
Age 16 to 24	93.9	4.7	1.4
Age 25 to 34	90.8	6.7	2.6
Age 35 to 49	83.0	11.1	5.9
Age 50 to 64	69.8	18.7	11.5

Age 65 to 74	57.5	28.0	14.5
Age 75 to 84	43.8	37.7	18.6
Age 85 and over	32.1	44.3	23.6
All categories: Age	78.8	13.9	7.3
Total by measure of health	249,267	44,086	23,031

Source: 2011 Census Table D.C3302EW

F.74 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 (Table F.15). This is mainly associated with older age groups.

Table F.15 Daily activity limitations			
Age Group	Measure of daily activity limitations (%)		
	Day to day activities not limited (%)	Day to day activities limited at little (%)	Day to day activities limited at lot (%)
Age 0 to 15	94.9	2.9	2.2
Age 16 to 24	92.7	4.2	3.1
Age 25 to 34	91.0	5.0	4.0
Age 35 to 49	84.6	7.7	7.8
Age 50 to 64	72.1	13.2	14.7
Age 65 to 74	55.7	22.3	22.0
Age 75 to 84	36.9	29.8	33.2
Age 85 and over	17.0	29.7	53.3
All categories: Age	78.1	10.6	11.3
Total by measure of health	247,227	33,530	35,627

Source: 2011 Census Table D.C3302EW

DWP data

F.75 The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) publishes borough-level information about the number of people receiving DLA by age group and the conditions associated with the claim. For Wirral Borough, Table F.16 indicates that 4.3% of the population receive DLA, with highest proportions of receivers in the 65 and over and under 16 age groups. The disabling conditions reported by Wirral Borough residents in receipt of DLA are shown in Table F.17 and indicates that the most prevalent conditions for claimants are arthritis and learning difficulties.

Table F.16 DLA claimants by age group				
Age group	Number of claimants	% of claimants	Population 2018 est	% population DLA claimant
Under 16	3,840	27.4	57,400	6.7
16-24	380	2.7	32,100	1.2
25-49	1,320	9.4	95,500	1.4
50-64	1,840	13.1	67,600	2.7

65 and over	6,630	47.3	70,700	9.4
Total	14,010	100.0	323,300	4.3

Source: NOMIS and DWP 2018

Table F.17 DLA claimants by disabling condition				
Disabling Condition	Age Group			Total %
	<65	65+	Total	
Total	7,310	6,600	13,910	100.0
Arthritis	370	2,740	3,110	22.2
Learning Difficulties	2,070	60	2,130	15.2
Hyperkinetic Syndromes	1,030	0	1,030	7.4
Behavioural Disorder	620	10	630	4.5
Disease of the Muscles, Bones or Joints	300	290	590	4.2
Heart Disease	60	500	560	4.0
Psychosis	370	190	560	4.0
Neurological Diseases	350	120	470	3.4
Back pain - other / Precise diagnosis not Specified	170	290	460	3.3
Chest Disease	70	350	420	3.0
Psychoneurosis	250	170	420	3.0
Spondylosis	50	310	360	2.6
Cerebrovascular Disease	100	260	360	2.6
Blindness	130	120	250	1.8
Epilepsy	150	60	210	1.5
Diabetes Mellitus	140	60	200	1.4
Malignant Disease	60	120	180	1.3
Trauma to Limbs	60	100	160	1.1
Deafness	110	50	160	1.1
Other (conditions each representing less than 1% of total recipients)	590	570	1,160	8.0
Unknown / Transfer from Attendance Allowance	260	230	490	3.5

Source: Nomis and DWP 2018

National disability prevalence rates applied to Wirral Borough

F.76 The ONS Family Resources Survey provides national data on the number of people with disabilities by age group. This can be applied to population projections to establish the potential number of residents who have a disability at the start of the plan period in 2020. The data can be modelled to see how this is likely to change over the plan period up to 2037 (Table F.18). The number of people identified does not necessarily translate to a specific housing need, although it provides a further insight into the likely level of disability experienced by residents in the borough.

