



REGENERATION AND PLACE DIRECTORATE

LOCAL PLAN MONITORING REPORT

2023/24

DECEMBER 2024

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1 Executive Summary

1.1 This document sets out the extent to which national and local priorities are being achieved within the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral under existing policies and progress on the delivery of the Council's new Local Plan, which was adopted on 31 March 2025.

1.2 This report covers the period of twelve months ending on 31 March 2024.

Monitoring Policy Implementation

Population

1.3 The latest national mid-year estimate for the population in Wirral in 2023 was 324,852, an increase of 1.4 percent since the 2021 Census.

Economy and Retail

1.5 77 percent of Wirral residents were economically active during the twelve months to March 2024, compared to the national average of 78.6 percent.

1.6 3.5 percent or 6,685 Wirral residents were claiming Universal Credit Out-Of-Work Benefits in April 2024, compared to the national average of 3.8 percent.

1.7 The amount of newly completed employment floorspace increased to 23,306 square metres in 2023/24, from 2,757 square metres in 2022/23, with the completion of two new office buildings in Birkenhead Town Centre.

1.8 2,122 square metres of new retail floorspace was completed during 2023/24, compared to 720 square metres in 2022/23, the majority of which was located within existing centres.

Housing

1.9 Gross housing completions reduced to 562 new dwellings during 2023/24, from 802 new dwellings in 2022/23. The number of new dwellings with planning permission on sites under construction had also reduced to 1,523 in April 2024 from 1,857 in April 2023.

1.10 The capacity of land with planning permission for new housing was 5,571 dwellings in April 2024.

1.11 81 percent of new dwellings were completed on previously developed land during 2023/24, compared to 89 percent in 2022/23.

1.12 211 new affordable dwellings were completed in 2023/24, compared to 297 in 2022/23.

1.13 86 percent of new housing was located within 400 metres of a high-frequency public transport service in 2023/24, compared to 87 percent in 2022/23.

Environment and Resources

1.14 39 percent of the Borough's total area of publicly accessible open space obtained a Green Flag Award in 2024.

1.15 The Environment Agency did not object to any planning applications on the grounds of water quality during 2023/24.

1.16 The Environment Agency objected to four planning applications on the grounds of flood risk during 2023/24. Three of the applications were approved subject to conditions, following the submission of further information by the applicant; and the remaining application had been recommended for approval subject to conditions and the signing of a section 106 legal agreement.

1.17 National data continues to indicate a higher rate of delivery of Energy Company Obligation measures in Wirral when compared to regional and national rates of delivery per thousand households.

1.18 The proportion of households in fuel poverty in Wirral was 15.2 percent, more than two percentage points above the national average for England.

Monitoring Plan Preparation

Local Plan

1.19 The examination hearings for the submitted Draft Wirral Local Plan took place between April and November 2023. The Inspectors issued their post-hearing note in March 2024 and consultation on the proposed modifications to the submitted Draft Local Plan was completed in November 2024. The Local Plan was adopted on 31 March 2025.

Neighbourhood Planning

1.20 The neighbourhood planning forum for Devonshire Park was re-designated in March 2024 and the neighbourhood planning forum for Hoylake was re-designated in May 2024.

Cross-boundary Co-operation

1.21 Effective joint working has continued with surrounding districts, prescribed agencies and infrastructure providers.

1.22 'Towards a Spatial Development Strategy for the Liverpool City Region up to 2040' was published for pre-statutory engagement in November 2023.

Questions and Comments

1.23 Any questions and comments on the data or analysis provided in this Monitoring Report should be directed to the Forward Planning Team, Wirral Council, Regeneration and Place Directorate, PO Box 290, Wallasey CH27 9FQ or at forwardplanning@wirral.gov.uk.

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2 Introduction

2.1 This document is prepared in accordance with Section 113 of the Localism Act 2011 and Section 35 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended.

2.2 The AMR is a statutory document setting out progress on the preparation and adoption of Local Development Documents and the extent to which national and local policies are being achieved.

2.3 This AMR principally covers the period of twelve months from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 but also includes more up-to-date information where available.

2.4 The latest available local monitoring data, in addition to the summaries presented in this report, can be viewed at <http://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/development-monitoring>.

2.5 This is expected to be the last AMR to be prepared in the current format. AMRs will in future years follow the Monitoring Framework set out within the adopted Wirral Local Plan.

2.6 Section 3 of the AMR sets out the latest policy context within the area.

2.7 Section 4 of the AMR sets out the extent to which the policy priorities for the area are being achieved under the heading of Monitoring Policy Implementation.

2.8 Section 5 of the AMR sets out progress on the delivery of up-to-date Local Plans under the heading of Monitoring Plan Preparation.

2.9 Section 6 of the AMR sets out details of the action that has been taken to co-operate with other local authorities and prescribed bodies under Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended.

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3 Policy Context

3.1 This section of the AMR sets out the latest position with regard to existing Development Plans and other significant policy initiatives.

3.2 Local policies and initiatives are strongly influenced by national legislation and by national planning policies and guidance.

3.3 The National Planning Policy Framework, NPPF, sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. This AMR reports on the position as it was in April 2024, under the NPPF issued in December 2023.

3.4 The NPPF and its accompanying Planning Practice Guidance can be viewed at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>¹.

3.5 The NPPF, following consultation in July 2024, was amended and published in December 2024.

The Development Plan for Wirral

3.6 At April 2024, the statutory Development Plan for the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral comprised:

- the remaining policies in the Unitary Development Plan for Wirral, adopted in February 2000;
- the Joint Waste Local Plan for Merseyside and Halton, adopted in July 2013;
- the Neighbourhood Development Plan for Devonshire Park, made on 14 December 2015; and
- the Neighbourhood Development Plan for Hoylake, made on 19 December 2016.

3.7 The remaining policies in the Unitary Development Plan for Wirral were withdrawn and replaced by the Wirral Local Plan 2022 to 2040 on 31 March 2025.

Unitary Development Plan

3.8 The Unitary Development Plan for Wirral, UDP, provides for urban regeneration across the Borough, supported by a tight Green Belt, with priority given to regeneration within the older inner urban areas and the outer, more suburban, former Council housing estates.

¹ The National Planning Policy Framework December 2023 can be viewed at <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20231228093504/https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

3.9 The UDP can be viewed at <http://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-plans/unitary-development-plan>

3.10 The UDP is an ‘old style’ development plan that will be replaced by new style Local Plans, such as the Joint Waste Local Plan for Merseyside and Halton and the Wirral Local Plan, supplemented by a series of Neighbourhood Development Plans prepared by the local community.

3.11 The Wirral Local Plan 2022 to 2040 was adopted on 31 March 2025 and further information on the adoption of the new Wirral Local Plan is set out in Section 5 of this AMR.

3.12 A list of the UDP policies and proposals that were no longer in force, following the adoption of the Joint Waste Local Plan, is reproduced in Appendix 1 to this AMR.

3.13 A list of the UDP policies that were replaced by the Wirral Local Plan 2022 to 2040 is set out in Appendix 2 of the Wirral Local Plan.

Joint Waste Local Plan for Merseyside and Halton

3.14 The Joint Waste Local Plan for Merseyside and Halton was adopted by the six partner authorities in July 2013.

3.15 The adoption documents can be viewed on the Council's website at <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-plans/joint-waste-local-plan-merseyside>

3.16 Separate monitoring reports on the operation of the Joint Waste Local Plan can also be viewed at <http://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-plans/joint-waste-local-plan-merseyside>

Local Development Documents

3.17 At April 2024, the following Local Development Documents were in force in Wirral:

Document	Adopted
SPD1 - Designing for Development by Mobile Phone Mast Operators	October 2006
SPD2 - Designing for Self-Contained Flat Development and Conversions	October 2006
SPD3 - Hot Food Takeaways, Restaurants, Cafes and Drinking Establishments	October 2006
SPD4 - Parking Standards	June 2007
Joint Waste Local Plan for Merseyside and Halton	July 2013
Devonshire Park Neighbourhood Development Plan	December 2015

Document	Adopted
Hoylelake Neighbourhood Development Plan	December 2016
Statement of Community Involvement	March 2021
Local Development Scheme	February 2025

Table 3.1 Adopted Documents**Statement of Community Involvement**

3.18 The Council adopted the current Statement of Community Involvement, SCI, on 4 March 2021.

3.19 The adopted Statement of Community Involvement can be viewed at <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/community-involvement-local-planning/statement>.

Supplementary Guidance

3.20 A series of Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes, SPGs, and later Supplementary Planning Documents, SPDs, have been available to assist in the delivery of existing Unitary Development Plan policies. The latest information can be viewed at <http://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/supplementary-planning-documents>.

3.21 A number of SPGs and SPDs will be formally rescinded following the adoption of the new Wirral Local Plan. The Council will provide clarity, by way of explanatory notes, regarding elements of retained SPGs and SPDs and any other guidance which will remain relevant to decision making. Additional SPDs and guidance will be prepared when the Wirral Local Plan has been adopted.

Local Development Scheme

3.22 The Local Development Scheme, LDS, is a statutory document setting out the Council's programme for the preparation of Local Plans.

3.23 An updated Local Development Scheme was published in November 2022, to take account of the submission of the Draft Local Plan for public examination in October 2022. The Scheme was updated in February 2025 to reflect the progress of the examination and the publication of proposed modifications to the Draft Local Plan.

3.24 The Local Development Scheme can be viewed at <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-plans/local-development-scheme>

3.25 A summary of the progress on the preparation of the Wirral Local Plan is set out in Section 5 to this AMR.

Neighbourhood Planning

3.26 Two neighbourhood forums are currently active in Wirral. The latest position can be viewed on the Council's website at <http://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning>.

3.27 Proposals to review and update existing Neighbourhood Development Plans will be taken forward once the new National Planning Policy Framework has been confirmed.

Devonshire Park

3.28 The Forum and Neighbourhood Area for Devonshire Park were re-designated on 13 March 2024, to enable the Forum to continue to prepare neighbourhood planning proposals for the area.

3.29 The latest information can be viewed on the Council's website at <http://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning/devonshire-park>.

Hoylake

3.30 The Forum and Neighbourhood Area for Hoylake were re-designated on 23 May 2024, to enable the Forum to roll-forward the Neighbourhood Plan for the Area.

3.31 Initial work has already commenced on a replacement Neighbourhood Development Plan. A Hoylake Masterplan and a Hoylake Design Guide and design codes are subject to ongoing consultation.

3.32 The latest information can be viewed on the Council's website at <http://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning/hoylake> or from Hoylake Vision at <http://www.hoylakevision.org.uk>.

Community Infrastructure Levy

3.33 The Council has not resolved to become a charging authority.

3.34 The latest viability information, prepared to support the delivery of the Wirral Local Plan, can be viewed on the Council's website at <http://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/community-infrastructure-levy>.

Wirral Council Corporate Plans

Wirral Plan 2023-2027²

3.35 The latest Wirral Plan, Wirral Working Together: A Council Plan for 2023-2027 seeks to drive local improvements under the themes of:

- creating a more efficient, effective and accessible Council;
- early help for children and families;
- promoting independence and healthier lives;
- people focused regeneration;
- protect our environment; and
- safe, resilient and engaged communities.

3.36 Council Plan priorities include:

- to prioritise those with the greatest needs;
- to play our part in addressing the climate emergency; and
- to deliver our ambitious regeneration programme through increased investment, jobs and new businesses throughout the Borough.

Wirral Economic Strategy 2021-2026³

3.37 The Wirral Economic Strategy was refreshed in October 2021. It particularly seeks to support the delivery of a transformational regeneration programme along the 'Left Bank' of the River Mersey stretching from New Brighton to Bromborough, underpinned by the Birkenhead 2040 Framework and the Wirral Local Plan, to capitalise on significant brownfield land assets and town centre renewal and to trigger a step change in quality of life in the most deprived communities.

