

**Wirral Council
Neighbourhoods**

The Hilbre Islands Local Nature Reserve

Management Plan 2024 - 2029



Written and updated by:	Reason for update:	Date:
Josef Hanik	New 5 Year Management Plan	11/01/2024
Josef Hanik	Green Flag Judges Comments plus 2024 Action Plan and Project Bank Updates	16/01/2024

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1 INTRODUCTION

This plan is intended to provide a framework for the development and improvement of the Hilbre Islands Local Nature Reserve. If you would like further information or to submit any suggestions please contact:

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This plan (and other information about the Hilbre Islands Local Nature Reserve) can be viewed, downloaded and printed from:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/leisure-parks-and-events/parks-and-open-spaces/hilbre-islands-local-nature-reserve>

Many thanks to the Friends of Hilbre who provided many of the photographs included in this management plan. Front cover photograph by Matt Thomas.



Bluebells and Thrift welcome visitors as they arrive on Hilbre Island

2 THE WIDER POLICY CONTEXT

Wirral Council's Parks and Countryside Service is based within the Neighbourhood Services Department of Wirral Council.

The content and structure of the Management Plan has been produced using the following guidelines:

A Guide to Producing Park and Green Space Management Plans (CABE Space, 2004)

<https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20110118095356/http://www.cabe.org.uk/files/parks-and-green-space-management-plans.pdf>

Raising the Standard: The Green Flag Awards Guidance Manual (Keep Britain Tidy, 2016)

www.greenflagaward.org/media/1019/green-flag-award-guidelines.pdf

1 Corporate Objectives

The Council's Vision is that Wirral will be a place where the vulnerable are safe and protected, where employers want to invest and local businesses thrive, and where good health and an excellent quality of life is within the reach of everyone who lives here.

The Wirral Plan agreed by cabinet in September 2021 sets out a series of pledges which the Council and its partners will work to achieve by 2026 focussing on 5 key themes:

- Inclusive Economy
- Safe and Pleasant Communities
- Sustainable Environment
- Brighter futures
- Active and healthy lives

The Wirral 2021-26 plan is available to download online:

<http://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/documents/s50080601/Appendix%201%20Wirral%20Plan%202021-26.pdf>

2 Parks and Countryside Service Objectives

The department's role is to protect the environmental quality of key locations across the borough for all local people, communities, and visitors to enjoy and to influence investors to operate their businesses and encourage new investors. Parks and countryside site maintenance and land uses will be re-aligned where appropriate to achieve resource and economic efficiencies whilst promoting health, social and environmental benefits to our communities.

The Parks and Countryside Service has produced a 10-year Parks and Open Spaces Strategy (running from 2014-2024). It is available online at:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/sites/default/files/all/Leisure%20parks%20and%20events/parks%20and%20open%20spaces/Wirral%20Parks%20and%20Open%20Spaces%20Strategy%202014-2024.pdf>

Whilst the strategy currently requires an update, it sets out how Wirral Parks and Countryside Service will aim to provide attractive and well managed parks and open spaces, whilst being accessible; and providing positive and healthy activities for all local people, communities, and visitors to enjoy and to attract and retain investment in the borough. The service also intends to contribute to the environmental sustainability and biodiversity of Wirral to achieve a good balance by protecting habitats while supporting economic growth.

3 Environmental Initiatives

Wirral Council is committed to carrying out its work in an environmentally responsible manner. (See Appendix - Wirral Parks and Countryside – Sustainability Statement)

Wirral Council declared an Environment and Climate Emergency at Council in July 2019 and through this committed to action to address the ecological and climate crisis that we face.

The commitment to action aims to:

- cut climate damaging pollution locally in line with global targets, whilst developing resilience to more extreme weather patterns and rising sea levels that impact Wirral
- protect and enhance biodiversity

As a local authority, we can have a positive influence through:

- how we organise our operations and services
- the regulations and policies we set
- the goods and services we buy
- the investments we make
- the example we set to others

Tackling the ecological and climate crisis presents major opportunities locally to improve quality of life, health, wellbeing and the economy.

More information on the Climate Emergency Declaration may be found at:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/about-council/climate-change-and-sustainability/climate-change-action>

To deliver against these aims Wirral Has developed 'Cool Wirral'. The Cool Wirral campaign is aimed at encouraging local climate-related action in support of the delivery of the 'Cool 2 Climate Change Strategy for Wirral:

[View Wirral Council's Cool 2 climate strategy and progress reports](#)

The Cool Wirral Partnership (formerly the Wirral Climate Change Group) co-ordinates local action on climate change. The partnership is supported by Wirral Council and a variety of partnership.

More information on the Cool Wirral Partnership may be found at:

[https://www.wirral.gov.uk/about-council/climate-change-and-sustainability/cool-wirral#:~:text=The%20Cool%20Wirral%20Partnership%20\(formerly,Wirral%20Partnership%20NHS%20Foundation%20Trust](https://www.wirral.gov.uk/about-council/climate-change-and-sustainability/cool-wirral#:~:text=The%20Cool%20Wirral%20Partnership%20(formerly,Wirral%20Partnership%20NHS%20Foundation%20Trust)

Some key initiatives include:-

Designating Pollinators and wildflower sites

A large proportion of pollinators are flies, including more than 250 species of hoverfly. Bees make up about a quarter of the pollinating insects and in the UK alone there are approximately 250 species of bee, 24 species of bumblebee, 225 species of solitary bee and just one species of honeybee. Butterflies and moths are also pollinators as well as bugs and beetles.

In line with the council's Climate Emergency Response, steps are being taken to prioritise pollinators. Dependant on the location of a verge, pollinators are prioritised in various ways, these methods can include:

- planting pollinator friendly plants
- not mowing grass verges when wildflowers of significance are in season
- reduced weed removal in the area of pollinator sites

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/environmental-problems/street-care-and-cleaning/pollinators-and-wildflower-sites>

No Mow May

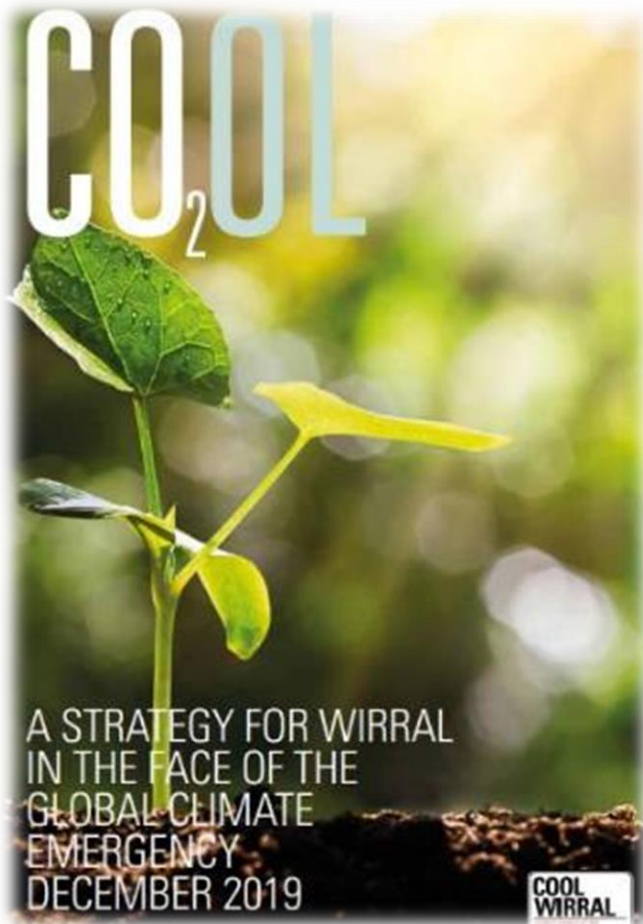
Throughout the month of May, the council takes part in the [No Mow May campaign](#), which is about stopping mowing in general grass areas in parks to help bees, butterflies and wildlife.

Trees, hedgerows and woodland

The council have been working with partners and stakeholders to develop a 10-year strategy to consider how we manage and respond to the borough's current trees and the future provision of trees. In the ten-year span of this strategy over 210,000 trees will be planted, at least 21,000 per year. In doing so we will replace many times over the number of trees unavoidably lost. The trees that are planted will see Wirral's tree canopy cover doubled by the time they are fully grown.

We will adopt the principle of 'the right tree for the right place' to ensure the most resilient tree population possible. We will establish a clear picture of Wirral's tree stock and its benefits. We will work constructively with individuals and groups to deliver this vision.

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/about-council/climate-change-and-sustainability/trees-hedgerows-and-woodland>







Our Values

'To work for Wirral Council is to be a public servant. We are here to serve our residents, to meet their needs, to protect them and to help them raise and achieve their aspirations.

This is the principle our organisation is built upon.

We have unrelenting focus on our residents. What they expect, what they need, and what they want underpins every decision we make.' - Paul Satoor, Chief Executive

Customer Focused  CUSTOMER FOCUSED	<p>We listen to our customers and acknowledge what they tell us. We let them know we have heard them and <u>take action</u>.</p> <p>We are flexible, open, honest, and respectful with our residents and customers, and always look for ways to make it easier for them to do business with us.</p> <p>We view things from the customer's perspective and focus on what we can do to give them the best possible service.</p>
Accountable  ACCOUNTABLE	<p>We are leaders and take personal responsibility for our work. We act with integrity to be the best we can be.</p> <p>We take ownership and solve problems. If we don't know the answer, we don't stop until we have found the solution.</p> <p>We take pride in doing what we say we are going to do. We are trusted by our colleagues, <u>Members</u> and residents to do a great job.</p>
Professional  PROFESSIONAL	<p>We treat everyone with respect. This includes our colleagues, <u>residents</u> and <u>Members</u>. We are courteous, punctual and communicate effectively to get the best <u>results</u>.</p> <p>We provide a professional service that people in Wirral are proud of. We know how our role makes a difference and lead by example.</p> <p>We are positive, honest and value the contributions of others. We build positive and trusting relationships to work together to deliver the best possible service for colleagues, <u>Members</u> and residents.</p> <p>We acknowledge when we are asked something and answer quickly and clearly. We are clear about how we will provide the best possible service.</p>
Ambitious  AMBITIOUS	<p>We aim high in everything we do. We do what we can and learn from experience to get the best for our colleagues, <u>Members</u> and residents.</p> <p>We will challenge, as well as support, each other to try new things and improve what we do. We continually look for better ways of doing things for our colleagues, <u>Members</u> and residents.</p> <p>We have high standards and expectations for ourselves, colleagues, <u>Members</u> and residents. We celebrate when we do well and recognise the achievements of others.</p>

3 SITE INFORMATION

3.1 Location and map

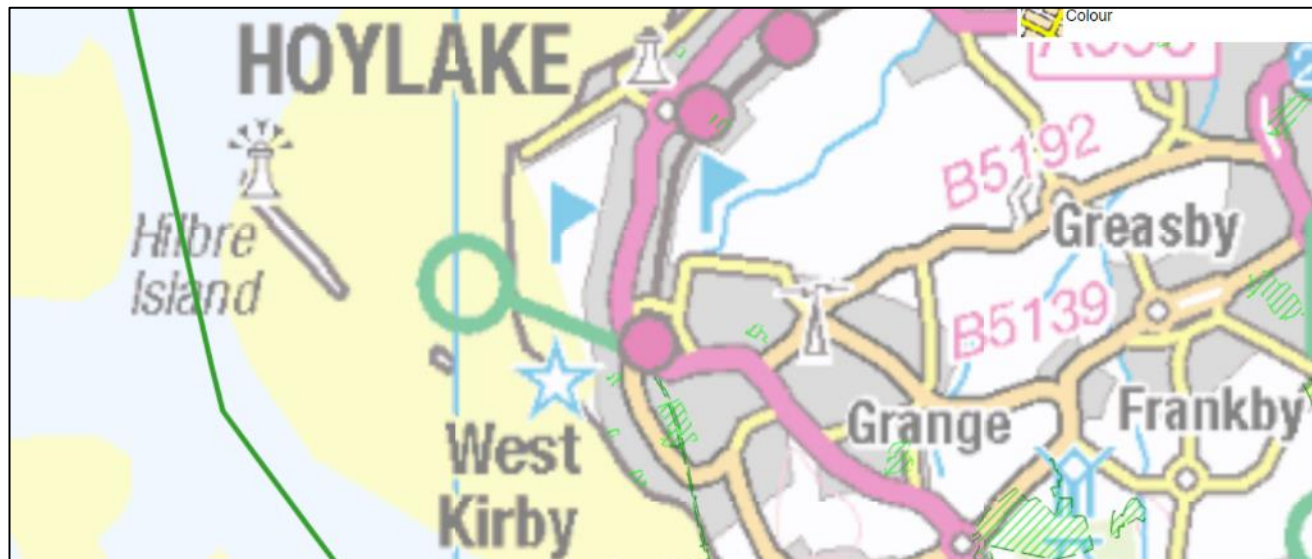
Official site name: Hilbre Islands Local Nature Reserve (LNR)

Site address: Dee Lane, West Kirby, Wirral

Grid reference: SJ 185 879

Ward: Hoylake and Meols

Size: 50.9 ha (120 acres)



Location off the coast of Wirral



..... extent of the Local Nature Reserve boundary

3.2 General access:

The only recommended safe crossing point from the mainland to Hilbre LNR is from the top of Dee Lane, West Kirby.

There is good public transport available to Dee Lane, bus and train services operate from West Kirby.

Beach access

The only one recommended safe crossing route to the islands is from West Kirby Beach, at the end of Dee Lane, and situated within a quarter of a mile of the town centre at West Kirby.

Due to the nature of the Islands access is across the sands and is approximately 1km to Little Eye and a further 1.5km to the main Island.

Access for pedestrians around the Islands can be problematic with some soft sand, uneven tracks and gradients.

Safe routes

The only recommended safe crossing route to Hilbre Island is to start from the slipway at Dee Lane, next to the Marine Lake, walking towards Little Eye, the smallest of the three Islands, keeping it on your right. As soon as you pass Little Eye turn right and continue on the sand passing Middle Eye on your left. Between Middle Eye and Hilbre take the rough track over the rocks towards the south end of Hilbre, or alternatively use the steps to cross over Middle Eye and continue over the rocks and sands to the main island slipway.