Table F.18 Estimate of the number of people with a disability			
	Estimate of residents with a disability		
	Year		Change
	2020	2035	
Base (total in households with disability)	74,280	82,367	8,086
% of population with disability	22.9	24.8	

Source: ONS Family Resources Survey 2016/17 and ONS 2016-based population projections

F.77 The 2019 household survey data invited respondents to provide data on any illness or disability present in their current household. Table F.19 shows the results for the number of people stating an illness/disability and the type of condition. The most frequently mentioned illness/disability was longstanding illness or health condition (11.0%) followed by physical/mobility impairment (8.6%).

Illness/disability	Number of people	% of population
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>	92,329	28.5

F.78 POPPI and PANSI data provide data on the likely prevalence of physical disabilities in 2020 and how this is expected to change by 2035 (Table F.20). The number of people aged 65 with mobility issues and visual impairments is expected increase.

Disability (age group)	2020	2035	% change 2020-2035
Impaired mobility (18-64)	10,998	10,317	-6.2
Mobility (unable to manage at least one activity on own) (65+)	13,247	15,852	19.7
Moderate or serious personal care disability (18-64)	9,587	9,002	-6.1
Serious visual impairment (18-64)	120	116	-3.3
Moderate or severe visual impairment (65+)	6,287	7,858	25.0
Severe hearing loss (18-64)	1,198	1,188	-0.8
Severe hearing loss (65+)	5,649	7,076	25.3

Source: POPPI/PANSI

F.79 A household's health may be a determining factor in the type of accommodation they require or the support they need to receive. Those with a physical disability may require level access or wheelchair accessible accommodation whilst those with a reduced capacity due to a learning disability or dementia may require intensive daily support. Individuals with poor mental health may also be in need of lower level support. For most in this group the need for specialist accommodation or support is likely to a lifelong need.

- F.80 Wirral's All Age Disability Ability Strategy³¹ provides the following details to supplement our analysis:
- Wirral Council Social Services provide long term support to around 4,208 adults and children in Wirral with physical, sensory and learning disabilities, mainly through community based services but also through nursing and residential care;
 - by 2030 it is estimated that around 64,000 Adults (18+) in Wirral will have some form of limiting long term illness or disability that would be around 1 in 4 of the projected adult populations; and
 - people in Wirral with a long term health condition, on average have a lower quality of life score when compared with the rest of England.
- F.81 The strategy's vision is that by 2020 *'we want to support disabled people of all ages and their families to live, independent and happy lives, playing a full and active part in their communities.'*
- F.82 Three priorities are identified:
- all people with disabilities are well and live healthy lives;
 - all young people and adults with disabilities have access to employment and are financially resilient; and
 - all people with disabilities have choice and control over their lives.
- F.83 This highlights that the range of housing options available for disabled people can sometimes be limited. By working together with partners in the public and private sector the council aims to identify opportunities to enable disabled people to have more choice and control over where they want to live, including the opportunity to live as tenants or own their own homes.
- F.84 The council also pledges to ensure that housing options for disabled people are enhanced through the delivery of additional Extra Care homes and increasing the use of equipment and adaptations to enable people to remain independent. We will also continue to work with the most vulnerable clients to ensure that they can access the most appropriate housing to meet their needs.

Learning Disability

- F.85 The latest data (2020) on predicted numbers of people with a learning disability based on POPPI/PANSI is set out in Table F.21 and how this is expected to change by 2035. The data suggests an increase in the number of people aged 65 and over with learning disabilities is expected to be a key trend, with a slight reduction across under 65 age groups.