3.38 Spatial outputs include:

- a series of area regeneration strategies
- delivery of Birkenhead 2040 pipeline projects
- a significant uplift in the number of new homes delivered on brownfield land, including high quality family homes
- increased investment in town centres and high streets
- providing an effective sustainable transport network
- increasing the number of people walking and cycling
- increasing the social value secured through planning agreements; and
- reducing the gap between areas of disadvantage and the rest of the Borough.

Birkenhead 2040 Framework⁴

3.39 The Birkenhead 2040 Framework is a 20-year plan for the transformational regeneration of Birkenhead, which sets out the most radical proposals for the town since the 1947 Town Plan.

² <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/council-plan>

³ <https://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=50083184>

⁴ <https://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=916&MID=9034> (Minute 83)

3.40 At the heart of the proposals is the creation of family-friendly neighbourhoods with beautiful, green public spaces and parks. The plan will re-connect the revitalised town centre with the opportunities along the Mersey waterfront and will seek to make the most of the town's iconic heritage and buildings.

3.41 The latest progress on the Council's regeneration activities can be viewed at <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/business/regeneration>⁵.

Birkenhead Culture and Heritage Strategy 2021 to 2040⁶

3.42 A Draft Birkenhead Culture and Heritage Strategy was published for public comment in November 2021 and approved in March 2022.

The Wirral Sport and Physical Activity Strategy 2021 to 2026⁷

3.43 The latest Sport and Physical Activity Strategy was approved in January 2022, to re-imagine how sport and physical activity can be made part of everyday life after the Covid pandemic.

3.44 The Strategy seeks to:

- promote active lifestyles;
- increase participation in community sport and physical activity;
- position sport and physical activity at the forefront of the Borough's future vision, through effective place shaping;
- create great places for people to live, work, learn and enjoy, with active travel solutions linked to walking and cycling;
- develop flexible solutions to locally identified needs;
- increase physical activity opportunities in parks and open spaces;
- create clean, friendly, modern, vibrant facilities across the Borough; and
- develop new facilities aligned with the Borough's ambitious regeneration plans.

Wirral Climate Change Strategy

3.45 The Council agreed an Environment and Climate Emergency Policy in July 2019⁸ and the Climate Change Strategy for Wirral, 'Cool 2', was updated, to promote:

- a clear view of climate risk
- adaption to limit negative impacts
- leaner use of energy
- clean energy
- clean travel

⁵ the latest documents can also be viewed in the Local Plan Examination Library at <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-planning-evidence-and-research-reports-3>

⁶ <https://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?AllId=60442>

⁷ <https://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/documents/s50092168/Appendix%201%20-%20Active%20Wirral%20Strategy.pdf>

⁸ <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/about-council/climate-change-and-sustainability/environment-and-climate-emergency-policy-statement>

- wiser decisions
- carbon storage
- wider climate understanding
- adequate resourcing
- stronger partnerships and networks
- evidence informed action

3.46 The 'Cool 2' Strategy sets two main goals:

- to stay within a local emissions 'budget' of 7.7 million tonnes (Mt) of CO₂ between 2020-2100 and to reach 'net zero' pollution as early as possible before 2041; and
- to ensure a climate resilient Wirral adapts to cope with existing change and further unavoidable disruption this century⁹

3.47 The Council's latest Environment and Emergency Action Plan can be viewed at <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/climate/wirral-council-environment-and-climate-emergency-action-plan> and key achievements can be viewed at <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/about-council/climate-change-and-sustainability/climate-emergency/key-achievements-climate-emergency>.

Wirral Tree, Hedgerow and Woodland Strategy 2020 to 2030

3.48 The Wirral Tree, Hedgerow and Woodland Strategy was launched in July 2020 as part of the Council's efforts to tackle climate change. The Strategy seeks to promote better ways of managing and increasing trees and hedgerows, and a programme of new planting that will double Wirral's tree canopy once they are fully grown.

3.49 The Strategy can be viewed at <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/about-council/climate-change-and-sustainability/trees-hedgerows-and-woodland>.

⁹ <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/about-council/climate-change-and-sustainability/consultation-new-cool-2-climate-change-strategy>

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4 Monitoring Policy Implementation

4.1 This section of the AMR seeks to provide information on the delivery of existing policy priorities based on information drawn from nationally published data sets and locally collected statistics.

4.2 The data provided has, wherever possible, continued to follow the format used over previous years. Indicators for future years are set in the newly adopted Wirral Local Plan¹⁰.

Population

4.3 The 2021 Census showed that the population in Wirral had increased by 0.1 percent since 2011 to 320,197, which was significantly lower than the previous national mid-year estimate for 2020 of 324,336.

4.4 The latest 2018-based national population projections had also expected the population in Wirral to have grown faster, to 325,177 by 2021.

People Thousands	2018	2023	2027	2031	2035	2037	2039	2041	2043	Change 2018-2043
Wirral	323.2	326.4	328.3	329.9	331.7	332.7	333.9	335.1	336.3	+4.05%
Merseyside	1423.1	1453.0	1474.6	1494.7	1512.7	1521.1	1529.2	1537.5	1545.8	+8.6%

Table 4.1 Population Projections, ONS 2018-based¹¹

4.5 The latest national mid-year estimate of the population in Wirral, for 2023, was 324,852¹².

Households

4.6 The 2021 Census recorded 143,300 households in Wirral, compared to 140,600 in 2011.

4.7 The latest ONS 2018-based national household projections had expected the number of households in Wirral to have grown faster, to 145,170 by 2021.

Households Thousands	2018	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041	2043	Change 2018-2043
Wirral	143	145	148	151	154	157	158	+10.5%
Merseyside	625	636	651	666	682	697	703	+12.5%

Table 4.2 Household Projections, ONS 2018-based¹³

¹⁰ Section 5 below refers

¹¹ ONS 2018-based population projections, March 2020

¹² <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/populationestimatesforukenglandandwalesandnorthernireland>

¹³ ONS 2018-based household principal projections, June 2020

4.8 The National Planning Policy Framework, December 2023¹⁴ and its accompanying planning practice guidance, December 2020¹⁵ continued to require the use of the previous CLG 2014-based projections, which had expected 147,669 households to be present by 2021:

Households Thousands	2014	2021	2023	2027	2031	2035	2037	Change 2014-2037
Wirral	143	148	149	152	154	157	158	+10.6%
Merseyside	614	642	648	662	662	675	693	+12.9%

Table 4.3 Household Projections, CLG 2014-based¹⁶

4.9 Table 4.4 shows how the structure of the population is expected to have changed based on previous national mid-year estimates, compared to the results from the 2021 Census.

National Mid-Year Population Estimate for Wirral	Young People 0-15 years	Working Age, males 16-64 & females 16-60	Retired, males 65 & over & females 61 & over
2023 ¹⁷	58,264	184,586	82,002
2022 ¹⁸	58,110	183,550	80,779
2021 ¹⁹	57,983	183,052	79,565
Census 2021	58,088	182,971	79,138
2020	60,200	184,200	80,000
2019	60,400	184,700	78,100
2018	60,800	184,000	78,000
2017	60,400	185,100	76,900
2016	60,000	185,000	76,200
2015	59,700	186,200	75,200
2014	59,600	187,100	74,200
2013	59,400	188,100	72,900
2012	59,500	191,200	69,500

Table 4.4 Population Change 2012-2023

Social Context

4.10 Approximately a quarter or 25 percent of the Wirral population lives in areas with some of the greatest social, economic and environmental needs in England²⁰.

¹⁴<https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20231228093504/https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2> paragraph 61 refers. Annex 1 paragraph 230 indicated that the Council's Local Plan would continue to be examined under the July 2021 version of the Framework

¹⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-development-needs-assessments>

¹⁶ CLG 2014-based household projections July 2016

¹⁷ ONS Mid-Year Estimates for Local Authority Areas 2023, published 15 July 2024

¹⁸ ONS Mid-Year Estimates for Local Authority Areas 2022, updated 15 July 2024

¹⁹ ONS Mid-Year Estimates for Local Authority Areas 2021, published 21 December 2022

²⁰ [English Indices of Deprivation 2019](#). The next update to the Indices is not expected to be published until late 2025.

4.11 Almost a quarter or 23 percent of Wirral residents, equivalent to approximately 72,000 people over the age of 16, have a long-term limiting illness, compared to 13 percent in England. Respiratory diseases, mental health, cancer and cardiovascular disease are the most common²¹.

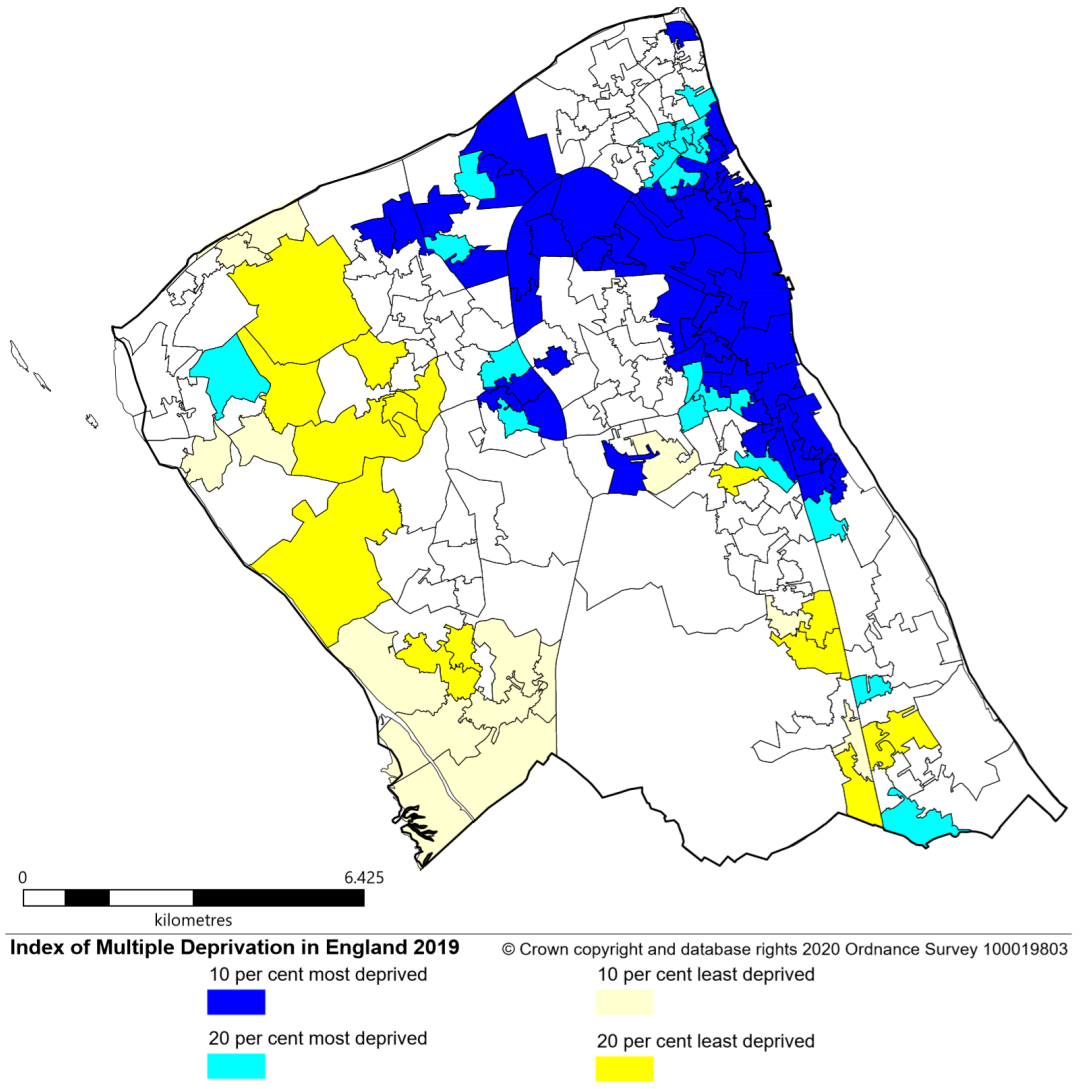


Figure 4.1 Areas of Multiple Deprivation in Wirral²²

4.12 Obesity is an ongoing issue, with 69.3 percent of Wirral adults overweight or obese, compared to 62.8 percent in England²³. Part of Birkenhead is ranked as the second worst area for health deprivation and disability in England²⁴.