Do not cross direct to Hilbre Island, or Middle Eye and do not cross from Hoylake/Red Rocks as there are deep tidal channels on the east side of Hilbre Island and Middle Eye.

Tidal information is displayed on Dee Lane notice board. For weather and tide times visit the council website for the latest sources of information.



3.3 Facilities and main features:

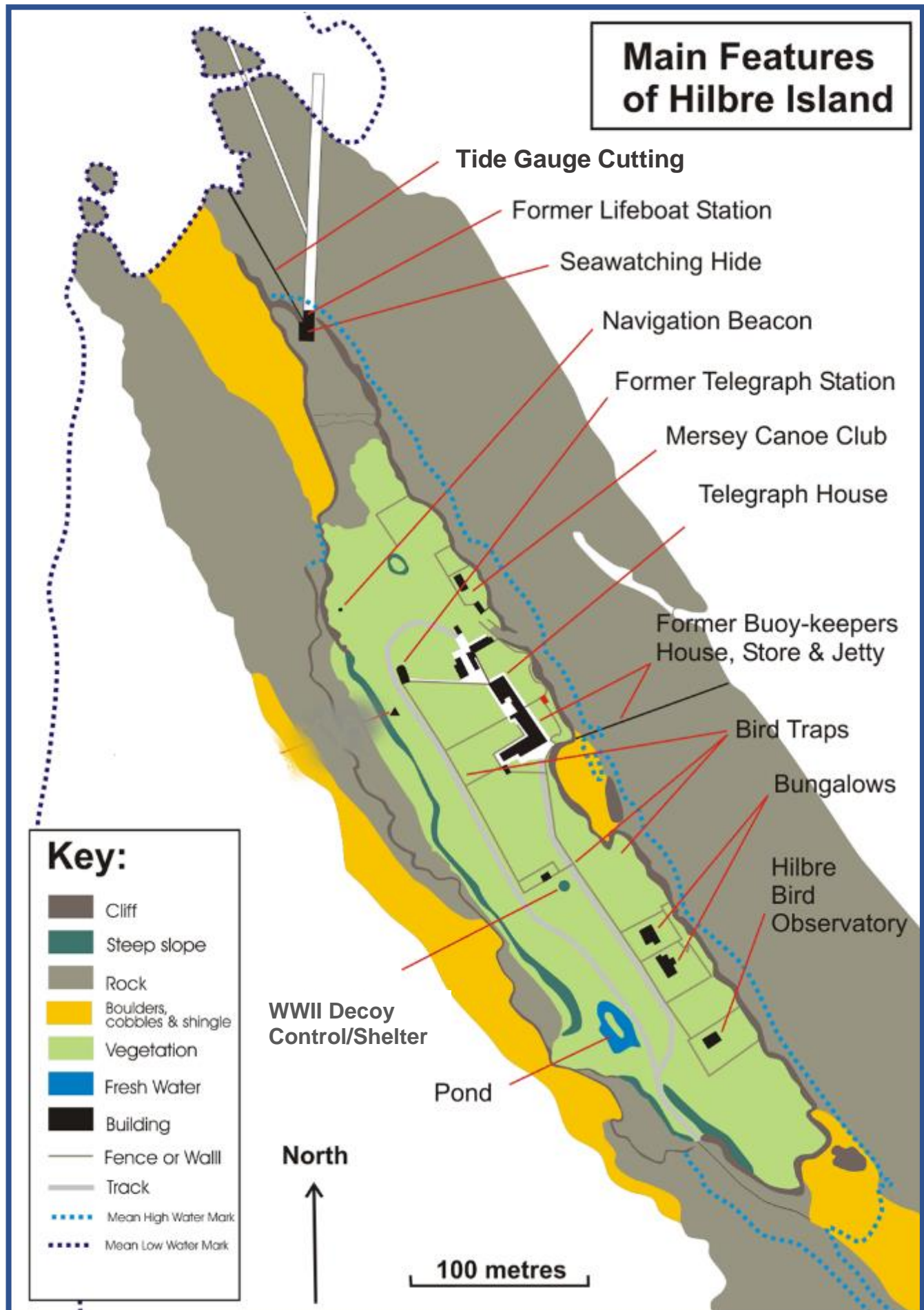
The Hilbre Islands Local Nature Reserve are the only large island habitat type in Merseyside and Cheshire. They are a special place to many people and one of the most popular outdoor visitor attractions on Wirral. The reserve is popular with walkers, birdwatchers and family groups who can explore the rocky shore and sandy beaches just a one hour walk from West Kirby Beach.

- Intertidal islands with significant wildlife value
- Secluded beaches and rocky shore
- Grassland plateaux on Hilbre and Middle Eye
- Panoramic views across the River Dee to the North Wales coast and the Wirral coastline
- Telegraph Station Information Centre
- Old Lifeboat Station and Slipway
- Buoymaster's Workshop Museum
- Hilbre Bird Observatory
- Toilets
- Day Room (with kitchen facility)
- Slate Shed (wet weather shelter and interpretation)
- Other buildings with private tenants (Canoe Club, two private Cottages)



Looking towards Hilbre from Middle Eye © Friends of Hilbre

Main Features of Hilbre Island





Aerial view of Hilbre Island and Middle Eye © Friends of Hilbre

3.4 Tenure:

The Hilbre Islands LNR and the surrounding foreshores are the freehold property of Wirral Council. A number of areas and properties on Hilbre Island are leased by the Council to private individuals; Hilbre Bird Observatory, Mersey Canoe Club and two private cottages.

Constraints of Tenure

Wirral Council owns the Freehold title to the Hilbre Islands LNR and the area of tidal foreshore within the Local Nature Reserve. The Hilbre Islands LNR were purchased by Hoylake Urban District Council from the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company on 18th December 1945 subject to the following covenants.

“The purchaser hereby covenants with the Vendor that the Purchaser and its successors in title will henceforth observe and perform the conditions following:

Not use nor permit the use of the property for any industrial purposes or for the provision of entertainment by means of swings, roundabouts, sideshows or similar or other amusements of a fairground character;

Use, hold and administer the property for recreational purposes to the end that the property may be preserved for the enjoyment of the public under proper control and regulation and for no other purposes whatsoever;

Make and enforce or cause to be made and enforced byelaws for the regulation of the property and for the preservation of order and the prevention of nuisance thereon;

Not erect nor permit to be erected on the property any buildings or structures except such as may be reasonably necessary to provide facilities for the public for shelter, bathing, boating, refreshment and sanitation, all such buildings or structures to be of suitable permanent construction and of a character unlikely adversely to affect the amenities of the district;

Maintain and keep the property including all buildings and structures erected thereon at all times in good order and condition.

Provided always that the Purchaser or its successors in title shall not be precluded from temporarily closing the property to the public for such period as it shall think fit for purposes connected with the better preservation of birdlife.”

The Mersey Docks and Harbour Board at that time retained the right to keep on the islands a survey mark, navigation light (now the responsibility of the Trinity House Lighthouse Authority), a Tide Gauge and any necessary buildings in connection with them. The Board also retained the right to visit the islands at any time in order to maintain or repair these facilities.

The foreshore surrounding the northerly part of Hilbre Island approximately north of a straight line between Hilbre Point and the Lighthouse at Point of Ayr is subject to certain Crown reservations. Among other things these reservations effectively give the public *“full and free right to walk or otherwise, pass to and fro over and to fish and bathe upon and to gather seaweed or ware and to land thereon goods and passengers from vessels and boats and to embark there from goods and passengers in vessels and boats.”*

The public originally also had the full and free right to ride (or) drive over this area of foreshore, but this right was withdrawn in 1980 with the consent of the Crown Estate Commissioners. This was to prevent people claiming the right to drive motor vehicles over the foreshore.

The foreshore to the south of a straight line between Hilbre point and the lighthouse at Point of Ayre, (i.e. Bounding the southern end of Hilbre Island and surrounding Middle Eye and Little Eye) is not subject to any Crown reservations or covenants.

A number of areas and properties on Hilbre Island are leased by the Council as non-residential 'holiday homes' and to groups/associations.

- Hilbre bird Observatory
- Two Cottages
- Mersey Canoe Club
- Trinity House

3.5 Visitors and main uses

- Walking
- Bird watching
- Seal watching
- A quiet naturalised area for relaxation
- Photography
- Natural History
- School visits/ an educational resource
- The opportunity to undertake voluntary work
- History



From Hilbre overlooking Liverpool Bay © Friends of Hilbre

3.6 History

The three islands are known today as Hilbre, Middle Eye and Little Eye. They originally formed part of the mainland and became tidal after the last Ice Age ended about 11,500 years ago. In archaeological terms the islands are of great importance as the range of finds shows that there has been a human presence from very early times. Recent surveys on the three Hilbre islands have located a number of probable Mesolithic (Middle Stone Age) sites dated from approximately 5000 BC. These were the first people to visit the islands after the Ice Age. They were hunter-gatherers who used flint tools and lived off fish, shellfish, deer, nuts and berries.

By the Neolithic period (New Stone Age), the stone technology had changed and the first farmers started to settle (approximately 3400 to 2500 BC). There are finds of flints dating to this period from the Hilbre islands. Similarly there have been finds from the Bronze Age, including a bronze socketed axe dated c1800 BC and a human burial dated about 800 BC. There is also evidence of cooking and field boundaries from this time.

The Romans also visited Hilbre and left some objects which were later found, including bronze buckles and pottery. They did not appear to settle as there has been no evidence of any structures. 19th century suggestions that a Roman Pharos (lighthouse) was erected on Hilbre has not produced any evidence to support this idea.

Cheshire after the Norman Conquest was controlled by the Earl of Chester and several subordinate barons. The baron who was the Norman feudal overlord of this part of Wirral was Robert of Rhuddlan. Some time prior to 1080 he gave West Kirby and Hilbre to the Abbey of St Evroul in Normandy. In 1140 St Evroul transferred West Kirby and Hilbre to Chester Abbey. A Benedictine cell of two monks was maintained on the island as a dependency of Chester Abbey until its dissolution in 1538.

Stone remains of graves found on Hilbre dating to the 10th and 11th centuries indicate that there was a religious presence on the island from before 1080 when the island was granted to St Evroul's Abbey. An Anglo-Scandinavian cross head was found on Hilbre dated to the 10th or 11th century and a Hiberno-Norse grave slab found on Hilbre was dated to the 11th century.

Hilbre's place name did not appear in records until 1140, when recorded as Hildeburgheye, meaning Hildeburgh's Island. As a Saxon personal name, this suggests a connection with an earlier time before the Norman Conquest. There was no English saint called Hildeburgh and the likelihood is that she was a relative of one of the local landowners in Cheshire or North Wales.

Hilbre chapel's dedication appeared in deeds from the 13th century as St Mary the Blessed Virgin. The rector of St Bridget's, West Kirby, had renounced his claim over the chapel on Hilbre and his reward was an annual mass on 15th August, the Feast of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, in Hilbre's chapel. He established an annual group visit of his parishioners to Hilbre starting in about 1234. The 'pilgrimage' was therefore likely to have been only a local festival, giving the people of West Kirby parish a holy day on Hilbre to hear Mass in the chapel of St Mary the Virgin. Whether the chapel was always open for public prayers is not known, but its disappearance at the Abbey's dissolution suggests that it was more akin to a private oratory for the use of the monastic cell on the island.

The Benedictine cell on Hilbre established by Chester Abbey consisted of two monks and their servants. They maintained fishing boats and monitored the local anchorages and fisheries. They also collected the tithes from West Kirby parish and also ran a farm in Little Meols. After the Reformation, Chester Abbey became the cathedral of a new diocese of Chester which included Hilbre. The Dean and Chapter of Chester Cathedral remained the owners of Hilbre until

1856 when the islands were sold to the Trustees of the Liverpool Docks, later becoming the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board. The islands were leased to various people over the years.

In the 16th to 18th centuries Hilbre Island and Hyle Lake became an important anchorage for shipping in the Dee Estuary when the river at Chester was silting up. Trade was mainly to Dublin or Belfast and across the Dee estuary to Welsh ports. Their cargoes included local farm produce and processed leather goods from Wirral, and raw skins, timber and fish from Ireland. Erosion of the sand banks eventually split the protecting Hoyle Bank into two portions, and caused the Lake to disappear rapidly during the 19th century.

Hilbre Island was also used as an embarkation point for shipping troops, horses and equipment to Ireland during Elizabeth I's Irish wars and again during Cromwell's Irish campaign. In 1690 William III travelled from Chester to Hoyle Lake on his way to Ireland to fight the Battle of the Boyne. The local legendary story of 10,000 men camped together on Hilbre could have originated from the total figures of soldiers embarking from Hyle Lake in 1690. There would not have been space for so many men and officers' horses on the islands at one time.

Salt refining took place on Hilbre in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. Rock salt was discovered in Cheshire in 1670. In 1692 there was a scheme to produce salt on Hilbre. It was shipped to Hilbre via the Mersey along with coal from the Lancashire coalfield. The rock salt was boiled in seawater on the island. There are traces of this industry still visible in the north of the island.

A public house on Hilbre was first recorded in 1793 to cater for the crews of the small vessels who used the harbour. A traveller recorded in 1813 the local gossip about the Hilbre innkeeper and his wife that 'their riches have been gained principally by wrecking, for which business their situation here is said to be admirably calculated.' Hilbre's public house is still remembered locally as The Seagull Inn, a name which never appeared in official records.

Two tall wooden sailing markers were built at opposite ends of Hilbre around 1810. The footings of the northern marker can still be seen as two sets of perpendicular troughs cut into the bare rock. These are mistakenly called monks' graves. In about 1840 these markers were replaced by a new pair of markers, one on Little Eye and one on the shore off Hoyle Lake. Sailing directions of 1840 showed how they should be lined up in the sight of sailors of small craft, to lead the ships into the Hilbre Swash and other safe channels. Rebuilt at least once in the next 100 years, the markers were demolished in World War II to avoid becoming landmarks to enemy aircraft. There are still remains of a base on Little Eye and traces of the other on the shore at low tide between Hilbre and Hoyle Lake.