³¹ <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/sites/default/files/all/About%20the%20council/Wirral%20Plan/All%20Age%20Disability%20Strategy.pdf>

Learning disability (age group)	2020	2035	% change 2020-2035
Total (18-64)	4,483	4,398	-1.9
Total (65+)	1,497	1,772	18.4
Moderate or severe (18-64)	1,019	1,008	-1.1
Moderate or severe (65+)	201	234	16.4
People with LD living with a parent (18-64)	354	356	0.6
Downs syndrome (18+)	119	116	-2.5
Challenging behaviour (18-64)	83	81	-2.4
Autistic spectrum disorders (18-64)	1,812	1,763	-2.7
Autistic spectrum disorders (65+)	664	791	19.1

Source: POPPI/PANSI (note sources do not report data for 2037)

- F.86 In terms of housing needs for this group, the report highlights that a lack of appropriate housing is an important barrier to independence for people with learning disabilities. The work of Mencap is cited where in 2012 it was reported that almost two-thirds (61%) of local authorities believe that local housing arrangements do not meet the needs of people with a learning disability. This has led to long waiting lists, large numbers of people living far away from family and friends, and a high number of people living in arrangements that may not promote independent living.
- F.87 Ongoing benefit reforms have introduced another potential barrier. Mencap note that changes to the benefits system under the Welfare Reform Act 2012 change the way many housing options are funded, which could affect the ability of local authorities to support independent living for people with a learning disability. With very few people with a learning disability in paid employment there is widespread reliance on benefits to support living arrangements. Mencap suggest that changes in the Act place a greater focus on those with high-level needs, reducing the availability of benefits for those with low and moderate needs (Mencap, 2012).
- F.88 Types of accommodation can be divided into settled accommodation, where the person can reasonably expect to stay as long as they want and unsettled accommodation which is either unsatisfactory or, where, as in residential care homes, residents do not have security of tenure.
- F.89 Wirral data suggests satisfactory performance in terms of adults having settled accommodation. These figures are based on reviews undertaken by the local authority with those known to local authority services. Data taken from Learning Disability profiles 2015 suggests that Wirral is achieving 85% adults with a learning disability in settled accommodation and just 15% in non-settled accommodation.
- F.90 The All Age Learning Disability Strategy ³² aims for “People with learning disabilities in Wirral live good lives as part of their community with the right support, at the right time, from the right people.”

³² https://www.wirralcgg.nhs.uk/media/6504/1learning-disability-strategy_2016-20_joint-wirral-final.pdf

F.91 The strategy states that people with learning disabilities should have the same opportunities as everyone else to live a good and meaningful life. For some people to achieve this there may be a requirement for additional support to ensure that their disability is not a barrier to accessing mainstream activities, social opportunities and services. They may also need additional support at home to ensure that they are safe and looked after. Through this priority we will ensure that any support that is required is provided as early as possible and is person centred to maximise positive outcomes.

Autism

F.92 The latest POPPI/PANSI data estimates a total of 2,476 adults to be living with autism in Wirral and this is set to increase to 2,607 by 2035, mainly due to an increase in people aged 65 and over with autistic spectrum disorders (Table F.22).

	2020	2035	% change 2020-2035
Autistic spectrum disorders (18-64)	1,812	1,763	-2.7
Autistic spectrum disorders (65+)	664	844	27.1
Total	2,476	2,607	5.3

Source: POPPI/PANSI (note sources do not report data for 2037)

F.93 Key gaps in knowledge and services for this group are highlighted in the JSNA report. These include:

- lack of systematic recording of people known to services who have an autism diagnosis;
- numbers not known accurately – in population and in service;
- further understanding is required of the needs of people with autism from a range of backgrounds in particular minority ethnic and cultural groups, women and older people; and
- understanding the experience of Wirral residents with autism in terms of local employment, housing and the criminal justice system.

Learning Disability and Autism Commissioning priorities

F.94 By 2020, partners in Wirral aim to deliver 300 Extra Care homes for people with additional needs, such as vulnerable older people and people with physical and / or learning disabilities. These homes will provide a wider range of options when deciding where to live and will help to maximise independence.

- F.95 The market position statement³³ suggests that approximately 780 people across all client groups are accessing supported living accommodation. Supported living includes supporting people who are living in their own property or who are living in shared accommodation with other people.
- F.96 The commissioning intentions of the council are to:
- 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.

Mental Health

- F.97 2020 POPPI/PANSI data estimates there are 35,213 residents with a common mental health disorder (Table F.23). The number of people aged 18-64 with a mental health is expected to reduce slightly over the period to 2035. However, depression amongst people aged 65 or over is expected to increase.