4.13 Poverty affects 13.4 percent of Wirral residents compared to 11.8 percent in England²⁵ and in Wirral’s most deprived Electoral Wards, child

²¹ [Wirral Sport and Physical Activity Strategy 2021 to 2026](#) page 12

²² For further information: <https://www.wirralintelligenceservice.org/this-is-wirral/wirral-indices-of-deprivation/> and https://wirral.communityinsight.org/?indicator=imd19_rank_20190101

²³ [Wirral Sport and Physical Activity Strategy 2021 to 2026](#) page 10

²⁴ [Wirral Sport and Physical Activity Strategy 2021 to 2026](#) page 12

²⁵ [Wirral Sport and Physical Activity Strategy 2021 to 2026](#) page 13

poverty is as high as 45 percent. At least 1 in 3 young people live in poverty in the Electoral Wards of Birkenhead and Tranmere, Bidston and St. James, Seacombe, and Rock Ferry²⁶.

4.14 The latest data for 2023/24 showed that 63.5 percent of children in Wirral met the expected level for all early learning goals, compared to 66.3 percent in England²⁷.

4.15 At secondary level, 42 percent of pupils in Wirral gained Grade 5 or above in English and Maths, compared to 46.2 percent of pupils in all schools in England and the average Attainment 8 score for Wirral was 44.4, compared to 46.1 for all schools in England²⁸.

4.16 Eighty four percent of Wirral State Funded schools are currently rated 'good' or better.

4.17 The latest published information on the level of qualifications held by Wirral residents is set out below²⁹.

	Wirral, number	Wirral	Merseyside	North West	Great Britain
RQF4 and above	88,700	48.2%	43.2%	44.4%	47.3%
RQF3 and above	131,200	71.3%	65.2%	65.8%	67.8%
RQF2 and above	169,200	91.9%	85.3%	86.6%	86.5%
RQF1 and above	175,600	95.4%	88.9%	89.6%	89.0%
Other qualifications	N/A	N/A	3.1%	3.6%	4.6%
No qualifications	N/A	N/A	8.0%	6.7%	6.5%

Table 4.5 Qualifications of Working Age Residents Aged 16-64, 2023

Crime

4.18 Wirral maintained a relatively low crime rate of 80 recorded offences per thousand population during 2023/24, excluding fraud, compared to 96 per thousand during 2022/23. Recorded anti-social behaviour in Wirral also fell, from 3,458 incidents in 2022/23, to 3,064 incidents in 2023/24.

²⁶ [Wirral Sport and Physical Activity Strategy 2021 to 2026](#) page 12

²⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/early-years-foundation-stage-profile-results-2023-to-2024>

²⁸ <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/key-stage-4-performance>

Attainment 8 is a score based on how well pupils have performed in up to eight qualifications, including English and maths; three [English Baccalaureate](#) qualifications including sciences, computer science, history, geography and languages; and three other additional approved qualifications.

²⁹ Local Authority Profiles for Wirral and Merseyside: NOMIS Qualifications January 2023 to December 2023

Economy

4.19 The latest figures now show a further reduction in the number of business enterprises in Wirral from 8,770 in March 2023 to 8,605 in March 2024.

Business Enterprises	Wirral, Number 2024	Wirral, Number 2023	Wirral Change 2023-24	Wirral 2024	Mersey-side 2024	North West 2024	Great Britain 2024
Total business enterprises	8,605	8,770	-165	-	-	-	-
Micro 0 to 9 employees	7,635	7,795	-160	88.7%	87.9%	88.4%	89.1%
Small 10 to 49 employees	805	815	-10	9.3%	9.8%	9.4%	8.9%
Medium 50 to 249 employees	140	135	+5	1.6%	1.8%	1.7%	1.6%
Large 250+ employees	25	25	-	0.3%	0.5%	0.4%	0.4%

Table 4.6 Business Enterprises March 2024³⁰

4.20 The most recent data still showed 102,000 employee jobs in Wirral in 2023, which was the same as before the pandemic, in 2019³¹.

Total Employees	Full Time percentage	Part Time percentage	Job Density 2022 ³²
Wirral	63.7%	36.3%	0.65
Merseyside	65.7%	34.3%	0.76
North West	69.0%	31.0%	0.84
Great Britain	68.8%	31.2%	0.87

Table 4.7 Wirral Employees 2023³³

4.21 There was still a higher proportion of part-time working in the local economy, compared to the national, regional and sub-regional averages.

4.22 Wirral still had a higher-than-average proportion of jobs in public administration, education and health.

³⁰ NOMIS UK Business Counts 2024

³¹ Local Authority Profile for Wirral: NOMIS Employee Jobs 2023

³² NOMIS Job Density 2022

³³ Local Authority Profiles for Wirral and Merseyside: NOMIS Employee Jobs 2023

Employment Sector	Wirral Employees	Wirral	Mersey-side	North West	Great Britain
Primary Services (A - B: agriculture and mining)	10	0%	0%	0.1%	1.0%
Energy and Water (D - E)	1,350	1.3%	0.8%	1.0%	1.1%
Manufacturing (C)	9,000	8.8%	6.4%	9.0%	7.5%
Construction (F)	5,000	4.9%	4.3%	4.9%	4.8%
Wholesale and retail including motor trades (G)	14,000	13.7%	13.3%	14.4%	13.7%
Transport Storage (H)	3,500	3.4%	5.1%	4.5%	5.0%
Accommodation and Food Services (I)	7,000	6.9%	8.0%	7.4%	8.0%
Information and Communication (J)	1,500	1.5%	2.3%	3.2%	4.6%
Financial and other business services (K - N)	17,400	17.1%	19.3%	23.1%	23.3%
Public admin, education and health (O - Q)	39,000	38.2%	36.0%	28.2%	27.2%
Other Services (R - S)	5,000	5.0%	4.6%	4.2%	4.5%

Table 4.8 Employee Jobs by Industry 2023³⁴

4.23 153,900 Wirral residents were classified as economically active over the twelve months to March 2024, with 147,500 residents in employment including 15,500 self-employed³⁵.

Percentage of Working Age Population	Economically Active	In Employment, employees	In Employment, self-employed	Economically Inactive ³⁶
Wirral	77.1%	66.3%	7.4%	22.9%
Merseyside	75.9%	65.0%	6.5%	24.1%
North West	76.8%	65.9%	7.2%	23.2%
Great Britain	78.6%	66.1%	9.2%	21.4%

Table 4.9 Economic Activity 2023/24³⁷

4.24 The number of people who were economically inactive was 44,100 over the twelve months to March 2024³⁸.

4.25 3.5 percent of Wirral residents or 6,685 people were claiming Universal Credit Out-Of-Work Benefits in April 2024, compared to 4.5 percent for

³⁴ Local Authority Profiles for Wirral and Merseyside: NOMIS Employee Jobs March 2024

³⁵ Local Authority Profile for Wirral: NOMIS Employment and Unemployment April 2023 to March 2024

³⁶ Local Authority Profiles for Wirral and Merseyside: NOMIS Economic Inactivity April 2023 to March 2024

³⁷ Local Authority Profiles for Wirral and Merseyside: NOMIS Employment and Unemployment April 2023 to March 2024

³⁸ Local Authority Profiles for Wirral: NOMIS Economic Inactivity April 2023 to March 2024

Merseyside, 4.3 percent for the North West and 3.8 percent for Great Britain³⁹.

4.26 Average weekly earnings for employees living in Wirral was higher than the averages for Merseyside and the North West but was still below the national average during 2024.

Average Weekly Earnings	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Wirral	£564.20	£569.60	£627.80	£689.50	£714.60
Merseyside	£562.90	£576.90	£610.80	£665.00	£695.50
North West	£558.10	£575.20	£604.40	£653.30	£696.00
Great Britain	£587.40	£612.20	£644.70	£689.70	£729.80

Table 4.10 Gross Weekly Full-Time Pay by Residence 2020 to 2024⁴⁰

4.27 Average weekly earnings for employees working in Wirral remained below the national, regional and sub-regional averages.

Average Weekly Earnings	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Wirral	£517.50	£519.30	£558.40	£613.40	£646.10
Merseyside	£574.90	£586.70	£592.30	£653.50	£685.20
North West	£557.80	£574.90	£602.90	£649.70	£692.90
Great Britain	£586.80	£611.90	£642.20	£689.60	£729.60

Table 4.11 Gross Weekly Full-Time Pay by Workplace 2020 to 2024⁴¹

Business Development

4.28 The amount of new employment floorspace completed during 2023/24 was 23,306 square metres, compared to 2,757 square metres during 2022/23.

Floorspace square metres	Use Class B1a	Use Class B1b	Use Class B1c	Use Class B2	Use Class B8	Total Floorspace
Completed floorspace, gross	18,250	0	4,244	442	370	23,306
Completed floorspace, net	13,831	0	4,244	327	-330	18,072
Total completed on previously developed land, gross	18,250	0	4,244	442	370	23,306

³⁹ NOMIS Out-of-Work Benefits Claimant Count by Sex, not seasonally adjusted

⁴⁰ Local Authority Profiles for Wirral and Merseyside: NOMIS Earnings by Place of Residence

⁴¹ Local Authority Profiles for Wirral and Merseyside: NOMIS Earnings by Place of Work

Floorspace square metres	Use Class B1a	Use Class B1b	Use Class B1c	Use Class B2	Use Class B8	Total Floorspace
Percentage completed on previously developed land, gross	100%	0%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 4.12 Amount of Employment Floorspace Developed by Type and on Previously Developed Land 2023/24

4.29 All of the new employment floorspace in 2023/24 was provided on previously developed brownfield land.

Completed Floorspace square metres	2019/ 2020	2020/ 2021	2021/ 2022	2022/ 2023	2023/ 2024
Use Class B1a	113	561	3,546	240	18,250
Use Class B1b	0	0	0	31	0
Use Class B1c	1,351	300	0	0	4,244
Use Class B2	86	9,955	804	553	442
Use Class B8	546	4,521	0	1,933	370
Total Floorspace	2,096	15,337	4,350	2,757	23,306

Table 4.13 Amount of Employment Floorspace Developed by Type, Gross

4.30 Projects to provide up to 3,429 square metres of new office and laboratory floorspace; 49,460 square metres of new industrial floorspace; and 8,241 square metres of new warehouse floorspace were registered as under construction at the end of the reporting period, including a major new complex at Ark Royal Business Park.

Employment Land Supply

4.31 The Unitary Development Plan for Wirral (UDP) set aside 843 hectares of land across the Borough for employment uses falling within Use Classes B1, B2 and B8, with 658 hectares within designated Primarily Industrial Areas and 185 hectares on allocated Employment Development Sites.

4.32 An updated Employment Land and Premises Study completed in August 2021 was published alongside the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan in May 2022⁴².