In 1826 the Trustees of the Liverpool Docks acquired the lease of the islands from Chester Cathedral in order to set up their first semaphore telegraph station for communicating messages from Holyhead to Liverpool. The line of stations ran through Anglesey, Puffin Island, the Great Orme, Llysfaen near Abergele, Foel Nant, Hilbre Island and Bidston Hill to Liverpool. The first station was a wooden structure just north of the present stone building. The first message was sent in 1827.

The stone telegraph building which is there today was built in 1841. It was originally flat roofed with two vertical posts, each bearing four hinged arms. A control system of levers was operated from a bench under the signals which has left marks still visible on the stone floor of the signal room. Rotating sockets in the wide bay window allowed several telescopes to be trained on the neighbouring stations of Foel Nant and Bidston Hill and on the flag signals from ships at sea. The record time for a message to pass from South Stack in Anglesey to the Dock Office in Tower Building, Liverpool, was claimed as 5 minutes. In 1860 the semaphore system was replaced with an electric cable which remained in use until 1939. A separate house for the Telegraph Keeper was also built in 1841 which later became the residence for the islands' wardens.

By late 1837 Trinity House had installed a buoymaster and his family on the island. His job was to maintain the buoys around Wirral and the Mersey coast. The buoys were towed to the island, lifted with a small crane up the cliff and rolled on trolleys into a lofty store room. Here they were cleaned, painted and repaired before returning to their positions at sea. After severe storm damage, by 1850 Trinity Board had erected a new house with additional store and outbuildings. These buildings have now become the museum. Trinity House removed the buoymaster and his family in 1876.



In 1848 a stone boathouse and launchway were built on Hilbre for the Hoylake No 2 lifeboat where it was possible to launch at any state of the tide. It had become very difficult to launch the Hoylake boat at every state of the tide due to the severe silting in the area of Hoyle Lake. The lifeboat was still operated by the same Hoylake crew, who would walk over to Hilbre to launch the boat at low tide. In 1894 the Royal National Lifeboat Institution took over all the local lifeboats. The Hilbre station closed in July 1939 as the motor boats at Hoylake, New Brighton and Rhyl were now able to ensure the safety of shipping in this part of Liverpool Bay. The Hilbre lifeboat saved 21 lives in 44 launches before its closure.

Lying beside the lifeboat slip there is a deep narrow cutting in the sandstone rock. This is part of the system to measure the depth of the tide along with a wooden ruler to mark the tide depth. It is all connected to a recording system above to provide a record of tide heights and times to predict future tidal cycles. It was decommissioned in 2009.

In 1856 the Dean and Chapter of Chester Cathedral sold the freehold of the three islands to the Trustees of the Liverpool Docks. Two years later they became the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board. Hilbre Island as it appears today is almost completely the creation of the Dock Trustees and the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board. In addition to the buildings, they also carried out extensive repair work to prevent erosion of the cliffs during the 1890s.

Hilbre was a frequent venue for prizefighting in the 19th century. The contests usually took place in the early hours of the morning to foil the authorities but the police constables stationed at

Frankby and Hoylake had some success in preventing them. The prize fights attracted a lot of interest, being reported as far away as Preston and Birmingham.

There are also stories of cock fighting which were arranged in the deep hollow near to the present Mersey Canoe Club. The organisers made use of steamer boats to bring the audience to Hilbre, and to remove them promptly when the tide ebbed, so as to evade the law. The island was also popular as an excursion destination in the 19th century. Visitors would sail to the island for an 'aquatic excursion' before returning to their departure point.

Entrepreneurs made several attempts to set up amusements on Hilbre or on Little Eye. In 1885 there was a proposal to form a Marine Establishment on Hilbre 'for the purposes of recreation, boating and bathing and to connect the same with Hoylake Railway by means of a tramway'. The Dock Board required more detailed information and the request was subsequently dropped. In 1893, Henry Summers proposed to build a pier from West Kirby to Middle Eye with ornamental pavilion buildings. Again, the Dock Board did not approve the plans.

The property built by Trinity House was leased to a succession of individuals after the buoy store was discontinued. By 1881 it was the base for the Hilbre Island Club, established as a club for old bachelors with strict rules, for example no females were allowed except for the wife of the Club caretaker. Later the rules were amended to allow married men. The Club continued until 1931 when new tenants took over the premises. A lease was granted for the construction of a clubhouse for the Mersey Canoe Club in 1897 and leases were also granted for the construction of holiday bungalows in 1896, 1904, 1908 and 1923.

The Dock Board and their various tenants became increasingly concerned at the number of day trippers. August Bank Holiday of 1911 brought 2,000 visitors. There were a number of attempts to prevent public access but the public outcry was such that the Dock Board eventually settled on a method of controlling the number of visitors by issuing tickets that had to be obtained in advance. Even this system was not introduced without local opposition. As an aid to control, iron railings and gates were erected around Hilbre Island and Middle Eye in 1912 and a Dock Board policeman was employed on Sundays and Bank Holidays to enforce regulations.



During the First World War a small group from the Army were placed on Hilbre as part of a plan to defend Liverpool and Birkenhead which were classed as a Defended Port. During the Second World War Hilbre was one of 14 'starfish' sites for Liverpool. These 'starfish' decoys were a series of controlled fires set off in fire baskets during an air raid to imitate an urban area targeted by bombs. It was in use on Hilbre from 1 March 1942 to 8 April 1943. Also in 1942 a 'QL' decoy was added as part of a series of decoys to protect Bootle Docks. This was in use between 2 October 1942 and 1 May 1943. The 'QL' decoy displayed lights to simulate the marshalling yards and factories at the northern end of Bottle docks. This was all operated by the RAF from a control room on Hilbre and the fire baskets and lights were placed on Middle Eye. The control room mound on Hilbre was nicknamed the air raid shelter.

In 1945 Hilbre was sold to Hoylake Urban District Council with a number of covenants designed to safeguard them from undesirable development. In 1974 when local government was reorganised, Hoylake UDC considered handing over the islands to the National Trust. The newly elected Wirral Borough Council, however, placed on record its determination to pursue a policy safeguarding the islands from undesirable development and to preserve and maintain their character for the enjoyment of the public.



A succession of Wardens have lived in Telegraph House to look after the interests of the islands. In 1985 the post of Warden was changed to Countryside Ranger with wider responsibility for the Dee Estuary. In 2010 the Hilbre Island Ranger post was lost as part of a cost cutting exercise and the islands were managed by the Local Area Parks and Countryside team. In 2020, following a restructure within Wirral's Parks and Countryside, the islands are now looked after by a Manager and team of Rangers responsible for Wirral Country Park, Hilbre Islands and Heswall Dales and based at Wirral Country Park.

***Many thanks to the Friends of Hilbre for providing this section of the Management Plan
Postcard images from the author's collection***

3.7 Landscape

Geology

The Hilbre Islands LNR consists of a ridge of Bunter sandstone of the Triassic period (180 million - 225 million years old). The ridge continues to the south and is visible at low tide at the Tanskeys, Seldom Seen Rocks and Caldy Blacks on the West Kirby and Caldy foreshore. Around the cliffs of the islands a number of small geological faults can be observed and there are numerous other interesting features such as cross bedding and pebble beds. The pebble beds contain trace fossils from a much earlier date (up to 259 million years old), which give geologists an indication of how rocks of the Triassic period were formed. Hilbre Island is the most northerly exposure of pebble beds with these types of fossils.



Layering of sandstone below the Trinity House Lighthouse

When the Last Glacial Period covering the UK ended about 25,000 years ago, the islands were probably still attached to what we know today as the mainland of Wirral. As the climate became warmer, and the ice caps continued to melt, the sea level rose. The islands were then probably separated from the mainland around 5500 BC and at about the same time as the British Isles were separated from what we know today as the European mainland.

Geomorphology

The topography of the Hilbre Islands LNR can be attributed to a combination of the underlying geology of the area and the effects over several thousand years of continuous erosion by the sea. The islands themselves consist of low plateaux with a maximum height on the West side of Hilbre Island of 56 feet (17 metres) above mean sea level. The plateaux reflect the underlying layers of Bunter Sandstone which dip in an easterly direction at an angle of about 10°.

The islands are known from historical and archaeological records to have reduced considerably in size in the last 2,000 years due to erosion by the sea. Bearing in mind that the islands were probably only separated from the mainland some 7,500 years ago, it seems fair to speculate that the next thousand years could witness the virtual disappearance of the islands. The revetment works of the past 150 years and the construction of the former Lifeboat Station have done much to prevent erosion at the north end of Hilbre Island. However, Little Eye has now been almost completely eroded away.

The process of erosion by the sea creates many features of geomorphologic interest such as cliffs, caves, stacks, wave-cut platforms and small sandy beaches. Much of the erosion is caused by the waves undercutting soft seams in the rock on the west sides of the islands, eventually causing the cliffs to fall. Fresh water draining through the rock to the east sides also gives rise to erosion and cliff falls, further aided by frost action in severe winters.

Meteorology

There are no reliable weather records for the Hilbre Islands LNR but Meteorological Office records are available from 1945 to 1970 for nearby Ashton Park, West Kirby. Ashton Park has an average annual temperature of 9.9°C ranging from a monthly average of 3.8°C in January to 16.1°C in July and August. It has an average of 4.03 hours sunshine per day ranging from 1.41 hours per day in December to 6.94 hours in June. The average annual rainfall is 29.1 inches (740mm). In relation to the North West of England in general, West Kirby is warmer, sunnier and drier than average. It is also relatively snow and frost free.

As the islands are only two miles or so from Ashton Park, the weather there should be similar. There may be slight differences however due to the influence of the sea and which for five hours in twelve surrounds the islands. The temperature of the sea at this part of the coast ranges from 8°C (46°F) in February to 14°C (57°F) in August. In Winter, therefore, temperatures on the islands may be slightly higher than at West Kirby and extremely low temperatures may be less frequent due to the warming influence of the sea. The islands may have a relatively long growing season for plants compared with inland areas but they are exposed to strong winds, sea spray and air-borne salt. These conditions seriously limit the range of plants that can grow on the islands.

Hydrology

Apart from two plastic lined ponds, wells and an artificially created pond of uncertain age on Hilbre Island, the islands have little hydrological interest due to their small size. However, it is interesting to note here that the Telegraph House well is contaminated with salt water indicating movement of tidal water through the sandstone.

Soils

The soil on Hilbre Island is, for the most part, a free draining very sandy loam. Although a detailed survey has not been carried out, the distribution of plant species indicates a wide range of pH values. The soil on Middle Eye has been the subject of more detailed study, particularly in relation to pH and conductivity. It consists in part of well drained sandy loam and in part a poor draining much peatier soil. The range of pH is between pH 4.0 and pH 8.4. This variation partly accounts for the great diversity of plant species found in such a relatively small area. The soil on Little Eye is almost pure blown sand with low humus content and a limited range of plant species.

The built landscape

Since the 13th century man's influence on the islands has developed from the building of a chapel to major sea wall and building construction. The 19th century Victorian cluster of buildings including the Lifeboat Station and Slipway (1848), Telegraph Station (1841), Telegraph House (1841), and Buoymaster's House, Store and Workshop (1850) are a major feature of Hilbre Island. The area around Hilbre and the 'Hoyle Lake' was an important anchorage point up until the 19th century when the moving sands made navigation more difficult. Tall wooden struts were erected on the island to provide a reference point for navigating at the mouth of the Dee Estuary. These were replaced with markers on shore and on Little Eye and in 1826 The Trustees of Liverpool Docks established a semaphore station and which was later replaced by the Telegraph Station in 1841.

In 1848 the Lifeboat Station and Slipway were built to provide a low water launch site for the crew serving the Hoylake area. The Lifeboat men would walk or be taken across to the island by horse and cart and the boat would then be launched. Considering that this would have usually taken place during storm conditions it shows the incredible bravery of people prepared to go to the help of others. The Hilbre Lifeboat was launched 44 times before its closure in 1939 and saved 21 lives.

In 1856 Chester Cathedral sold the freehold of the islands to the Trustees of the Liverpool Docks which later became the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board. They undertook major seawall construction to reduce erosion of the soft sandstone cliffs and were responsible for many of the buildings seen on the island today. In the latter part of the 19th century and early years of the 20th century Hilbre started to attract large numbers of day visitors. Mersey Docks and Harbour Board employed a 'policeman' to restrict the number of visitors on Hilbre and iron railings were erected and only day ticket holders allowed to pass through a gated access.

During the Second World War a decoy was established on Middle Eye with the aim of confusing German bombers as they prepared to target the Port of Liverpool. The control room on Hilbre is often referred to as 'the air raid shelter' but it was actually used for setting off oil fires in what was known as a 'Starfish' and one of 14 located along west Wirral.

The Buoymaster's House was used as a 'gentlemen's club' for some years where invited guests (and that included HRH Prince Phillip) could spend the night and Telegraph House was accommodation for the Hilbre Island Warden. With the exception of the Day Room (previously an old stable block and then used as a simple overnight bunkhouse) the Telegraph Station and Buoymaster's Workshop (opened to visitors by the Friends of Hilbre on their Open days), none of these buildings are currently in use.

Repairs are regularly undertaken to ensure that the buildings remain watertight and secure. A report commissioned by Wirral Council has looked at options for managing the Victorian cluster of buildings. The recommendation is that the buildings receive minimum work to ensure public safety until such time as a viable option for the buildings' future can be decided.



The two-storey Buoymaster's House and adjacent Buoymaster's Workshop

3.8 Biology

Flora

The vegetation of the islands consists of open grassland plant communities that vary according to levels of exposure to the sea and wind, soil characteristics and human interference. The extent to which the land had been grazed in the past is also an important factor.