Mental health 18-64	2020	2035	% change 2020-2035
Common mental disorder	35,213	33,974	-3.5
Borderline personality disorder	4,470	4,313	-3.5
Antisocial personality disorder	6,127	5,944	-3.0
Psychotic disorder	1,296	1,253	-3.3
Psychotic disorders (2 or more)	13,349	12,898	-3.4
Older people with depression	2020	2035	% change 2020-2035
Depression 65+	6,189	7,767	25.5
Severe depression (65+)	1,944	2,508	29.0

Source: POPPI/PANSI (note sources do not report data for 2037)

- F.98 Analysis of the MainStay support service assessment and referral database conducted for the emerging Homelessness Review revealed that mental health is the most frequently occurring support need. 72% of all MainStay assessments identified poor mental health as a current issue.
- F.99 60% of the 1,542 clients owed a duty by the Housing Options Team in 2018/19 declared that they had a support need. The most prevalent need was a history of mental health problems – 351 clients in 2018/19.
- F.100 Generally, the Homelessness Review highlighted a growing level and complexity of support needs amongst homeless households leading to a rise in challenging

³³

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/sites/default/files/all/Health%20and%20social%20care/adult%20social%20care/Market%20Position%20Statement%20What%20-%202019-2024.pdf>

behaviour and a lack of engagement. There were indications that that some supported housing provision may require reconfiguration to fully meet the increasing complexity of need that clients are presenting with.

Life-experience related housing need

F.101 Supported accommodation in its broadest sense is generally provided for those individuals or households who are vulnerable to tenancy failure. For many this will be due to life experiences which may have disadvantaged their ability to live independently. These may include time in an institution or care, asylum or a history of abuse. The support required here may be shorter term with the intention of promoting independence in the longer term.

Armed forces

F.102 Analysis for the Homelessness Review found that during 2018/19, 20 households owed a homeless duty by the borough had a support need due to leaving the armed forces.

F.103 Analysis of the MainStay support service assessment and referral database conducted for the emerging Homelessness Review revealed that mental health is the most frequently occurring support need. 72% of all MainStay assessments identified poor mental health as a current issue.

F.104 According to MOD Annual Local Statistics ³⁴ there were 20 MOD personnel or officers based in the borough at 1st April 2018. The location of armed forces pensions and compensation dataset ³⁵ indicates that there were 1787 veterans residing in the borough at the 31st March 2018.

F.105 The accommodation status of armed service veterans in Wirral aged 16+ is estimated in a 2017 JSNA report³⁶ (Table F.24). This estimates that:

- more than 3 out of 4 armed service veterans (75.9%) own their own home (either outright or bought with a mortgage/loan);
- around 23% veterans are estimated to be renting their property. This could be because they do not have a sustainable income to purchase their accommodation as 1 in 5 veterans were likely to be economically inactive; and
- estimates suggest that 3% of the street-homeless population has a service history.

³⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/location-of-uk-regular-service-and-civilian-personnel-annual-statistics-2018>

³⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/location-of-armed-forces-pension-and-compensation-recipients-2018>

³⁶ <https://www.wirralintelligenceservice.org/media/2285/wis-armed-service-veterans-estimates-report-oct-17-v8.pdf>

Table F.24 Estimated accommodation status is armed service veterans in Wirral aged 16+		
Accommodation status	Number	%
Owned outright/bought with a mortgage/loan	11,083	75.9
Rent / Part rent	3,383	23.2
Other	140	1.0
Total	14,606	100.0

Source: JSNA

Source: ONS, MoD and 2015 mid-year population estimates.

Note Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding

Young Care Leavers

- F.106 The Market Position Statement CLA Placements And Sufficiency Strategy³⁷ highlights that Wirral's Children Looked After (CLA) numbers have been rising over the course of the last two years with an increase of 70 between 1st April 2017 and 31st March 2018. This mirrors an upward trend nationally although Wirral's traditionally high numbers means that we have a significantly higher rate per 10,000 (125) than national, regional, and similar local authority comparators.
- F.107 While the upward trend appears to have levelled off in the last 12 months, reducing overall numbers continues to present significant challenges.
- F.108 A snapshot picture as at the 1st January 2019 indicates that Wirral's Children Looked After (CLA) population stood at 842. Table F.25 illustrates the number of children and young people placed with external residential, independent fostering (IFA) and supported accommodation and independent living providers (SAILS).