4.33 Only 15 percent of the land allocated as an Employment Development Site in the UDP was still in the land supply at April 2024:

⁴² <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-planning-evidence-and-research-reports-3> Document EE5

Land Area hectares	Mersey Waters Enterprise Zone	Wirral International Business Park	Borough Total
Land Identified in the Unitary Development Plan for Wirral, February 2000			
Land Allocated for B1, B2 and B8 Uses	1.06	7.66	27.79
Other Land Within Primarily Industrial Areas	0.00	12.45	35.98
Former Dockland	11.96	0.00	35.56
Land Currently Subject to Other Designations	0.00	0.00	3.42
Total	13.02	20.11	102.75
Land Identified in the Wirral Local Plan			
Land Allocated for Employment Uses under Policy WS 1	12.79	4.03	50.99
Land Within Primarily Employment Areas under Policy WS 4	0.00	11.93	17.93
Land Within the Port and Maritime Zone under Policy WS 4	0.00	0.00	6.98
Land Subject to Other Designations	0.23	4.15	26.85
Total	13.02	20.11	102.75

Table 4.14 Proposed Employment Land Supply April 2024⁴³

4.34 Table 4.15 shows the take up of employment land in Wirral over the last ten years.

Year	Small Sites of 0-0.2 hectares	Large Sites Over 0.2 hectares	Total Land in hectares
2014/15	0.57	7.28	7.85
2015/16	0.84	2.83	3.67
2016/17	0.13	5.56	5.69
2017/18	0.16	6.65	6.81
2018/19	0.50	1.37	1.87
2019/20	0.10	1.23	1.33
2020/21	0.14	4.50	4.64
2021/22	0.10	0.73	0.83
2022/23	0.36	0.78	1.14
2023/24	0.45	5.21	5.66
Total	3.35	36.14	39.49
Annual average	0.34	3.61	3.95

Table 4.15 Take-Up of Employment Land Since April 2014

⁴³ The land supply at April 2024 is set out in Wirral Employment Land April 2024.xls, which accompanies this report

Town Centres

4.35 The amount of new retail floorspace completed in Wirral, formerly within Use Class A1 but now within Commercial Business and Service Use Class E, was 2,122 square metres during 2023/24, compared to 720 square metres during 2022/23. None of the new floorspace was provided within existing centres.

Use Class	Town Centre		Borough Total		% in Town Centres	
	Gross	Net	Gross	Net	Gross	Net
Use Class Ea (former A1)	0	0	2,122	1,650	90%	88%
Use Class Ec (former A2)	0	0	417	417	0%	0%
Use Class Egi (former B1a)	18,250	18,250	18,250	18,250	100%	100%
Use Class Ed (former D2)	0	0	567	567	0%	0%

Table 4.16 Total Floorspace Developed for Town Centre Uses 2023/24

4.36 Table 4.17 shows the changing trend over time.

Completed Floorspace, square metres	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Use Class Ea (former A1), gross	276	591	1,960	720	2,122
percentage in town centres	82%	0%	2%	0%	90%
Use Class Ea (former A1), net sales	266	591	1,316	407	1,650
percentage in town centres	85%	0%	3%	0%	88%
Use Class Ec (former A2)	76	61	126	195	417
percentage in town centres	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%
Use Class Ed (former D2)	134	693	4,557	1,600	567
percentage in town centres	100%	44%	0%	0%	0%

Table 4.17 Completed Floorspace for Town Centre Uses Since April 2019

4.37 The Council's latest retail and centres study was completed in April 2021⁴⁴.

Tourism

4.38 Wirral tourism has continued to grow, with significant increases in spending in most tourism-related sectors between 2022 and 2023.

⁴⁴ <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-planning-evidence-and-research-reports-3> Document EE6

Expenditure by Sector £ million	2022	2023	Percentage Change
Accommodation	£32.74	£35.56	8.6%
Food & Drink	£85.92	£105.45	22.7%
Recreation	£22.97	£28.07	22.2%
Shopping	£156.48	£193.18	23.4%
Transport	£34.44	£42.47	23.3%
Total Direct Revenue	£332.56	£404.73	21.7%
Indirect Expenditure	£109.93	£134.41	22.3%
Total	£442.49	£539.14	21.8%

Table 4.18 Visitor Spending by Sector in 2022 and 2023⁴⁵

4.39 The overall value of the Borough's visitor sector has now increased to over £539 million, 18 percent higher than the pre-pandemic figure of £458.51 million in 2019. The total number of visitors to Wirral rose from 7.48 million during 2022 to 8.22 million during 2023, compared to 9.01 million in 2019.

4.40 Employment in the sector has also continued to recover, to 5,295 full-time equivalent jobs in 2023, compared to 4,650 full-time equivalent jobs in 2022.

Employment by Sector Jobs	2022	2023	Percentage Change
Accommodation	564	541	-4.0%
Food & Drink	983	1,142	16.2%
Recreation	319	369	15.7%
Shopping	1,632	1,908	16.9%
Transport	176	206	16.7%
Total Direct Employment	3,674	4,166	13.4%
Indirect Employment	975	1,129	15.8%
Total	4,650	5,295	13.9%

Table 4.19 Visitor Related Employment by Sector in 2022 and 2023⁴⁶

4.41 The economic impact of serviced accommodation, such as bed and breakfast, hotels, guesthouses and inns, increased by over 11 percent, to £86.1 million in 2023, compared to £77.02 million in 2022.

4.42 A three-year Strategic Investment Fund, City Region Destination Marketing Project commenced in 2022 to help re-build tourism and related marketing activity in Wirral, and a City Region Visitor Economy Partnership is being formed to shape future City Region strategy and activity.

⁴⁵ STEAM 2022 and 2023 see Glossary

⁴⁶ STEAM 2022 and 2023, see Glossary

Housing

4.43 Just over 84 percent of Wirral's residential properties were privately owned in April 2024. Almost 16 percent were owned by a Registered Provider.

Dwelling Stock by Sector Number of dwellings	Total Stock ⁴⁷	Vacant	Percentage Vacant
Registered Provider	24,123	463	1.9%
Private Sector	127,729	3,819	3.0%
Totals	151,852	4,281⁴⁸	2.8%

Table 4.20 Wirral Dwelling Stock April 2024

4.44 The majority of vacancies, just over 89 percent, were within the private sector housing stock.

4.45 Average house prices increased by 2 percent in Wirral between 2022/23 and 2023/24, which was the same as the average for the North West. Average houses prices in Merseyside showed a decrease of 0.6 percent during the same period.

Average House Prices	Wirral	Merseyside	North West
Overall	£207,105	£191,576	£213,142
Detached	£349,294	£331,885	£359,134
Semi-detached	£232,476	£216,070	£227,532
Terraced	£159,611	£153,476	£166,062
Flat/Maisonette	£122,284	£124,369	£150,273

Table 4.21 Average House Prices April 2023 to March 2024⁴⁹

4.46 The median affordability ratio for 2023, used in the Government's standard method calculation, was 6.67⁵⁰.

Housing Land Supply

4.47 The Borough's housing land supply with planning permission at 31

⁴⁷ Affordable Housing Database 2024 using stock returns from Registered Providers and a dwelling address list of properties registered for Council Tax

⁴⁸ Table 615: vacant dwellings by local authority district: England, from 2004, for October 2024 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-dwelling-stock-including-vacants>

⁴⁹ <https://landregistry.data.gov.uk/app/ukhpi>

⁵⁰ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/datasets/ratioofhousepricetoworkplacebasedearningslowerquartileandmedian> Table 5c published 25 March 2024

March 2024 was 5,571 units⁵¹. The proportion of units with planning permission on previously developed land remained at 95 percent in 2023/24.

4.48 A calculation of the Borough's housing land supply at April 2024, based on the Wirral Local Plan 2022 to 2040, is set out in Appendix 3 to this AMR.

Housing Delivery

4.49 Gross completions totalled 562 during 2023/24, compared to 802 during 2022/23. The number of new dwellings with planning permission on sites under construction also reduced, to 1,523 in April 2024 from 1,857 in April 2023.

4.50 The percentage of residential completions on previously developed land was 81 percent in 2023/24, compared to 89 percent in 2022/23.

Completed Dwellings	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Gross New Build	509	511	553	626	463
Demolitions	12	16	11	33	12
Net New Build	497	495	542	593	451
Gross Conversions	329	151	134	176	99
Net Conversions	260	86	89	114	59
Total Gross Additional	838	662	687	802	562
Total Net Additional	757	581	631	707	510

Table 4.22 Completed Dwellings 2019/20 to 2023/24

4.51 Table 4.23 shows how the geographical pattern of development has changed across the Borough since April 2019:

Completed Dwellings Gross	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Settlement Area 1 – Wallasey	83 10%	63 10%	92 13%	80 10%	131 23%
Settlement Area 2 – Commercial Core	154 18%	38 6%	151 22%	105 13%	24 4%
Settlement Area 3 – Suburban Birkenhead	256 31%	241 36%	88 13%	264 33%	114 20%
Settlement Area 4 – Bromborough & Eastham	156 19%	97 15%	99 14%	82 10%	65 12%
Settlement Area 5 – Mid Wirral	104 12%	34 5%	162 24%	181 22%	134 24%
Settlement Area 6 – Hoylake and West Kirby	42 5%	53 8%	40 6%	37 5%	32 6%

⁵¹ Summarised in Appendix 2 Table 1 and itemised in Wirral Schedule of Committed Residential Sites at 31 March 2024.xls, which accompanies this report
December 2024

Completed Dwellings Gross	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Settlement Area 7 - Heswall	31	94	30	5	46
	4%	14%	4%	1%	8%
Settlement Area 8 – Rural Areas	12	42	25	48	16
	1%	6%	4%	6%	3%
Total	838	662	687	802	562

Table 4.23 Completed Dwellings, Gross 2019/20 to 2023/24

Gypsies and Travellers

4.52 Wirral does not have any existing pitches for Gypsies or Travellers.

Affordable Housing

4.53 The number of affordable housing completions was 211 units in 2023/24, compared to 297 units in 2022/23. The new dwellings were in Liscard, 76 units; Rock Ferry, 58 units; Seacombe, 28 units; Bromborough, 25 units; Leasowe, 13 units; Moreton, 6 units; and Heswall, 5 units⁵².

Settlement Area	Affordable Completions	Total Gross Completions	% of Total Completions
Settlement Area 1 - Wallasey	104	131	18%
Settlement Area 2 - Commercial Core	0	24	0%
Settlement Area 3 - Suburban Birkenhead	58	114	10%
Settlement Area 4 - Bromborough & Eastham	25	65	5%
Settlement Area 5 - Mid-Wirral	19	134	3%
Settlement Area 6 - Hoylake and West Kirby	0	32	0%
Settlement Area 7 - Heswall	5	46	1%
Settlement Area 8 - Rural Areas	0	16	0%
Total Borough	211	562	37%

Table 4.24 Affordable Housing Completions, Gross 2023/24

4.54 The majority of the new affordable dwellings completed during 2023/24, 83 percent or 175 units, were provided by Registered Providers, with the remainder, 17 percent or 36 units, provided by developers as part of market housing developments.

4.55 The Council's latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment was published alongside the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan in May 2022⁵³.

⁵² The Council wrote to all contacts on the Self Build Register in February 2024 to identify those people with a current or ongoing interest in remaining on the Register. This has led to a significant reduction of individuals from the previous monitoring period.

⁵³ <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-planning-evidence-and-research-reports-3> Document H8

Self-Build and Custom House Building

4.56 In November 2024, there were 107 individuals on the Council's Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Register, who had requested between 116 and 133 plots of land⁵⁴. Five respondents did not specify the number of plots that they might be interested in.

4.57 There is a general preference for self-build plots in the west of the Borough, in Hoylake, West Kirby and Heswall, and in locations outside the existing built-up area.

Settlement Area November 2024	Preferred Location Number of Requests ⁵⁵	Percentage
1 – Wallasey	28	8%
2 - Commercial Core	6	2%
3 - Suburban Birkenhead	27	8%
4 - Bromborough & Eastham	51	14%
5 - Mid-Wirral	34	9%
6 - Hoylake & West Kirby	71	20%
7 - Heswall	55	15%
8 - Rural Areas	74	20%
No Stated Preference	16	4%

Table 4.25 Preferred Locations for Self-Build and Custom House Building

4.58 The Council's Schedule of Committed Residential Sites at 31 March 2024, which accompanies this report, shows 85 plots with planning permission for single dwellings with potential to accommodate self-build or custom-build housing.

4.59 Over the last five years, 4.7 percent of all completed new build housing or 126 units have been provided on single plots which were likely to have supported self-build and custom-build housing, including 26 units completed during 2023/24.