Patches of heath vegetation exists in places comprising species such as Bell Heather (*Erica cinerea*) and Common Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*). On the western sides of Hilbre Island and Middle Eye the grassland and heath gives way to cliff-top vegetation characteristic of sub-maritime heaths found in Western Britain. Typical species include Thrift (*Armeria maritima*), Buck's Horn Plantain (*Plantago coronopus*), Danish Scurvygrass (*Cochlearia danica*) and Rock Sea-spurrey (*Spergularia rupicola*).

Hilbre holds about 10% of the world population (one of only 5 sites) of a Rock Sea Lavender subspecies (*Limonium britannicum* ssp. *celticum*), this is an endemic and a Red Data Book species. Sea spleenwort (*Asplenium marinum*) is a regionally scarce species. Locally important plants such as Field Mouse Ear (*Cerastium arvense*), Slender Trefoil (*Trifolium micranthum*), and Pellitory-of-the-wall (*Parietaria judaica*) are present. Many species of plants, which had been recorded in the past, were found to be absent. These may have been lost due to erosion or grazing but in some cases the plants may have been artificially introduced and may have failed to naturalize or been subject to visitor pressure and ad hoc picking of wildflowers.



Thrift provides a splash of colour throughout the grasslands

What the vegetation of the islands would have been like without the influence of man is a matter of speculation. The native or "climatic climax" vegetation of the British Isles evolved in the period 5500 BC to 3000 BC following a gradual improvement in climatic conditions after the Ice Age. The climatic climax vegetation of much of mainland Britain was mixed oak woodland. Because of its proximity to the sea, however, the Hilbre area probably would have supported a sub-maritime heath with possibly some scrubby woodland in more sheltered parts. However, since man may have inhabited the Hilbre area since 8000 BC or earlier and the islands were not separated from the mainland until 5500 BC, the islands may never have developed a truly natural vegetation free from human interference.

The islands are also important for marine life supported by the 38 hectares (95 acres) of tidal rocks. There are very few examples of rocky shore in the long coastline of sand and mud flats of North West England and North Wales. Although species diversity has decreased here this century (partly attributed to an increase in silt deposition and sediment scour around the islands), the

Hilbre shore still possesses a great variety of microhabitats such as crevices, gullies, rock pools, vertical faces and overhangs, each of which tends to support a different kind of seaweed community. Over 150 species of algae have been recorded, some of these being regionally, and in one case nationally, rare.

Fauna

The Hilbre Islands LNR, particularly Little Eye and Middle Eye, provides a roost site for internationally important numbers of wading birds overwintering in the Dee Estuary. The most common species are Knot, Dunlin, Redshank, Turnstone, Sanderling and Oystercatcher. Most of the wading birds feed on the plentiful supply of invertebrates concentrated in the alluvial sediments of the estuary. A few waders, however, notably the Purple Sandpiper, feed on invertebrates from the seaweed covered rocks surrounding the Hilbre Islands. The islands become particularly important roost sites on high spring tides and in storm conditions when other roost sites in the estuary (beach and saltmarsh) are completely covered. The islands can be carpeted with waders at these times. (See front cover photograph).

The islands are also an important staging post for migrating passerines (perching birds) during both spring and autumn. These feed on the invertebrate population of the island plateaux before setting off on the next leg of their journeys. As with the waders, the main attraction of the islands is probably their strategic position and the fact that the birds are relatively undisturbed.

Despite the large numbers of birds observed on the Hilbre Islands there are few species that have nested regularly on the islands in recent years. The islands do however present an interesting opportunity for the study of isolated breeding colonies.

The islands contain one of the most studied populations of invertebrate fauna in the northwest of England with the latest detailed survey undertaken in 2023 by the Liverpool University-based Tanypetra Project. There are over 700 species (mainly insects) with the distribution of species closely related to the vegetation type, tolerance of sea spray and the incidence of occasional inundation by waves. Some of the species found in the heath and open grassland plant communities are regionally rare but most of those in the paddock and garden areas are locally common. The spider and harvestmen populations are similar to those found on mainland heaths, such as Thurstaston Common, whilst the land molluscs are common or garden varieties.



A Pallas's Warbler netted on Hilbre in 2023. This was just the 8th record for Wirral and the second on Hilbre, the previous one in 1997

The only mammals that regularly breed on the islands are field voles. Other mammals have been observed, presumably having crossed from the mainland rather than transported across. These have included rabbits, hedgehogs and foxes.

The Hilbre Islands are of particular interest as a platform from which to observe Atlantic Grey Seals, either swimming around the islands or hauled out on the West Hoyle Bank to the west of Hilbre Island (and which the seals have used as a haul-out site for the last 70 years). The colony, which numbers over 500 at their annual maximum, spends most of the year around the mouth of the Dee and is of regional interest. Most return to their breeding grounds in autumn. Rare sightings are made on occasions of Common Seals and species of porpoises, dolphins and whales. The Dee Estuary is also estimated to support 93 species of fish including the uncommon anadromous fish, Smelt (*Osmerus eperlanus*).

3.9 Survey and archaeological work

The Hilbre Bird Observatory was formed in 1957 and is one of several international bird observatories and accredited by the Bird Observatories Council. Their primary purpose is to conduct long-term monitoring of bird populations and migration, and individual observatories are located at prime migration points where a daily census is taken. An integral part of their work is bird ringing, undertaken under license and co-ordinated by the British Trust for Ornithology. This provides data for guiding conservation policies of such bodies as Natural England. The observatories enable and encourage volunteers to participate in scientific studies of birds and the environment and the results are made freely available to researchers and to the public who are welcome to visit the observatories by appointment.

Detailed observations of birds have been made at Hilbre for over 60 years and about 1,000 birds are ringed annually. In all, 223 species have been recorded on the islands. Full details of observations including frequencies of sightings are given in the annual Hilbre Bird Observatory Reports. The Hilbre Bird Observatory has a fascinating blog with some fantastic images:

<https://hilbrebirdobs.blogspot.com/>

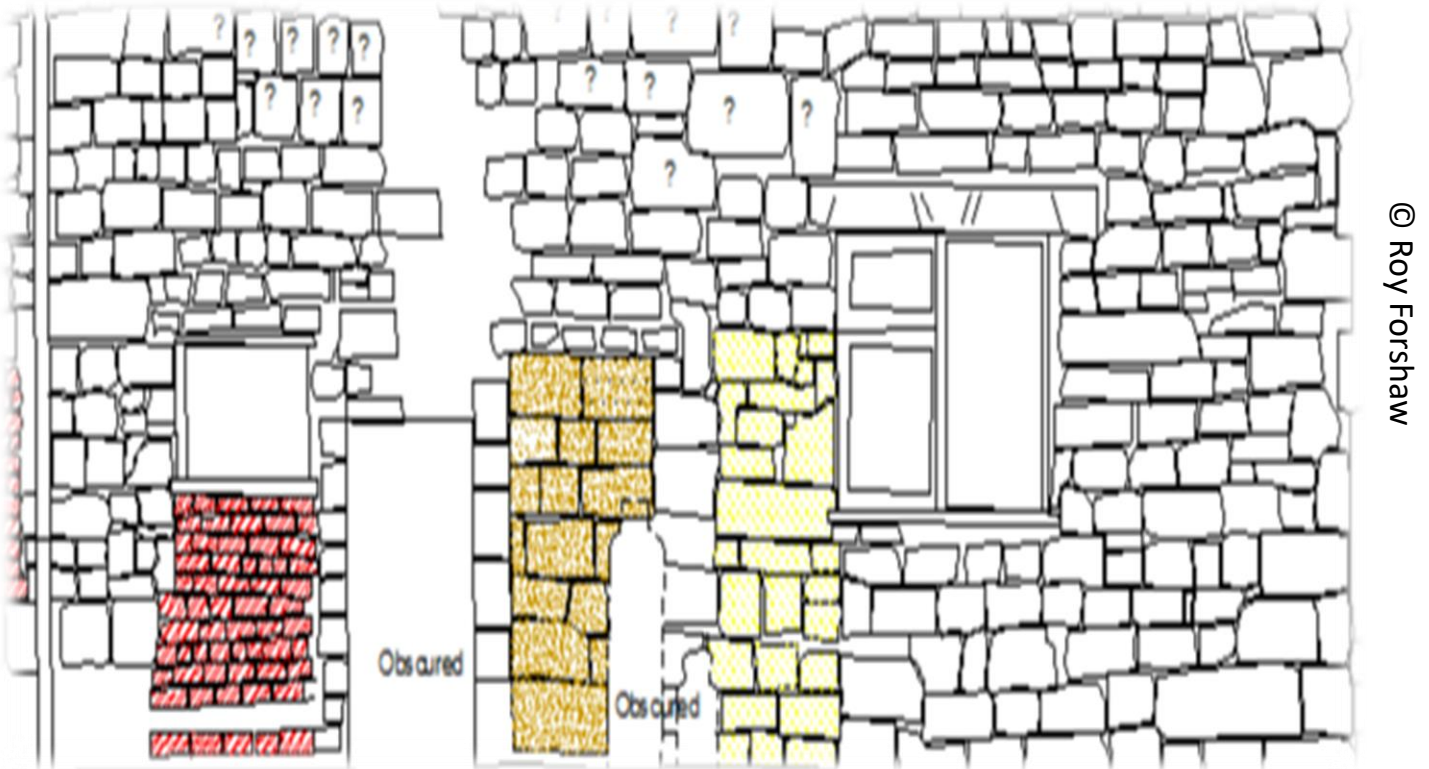
A large portion of the island (buildings and topography) has been recorded by Roy Forshaw from Liverpool Museums. A lot of new detail has been noticed such as an early slipway at the north of the island probably predating the Lifeboat Slipway. Other features on the beach include cut outs in the rock where stone blocks supported the rails for a tramway operated by Trinity House. This was used to bring buoys and supplies at low water to the Buoymaster's Store. What may be fish traps have also been found on the Hoylake side of the island. The buildings were measured and drawn with individual stone bonding showing an interpretation on the various phases of construction using computer aided design software. Image corrected photographs were imported onto the drawing and the stonework and brickwork bonding traced. Blocked-in openings, extensions and reuse of earlier dressed stone blocks have been shown. (See the image on page 27). Over the centuries dressed stone blocks have been salvaged and reused in other structures and the drawings will be used to identify the various stone types including type of material, masons finish and dimensions. There is a possibility that some of these blocks came from the chapel and monk's cell.

The Korec Group provided a Sencefly Swinglet flying drone survey which took detailed plan photographs from the air. This has proved particularly useful in identifying rock cut features on the beach areas which are reproduced to scale in high definition. At the southern end of the island early field boundaries and excavations into banking have been measured. These boundaries appear on early plans and have yet to be dated accurately. Elsewhere undulations in the ground are more apparent as the grass is shorter.

The salt works remains at the north of the island were measured and aided an application for funding a community archaeology excavation. Dating from the late 1690's the salt works was never modernised and its remains are a valuable record of early salt making.

In 2016 a Community Dig took place on Hilbre Island. The project, organised by the University of Liverpool in collaboration with The Friends of Hilbre, was built on a previous project in 2006 when evidence of an ancient building was uncovered on the plot of land adjacent to the Hilbre Bird Observatory. The post-holes of a rectangular structure were found that may belong to the early medieval period (AD 400-1100). Dwelling houses from this period are rare finds in north-west England, making this a particularly important discovery. Other finds from the 2006 dig included pieces of prehistoric pottery and medieval tile, a testament to the island's longstanding place in the lives of local people. Sieved soil in the 2016 dig produced a range of finds from the pre-historic (heat-shattered stone) and the partial base of a stoneware tankard dating to the late 17th Century along with some flint and a number of heat-shattered stones. This method of heating water was used during the pre-historic period as well as the early medieval period. A small pottery handle was found, probably late medieval or early post-medieval along with the partial base of a tyg (multi-handled drinking cup). This piece probably dates to the late 16th or early 17th century. It was probably made locally, possibly in Buckley. A strong concentration of cobbles was found in one of the trenches. These stones were probably collected from the beach and transported for use as building material and possibly belongs to the period between AD 400 and 1200. Several test-pits were dug in the northern part of the island to investigate elements of the late 17th-mid-18th century salt processing works.

Due to the importance of the islands as a prehistoric site it is policy that any excavation work is preceded or accompanied by a representative of the University of Liverpool's Archaeology Department. Metal detecting is not allowed on any part of the reserve.