Table F.25 Looked After Children placements, January 2019, Wirral	
Total number of placements	42
Total number of placement inside LA	25
Total number of placements outside LA	17
% placements inside LA boundary	60

Source: Placements Commissioning Service Placements Tracker January 2019)

- F.109 Overarching commissioning intentions for Wirral's Look After Children are partners, including housing and RP's, work together to secure a range of provision to meet the needs of those who are looked after at the age of 16 and 17, and support the continuity of accommodation beyond the age of 18.
- F.110 Analysis for the Homelessness Review found that during 2018/19, 29 households owed a homeless duty by the borough had a support need due to being a care leaver.

37

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/sites/default/files/all/Health%20and%20social%20care/children/Children's%20Social%20Care%20Improvement%20Board/Appendix%202.%20Market%20Position%20Statement%202019.pdf>

Domestic Abuse

- F.111 The Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment 2015³⁸ provided Public Health England data highlighting that:
- Of the 39 constabularies in England, Merseyside Police reported the second highest incidence of domestic abuse for 2013/14, at a rate of 28.4 incidents per 1,000 population (Public Health Outcomes Framework, 2015); and
 - comparable data shows an England average rate of 19.4 incidents per 1,000 population, with West Yorkshire the highest reporting force at a rate of 30.4 incidents and Cheshire the lowest, at a rate of 4.9 incidents.
- F.112 The report highlights that the number of domestic abuse crimes has steadily been increasing. Analysis of wider datasets pertaining to violent incidents/crimes against the person showed that the incident-crime ratio for violence across the sub-region has increased from 1.0 to 1.4. In other words, a 40% increase in violent crimes has been recorded for the same number of incidents. As a data subset, domestic abuse incidents/crimes displayed a similar pattern. Moreover, further analysis of the datasets indicated that the number of the most serious violent incidents has remained steady at approximately 100 incidents across the force each month. This would suggest that any increases in domestic violence incidents are being driven by lower level violence than by serious assaults.
- F.113 Analysis for the Homelessness Review found that during 2018/19 179 households owed a homeless duty by the borough had a support need due to being at risk or having experience domestic abuse. Analysis of the MainStay support service assessment and referral database revealed that 98 clients had support needs due to fleeing domestic abuse.
- F.114 The findings of the review suggested that increased awareness was needed of domestic abuse support services.
- F.115 The zero tolerance to domestic abuse strategy³⁹ sets the ambition for Wirral to be free from all forms of violence and abuse and a culture of empowerment for those who have experienced abuse. The council plan to raise awareness of the health, psychological and social implications of domestic abuse and make sure that individuals know how and where they can get help.

Substance Abuse

- F.116 The JSNA alcohol report 2018⁴⁰ estimates that 1.9% of Wirral's adult population are estimated to be dependent drinkers, males being three times more likely to be dependent than females. 2020 PANSI data suggests 8,242 people aged 18-64 are predicted to be at higher risk of alcohol related problems but this is expected to reduce by 4.1% to 7,904 by 2035.
- F.117 Alcohol-specific and alcohol-related hospital admissions in Wirral were above national and regional rates in 2015/16 and have been increasing over the past

38 <https://www.wirralintelligenceservice.org/media/1671/wirral-domestic-abuse-needs-assessment-final-draft-20-11-15.pdf>

39 <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/sites/default/files/all/About%20the%20council/Wirral%20Plan/Domestic%20Abuse%20Strategy.pdf>

40 <https://www.wirralintelligenceservice.org/media/2890/alcohol-jsna-21-3-2018.pdf>

decade, particularly in people aged over 40, but have been decreasing in the under 40 age group. Admissions increased with increasing deprivation in Wirral and were highest among males.