Heritage Conservation

4.60 Wirral has a significant built heritage, with over 1,900 listed buildings covered by 732 separate list entries on the Historic England National Heritage List for England, including nine Ancient Monuments, four Historic Parks and Gardens and twenty-six Council-designated Conservation Areas⁵⁶.

4.61 The following heritage assets are currently included on the national Historic England Heritage at Risk Register⁵⁷:

- Clifton Park Conservation Area
- Flaybrick Cemetery Conservation Area and Historic Park and Garden

⁵⁴ five respondents registered an interest without specifying the number of plots that they might be interested in

⁵⁵ The majority of respondents expressed an interest in multiple locations

⁵⁶ <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/built-conservation>

⁵⁷ [Historic England Heritage at Risk Register for Wirral November 2024](#)

- Hamilton Square Conservation Area
- Church of St James, Victoria Road, New Brighton
- Church of St Nicholas, Newport Avenue, Wallasey
- Church of St Paul, Church Crescent, Seacombe
- New Hall Moated Site, Gayton
- Storeton Hall, Redhill Road, Storeton Village
- Fort Perch Rock, New Brighton
- Thornton Manor and Historic Park and Garden, Thornton Hough
- Roman Catholic Church of St Michael and All Angels, Woodchurch
- Church of St Mary, Liscard

4.62 Work to restore Storeton Hall has now been completed.

Biodiversity

4.63 The latest published information from Natural England shows five of the Borough's twelve nationally designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are not currently meeting the Government's Public Service Agreement Target to have at least 95 percent of the SSSI in favourable or recovering condition⁵⁸. The Council's planning decisions must ensure that development on land within or outside a SSSI is not likely to have an adverse effect on it.

Site of Special Scientific Interest	Favourable Condition	Unfavourable Condition - Recovering	Unfavourable Condition - No Change	Unfavourable Condition - Declining
Dee Cliffs	86.9%	-	13.1%	-
Dee Estuary	100%	-	-	-
Dibbinsdale	8.2%	21.8%	22.0%	48.0%
Heswall Dales	-	100%	-	-
Meols Meadows	-	-	100%	-
Mersey Estuary	29.3%	24.7%	46.0%	-
Mersey Narrows	22.3%	77.7%	-	-
New Ferry	-	100%	-	-
North Wirral Foreshore	-	-	-	100%
Red Rocks	-	71.6%	-	28.4%
The Dungeon	100%	-	-	-
Thurstaston Common	-	100%	-	-

Table 4.26 Percentage of Sites of Scientific Interest in Favourable Condition⁵⁹

⁵⁸<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteList.aspx?siteName=&countyCode=28&responsiblePerson>

⁵⁹ From reports generated on 20 December 2024. The responsibility for assessing and monitoring the condition of a Site of Special Scientific Interest lies with Natural England.

4.64 An interim approach to avoid and mitigate recreation pressure on internationally designated wildlife sites was published alongside the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan in May 2022⁶⁰ and adopted by the Council in September 2023⁶¹.

Public Open Space

4.65 Green Flag Awards were obtained for 31 of the Council’s open space sites in 2024, with the addition of Victoria Park, Tranmere and Warwick Park, Upton. This has increased from 29 in 2023.

4.66 Birkenhead Park, Wirral Country Park and Port Sunlight Village, managed by the Port Sunlight Village Trust also retained their Green Heritage Site Accreditation, in recognition of maintaining the required standard in the management and interpretation of a site with local or national historic importance⁶².

4.67 New Ferry Butterfly Park, managed by the Cheshire Wildlife Trust and Holy Cross Churchyard, Woodchurch, managed by the Holy Cross Woodchurch PCC also retained their Green Flag Community Awards, for sites managed by voluntary and community groups.

Total Publicly Accessible Open Space	1,545 hectares ⁶³
Area of Open Space Managed to Green Flag Award Standard	607 hectares
Percentage of Open Space Managed to Green Flag Award Standard	39%

Table 4.27 Publicly Accessible Open Space Managed to Green Flag Standard 2023/24⁶⁴

4.68 The Council’s target had been to increase the number of new Green Flag Award parks by at least one every year⁶⁵.

Water Quality

4.69 Wirral’s beaches have consistently been among the cleanest in the North West and three of Wirral’s beaches were recommended in the 2024

Landowners are required to manage the land effectively and appropriately and public bodies must take reasonable steps to conserve and enhance the special features of a designated site when carrying out or approving works on or near it. Consent is required before certain activities can be carried out on or near the land. The relevant guidance can be viewed at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/protected-areas-sites-of-special-scientific-interest>

⁶⁰ <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-planning-evidence-and-research-reports-3> Document ECC27

⁶¹ [Economy Regeneration & Housing Committee 18 September 2023](#) item 29

⁶² [Green Flag Award Winners List 2024](#)

⁶³ includes sites accessible to the public within the designated Green Belt and sites in private or voluntary sector ownership

⁶⁴ Figures are based on the Open Space Assessment 2021, completed in September 2021 <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-planning-evidence-and-research-reports-3> Documents GI3.1 and GI3.2 refer

⁶⁵ Wirral Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2014-2024 <http://tinyurl.com/nj4nc8x>

Marine Conservation Society UK Beach Guide⁶⁶. The beaches at Leasowe Bay, Meols, Moreton, New Brighton/Wallasey and West Kirby also featured among the top ten beaches in Merseyside, as selected by the users of the Beach Guide website⁶⁷.

4.70 The bathing water quality at Moreton received an ‘excellent’ rating in 2024. The rating at Wallasey and Meols was ‘good’ and the rating at West Kirby was ‘sufficient’⁶⁸.

4.71 The latest information on river water quality continues to classify the Dibbinsdale Brook and Clatter Brook as ‘Poor’; and The Birket, including Arroe Brook and The Fender as ‘Moderate’⁶⁹.

4.72 The Environment Agency did not object to any planning applications on the grounds of water quality during 2023/24⁷⁰.

4.73 The City Region Mayor is seeking to work towards the elimination of untreated discharges into the Mersey by 2030⁷¹.

Flood Risk

4.74 The Environment Agency objected to four planning applications on the grounds of flood risk during 2023/24. At the time of writing, three of the applications had been approved subject to conditions, following the submission of further information by the applicant; and the remaining application had been recommended for approval subject to conditions and the signing of a section 106 legal agreement⁷².

4.75 A revised Level 1 Flood Risk Assessment for the Borough was completed in July 2021, followed by a Level 2 Assessment in February 2022, to support the preparation of the Wirral Local Plan. Further addendums were

⁶⁶ https://www.thebeachguide.co.uk/best-beaches/mcs_recommended.htm at May 2024, at Meols, Moreton and New Brighton

⁶⁷ <https://www.thebeachguide.co.uk/north-west-england/merseyside/top-10-beaches>

⁶⁸ <http://environment.data.gov.uk/bwg/profiles/> The beaches at Thurstaston, Red Rocks, Leasowe Bay and New Brighton were not tested

⁶⁹ <https://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/OperationalCatchment/3540> latest data August 2023

⁷⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environment-agency-objections-to-planning-on-the-basis-of-flood-risk>

⁷¹ <https://www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/news/metro-mayor-and-local-leaders-call-for-discharge-free-mersey-by-2030>

⁷² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environment-agency-objections-to-planning-on-the-basis-of-flood-risk> including [APP/23/00041](#) for an extension to the Twelve Quays Ferry Terminal, approved following further information on site ground levels; [APP/23/01240](#) for a conversion into two dwellings, in Moreton, approved with conditions related to floor levels and site warning measures; [APP/23/01407](#) for further works at the U Boat Story museum at Woodside, approved with a condition on finished floor levels; and [APP/23/01510](#) for 115 dwellings at Dock Road North, Bromborough, recommended for approval subject to agreed mitigation measures.

provided to both reports in July 2021, Level 1 Addendum and April 2022, Level 2 Addendum⁷³.

Energy

4.76 The latest published information indicates that total energy consumption in Wirral had reduced by 32 percent, from 7,462 GWh in 2005 to 5,047 GWh in 2022. While the highest proportion continued to be taken up for domestic needs, domestic energy use had reduced by 38 percent since 2005. Over the same period, the amount of energy used by industry and commerce had reduced by 35 percent, and the amount of energy used by transport had reduced by 24 percent⁷⁴.

Total Final Energy Consumption (percentages)	Industry & Commerce	Domestic	Transport	Bioenergy & Wastes
Wirral	31.3%	40.0%	28.7%	3.8%
North West	40.0%	29.2%	30.8%	6.6%
Great Britain	37.3%	29.6%	33.1%	5.1%

Table 4.28 Energy Consumption by Sector 2022⁷⁵

4.77 The use of energy from bioenergy and waste has increased from 25.6 GWh in 2005 to 190.7 GWh in 2022.

Local Generation

4.78 The latest national figures show that there were 4,350 photovoltaic installations in Wirral at the end of 2023, compared with 3,289 photovoltaic installations at the end of 2022.

4.79 Installed capacity in Wirral had increased to 370.2 MW at the end of 2023, compared to 366.1 MW at the end of 2022.

Renewable Electricity	Photo-voltaic	On-shore wind	Off-shore wind	Sewage gas	Landfill gas	Total
Installations	4,350	4	2	1	1	4,358
Installed Capacity MW	16.9	0.1	349.0	0.5	3.7	370.2
Generation MWh	14,283	156	n/a	n/a	n/a	14,438

Table 4.29 Generation of Renewable Electricity in Wirral 2023⁷⁶

⁷³ <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-planning-evidence-and-research-reports-3> Documents ECC21 and ECC22, with Level 1 addendum ECC21.3 and Level 2 addendum ECC22.2

⁷⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/total-final-energy-consumption-at-regional-and-local-authority-level-2005-to-2022>, September 2024, 1 kilotonne of oil equivalent, ktoe = 11.63 GWh

⁷⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/total-final-energy-consumption-at-regional-and-local-authority-level-2005-to-2022> September 2024

⁷⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/regional-renewable-statistics> Renewable Electricity by Local Authority 2014 to 2023, October 2024. Data for 2023 has been suppressed to prevent individual plants from being identified.

4.80 The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority voted in March 2024 to begin the formal planning process towards the construction of an energy generating tidal barrage across the Mersey between Liverpool and Wirral. The latest information can be viewed on the Combined Authority website at <https://www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/its-time-for-tidal/>.

Household Energy Efficiency

4.81 The Energy Company Obligation, ECO, is a national energy efficiency scheme to help reduce carbon emissions and tackle fuel poverty. The latest ECO4 Order, to cover the period from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2026, came into force on 27 July 2022.

4.82 The latest published information shows that the total number of ECO measures delivered in Wirral in the period to March 2024 was 38,281, an increase of 3,440 since March 2023.

Area	ECO measures per 1,000 households	Total households in receipt of ECO measures
Wirral	267.2	38,281
Merseyside	247.3	154,472
North West	224.4	700,135
England	139.6	3,238,254

Table 4.30 Energy Company Obligation Measures January 2013 to March 2024⁷⁷

4.83 This included 4,916 Carbon Savings Target CERO measures; 5,045 Carbon Savings Community CSCO measures; and 28,320 Affordable Warmth HHCRO measures.

Fuel Poverty

4.84 The latest published figures indicate that over 22,400 households in Wirral were considered to be fuel poor in 2022⁷⁸.

Area	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Wirral	11.2%	13.1%	13.5%	12.2%	13.9%	14.4%	15.3%	15.2%
England	11.0%	11.1%	10.9%	10.3%	13.4%	13.2%	13.1%	13.1%

Table 4.31 Households in Fuel Poverty⁷⁹

⁷⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/household-energy-efficiency-statistics-headline-release-may-2024> Table 3.4

⁷⁸ In England, a household is defined as fuel poor if they are living in a property with an energy efficiency rating of D, E, F or G and their disposable income after housing costs and energy needs would be lower than 60 percent of the national median.