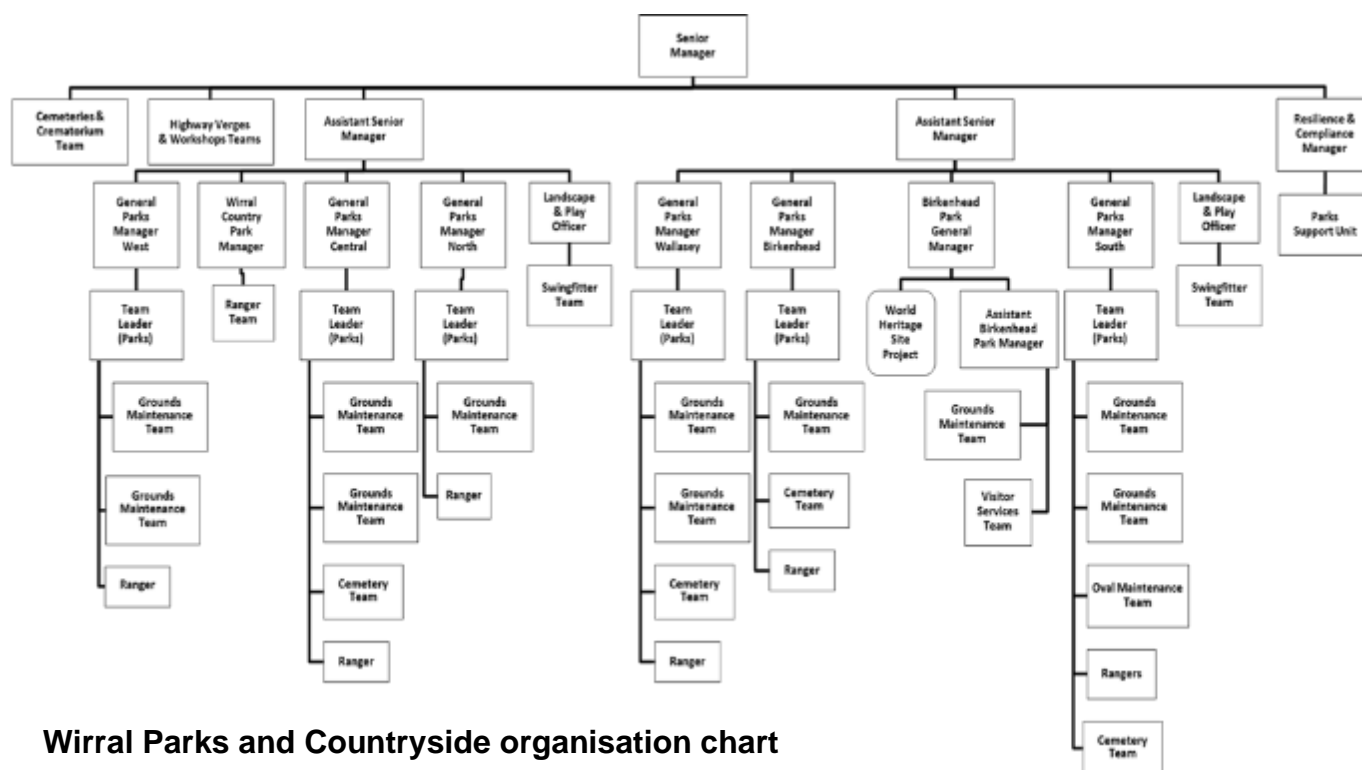
Telegraph House elevation showing the combination of stonework and brickwork used in its construction and detailed using computer aided design software

3.10 Management and summary of the known challenges:

Management

A Wirral Council Parks and Countryside Manager (based at Wirral Country Park) oversees the day-to-day maintenance and management of Wirral Country Park, Heswall Dales Local Nature Reserve and The Hilbre Islands Local Nature Reserve. A team of Rangers based at Wirral Country Park (5 full-time permanent and 2 part-time permanent) manage the three sites to meet the Council's aims and objectives. The Rangers wear a distinctive uniform and vehicles are liveried with the Council logo. The Rangers are a very visible and approachable link with the public and management and much of their work is liaising with visitors and user groups. The Rangers are required to respond to incidents, customer comments and reports across all three sites 7 days a week and, as with visitors to the islands, the tide and weather are the most important factors regarding safe access the islands. A daily presence on the islands by Council staff is not possible but the support and the 'island community' of leaseholders and volunteers ensure a well-managed site who regularly meet informally on the islands as well as at the formal Hilbre Islands Management Committee.

Whilst Wirral Council's Parks and Countryside are responsible for the 'top' of the islands, Wirral Council's Coastal Defence Team is responsible for the cliffs and 'lower' parts of the reserve.



Wirral Parks and Countryside organisation chart

The Hilbre Islands Management Committee

Partners and stakeholders form the Hilbre Islands Management Committee and that is made up of the following:

Key Stakeholders with one vote per group

Friends of Hilbre Island
Hilbre Bird Observatory
British Arts Development Association
Resident Leaseholders
Mersey Canoe Club

Nine Councillors with one vote each (One Councillor is voted as Hilbre Islands Management Committee Chair)

Non-Voting Council Officers

Assistant Director - Neighbourhoods
Head of Service - Parks and Countryside
Senior Manager – Flood and Coastal Risk Management
Assistant Senior Manager – Parks and Countryside
Hilbre Island Manager – Parks and Countryside

Representatives to be invited when required/to aid a particular discussion at a particular meeting. (Non-voting rights)

RNLI
Natural England
Environment Agency
Marine Maritime Organisation
HM Coastguard

The Management Committee meets twice a year including a visit to the reserve during the summer months. The list of representatives referenced are considered 'lay members', as they are recognised for being key points of contact and bringing their own expertise and can therefore be invited as appropriate.



A meeting of the Hilbre Islands Management Group in the Buoymaster's Workshop

Environmental challenges

- Trampling and ad hoc wildflower and mollusc collection can have an adverse effect, particularly on the more fragile and slow growing species.
- Visitors may not understand the tides and/or safe crossing routes/information.
- Over the last decade, siltation has led to a decrease in diversity around the rocky shore due to the smothering of communities
- Invasive *Sargassum muticum* (Japanese Wireweed) is threatening native intertidal habitats
- The reef building worm *Sabellaria alveolate* may be displacing other rocky shore species
- Storm surges and tidal action causes erosion to the built and natural landscape
- The wall at the north end of Hilbre, built by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company will continue to be subject to erosion.



Telegraph House built by the Trustees of the Liverpool Docks in 1841

Financial challenges

Local authority budget constraints require any expenditure to be justified and expenditure is restricted through the Council's Procurement Policy. The historic buildings do not meet modern standards regarding access, energy efficiency and conservation and, at present, the Council is not in a position to fund the major work required to bring the buildings back into use.

Other known challenges

- Balancing nature conservation with visitor access
- Difficulty of access
- Misinformation fed through social media
- Ensuring statutory consents/licencing are in place

4 GREEN FLAG CRITERIA AND ASSESSMENT

It is the intention of Wirral's Parks and Countryside Service that the Hilbre Islands Local Nature Reserve continue to achieve high standards as defined by the Green Flag Award Scheme and achieved through partnership working with stakeholders and the Hilbre Islands Management Committee.

Further details about the scheme are available at www.greenflagaward.org.uk.

The current condition of the islands has been assessed using the Green Flag criteria as follows:

- A welcoming place
- Healthy, safe and secure
- Well maintained and clean
- Environmental Management
- Biodiversity, landscape and heritage
- Community involvement
- Marketing and Communication
- Management

4.1 A welcoming place

West Kirby Beach

The only recommended safe access to the islands is from West Kirby Beach. There is a large three-sided notice board with information on Hilbre at the entrance to the beach at Dee Lane. A public toilet block at the Wirral Sailing Centre on the promenade is open and serviced daily. A small kiosk in private ownership serves ice cream and refreshments. Car parking is free on the main highway and there is a small charge in the adjacent pay and display car park.



A large noticeboard at West Kirby Beach provides information on safe crossing to the Hilbre Islands (visible in the background)

Hilbre Island

Access to the main island is via a slipway / track with a small notice board. The main information point for Hilbre is in the Slate Shed. The Slate Shed, Telegraph Station, Toilets and Day Room are all within the 'hub' of the island. The Telegraph Station also contains information on the islands' natural and maritime history. The Telegraph Station is open to the public on regular open days, or by arrangement with the Ranger.

4.2 Healthy, safe and secure

The Hilbre Islands Local Nature Reserve is covered by Byelaws, made under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949, and in accordance with Section 236 of the Local Government Act, 1972. See Appendix.

Wirral Council operates a 24-hour community helpline, the switchboard can be contacted on: 0151 666 5265. Wirral's Parks and Countryside are in regular contact with Merseyside Police, HM Coastguard, the local RNLI and the RNLI beach patrol during summer.

Wirral Council Rangers, based at Wirral Country Park, undertake regular visits to the islands to undertake litter picking, toilet cleaning and site safety checks. The Rangers also assist the Friends of Hilbre with their event programme and assist schools and other groups visits to the islands. The Rangers use a vehicle to access the islands and, wearing a distinct uniform, are able to assist general visitors with information about the islands and advice on safe crossing times. A site inspection is undertaken after every 'named' storm.



A defibrillator is positioned on Hilbre island during the busy summer months

Erosion

Erosion of the soft sandstone is through direct wave action and a process known as 'hydraulic action' where air is forced into cracks and causes the rock to break apart. This is particularly evident in the erosion of the Lifeboat Slipway. There is undercutting of the soft seams in the rock on the west sides of the islands that leads to cliff collapse and surface water draining through the

rock to the east adds to erosion and increased by frost action in severe winters. In 2019 there was an attempt to slow down erosion of the cave on the north west of Hilbre by infilling with an expanding foam. However, the foam reacted with the saltwater and a resulting fire and strong public criticism. Following the fire, the management of the reserve was restructured so that Wirral Council's Parks and Countryside Section would manage the 'top' parts of the Hilbre Islands whilst its Flood and Coastal Defence Section would manage the cliffs and 'lower' parts of the reserve. Again, following on from the strong public criticism, a decision was made that there will be no future engineered intervention to prevent or control erosion. Some of the factors that had to be taken into account were the cost and the practicalities of undertaking work – both transportation to and working on an eroding cliff face in tidal conditions. Permissions from the various statutory regulatory bodies including Natural England, the Environment Agency and the Marine Management Organisation would also be required on the Island that is within one of the most highly protected sites in Europe and, even with the large amount of Wirral tax-payers money needed to undertake the work, there would be no guarantee that any work would achieve any lasting and worthwhile erosion control.

The islands will continue to be surveyed. The walls will be maintained and appropriate signage and fencing is in place to restrict access to this area of the island and beach.



Good signage and fencing is in place to restrict access to areas of erosion

Dogs

Dog fouling is not a considerable problem within the islands. There are no bins on the islands and people are asked to take their litter home. The public are asked to keep dogs on leads whilst on the Local Nature Reserve.

The islands at night

The islands do not have lighting. Visitors are advised to leave the islands before light fades and where safe recommended crossing times are given the latest time to be on the islands is 8pm.

Pathways, pedestrian routes

Visitors are required to keep to the paths and access routes that are managed to reduce erosion. These are:

- main track/slipway that runs north/south across Hilbre (made up of concrete at southern slipway end then consolidated infill and finally flagstones leading to a concrete base adjacent to the toilets)
- pedestrian path leading from Telegraph Station towards the old Lifeboat Station
- slipway on the eastern side of the island
- steps that lead to the foreshore
- steps leading off the old lifeboat slipway
- metal ladder leading from the slipway
- steps on Middle Eye

Lifeguarding

A lifeguarding service is provided to Wirral Council through a contract with the RNLI. Uniformed lifeguards patrol the entire area daily during the spring and summer season. They work closely with the Ranger, Merseyside Police, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service, HM Coastguard and local RNLI rescue service to provide cover in case of any emergency.

Additional up-to-date information can be found at: <https://rnli.org/find-my-nearest/lifeguarded-beaches/west-kirby-beach>

4.3 Clean and well maintained

The Hilbre Island Manager and Rangers based at Wirral Country Park are responsible for the overall day to day management and maintenance of the Hilbre Islands. The Rangers undertake a programme of work and conservation management tasks each year working alongside the Friends of Hilbre and other volunteers to deliver these and other projects in the Action Plan (see Appendix). The Rangers carry out regular inspections to identify any issues within the islands that may present a safety problem for staff and visitors. Job orders are raised through Asset Management (Facilities Management Helpdesk) and can be prioritised as non-urgent (72 hours) or Emergency Repairs (2 hours).

The following items are appraised under an Annual safety Site Inspection (See Appendix)

- Paths, steps, ramps, slipways
- Walls, fences, gates
- Buildings and structures
- Furniture – signs, litterbins etc
- Soft landscape – grass, planted areas, water features etc
- Habitat surveys/inspections

A Workplace Health and Safety Inspection is undertaken every 3 months (see Appendix) and includes the Day Room, Fog Cottage and toilets along with an Annual Property Return (see Appendix). The Rangers undertake minor repair works, as and when required, alongside litter picking, toilet cleaning, updating the information noticeboards and advising visitors of the tide and safe crossing times and byelaws.

The Rangers liaise with contractors to provide vehicle access to the islands and transport of tools and equipment and work undertaken through Asset Management is inspected by a Site Inspector.



The Day Room is used by visiting groups, including schools, and for hosting events

4.4 Environmental Management

There are numerous examples of good practice for sustainability on Hilbre and used to promote sustainability to the public.

There is no mains water, gas, or electricity on Hilbre. Gas is transported to the island by vehicle. Two 'zero water' toilet units for public use are periodically emptied and chemicals (other than hand soap and disinfectant wipes) are only used in exceptional circumstances. Vehicle and mowing equipment are checked for emission levels. Vehicle cleaning takes place at Wirral Country Park where there is an oil separator to stop contaminants being added to the surface water drainage.

There are no litter bins on the islands and visitors are requested to take litter home. Litter collected by volunteers is taken to the mainland and recycled where appropriate in recycling bins available in the supermarket carpark at West Kirby. Litter collected by the Rangers is recycled where appropriate in recycling bins at Wirral Country Park.

4.5 Biodiversity, landscape and heritage

Biodiversity designations

Hilbre, Middle Eye and Little Eye are all included as part of the Hilbre Islands Local Nature Reserve in the Dee Estuary. The Dee Estuary is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). It has been designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA), and a Special Area for Conservation (SAC), under the European Union's Habitats Directive. It is a Ramsar Site under the Ramsar Convention of Wetlands of International Importance. It is primarily of importance for its assemblage of wintering waders and wildfowl and as a staging post for migrating birds.

The most notable plant species are:

- Rock Sea Lavender (*Limonium britannicum*)
- Sea Spleenwort (*Asplenium marinum*)
- Field Mouse Ear (*Cerastium arvense*)
- Slender Trefoil (*Trifolium micranthum*)
- Pellitory-of-the-wall (*Parietaria judaica*)
- *Chlorococcum submarinum* (microscopic green algae in cave)

The predominant plant associations, stressing the most important species, are:

- Heath plant community comprising Bell Heather (*Erica cinerea*) and Common Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*).
- Cliff-top plant community comprising Thrift (*Armeria maritima*), Buck's Horn Plantain (*Plantago coronopus*), Danish Scurvygrass (*Cochlearia danica*) and Rock Sea-spurrey (*Spergularia rupicola*).