- F.118 The majority of local YMCA residents are in contact with drug and/or alcohol services. Wirral had over double the national rate of benefits claimants due to 'alcoholism' in 2016. One in three children referred to social care services in 2016/17 in Wirral had 'alcohol misuse' as an identified factor, nearly double the national rate.
- F.119 The drug misuse report 2019 ⁴¹ states that whilst national estimates suggest higher rates of people using opiates and/or crack cocaine in Wirral compared to the North West and England, local intelligence suggest that the prevalence is lower. 2020 PANSI data suggests 6,028 people aged 18-64 are predicted to be dependent on drugs and this is set to reduce slightly by 0.4% to 6,003 in 2035.
- F.120 The number of people accessing drug treatment in Wirral in 2017/18 was 2,412. The most common drug group clients sought assistance with was opiates (51% of all clients in Wirral). Of the four localities in Wirral, Birkenhead had the largest number (1,572) and rate (23.8 per 1,000) of clients in treatment (Wallasey was next highest). Wirral substance misuse service clients appear to have a much greater need for mental health treatment services at presentation than in England overall (61% locally versus 41% nationally).
- F.121 Through the Wirral Alcohol Strategy ⁴², the council wants to reduce the impact of alcohol-related health harms to individuals, reduce alcohol-related crime, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour in the local communities and establish a diverse, vibrant and safe night-time economy in Wirral.
- F.122 This strategy outlines the ambition to work with local partners to improve the alcohol environment, by rebalancing the place that alcohol has in the community and supporting people of all ages to have a healthier understanding of the role that they want alcohol to have in their lives.
- F.123 Analysis for the Homelessness Review found that during 2018/19, 147 households owed a homeless duty by the borough had a support need due to drug or alcohol dependency. Analysis of the MainStay support service assessment and referral database revealed that 1060 clients had support needs due to current or former substance misuse.

Demand for Supported Housing Services –Findings of Homelessness Review

High demand

- F.124 Despite significant levels of housing-related support provision across the Wirral for homeless and socially excluded clients, demand for this accommodation outstrips supply. The gap between demand and supply is increasing on an annual basis.

⁴¹ <https://www.wirralintelligenceservice.org/media/2772/wirral-intelligence-service-jsna-drugs-23-05-19-final-final-draft.pdf>

⁴² <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/sites/default/files/all/About%20the%20Council/Wirral%20Plan/Alcohol%20Strategy.pdf>

F.125 The waiting list for accessing supported housing peaked at its highest level in December 2019 with 196 people waiting to access supported housing. This is linked to the lack of move-on options for people in supported provision.

Increasingly complex needs

F.126 There are a number of refusals by providers due to high levels of risk and clients' needs being too high. This may indicate that some provision may require reconfiguration to fully meet the increasing complexity of need that clients are presenting with.

F.127 While the majority of people move on from supported accommodation in a planned way into alternative accommodation, eviction is the second-highest single reason for leaving supported housing and accounts for 18% of all moves. This may link to the higher and more complex support needs that clients are presenting with, leading to a rise in challenging behaviour and a lack of engagement.

Suitability and gaps in provision

F.128 Some issues have been identified concerning the physical nature of some of the supported housing projects, with concerns that these may not provide the best environment for recovery out of homelessness. The lack of provision of supported accommodation specifically for women was also identified.

F.129 There is a need to undertake a detailed needs assessment and review of housing-related support services, in order to respond to the current identified need and shape what future provision should look like. The findings from this should be used to inform a robust commissioning plan.

Move-on

F.130 There is a significant issue concerning a lack of move-on from supported accommodation. Progressing the existing review of the current 'virtual' Move on Priority Panel and developing a coordinated private landlord offer could help improve move-on options.

Cultural heritage related housing need

F.131 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 BME households as well as those from travelling communities.

BAME Households

F.132 Wirral Intelligence Service and Wirral Public Health Team prepared a Needs Assessment of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Groups in 2018⁴³ to form part of the JSNA suite of reports.