⁷⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/sub-regional-fuel-poverty-data-2024-2022-data> December 2024, Table 2

4.85 The most recent figures by Parliamentary Constituency, using 2011 boundaries, are set out below.

Constituency Area	Number of Households	Percentage of Households
Birkenhead Constituency	8,126	19.1%
Wallasey Constituency	7,017	17.2%
Wirral South Constituency	3,886	11.9%
Wirral West Constituency	3,388	10.8%
North West	-	14.1%

Table 4.32 Households in Fuel Poverty by Constituency 2022⁸⁰

Minerals

4.86 Wirral does not have any significant mineral reserves, apart from small amounts of winnable brick clay.

4.87 A revised Wirral Minerals Report was published alongside the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan in May 2022⁸¹.

4.88 The latest Local Aggregate Assessment for Greater Manchester, Merseyside, Halton and Warrington for 2020 to 2023, which will include data up to 2022, has not yet been ratified by the North West Aggregates Working Party.

Waste

4.89 The amount of collected household waste per person was 368kg per person in 2023/24, compared to 366kg per person in 2022/23. The average for England for 2022/23 was 346kg per head⁸².

Waste Managed tonnes	Landfill	Recycled	Composted	Total
Amount of household waste arising and managed by management type	80,655	22,811	15,855	119,381
Percentage of household waste arising by management type	68%	19%	13%	100%

Table 4.33 Amount of Household Waste Arising and Managed by Management Type 2023/24

4.90 The number of garden waste subscribers was 40,729 in 2023/24 compared to 40,795 households in 2022/23.

⁸⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/sub-regional-fuel-poverty-data-2024-2022-data> December 2024, Table 4

⁸¹ <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-planning-evidence-and-research-reports-3> Document EE4

⁸² A more up to date figure for England was not available at the time of writing

Waste Arisings tonnes	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Landfill	80,353	90,957	86,431	80,644	80,655
percentage of total arisings landfilled	67%	68%	68%	69%	68%
Recycled	24,095	28,257	26,191	22,713	22,811
percentage of total arisings recycled	20%	21%	21%	19%	19%
Composted	15,979	14,434	15,061	13,898	15,855
percentage of total arisings composted	13%	11%	11%	12%	13%
Total Arisings	120,427	133,648	127,683	117,255	119,381

Table 4.34 Trends in Waste Management by Management Type 2019/20 to 2023/24⁸³

Transport

4.91 Wirral largely mirrors England in terms of the overall proportions of households with access to a car or van but there is a significant disparity in levels of access between Electoral Wards, particularly in Bidston and St James, Birkenhead and Tranmere, Liscard, Rock Ferry and Seacombe.

Electoral Ward/ Area	Percentage of Households with Cars or Vans			
	No Car or Van	1 Car or Van	2 Cars or Vans	3 or more Cars or Vans
Bebington	18%	43%	31%	8%
Bidston and St James	42%	40%	14%	4%
Birkenhead and Tranmere	52%	36%	10%	2%
Bromborough	24%	47%	23%	6%
Clatterbridge	11%	41%	36%	12%
Cloughton	25%	42%	25%	8%
Eastham	17%	42%	32%	9%
Greasby, Frankby and Irby	11%	42%	36%	11%
Heswall	11%	37%	38%	14%
Hoylake and Meols	17%	43%	30%	10%
Leasowe and Moreton East	27%	44%	23%	6%
Liscard	33%	44%	19%	4%
Moreton West and Saughall Massie	17%	45%	30%	8%
New Brighton	29%	45%	21%	5%
Oxton	22%	47%	24%	7%
Pensby and Thingwall	14%	44%	33%	9%
Prenton	22%	42%	27%	9%
Rock Ferry	41%	41%	15%	4%
Seacombe	42%	41%	14%	3%

⁸³ Wirral Council, Neighbourhood Services: data submitted to but not yet verified by WasteDataFlow: <http://www.wastedataflow.org/>

Electoral Ward/ Area	Percentage of Households with Cars or Vans			
	No Car or Van	1 Car or Van	2 Cars or Vans	3 or more Cars or Vans
Upton	27%	42%	23%	7%
Wallasey	17%	45%	30%	9%
West Kirby and Thurstaston	14%	40%	34%	12%
Wirral Borough	25%	42%	25%	7%
England	24%	41%	26%	9%

Table 4.35 Car Ownership and Access in Households, 2021 Census

4.92 86 percent of all new dwellings completed during 2023/24 were located within 400 metres walking distance of a high frequency public transport service or railway station. Only 78 new dwellings were located further than 400 metres from a high frequency public transport service or railway station⁸⁴.

Settlement Area	Gross Dwelling Completions	Number within 400m of a High Frequency Public Transport Service or railway station	Number beyond 400m of a High Frequency Public Transport Service or railway station	Percentage Within 400m of a High Frequency Public Transport Service or railway station
Settlement Area 1 - Wallasey	131	129	2	98%
Settlement Area 2 - Commercial Core	24	24	0	100%
Settlement Area 3 - Suburban Birkenhead	114	105	9	92%
Settlement Area 4 - Bromb & Eastham	65	64	1	98%
Settlement Area 5 - Mid-Wirral	134	91	43	68%
Settlement Area 6 - Hoylake & West Kirby	32	28	4	88%
Settlement Area 7 - Heswall	46	39	7	85%
Settlement Area 8 - Rural Areas	16	4	12	25%
Total Borough	562	482	78	86%

Table 4.36 Accessibility of New Residential Development 2023/24

4.93 A range of updated transport and air quality studies were published alongside the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan in May 2022⁸⁵.

⁸⁴ A high frequency public transport service is defined as a public transport route providing a passenger rail service or a day-time public transport service that runs at least every 30 minutes or more frequently in each direction.

⁸⁵ <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-planning-evidence-and-research-reports-3> Documents ECC18 and T1 to T14 refer

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5 Monitoring Plan Preparation

5.1 This section of the AMR records progress on the preparation of the Council's Local Plans.

Wirral Local Plan

5.2 In April 2024, the Wirral Local Plan was still being examined by the Planning Inspectors appointed by the Secretary of State.

5.3 The Draft Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination on 26 October 2022. A period of eight weeks of hearings in public began in April 2023 and concluded in November 2023. The Inspectors issued their post-hearing note on 4 March 2024⁸⁶ and consultation on the proposed modifications to the Draft Local Plan was completed on 8 November 2024⁸⁷.

5.4 Further information on the Examination and the documents submitted for consideration can also be viewed at <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plan-examination>.

5.5 The Wirral Local Plan 2022 to 2040, which was adopted on 31 March 2025, can now be viewed at <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/new-local-plan>

Joint Waste Local Plan for Merseyside and Halton

5.6 The need for a review of the Joint Waste Local Plan is currently being considered by a sub-group of the Liverpool City Region Planning Policy Managers. No further documentation has yet been published.

Evidence Base

5.7 The evidence base, which supported the progression of the Local Plan, throughout 2023/24 can be viewed at <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-planning-evidence-and-research-reports-3>.

5.8 Further information can be obtained from localplan@wirral.gov.uk or by telephone at 0151 691 8235.

⁸⁶ Post Submission Examination Document INSP015, March 2024
<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-03/INSP015%20Inspectors%27%20Post-hearing%20note%20March%202024.pdf>

⁸⁷ <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plan-examination>

6 Cross-Boundary Co-operation

6.1 National regulations require monitoring reports to include information on co-operation with other local planning authorities and prescribed bodies undertaken under Section 110 of the Localism Act 2011.

Liverpool City Region Structures and Initiatives

6.2 A Combined Authority for the six councils of Greater Merseyside, working jointly with the Merseyside Integrated Transport Authority and the Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership on transport, economic development and regeneration, was formally established by Government in April 2014.

6.3 The Devolution Agreement with Government also gave strategic planning powers to an elected Liverpool City Region Mayor, to help accelerate economic growth and new housing development and to prepare a Spatial Development Strategy for the City Region⁸⁸.

6.4 Further devolution, related to business rates; health and social care; children's services; home ownership; housing supply; apprenticeships; local traffic and highway powers; and criminal justice, was agreed in March 2016.

6.5 The first City Region Mayor was elected in May 2017 and regulations to govern the preparation of the Mayor's Spatial Development Strategy were published in July 2018⁸⁹. The amended regulations came into force in August 2018⁹⁰.

6.6 A new Plan for Prosperity was published in January 2022, to provide a roadmap for economic growth up to 2035⁹¹ and a new devolution deal with Department for Transport could pave the way for greater integration of rail infrastructure, with work to develop a new station at Woodchurch scheduled to start by 2030.

6.7 The latest report of progress is set out in the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Annual Review 2023/24⁹²

6.8 The Government's English Devolution White Paper has confirmed that the Liverpool City Region will be in the first wave of Mayoral Combined Authorities that will receive an Integrated Settlement – a consolidated budget

⁸⁸ The original Agreement, from November 2015, can be viewed at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/477385/Liverpool_devolution_deal_unsigned.pdf

⁸⁹ The Combined Authorities Spatial Development Strategy Regulations 2018 can be viewed at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2018/827/contents>

⁹⁰ The Combined Authorities Spatial Development Strategy Amendment Regulations 2018 can be viewed at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2018/924/contents/made>

⁹¹ <https://www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/plan-for-prosperity>

⁹² <https://api.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/Annual-Review-2023-2024.pdf>

across housing, regeneration, local growth, local transport, skills, housing retrofit, and employment support – from 2026/27⁹³.

Liverpool City Region Spatial Development Strategy

6.9 Pre-statutory engagement on 'Towards a Spatial Development Strategy for the Liverpool City Region up to 2040' began in November 2023. The deadline for comments expired on 16 February 2024⁹⁴. The latest information can be viewed at <https://www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/sds>.

6.10 Further information on City Region planning can be found on the Combined Authority website at <https://www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/spatial-planning/>

Other Cross Boundary Working

6.11 Wirral Council has also continued to work as part of sub-regional collectives of local planning authorities from across the City Region and the surrounding areas on joint initiatives including:

- The Liverpool City Region Housing and Regeneration Board;
- meetings of the Liverpool City Region Chief Planning Officers and Planning Policy Managers including West Lancashire Council;
- shared specialist environmental services provided through Sefton Council by the Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service;
- participation in the North West Coastal Forum Advisory Group;
- a shared archaeological records management and planning advisory service with the councils for Liverpool, Sefton, Knowsley and St Helens;
- the Liverpool City Region Local Nature Partnership;
- joint consultancy for the consistent provision of City Region Local Plan Habitats Regulations Assessments;
- arrangements for the preparation of the Liverpool City Region Spatial Development Strategy; and
- further work with the Mersey Dee Alliance, spanning the North Wales and North West England border⁹⁵.