The most characteristic and notable species of fauna are:

- | | |
|--|--|
| • Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) | • Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) |
| • Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) | • Linnet (<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>) |
| • Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) | • Skylark (<i>Alauda arvensis</i>) |
| • Bar-tailed godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) | • Wren (<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>) |
| • Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) | • Mallard (<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>) |
| • Ringed plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) | • Pied wagtail (<i>Motacilla alba yarrellii</i>) |
| • Purple sandpiper (<i>Calidris maritima</i>) | • Meadow pipit (<i>Anthus pratensis</i>) |
| • Grey plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) | • Robin (<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>) |
| • Turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>) | • Swallow (<i>Hirundo rustica</i>) |
| • Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) | |
| • Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) | • Atlantic Grey seal (<i>Halichoerus grypus</i>) |
| • Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) | • Field vole (<i>Microtus arvalis</i>) |
| • Brent goose (<i>Branta bernicla</i>) | • Honeycomb reef building worm (<i>Sabellaria alveolata</i>) |



An Atlantic Grey Seal © Friends of Hilbre

Landscape character

The islands represent the only natural hard rocky coast within the estuary and are the only examples of this habitat between the limestone cliffs of the Creuddyn Peninsula in North Wales and the sandstone cliffs of St Bees Head in Cumbria. The supporting vegetation of maritime heath land/grassland and hard cliff/ledge vegetation are of significant interest. The ecological communities on the islands include two major and largely separate habitats. One is a form of dry maritime heath and grassland on the plateaux and the other is the tidal rocky shore. They can in turn be sub-divided into numerous micro-habitats where different species of flora and fauna predominate in response to variations in the degree of exposure to sea, salt, wind, trampling and (on the plateaux) past grazing and cultivation. In both habitats the invertebrate fauna and mollusk populations appear to be closely related to the types of plant communities present. The islands' only resident land mammal, the field vole, is commonly found in rough ungrazed grasslands.



The main trackway leading to the top of Hilbre island © Friends of Hilbre

For waders and migrating passerines the tidal islands (relatively free from human disturbance) are primarily a resting place. The islands are strategically located and. The seals that use the West Hoyle Bank as a haul-out site feed on the fish of the Irish Sea and the Dee Estuary. The West Hoyle Bank has probably been selected for the accessibility it affords to their feeding grounds, shelter from the prevailing westerly winds and its relative safety from human interference. Although it is difficult to determine precisely the human influence on the ecology of the islands; humans have had some influence on the islands for as long as 10,000 years. Man has farmed and grazed the islands with stock for over 1000 years and has visited the islands in large numbers for 100 years. Even those areas that appear at first glance to be natural are in fact the result, to a certain extent, of earlier farming or grazing practices. The building of the Lifeboat Station and extensive revetment work has prevented some parts of Hilbre Island from erosion by the sea. Conversely, by the quarrying of other areas the erosion process has been accelerated. By growing various crops, grazing various animals and gardening, man has influenced the range of plants that grow on the islands. Some species of flora and fauna have been deliberately introduced, whilst others have arrived accidentally.

Trampling by visitors in sensitive areas can cause the destruction of vegetation and accelerate erosion, while the disturbance of roosting birds by recreational users can deplete the birds' energy reserves and reduce their ability to survive the winter. Wirral's Parks and Countryside staff provide the expertise to maintain and promote the nature conservation interest of the islands in a variety of ways.

The Council Rangers provide opportunities for volunteers and interpretation is provided through notice boards, a programme of guided walks and education events including assisting with school field trips. Cheshire Wildlife Trust manage the Red Rocks Nature Reserve on the nearby shore. They also run occasional guided walks to the Hilbre Islands each year and promote the wider area through the Lottery sponsored 'Our Dee Estuary' Project.

Nature conservation aims:

- Control invasive & alien species where they are a threat to the important native species or habitats
- Promote and co-ordinate research on habitats and species
- Encourage the good management of the maritime flora (e.g. heather, scurvy grass, thrift and sea plantain)
- Increase floristic diversity in the paddocks
- Propagate heather species on western cliff tops
- Encourage species diversity by maintaining open water habitats
- Retain soil and vegetation along cliff-tops
- Maintain shelter for the benefit of perching birds (passerines)
- Maintain maritime heath and grassland communities by control of bracken



Bracken is invading some of the open grassland areas

Heritage

Wirral Council's Asset Management Team is responsible for the management and maintenance of the buildings on Hilbre. The Rangers assist with logistical issues and undertake an Annual Asbestos Inspection, ensure electrical appliances are PAT tested as part of the Annual Property Return and undertake minor repair works.

Listed Buildings

Building Name: BUOYMASTER'S HOUSE AND BUOYSTORE

Parish: HOYLAKE

District: WIRRAL

County: MERSEYSIDE

LBS Number: 443646

Grade: II

Date Listed: 20/01/1988

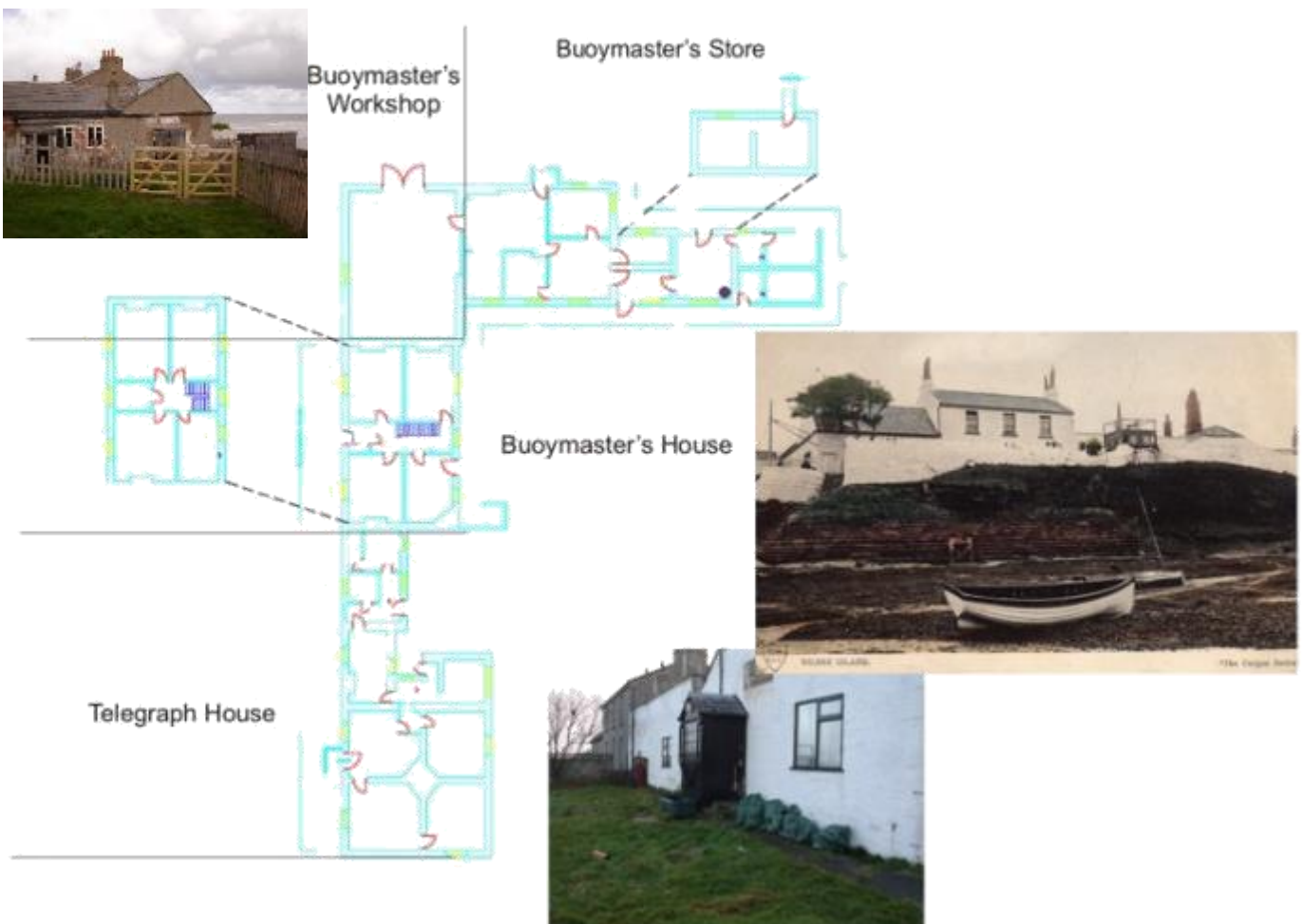
Date of Last Amendment: 20/01/1988

NGR: SJ1847688020

Listing Text:

SJ 1888 HOYLAKE HILBRE ISLAND

(east side) 8/25 Buoymaster's House and buystore c.1836. Roughcast, with slate roof. L-plan; house of 2 storeys and 3 bays with adjoining one-storey wing to left. Windows are sashed with glazing bars. Central entrance to house has overlight with glazing bars and 4-panel door. Wing for buoy storage etc. now mostly converted to domestic use has gable to end bay with small bell attached. Casement windows to south facade, sashes with glazing bars to north. Entrance with C20 porch and side entrance with paired doors to store in end bay. 2 gable-end stacks to house, small stack to wing.



Building Name: TELEGRAPH STATION

Parish: HOYLAKE

District: WIRRAL

County: MERSEYSIDE

LBS Number: 443647

Grade: II

Date Listed: 20/01/1988

Date of Last Amendment: 24/11/2005

NGR: SJ1842188029

Listing Text:

SJ 1888 HOYLAKE HILBRE ISLAND

(north west) 8/26 Telegraph – Station

Telegraph Station. 1841. For Liverpool Dock Trustees. Painted stone with slate roof. One storey, with bowed north end. Bowed end has small-paned glazing with 4 brass gimbals for telescopes. East facade has timber platform and elliptical-headed entrance. Hipped south end. Built as part of a relay of 12 stations from Point Lynas to Liverpool transmitting information on merchant ships sailing to Liverpool.

**The Telegraph Station, opened by the Friends of Hilbre on Seal Watching Days**

Whilst there are only three designated listed buildings on Hilbre (Buoymaster's House, Buoymaster's store/Workshop and the Telegraph Station) the other buildings that form the Victorian cluster of buildings are listed 'by association' meaning that they receive the same level of attention to preserving their character when repairs are undertaken.

4.7 Community Involvement

The Friends of Hilbre

The islands have a very active friends group with a membership of around 150. The group meets on a regular basis and have an Annual General Meeting each year. The friends produce leaflets, assist in guided walks and events, staff the Telegraph Station as an information centre, undertake conservation tasks, organise seal watching events and seek funding opportunities. The Friends of Hilbre was formed in 2001 and is a Registered Charity. Their intention is to help Wirral Council maintain the islands and:

- To promote the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment of Hilbre Islands Local Nature Reserve for the benefit of the public
- To provide funds, volunteer help, educational facilities and other related charitable goods and services
- To offer practical help under the guidance of the appropriate officer of the local authority

The Friends of Hilbre and other partners are involved in management decisions affecting the islands through the Hilbre Islands Management Committee. In 2023 The Friends of Hilbre announced that Ann Cleaves OBE, award winning crime writer, had agreed to become their patron. Ann Cleaves created detectives Vera Stanhope, Jimmy Perez and Matthew Venn and although Ann lives in Northumberland she lived on Hilbre from 1977 to 1981 with her husband Tim Cleaves, who was the warden of the island and once said of Hilbre *"It's a wild, wonderful and lonely location , the perfect place for a murder "*

Friends of Hilbre website www.hilbreisland.org.uk



Ann Cleaves OBE in the Hilbre Island Telegraph Station © Friends of Hilbre

An island community

Whilst the Friends of Hilbre may be the most visible group on the islands, members of the Hilbre Bird Observatory and resident leaseholders alongside other regular visitors and groups, such as British Divers Marine Life Rescue, all help to create a close network that helps to deliver good management and the Council's and Green Flag policies of a providing a welcoming site that is safe and secure and has good environmental management in place.

It is very much a symbiotic relationship between many of the island groups that maintains the community input into the management of the islands. The resident leaseholders have assisted in rescuing members of the public from potentially fatal situations and the British Divers Marine Life Rescue have engaged with event organisers to assist in the good management of activities taking place around the reserve and near to a colony of Atlantic Grey Seals. Members of the Hilbre Bird Observatory have welcomed groups including school field trips to the island with demonstrations of bird ringing and other species recording.



A Friends of Hilbre Open Day with Seal Watching and selling refreshments

Volunteering

Wirral Council encourages volunteering with the Wirral Country Park-based Rangers and that will often include an opportunity to work on the islands. This could be part of a university work placement, Duke of Edinburgh Students or people undertaken one of the John Muir Awards.

Research students have the opportunity to stay overnight on Hilbre as part of their further education studies. Part of their island duties are to assist members of the public and ensure a safe site.

Volunteer with Parks and Countryside:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/leisure-parks-and-events/parks-and-open-spaces/volunteer-with-us>

4.8 Marketing and Information

The islands are visited by the local community and by other regular visitors come from the Liverpool, Chester and Manchester areas. Peak use is at weekends during the summer, although the islands are well used throughout the year with many ramblers and birdwatching groups visiting during the winter months. The Hoylake Golf Tournament and world-wide television coverage of the event and surrounding area has led to an increase in international tourism to the islands.

Casual visits

The Hilbre Islands are a well-known local landmark attracting over 20,000 visitors each year. Visitor numbers started to increase gradually about 20 years ago and increased dramatically during the worldwide Covid pandemic in 2020. Although visitor numbers have decreased slightly in the last couple of years the impact of visitor numbers, especially causing erosion, is a continuing issue on the reserve.



The first information board on Hilbre welcoming visitors to the Local Nature Reserve

Marketing information:

- Wirral Council's Internet website www.wirral.gov.uk
- Hilbre Bird Observatory website: <http://www.hilbrebirdobs.blogspot.com/>
- Dee Estuary website <http://www.deeestuary.co.uk/>
- Friends of Hilbre website www.hilbreisland.org.uk
- Visit Wirral website <https://www.visitwirral.com/things-to-do/hilbre-islands-p17578>
- Noticeboards
- Walks and talks /events

4.9 Management

Day to day management and maintenance

The Hilbre Islands Manager is responsible for the day to day management and maintenance of the site. Site inspections, practical conservation and other work, including assisting with events and interpretation of the site is undertaken by a team of uniformed Rangers based at Wirral Country Park. Included in that team is a specialist schools and events Ranger' who takes the lead on the production of resource information and school visits as well as coordinating Event Notifications with the Parks and Countryside Bookings Officer. The Rangers access the islands using a 4x4 vehicle that can also be used to transport volunteers, contractors and tools and equipment to the islands. As previously mentioned, there is a strong 'island community' that works together to ensure good management of the reserve and who meet twice a year at the Hilbre Islands Management Committee where any on-going issues and major projects can be discussed.