F.133 Key findings from this report are:

- Determining the profile of the local BAME population continues to be a challenge. While national mid-year population estimates are published annually, they lack any ethnicity data. Hence, 2011 Census data remains the most recent and reliable data source for this purpose.
- According to 2011 Census data, Wirral's BAME population has grown since the previous 2001 Census. In 2011, the BAME population represented 5.46% (n=16,101) of the general population compared to 3.46% (n=10,900) in 2001.
- The 2011 Census reported that more BAME individuals resided in the Birkenhead & Tranmere Ward than any other, with twice the number of BAME residents than in each of next highest wards, which include Claughton, Rock Ferry and Hoylake & Meols.
- Since 2011, it is very likely that Wirral's BAME population has continued to grow, both in number and proportional representation within the general population. An indicator of this growth can be found within the annual School Census (2017) data for Wirral, where BAME pupils now make up 8.1% of the overall school population.

F.134 The report highlights that according to the 2011 Census data (ONS, 2012), BAME households are more likely to seek private rented sector accommodation than their white counterparts:

- 16.86% of all Wirral households are located in the private rented sector.
- Of all non-white households in Wirral, 25.12% live in the private rented sector compared to 16.47% of white households.
- Non-white households were generally larger, at an average of 2.54 persons compared to 2.30 persons in white households.
- Non-white households were more likely to live in overcrowded conditions than white-households, particularly Asian and Black African households.

F.135 The 2019 household survey identified that 17.5% of BAME households were in housing need compared with 9.4% of all households

Gypsy Travellers

F.136 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

⁴³ <https://www.wirralintelligenceservice.org/media/2357/bame-final-220318.pdf>

more specific needs which could be addressed through the normal housing register.

Self-build and custom housebuilding

- F.137 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 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. The Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 and subsequent Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding (Register) Regulations 2016 require authorities to maintain a register of those who have expressed an interest in buying serviced plots. Local authorities are under a duty to have regard to these registers in carrying out their planning function.
- F.138 The following section presents key findings from the register between March 2016 up to November 2018 from a policy perspective:
- there were 186 applicants;
 - all but 2 met eligibility criteria;
 - 10 applicants were currently living outside Wirral and stated that they had 'no connection with the area';
 - all applicants stated they were 'individual' applications - not part of a group or association;
 - 42 applicants (23%) stated that they had previous experience of self or custom build projects;
- F.139 Regarding preferred plot size, many gave multiple answers. This is an analysis of the minimum size requested:
- 3 applicants stated less than 150sqm
 - 52 stated 150 – 299 sqm
 - 20 stated 300-499 sqm
 - 14 stated 500 sqm or more
 - 95 stated 'don't know; and
 - 2 did not respond.
- F.140 Regarding preferred number of bedrooms, many gave multiple answers. The minimum number were as follows:
- 8 stated 1-bedroom;
 - 11 stated 2-bedroom;
 - 45 stated 2 or 3-bedroom;
 - 32 stated 3-bedroom;
 - 59 stated 4-bedroom;
 - 6 stated 4, 5 or more-bedroom;
 - 13 stated don't know; and

- 2 did not respond.

F.141 Location was difficult to analyse since most applicants stated many multiple locations:

- 32 stated specific locations (most either Bebington/Bromborough or Hoylake and West Kirby or Wallasey and New Brighton);
- only 3 stated 'the rural area';
- 134 were multiple choices;
- 18 stated no preference; and
- 1 did not respond.

F.142 Table F.26 is a total count of the multiple preference and sums to the total number of locations of preference expressed. The rural area scored most highly.

Table F.26 Self-build register, count of multiple preferences by area		
Location	Number	Percent
Bebington/ Bromborough	52	10.3
Commercial Birkenhead	6	1.2
Heswall	97	19.2
Hoylake/ West Kirby	82	16.2
Mid Wirral	80	15.8
Rural Area	119	23.6
Suburban Birkenhead	34	6.7
Wallasey/ New Brighton	35	6.9
Total	505	100

Planning applications

F.143 Planning lists for 12 consecutive weeks during 2019 were analysed. We found 13 applications for construction of individual dwellings. Whilst we have no evidence that these would be self or custom build projects, it indicates that there was a low level of building on individual plots. There were planning applications for 104 dwellings in this period and all but 13 were for 2 or more-dwellings.