6.12 The information with regard to the preparation of the Wirral Local Plan through 2023/24 is set out in:

- the Wirral Local Plan Regulation 22 Consultation Statement, October 2022, page 29 onwards⁹⁶;
- Wirral Local Plan Submission Update Report, October 2022, page 19 onwards⁹⁷;

⁹³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-devolution-white-paper-power-and-partnership-foundations-for-growth/english-devolution-white-paper>

⁹⁴ a copy of the consultation documents, can be viewed at <https://www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/sdsengagement>

⁹⁵ Further information can be viewed at <http://www.merseydealliance.org.uk/>

⁹⁶ <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plan-examination> Document SD5.1

⁹⁷ <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plan-examination> Document SD7

- Wirral Local Plan Duty to Cooperate Statement of Compliance Submission Version, October 2022, Version 3⁹⁸;
- the Wirral Infrastructure Delivery Plan Version 2, May 2022⁹⁹; and
- on the Wirral Local Plan Examination website at <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plan-examination>

⁹⁸ <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-planning-evidence-and-research-reports-3> Document SGD1.1

⁹⁹ <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-planning-evidence-and-research-reports-3> Document KSD1

Appendix 1

1. Unitary Development Plan for Wirral - Policies and Proposals No Longer in Force from July 2013

A. Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Schedule 8, Paragraph 1, 3

The following policies and proposals from the Unitary Development Plan for Wirral adopted in February 2000 did not remain in force beyond 27 September 2007:

Part One Policies:

Policy HSG1 – New Dwelling Requirement
Policy WMT1 – Landfill Provision

Part Two Policies and Proposals:

Policy EM10 – Birkenhead and Eastham Dock Estates
Policy EM11 – Bidston Observatory and the Proudman Oceanographic Laboratory
Proposal HS2 – Land at Noctorum Way, Noctorum
Proposal HS3 – Land to the East of Fender Farm, Moreton
Proposal RE3 – New Neighbourhood Indoor Sports Facilities
Proposal RE4 – New Neighbourhood Swimming Pool, Beechwood
Policy RE5 – Criteria for the Protection of Playing Fields
Policy RE7 – Criteria for the Protection of School Playing Fields
Proposal TL3 – Land for Tourism Development at Wirral Waterfront
Policy TL6 – The Control of Tourism in Port Sunlight
Proposal TL8 – Land at the Former Derby Pool, New Brighton
Proposal NC9 – Dibbinsdale Nature Camp
Proposal TR4 – Birkenhead Central Bus Facility
Policy WM10 – Requirements for the Environmental Assessment of Waste Disposal Facilities
Policy WA7 – Heswall Drainage Catchment Area
Policy CO3 – Tourism and Leisure in the Coastal Zone

B. Joint Waste Local Plan for Merseyside and Halton, adopted July 2013

The following policies and proposals from the Unitary Development Plan for Wirral adopted in February 2000 were replaced by the Joint Waste Local Plan for Merseyside and Halton, which was adopted on 18 July 2013:

Policy WMT2 - Recycling And Re-Use of Waste Materials
Proposal WM1 - Landfill Waste Disposal Sites
Policy WM2 - Criteria for Landfill Waste Disposal Sites
Policy WM3 - Restoration and Aftercare of Landfill Waste Disposal Sites
Policy WM4 - Provision of Recycling Collection Areas
Policy WM5 - Criteria for Waste Reception Centres
Policy WM6 - Criteria for Waste Transfer Stations
Policy WM7 - Criteria for Clinical and Chemical Waste Incinerators
Policy WM8 - Criteria for Sewage Treatment Facilities
Policy WM9 - Criteria for Sewage Sludge Disposal Facilities

The adoption of the Joint Waste Local Plan also has implications for:

UDP Proposal EM1 through Joint Waste Local Plan Policy WM2
UDP Proposal EM3/14 through Joint Waste Local Plan Policy WM3
UDP Policy EM8 through Joint Waste Local Plan Policy WM5

2. Policies proposed to be replaced by the Wirral Local Plan 2020 to 2040

The list of the remaining policies and proposals in the Unitary Development Plan which are proposed to be replaced by the Wirral Local Plan are set out in Appendix 2 of the Wirral Local Plan.

Appendix 2

Table 1 – Housing Land Supply with Planning Permission April 2024

Land with Planning Permission at 31 March 2024, Gross	Previously Developed	Greenfield	Total
1. New Build Sites			
Sites under construction > 0.4 hectare units not started and under construction	747	134	881
Sites not started > 0.4 hectare units not started	3,242	50	3,292
Sites under construction < 0.4 hectare units not started and under construction	342	61	403
Sites not started < 0.4 hectare units not started	377	54	431
Total units on new build sites	4,708	299	5,007
2. Conversions and Changes of Use			
Changes of use under construction units not started and under construction	170	0	170
Changes of use not started units not started	256	1	257
Conversions under construction units not started and under construction	69	0	69
Conversions not started units not started	68	0	68
Total units from conversions and changes of use	563	1	564
Total units with planning permission	5,271	300	5,571
Percentage of units on previously developed land			95%

Notes

Sites in Category 1 New Build Sites include all sites for new build housing under construction and not started with extant planning permission, gross.

Sites in Category 2 Conversions and Changes of Use include all sites with planning permission for the conversion of a dwelling to provide additional dwellings or with planning permission for a change of use to a residential dwelling, gross.

Table 1 includes 1,934 units of the 13,521 dwellings granted outline consent at Wirral Waters under OUT/09/06509¹⁰⁰ which are proposed to be allocated for development in the Wirral Local Plan. This includes proposed site allocation RES-RA6.4 - Northbank West 2 for 230 units and proposed site allocation RES-RA6.2 - Vittoria Studios/Sky City for 1,704 units, to be delivered within the Plan period. 500 units are already under construction at 'Miller's Quay', Dock Road, Seacombe, approved under planning application DLS/18/00715¹⁰¹.

¹⁰⁰ Site reference HLA 624300 in Wirral Schedule of Committed Residential Sites at 31 March 2024.xlsx, which accompanies this report

¹⁰¹ site reference HLA 718900 in Wirral Schedule of Committed Residential Sites at 31 March 2024.xlsx, which accompanies this report

Appendix 2

Table 2 - Recorded Demolitions

Numbers of single dwellings	Settlement Area								Total
	Area 1	Area 2	Area 3	Area 4	Area 5	Area 6	Area 7	Area 8	
2001/2002	0	64	198	1	28	2	4	6	303
2002/2003	27	7	364	0	49	2	1	0	450
2003/2004	7	34	158	0	3	5	4	1	212
2004/2005	22	57	313	2	17	4	4	0	419
2005/2006	1	91	169	5	3	2	6	0	277
2006/2007	20	40	126	4	11	2	7	5	215
2007/2008	74	5	131	7	3	4	3	3	230
2008/2009	32	1	205	0	2	0	1	1	242
2009/2010	31	0	64	2	3	0	29	2	131
2010/2011	15	0	145	3	4	1	5	2	175
2011/2012	9	95	33	1	89	9	4	2	242
2012/2013	16	0	130	0	197	2	4	6	355
2013/2014	0	0	88	0	87	0	5	1	181
2014/2015	3	0	4	1	1	2	2	3	16
2015/2016	11	0	33	1	1	0	5	1	52
2016/2017	0	0	7	1	1	5	3	2	19
2017/2018	5	0	12	8	2	22	6	1	56
2018/2019	0	0	56	28	1	1	5	2	93
2019/2020	0	0	4	1	1	2	2	2	12
2020/2021	1	2	1	3	3	3	3	0	16
2021/2022	0	0	0	1	0	0	6	4	11
2022/2023	0	0	0	4	1	25	2	1	33
2023/2024	2	0	0	1	1	7	1	0	12

Notes

Demolitions have reduced significantly in recent years, following the completion of previous housing market renewal and social housing demolition programmes, to an annual average of 17 dwellings over the last five years.

An annual allowance for the loss of 50 dwellings has however still been retained in future estimates for 2024/25 to 2028/29 in Appendix 3 to reflect the figure included in the Wirral Local Plan.

Appendix 2

Table 3 - Actual Net Change in Dwelling Stock

A	B	C	D	E
Year	Total Demolitions	Total Net Conversions	Total New Build	Net Change (C+D)-B
2001/2002	303	104	378	179
2002/2003	450	43	591	184
2003/2004	212	74	581	443
2004/2005	419	81	440	102
2005/2006	277	55	442	220
2006/2007	215	115	606	506
2007/2008	230	155	639	564
2008/2009	242	154	422	334
2009/2010	131	47	284	200
2010/2011	175	14	258	97
2011/2012	242	10	254	22
2012/2013	355	144	463	252
2013/2014	181	63	420	302
2014/2015	16	158	395	537
2015/2016	52	82	468	498
2016/2017	19	86	261	328
2017/2018	56	91	669	704
2018/2019	93	114	633	654
2019/2020	12	260	509	757
2020/2021	16	86	511	581
2021/2022	11	89	553	631
2022/2023	33	114	626	707
2023/2024	12	59	463	510

Notes

An allowance of 100 units for conversions and changes of use per annum has been used in calculating the five-year housing land supply in Appendix 3, based on the allowance included in the Wirral Local Plan.

The total number of conversions and changes of use with planning permission at April 2024 shown in Appendix 2, Table 1 was 564 units of which 239 were on sites currently registered as under construction, which will be completed during future years. This has fallen since April 2023, when there were 647 units with planning permission of which 281 were on sites registered as under construction.

An additional 1,017 net dwellings, 1,047 gross, which had previously been registered as still under construction were found following a visual inspection to be complete and occupied at 31 March 2013, without a completion date having been registered under the Building Regulations¹⁰². As these additional completions, which included 276 additional net conversions and/or changes of use, 306 gross, cannot be attributed to any specific year, they have not been included in Table 3 above.

¹⁰² These additional completions were reported in the 2013 AMR.

Appendix 2

Table 4 - Windfall Site Generation 2023/24

HLA Ref	Application	Location	Gross Capacity	Net Capacity	Status
749500	APP/22/01594	16 Waterford Road, Oxton	1	1	NS
749600	APP/22/01445	20 Golf Links Road, Prenton	1	1	NS
749700	APP/20/01716	100 Meols Drive, West Kirby	10	8	NS
750100	APP/22/01888	40 Gorse Lane, Newton	1	1	UC
750300	APP/21/02146	140 Leasowe Road, Wallasey Village	1	1	UC
750800	APP/21/01816	76 Birkenhead Road, Seacombe	12	12	NS
751200	OUT/22/01305	Greenfield Estate, West Kirby	39	39	NS
751300	APP/23/00066	21 Hertford Drive, Egremont	1	1	UC
752000	APP/22/01336	49 Sandbrook Lane, Moreton	2	1	NS
752300	APP/22/02175	Barford Close, Beechwood	1	1	NS
752400	APP/22/02185	152 Seabank Road, New Brighton	7	6	NS
752500	APP/22/01258	Prenton Road East, Prenton	9	9	NS
752700	APP/22/02149	Edgemoor Close, Beechwood	2	2	NS
752800	APP/22/02142	84 Kings Drive, Irby	1	1	NS
753000	OUT/23/00087	201 Pensby Road, Heswall	1	1	NS
753100	APP/22/02183	Everleigh Close, Beechwood	3	3	NS
753200	APP/22/02177	Dryden Close, Beechwood	2	2	NS
753700	APP/23/00282	11 Caldby Road, West Kirby	6	5	NS
753800	APP/23/01175	22 Oak Road, Higher Bebington	3	3	NS
754000	APP/23/00529	St Georges Road, Wallasey	1	1	UC
754100	OUT/22/01856	16 Mill Hill Road, Irby	1	1	NS
754200	APP/23/00936	60 Union Street, Wallasey	1	1	NS
754300	APP/23/01214	78 Irby Road, Heswall	1	0	NS
754400	APP/23/01186	11 North Drive, Gayton	2	1	NS
755100	APP/23/00884	Paddock, Croft Drive, Caldby	2	2	NS
755200	APP/22/01507	5 Whaley Lane, Irby	4	4	NS
755800	APP/23/00941	86 Upton Road, Claughton	1	1	NS
756000	APP/23/00578	3 Mountwood Road, Prenton	1	0	NS
756200	APP/23/00364	62 Barton Hey Drive, Caldby	1	1	NS
756700	APP/23/01748	16 Boundary Road, Bidston	1	0	NS
756800	APP/22/01327	175 Heygarth Road, Eastham	1	1	NS
756900	APP/21/01853	West Kirby Community Fire Station	32	32	UC
757000	OUT/22/00107	Burnbrae, Lever Causeway, Storeton	1	1	NS
757200	APP/23/01204	66 Thurstaston Road, Heswall	1	1	NS

HLA Ref	Application	Location	Gross Capacity	Net Capacity	Status
757300	APP/22/01127	8 Melrose Avenue, Hoylake	15	15	NS
757900	APP/23/01322	292 Telegraph Road, Heswall	6	5	NS
758300	APP/24/00140	19 Joan Avenue, Moreton	1	0	NS

Notes

Table 4 shows the new build proposals, 176 units, 165 net, that were added to the land supply during 2023/24 on sites that were not included in the housing trajectory in the Wirral Local Plan 2022 to 2040 and which had not previously obtained a planning permission for housing¹⁰³.