Special projects and sea defences

Special projects are those outside the general day to day management and maintenance of the site and usually require additional resources including funding. These can be part of the 5 Year Action Plan with a target date for completion, or in the Project Bank where there is no target date and where funding is outside normal funding and requires either external funding or a Capital Bid application. (see Appendix). Special projects are also likely to require licencing or consent from other statutory agencies including Natural England, the Marine Maritime Organisation and/or the Environment Agency. Wirral Council employs a Senior Manager responsible for Flood and Coastal Risk Management and who is responsible for the cliffs and lower parts of the reserve including the sea wall and Lifeboat Station Slipway. The Shoreline Management Plan details the policies in place for the current and future management of Wirral's coastlines and coastal defences. <http://mycoastline.org.uk/>

Inspections of the coastal structures and buildings on the Hilbre Islands are carried out on a regular basis and after named storms to ensure major damage is fixed as soon as possible. Enquiries about the management of the islands should be directed to the Hilbre Island Manager: wcp@wirral.gov.uk



The Hilbre Island Day Room is used by visiting groups and to host events and meetings

5 APPENDICES

5.1 Wirral Parks and Countryside Maintenance Specification Specific to the Hilbre Islands

1. Cleansing: (litter, rubbish & leaf collection)

1.1 Litter control

Collect and remove litter and refuse from the entire reserve. Government guidance and Regulations for the disposal of noxious or hazardous waste, for example empty chemical containers or 'sharps' shall be followed.

Inspect and empty all litter bins and disposing of the rubbish and for clearing all litter from around each bin.

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 does not specify frequencies. Requisite standards shall be maintained by:

- o Ensuring familiarity with site plans and locations
- o Programming works effectively
- o Applying resources appropriately

Litter control shall conform to the Environmental Protection Act 1990: Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse (updated November 2006).

The site shall be maintained to Grade B standard in accordance with the Code of Practice Part 1: litter and refuse.

- o Predominately free of litter and refuse apart from some small items

The maximum response time to restore to Grade A standard (no litter or refuse) if it falls below Grade B shall be 1 day; this means by 6pm the following day.

All staff shall ensure that they use their reasonable endeavours to collect and minimise the effects of litter on the site, whenever it is encountered in the pursuance of their duties, whether or not those duties are primarily litter control.



1.2 Sweeping and Cleansing

This requirement is applicable to all surfaces other than grass within the park. The entire surfaces of all tarmac, concrete or paved areas, rubberised surfaces and tiles, including play facilities and safety surfaces and other surface areas including loose surfaces such as bark and shale shall be kept clear in accordance with the Environmental Protection Act 1990: Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse (updated November 2006) to Grade B standard.

Sweeping, including gutters and drainage channels within the surface areas, shall be carried out by appropriate methods that do not damage or disrupt the surface.

Surfaces shall be washed down whenever necessary in order to maintain a clean and useable area.

All paths and hard surfaces shall be swept at even intervals and be kept cleared of grass cuttings following mowing operations.

All slippery surfaces caused by whatsoever nature, shall be made safe by the removal and / or treatment of the hazard.

All hard surfaces shall be maintained in a weed free condition including moss and algae growth.

1.3 Graffiti and fly-tipping

Maintenance teams shall collect information on graffiti and fly-tipping during weekly site checks and inspections and shall report any incidence of these to the area manager for action.

Minor graffiti should be removed as soon as possible in cases where it is practical to do so. More significant graffiti should be reported to the Facilities Management team for action. Incidences of offensive or racist graffiti shall be prioritised for urgent removal within 24 hours by the appropriate contractor. Data for incidents of graffiti shall include:

- Location
- Surface type
- Paint type
- Description including offensive characteristics.

Fly-tipping shall be defined as any single quantity of tipped material that cannot be lifted by two members of staff and removed from the site. All instances of fly-tipping should be reported to the service area manager.

Where tipped material can be lifted by two members of staff, it is deemed to be covered by the litter control clauses of this service requirement and should therefore be removed from site as soon as possible.

Tipped materials which are not removable by service members should report the instance to the Waste Management Team for removal within 48 hours.

1.4 Hard landscape infrastructure: condition surveys and improvement plans

An annual condition survey of the hard landscape infrastructure shall be carried out by the service area team leader/manager. Any defects will be included in the annual improvement plan, and repairs arranged by either the landscape development team, or facilities management team.

1.5 Hard surfaces weed control

Undertake a programme of effective weed control on all hard surfaces including roads; footpaths, car parks, steps, ramps and bridges, including the bases of all walls and fences where adjoining hard surfaces, along kerbstones and around landscape and park furniture. The use of residual herbicides shall not be permitted.

All hard surfaces including all edgings, kerbs and channels are to be kept weed-free by use of a non-residual translocated herbicide.

A well-timed programme and effective application linked to the growth of weeds is essential.

1.6 Hard surfaces gritting, salting and snow clearance

Hard surface gritting, salting and snow clearance is required to ensure that, where reasonably practicable, safe passage along a road or footpath is not endangered by snow ice.

Although there is no requirement to treat all roads and footpaths there are locations where this is required. The sites and areas to be treated are limited to those where essential only access is required.

Treatment shall include pre-treating to prevent ice from forming and post treating when ice has formed, or snow has accumulated.

1.7 Benches and seating

All benches and seating, including picnic benches & tables, shall be kept clean and in good order through the use of such means as repainting or re-staining/oiling surfaces according to type of material.

1.8 Fences, railings, walls, gates, handrails, stiles, boardwalks, revetments and bollards

Any minor repairs such as loose bolts, protruding nails and sanding of sharp edges shall be undertaken on-site where possible. All other repairs should be reported to the landscape development team or facilities management team.

Defects which represent a hazard that cannot be repaired immediately must be made safe until an effective repair can be undertaken.

All gates, locks and mechanisms will be regularly maintained to ensure good working condition.

1.9 Notice boards and signs

Keep all signs, signposts and notice boards clean at all times and in good order through the use of such means as repainting or re-staining surfaces according to type of material of construction. Noticeboards should be kept up to date with appropriate information and posters where appropriate.

2. Buildings

2.1 Public toilets

The Rangers are to maintain public toilets to a sufficient level of cleanliness as per site specification. Ensure any defects highlighted are reported to facilities management team for repair/replacement in a timely manner.

3. Vandalism and third-party damage (see also Cleansing: litter, rubbish & leaf collection)

3.1 General

Work with the community, stakeholders, and partner organisations to reduce vandalism and anti-social behaviour throughout the reserve.

3.2 Soft landscape

Rectify minor incidents of vandalism or third-party damage to soft landscape features including trees, planted and grassed areas within 24 hours, inclusive within the routine maintenance activities. This shall include any minor incidents of damage caused by any other source.

3.3 Hard landscape infrastructure

The Rangers shall rectify minor damage to fencing, gates, walling, furniture, signage, notice boards, lighting and surfacing and other hard landscape infrastructure resulting from any act of vandalism or third-party damage within 24 hours, inclusive within the routine maintenance activities. This shall include any minor damage caused by any other source. Minor damage shall be defined as requiring no more than 1 hour of labour per occasion to rectify with a minimal requirement for materials.

For more significant incidents of vandalism or third-party damage, make safe immediately, and refer to the facilities management team for repair. Significant vandalism should be reported to the police where necessary and be highlighted to the service manager.

5.2 2024 – 2029 Action Plan

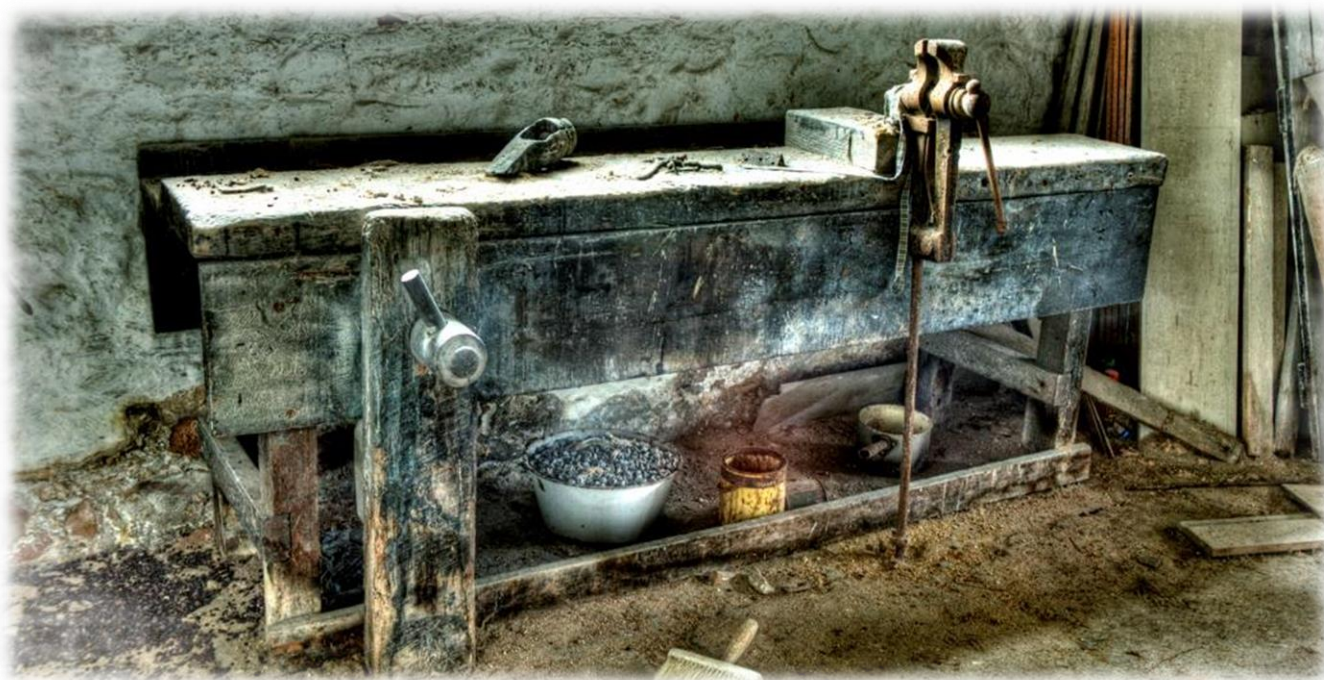
Action	Target Date	Lead Council Officer	Resource	Yearly Target
1. A Welcoming place				
Promote events and activities organised by the Rangers, Friends of Hilbre, Cheshire Wildlife Trust	Ongoing	Rangers	Parks and Countryside budget/Volunteers/ Friends of Hilbre/Cheshire Wildlife Trust (Our Dee Estuary)	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
Replace information when it becomes out of date, damaged or worn	Ongoing	Rangers	Parks and Countryside Volunteers	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
Maintain websites	Ongoing	Manager Digital Marketing/ Comms Team	Parks and Countryside Friends of Hilbre	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
2. Healthy, safe and secure				
Identify risks and undertake risk assessments to guide appropriate action	Ongoing	Manager Rangers	Parks and Countryside	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
Carry out Annual Site Safety Inspection in January each year	Annual	Manager Rangers	Parks and Countryside	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
Carry out a Quarterly Workplace Inspection	Quarterly	Manager Rangers	Parks and Countryside	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
Display tide and safe crossing information for visitors in the Dee Lane Noticeboard	Ongoing	Rangers	Parks and Countryside	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
Display safety information on the reserve at main access points.	Ongoing	Rangers	Flood and Coastal Defence and Parks and Countryside	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029

Maintain lifesaving equipment including a seasonal defibrillator on the island in the Slate Shed	Ongoing	Manager Rangers	Parks and Countryside Asset Management/The Circuit	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
Produce & circulate a water sports code of conduct	2024	Senior Manager Manager Rangers	Our Dee Estuary Project	2024
Maintain asbestos register and ensure compliance	Ongoing	Asset Mgt Rangers	Asset Management/Parks and Countryside	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
Facilitate annual fire safety check and maintenance to fire extinguishers	Annual	Asset Mgt Rangers	Asset Mgt/Parks and Countryside	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
3. Clean and well maintained				
Consult appropriate archaeology experts in advance of any excavations	Ongoing	Manager Rangers	Parks and Countryside	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
Maintain use of buildings that is consistent with the character of Hilbre	As required	Manager Asset Management	Parks and Countryside	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
Maintain main track, clifftop fences and existing sea walls	Ongoing	Manager Rangers Coastal Engineers	Parks and Countryside budget/ capital bids where necessary	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
Remove litter regularly	Ongoing	Rangers	Parks and Countryside Volunteers	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
4. Sustainability				
Review options for energy supply	2025	Management Committee	Parks and Countryside	2025
Keep all vehicle journeys to a minimum	Ongoing	Rangers	Parks and Countryside	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029

Ensure that visitors to the privately leased buildings on Hilbre do not bring more than one vehicle at a time on to Hilbre and that vehicle journeys are kept to a minimum	Ongoing	Rangers	All	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
Recycle as much of the materials brought on the reserve as possible	Ongoing	Rangers	Parks and Countryside	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
Encourage visitors to take their litter home	Ongoing	Rangers	Parks and Countryside	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
5. Conservation and Heritage				
Undertake species monitoring and provide details to the Local Record Centre	Ongoing	Rangers	Parks and Countryside/Friends of Hilbre/Hilbre Bird Observatory	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
Investigate sources of funding to assist in the management of biodiversity species and habitats.	On-going	Rangers	Parks and Countryside/Volunteers/BDMLR	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
Mow areas of long grass adjacent to existing maritime flora on Hilbre and Middle Eye	Annual	Rangers	Parks and Countryside	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
Maintain soil retaining walls	On-going	Rangers	Parks and Countryside/Volunteers	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
Maintain garden fences	On-going	Rangers	Parks and Countryside/Volunteers	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
Allow some areas of long grass to develop	On-going	Rangers	Parks and Countryside	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029