An allowance of 30 units per annum has been used in calculating the five-year housing land supply in Appendix 3, based on the allowance included in the Wirral Local Plan.

¹⁰³ Further information on each of these sites can be found in Wirral Schedule of Committed Residential Sites at 31 March 2024.xlsx, which accompanies this report
December 2024

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Appendix 3

Based on 500 dwellings per annum using the stepped trajectory included in the Wirral Local Plan 2022-2040¹⁰⁴

Table A1 - Five-Year Housing Land Supply at April 2024 Plus 5%

A	Local Plan Housing Requirement 2024-2029	2,850
B	Historic Surplus/ Shortfall from 2022/23-2023/24	217
C	Five Percent Buffer, (A-B) x 0.05	132
D	Five-Year Housing Target 2024-2029, A minus B plus C	2,765
E	Current Five-Year Supply	3,115
F	Annual Requirement Over Five Years, D divided by 5	553
G	Years' Supply, E divided by F	5.6

Notes:

The calculation in Table A1 is based on the following assumptions:

- **Local Plan Housing Requirement, Row A** is based on the stepped trajectory included in the Wirral Local Plan, of 500 dwellings per annum for the four years between 2024/25 and 2027/28 and 850 dwellings per annum during 2028/29¹⁰⁵.
- **Historic Surplus/ Shortfall, Row B** applies the surplus of 207 units registered during 2022/23, 707 net completions; and the surplus of ten units registered during 2023/24, 510 net completions.
- **Ten Percent Buffer, Row C** adds a buffer of 5 percent based on the latest national Housing Delivery Test¹⁰⁶ and paragraph 78 of the National Planning Policy Framework¹⁰⁷.
- **Current Five-Year Supply, Row E** includes the following:
 - Extant planning permissions for new build units assumed to be deliverable at April 2024: 2,093 x 0.9 = **1,883 units**¹⁰⁸;
 - Other sites considered deliverable within the first five years, at April 2024, based on the trajectory submitted to the Local Plan

¹⁰⁴ An annual requirement of 500 dwellings between 2022/23 and 2027/28, of 850 dwellings between 2028/29 and 2032/33 and of 1,025 dwellings from 2033/34 to 2039/40

¹⁰⁵ Based on 707 net completions during 2022/23 and 510 net completions during 2023/24

¹⁰⁶ The Government's latest Housing Delivery Test Measurement, published in December 2024, can be viewed at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-delivery-test-2023-measurement>

¹⁰⁷ Paragraph 78 of the National Planning Policy Framework December 2024 no longer provides for the 10 percent buffer assumed in the Wirral Local Plan, which was based on paragraph 74b of the National Planning Policy Framework July 2021

¹⁰⁸ See Wirral Housing Trajectory April 2024.xls, which accompanies this report. Figures include a 10 percent discount for slippage/ non-implementation.

Examination, revised to take account of the findings of the Local Plan Examination Inspectors' Post Hearing Note INSP015, paragraph 12: $1,080 \times 0.9 = \mathbf{972 \text{ units}}$ ¹⁰⁹;

- An allowance for net additional conversions and changes of use per year between April 2024 and March 2029, based on the allowance included in the Wirral Local Plan, at 100 units per year, applied to years 4 and 5 only, total **200 units**; and
- An allowance for further additions to the land supply from new build windfalls between April 2024 and March 2029, based on the allowance included in the Wirral Local Plan, at 30 units per year, applied to years 4 and 5 only, total **60 units**.

¹⁰⁹ See Wirral Housing Trajectory April 2024.xls, which accompanies this report. Figures include a 10 percent discount for slippage/ non-implementation.

Glossary

Terminology	Abbreviation	Explanation
Adoption		The stage at which the Council formally decides to adopt the final version of a Local Development Document to make it legally operative.
Allocated		The identification of a specific piece of land for a specific type of development in the Unitary Development Plan.
Allocation		The identification of a specific piece of land for a specific type of development in a Local Plan, Neighbourhood Development Plan or the Unitary Development Plan.
Ancient Monument	SAM	An identified area designated by the Secretary of State on the basis of its national importance for archaeology.
Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy	BEIS	Government department with responsibilities for business, industrial strategy, science, innovation, energy, and climate change.
Biodiversity		A collective term for the full variety of biological life on earth including plants, animals and ecosystems.
Category 1 Hazard		A Category 1 Hazard is the most severe rating within the new Housing Health and Safety Rating System. A hazard is a risk of harm to the health or safety of an actual or potential occupier of a dwelling or House in Multiple Occupation, HMO, arising from a deficiency in the dwelling or in any building or land in the vicinity, whether the deficiency arises as a result of the construction of any building, an absence of maintenance or repair, or otherwise.
Combined Authority		A formally constituted strategic authority with powers over transport, economic development and regeneration.
Community Infrastructure Levy	CIL	A financial charge that can be levied on new development to pay for local infrastructure to be provided.
Conservation Area		An identified area designated by the Council to allow the character and appearance of that area to be protected.
Corporate Plan		A public document prepared by the Council setting out the Council's main priorities for the future.
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	DEFRA	The Government Department responsible for sustainable development, environmental protection and rural policy.
Development Plan		A statutory document that individual planning decisions must legally be made in accordance with unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Terminology	Abbreviation	Explanation
Dock Estate		An area of land owned and operated by a port operator, which was set aside for port-related land uses in the Unitary Development Plan.
Energy Company Obligation	ECO	A government energy efficiency scheme in Great Britain to help reduce carbon emissions and tackle fuel poverty.
Environment Agency	EA	A government body with responsibility for preventing harmful impacts on the environment.
Green Flag Award		An annual award based on a national standard for the maintenance of parks and open spaces.
Habitats Regulations Assessment	HRA	An assessment of the impact of emerging policies and proposals on European designated sites.
Heritage at Risk	HAR	A national record of designated heritage assets considered to be at serious risk of harm or damage, prepared by Historic England.
Historic England		A government body with responsibility for protecting and promoting the historic environment.
Housing Health and Safety Rating System	HHSRS	The new risk assessment approach for housing which enables hazards to health and safety in dwellings to be identified and works to remove or minimise those hazards to be recommended. It is used to assess conditions in all private properties including those that are owner occupied, rented to single people and families, and houses in multiple occupation. Properties are assessed against 29 potential hazards. The likelihood and the severity of these hazards is then used to generate a hazard score.
Independent Examination		The process undertaken to examine the content of a Local Plan or Neighbourhood Development Plan before it can be adopted by the Council.
Liverpool City Region	LCR	The functional economic area based around the City of Liverpool.
Local Aggregate Assessment		A jointly prepared assessment of the ongoing supply of mineral aggregates.
Local Development Document	LDD	A legal document that sets out the Council's approach to land use planning within the Borough.
Local Development Scheme	LDS	A document setting out the timetable for the preparation of individual Local Plans
Local Enterprise Partnership	LEP	A coalition of local partners working together to lead and drive economic growth and job creation across the Liverpool City Region..
Local Plan		A Local Development Document with status as part of the Development Plan for the Borough.
Local Wildlife Site		A site identified for its local importance for nature conservation.
Mersey Waters Enterprise Zone		An area designated by the Government around the Birkenhead Dock Estate, where incentives are

Terminology	Abbreviation	Explanation
		offered to new and expanding businesses to support economic revitalisation.
Merseyside		The land area covered by the local Councils of Liverpool, Wirral, Sefton, Knowsley and St Helens.
Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service	MEAS	A jointly funded environmental advisory service provided on behalf of the LCR district councils by Sefton Council.
National Planning Policy Framework	NPPF	A statement of national planning policy, published by the Government, which all planning decisions should normally follow.
Neighbourhood Development Plan		A new type of Development Plan, prepared by the local community and adopted by the Council after a local referendum.
Neighbourhood Forum		A community group authorised by the Council to prepare local planning proposals.
Neighbourhood Planning		The general name for a series of new measures, introduced through the Localism Act 2011, to enable the community to have a greater say over development within their neighbourhood.
NOMIS	NOMIS	A database of official labour market statistics, run on behalf of the Office for National Statistics.
Objectively Assessed Need	OAN	A 'policy-off' calculation of the local need for housing, without taking account of any other constraints on future development.
Planning Inspector		A person appointed by the Secretary of State to carry out the Independent Examination of a Local Plan.
Previously Developed Land	PDL	Land that is or was occupied by a permanent structure and associated fixed surface infrastructure, as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework.
Primarily Industrial Area	PIA	An area of land set aside for primarily industrial land uses in the Unitary Development Plan.
Proposed Submission Draft		A preliminary version of a Local Plan that the Council intends to submit to the Secretary of State for Independent Examination.
Registered Provider	RP	An organisation registered as a provider of housing to meet the needs of people unable to afford to own their own home.
Secretary of State		The person appointed by the Prime Minister to have overall responsibility for the operation of the national planning system.
Settlement Area		A geographical area identified in the Local Plan, representing one of the eight main groups of settlements within the Borough.
Site of Special Scientific Interest	SSSI	A site designated by the Secretary of State on the basis of its scientific importance for nature conservation and/or earth science.

Terminology	Abbreviation	Explanation
Spatial Development Strategy		A statutory land use planning framework prepared by the elected Mayor for the Liverpool City Region.
Stakeholder		A person or organisation with an interest in the future planning and development of the Borough.
Statement of Community Involvement	SCI	A statutory document setting local standards for community involvement in the preparation of policy documents and planning decisions.
Statutory		A document or process which has a special legal status, as set out in national law.
STEAM	STEAM	A statistical model which estimates the annual value, volume and economic impact of tourism for any defined geographical area.
Strategic Housing Market Assessment	SHMA	A document that examines the key features of Wirral's existing and future housing market, including housing need, supply and demand.
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment	SHLAA	A document that examines potential sites for housing across the Borough and assesses them in terms of their suitability, availability and achievability.
Strategic Regeneration Framework	SRF	A strategy that sets out the Council's corporate regeneration priorities.
Submission		The stage at which a proposed Local Plan is submitted to the Secretary of State for consideration at an Independent Examination.
Supplementary Planning Document	SPD	A Local Development Document which provides additional information to help landowners and developers prepare acceptable planning applications
Unitary Development Plan	UDP	An old-style Development Plan, which will be progressively replaced by new-style Local Plans, as set out within the Council's Local Development Scheme.
Use Class		A category of land use defined in national law.
Use Class A1	A1	Land uses falling within the category of shops now falling within Use Class E(a) or F2.
Use Class A2	A2	Land uses falling within the category of financial and professional services now falling within Use Class E(c).
Use Class B1(a)	B1(a)	Land uses falling within the category of business, as an office which will not be used to provide services to the visiting public now falling within Use Class E(g)(i).
Use Class B1(b)	B1(b)	Land uses falling within the category of business, which will be used for research and development now falling within Use Class E(g)(ii).

Terminology	Abbreviation	Explanation
Use Class B1(c)	B1(c)	Land uses falling within the category of business, for an industrial process that can be carried out within a residential area without harming the amenity of that area now falling within Use Class E(g)(iii).
Use Class B2	B2	Land uses falling within the category of general industry, which could not be carried out in a residential area without harming the amenity of that area.
Use Class B8	B8	Land uses falling within the category of storage and distribution.
Use Class D2	D2	Land uses falling within the category of assembly and leisure now falling within Use Class E(d) or F2.
Use Class E	E	A new use class for land uses falling within the category of commercial, business and service uses, which has replaced and incorporated the former A, B1 and D2 Use Classes.
Use Class F2	F2	A new use class for land uses falling within the category of local community uses.
Wirral Waters		A long-term project to create an internationally recognised city waterfront, focused on the East and West Floats of the Birkenhead and Wallasey dock system and forming part of the Mersey Waters Enterprise Zone.