Use corrugated sheets or similar to provide an artificial habitat allowing mammal populations to be monitored without trapping.	On-going	Rangers	Parks and Countryside	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
Undertake seal watching activities to record population numbers	On-going	Rangers	Parks and Countryside Friends of Hilbre	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
Have autopsies undertaken on dead seals where there is an increase in the number of incidents	On-going	Manager	Parks and Countryside/ BMDMR	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
Cut back, mow and hand pull areas of bracken	Annual	Rangers	Parks and Countryside/ Volunteers	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
Support the Friends of Hilbre on Open Days	Once per month from April to October	Rangers	Parks and Countryside	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
Provide assistance for volunteers task days and other Friends projects	On-going	Rangers	Parks and Countryside	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
Develop links with local schools to enhance educational opportunities	Ongoing	Rangers	Parks and Countryside	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
6. Marketing				
Open the Telegraph Station on busy days and at the request of visiting groups	Annual	Rangers	Parks and Countryside/ Volunteers	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
Produce information leaflets/resource material for schools	Ongoing	Manager Rangers	Parks and Countryside Eco Schools Officer	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029


Promote events and activities including those organised by the Friends of Hilbre – open days, seal watching, and other groups	On-going	Rangers	Parks and Countryside Friends of Hilbre	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
Look at opportunities to develop the site heritage including Green Heritage Site Application and site appraisal of features		Manager	Parks and Countryside	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
Improve information provided on Council's internet site for visitors and teachers	2024-25	Rangers Digital Marketing	Parks and Countryside	2024 2025
Provide information about the Hilbre Islands at the Wirral Country Park Visitor Centre	On-going	Manager Rangers	Parks and Countryside	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
7. Management				
Provide regular updates to the Hilbre Advisory Committee to reflect progress	Every 6 months	Manager Rangers	Parks and Countryside	2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029
Ensure compliance with the Parks and Countryside Maintenance Specification Specific to the Hilbre Islands	On-going	Manager Rangers		2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029



Workbench in the Buoymaster's Workshop

5.3 Project Bank

These projects require additional support and funding outside of the general day to day management and maintenance budget.

PROJECT BANK		
Project	Est cost	Comments
Hilbre Cam & live streaming	£3k	With Liverpool University
Zero compost toilets	£4k	To improve waste management
Boatshed refurbishment	£3k	Rangers storage and mess room and safe access
Access for all	£10k	Especially in front of Middle Eye. MMO/NE consent
Refurbish the Victorian cluster of buildings	£1m	Will require external funding and could be undertaken in stages as funding becomes available
Refurbish gas supply and provide a new gas hob in the Day Room	£3k 	Will provide hot water and cooking for visiting groups and heating for possible overnight stays
Provide learning opportunities for research on the islands	£3k	Could include use of the Day Room or refurbished Boathouse for overnight accommodation
Provide digital automatically updated tide and safe crossing information	£3k	Could be incorporated into the existing West Kirby Beach Noticeboard or displayed outside the Wirral Watersports Centre
Bracken control	£3k	Could include purchase of specialist machinery
Survey the Starfish Control Room	£3k	Needs to be secured and professionally surveyed



The Boatshed on Hilbre Island

5.4 Hilbre Island Local Nature Reserve Bylaws

In these Byelaws “the Reserve” means the pieces or parcels of land containing in the whole 49 hectares or thereabouts and situated in the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral declared to be managed as a Nature Reserve by the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral.

Throughout these Byelaws the expression “the Council” means the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral.

“Firearm” shall have the same meaning as in Section 57 of the Firearms Act, 1968.

An act necessary to the proper execution of his duty in the Reserve by an officer of the Council or by any person or servant of any person employed by the Council shall not be deemed an offence against these Byelaws.

No person under the age of 16 shall be allowed access to the Reserve unless accompanied by a person aged 16 or over who has been issued with an appropriate permit.

Within the Reserve the following acts are hereby prohibited:

- Taking, molesting or intentionally disturbing, injuring or killing any living creature
- Taking or intentionally disturbing or destroying the eggs, larvae, pupae or other immature stages,
- or the place used for the shelter or protection of any living creature
- Spreading or using any net, or setting or using any lamp or other instrument, or any snare or lure,
- for the taking, injury or destruction of any living creature
- Intentionally removing any material from any area of the Reserve
- Intentionally removing, displacing, damaging or defacing any tree, shrub, plant, fungus or part thereof, or any unfashioned mineral including water
- Intentionally bringing or permitting to be brought into the Reserve any living creature, or the egg
- of any living creature, or any plant, or any seed or any other part of any plant, in such
- circumstances that it is likely that such creature or plant will reproduce or propagate itself, or such
- egg will hatch, or such seed will germinate
- Driving, riding, propelling or leaving any mechanically propelled vehicle (including hovercraft)
- Bringing into or permitting to remain any animal. Provided that this Byelaw shall not apply to any
- dog kept on a lead and under proper control and effectively restrained from injuring or disturbing
- any person, animal or bird or damaging or defacing any tree, shrub, plant, fungus or part thereof

- Erecting, occupying or using any tent, shed, hide, van or other structure
- Lighting any fire, stove, heater, firework or other appliance capable of causing fire or discarding or throwing any lighted match or lighted substance in a manner likely to cause a fire
- Boating, bathing or wading in any water body other than the sea
- Any act which pollutes or is likely to pollute any water
- Intentionally or recklessly removing or displacing any notice board, notice, fence, barrier, post, boardwalk, bridge, hide or other structure
- Being in possession of a firearm, catapult, bow and arrow or a crossbow
- Discharging a firearm, catapult, bow and arrow or a cross bow
- Flying any model aircraft or sailing any model boat in any water body other than the sea
- The use of any apparatus for the transmission, reception, reproduction or amplification of sound
- or images by electrical or mechanical means, except apparatus designed and used to aid
- defective hearing, in such a manner as to cause annoyance to or interfere with the quiet
- enjoyment of the Reserve by any other members of the public or to cause harm to any living
- creature or plant in the Reserve
- Intentionally obstructing any officer of the Council or any person or the servant of any person employed or 55pprox.55ed by the Council in the execution of any works, including research or scientific work connected with the laying out, maintenance or management of the Reserve
- Intentionally leaving items in a place other than a receptacle provided by the Council for deposit of litter or refuse
- Entering at any time any part of the Reserve where notice to keep out has been posted by order of the Council
- Turning out any animal or poultry to feed or graze
- Landing any aircraft except in emergency
- Using any device designed or adapted for detecting or locating any metal or mineral in the Reserve
- Riding any bicycle, tricycle or similar machine elsewhere than in a place indicated by a notice as being available for the purpose.

5.5 Statutory protection

Fisheries are protected by:

The Marine and Coastal Access Act

Managed nationally by the Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities

Managed locally by NWIFSFA and Dee Harbour Master

Dee Estuary and North Wirral Foreshore Sensitive Marine Area

Wildlife and Countryside Act

Enforcement by Natural England and Merseyside Police

Civil Aviation Authority designated Bird Roosts/Bird Sanctuary protected by:

Civil Aviation Authority

Bird roosts are protected by:

The Hilbre Islands Dee Estuary Site of Special Scientific Interest

Enforcement by Natural England and Merseyside Police

The Hilbre Islands and Dee Estuary is protected by:

Special Protection Area

Special Area for Conservation

International Wetland (Ramsar Site)

The Road Traffic Act

Enforcement by Natural England and Merseyside Police

Grade II Listed Buildings are protected by:

Enforcement by English Heritage And Local Authority and Building Conservation Officer

The Local Nature Reserve is protected by:

Hilbre Island Byelaws

Wildlife and Countryside Act

Enforcement by the Local Authority, Natural England and Merseyside Police

The Hilbre Islands Local Geological Site

UK RIGS Cheshire RIGS

Enforcement by the Local Authority



Sunset at the Bird Hide overlooking Niffy Bay

5.6 List of main manmade features

Feature	Description and Comments
The Telegraph Station Interpretive Centre	The Hilbre Island Telegraph Station is a Grade II listed building and is in good condition. The station is used as a visitor information point and contains historical artifacts. It is one of the last examples of the Holyhead to Liverpool optical telegraphs.
Telegraph House	Reasonable 2 bedroom single-storey property with minor interior repairs required. Outside well now contaminated with salt water
The Buoymaster's house	The Buoymaster's house is a two-story building with an entrance hall two reception rooms, one pantry and kitchen and under stairs storage. Stairs lead from the hallway to four bedrooms and one room with an obsolete chemical toilet. The building is structurally sound but is in a poor state of repair.
Buoymaster's Store and Workshop	The Buoymaster's Workshop consists of a large single room used as a museum. There is a pair of non-original large entrance doors Buoymaster's Store – a mostly single story building with loft space accessed via the Buoymaster's Workshop and extra two rooms above the kitchen accessed via a bridge. There are two rooms and three bedrooms as well as a kitchen and a small bathroom. The access to the outside from the bathroom leads to the Pigsty.
Day Room	In 2008 this building was converted from a Bunkhouse and including the fitting of a new heating system and kitchen
Lifeboat Station and Slipway	The lifeboat station was constructed in 1849. A sea watching hide has been constructed over the Next to the old lifeboat Station is room that housed a tide gauge. (No on display at Wirral Country Park). The lifeboat slipway has suffered significant storm damage. A number of repairs have been carried out but full restoration is very unlikely.
Slate Shed	Opposite the Day Room and recently refurbished with new roof, seating for wet weather and interpretive displays.
Goat Shed	Store room next to the Day Room
Telegraph Pigsty	Attached to goat shed covered and uncovered areas
Fog Cottage	Storage outbuilding. Non-working diesel generator in separate room
Boathouse	Brick and sandstone building at the top of telegraph slipway. Reasonable condition and used as a wood store
Buoymaster's Pigsty	Attached to west end of the buoy masters store
Starfish Control Room	Buried brick structure. Not accessible
Cart Shed	Three sided sandstone building in main paddock with no roof
North Bridge	Solid sandstone crossing point
Window Bridge	Historic sandstone bridge constructed from windows partly from an old church
Wind Turbine	Base and shaft only
Cliff Top Walls	Around Telegraph House and Buoymaster's House.
South Slipway	Concrete and sandstone slipway with sandstone wall
Main Pond	Largest freshwater habitat on the reserve

Feature	Description and Comments
Salt Works	Excavated wells and sluice gates with associated channels
Tide Gauge Bridge	Concrete bridge
Tide Gauge Cutting	Excavated channel
Telegraph House steps	Sandstone steps
Bird Hide	Wooden structure overlooking Niffy Bay. Poor Condition and not usable
Various sea defence walls	Good
Zero water toilets for public use	Reasonable condition and well used. Looking to convert to Zero Discharge toilets at about £4k



5.7 Green Flag Judging Results 2023

Manager's response to Green Flag Comments 2023:




The area of the Hilbre Islands Local Nature Reserve covers the area of sandy and rocky foreshore. The Rangers, Friends of Hilbre and other volunteer groups undertake regular litter picking including removal of discarded dog waste. Not all dog waste is from visits to the islands and could be from other areas around the coast and washed up with tides. We will however always ensure that the areas are litter picked and clean and tidy for visitors and safe for wildlife.

We are delighted to have a strong 'island community' that commits to providing a welcoming and sustainable environment and to fly the Green Flag over the Hilbre Islands Local Nature Reserve.



Site Quality Evaluation (Mystery Shop)

Name of Site	Hilbre Island Local Nature Reserve	Managing organisation	Wirral Council		
Weather Conditions	Hot, some cloud, very windy				
Date of assessment	11/08/23	Time (from – to)	10.40 to 2.55		
Overall Result	Green – Meets the standard with no concerns raised Amber – Meets the standard but with some minor areas of concern Red – Does not meet the requirement with major issues identified				
Result: (✓)	Is the site of Green Flag Award Standard? Green <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amber <input type="checkbox"/> Red <input type="checkbox"/>				
Grading		Strengths and Recommendations			
Each question is graded Green, Amber or Red NG (not graded) is used when the question can't be answered or is not applicable – for which an explanation is provided.		Strengths and recommendation are provided to support each grading. Photographs can be included throughout, or at the end of the report to support the feedback from the judge(s) in relation to both strengths and recommendations. Please refer to the Raising the Standard guidance manual here for further information on the criteria.			
A Welcoming Place					
1. Is the site welcoming?	NG	G	A	R	There is a very pleasant walk of around 2 miles to the island. On approaching the visitor begins to enjoy the natural scenery and rock formations. Very inviting.
		✓			
2. Is the site easy to find?	NG	G	A	R	Very easy to identify from West Kirby. Information at the slipway advises on best times to visit and the best route.
		✓			
3. Is signage in good condition?	NG	G	A	R	All signage is excellent, informational and educational. There is also much safety signage. Considering the site is windswept by sea/salt spray, all signage is remarkably clean.
		✓			
4. Is the site accessible to all users?	NG	G	A	R	The natural character and topography of the nature reserve along with the 2 mile walk along wet sand and rocks generally isn't suitable for disabled people and those with limited mobility. However, if the visitor is able to travel to Hilbre through suitable transport then there are some good accessible tracks and mown grass paths.
		✓			
Healthy, Safe and Secure					
5. Are facilities on site in good and safe condition?	NG	G	A	R	The facilities for visitors are benches and compost toilets, all of which are in safe and very good condition.
		✓			
6. Did you feel safe during the visit?	NG	G	A	R	The site attracts friendly people , many naturalists, etc. Also, the good information at the slipway on best route and tides is very reassuring.
		✓			
7. Are dogs being controlled and the site free of dog fouling?	NG	G	A	R	All dogs were under control and no fouling witnessed. However, a few discarded bags with poo were noticed on the sands and the rocks. This doesn't affect the judging at all as it isn't on the island, but the Council may want to address this separately as the plastic will be taken by the sea and not good for sea life.
		✓			

Well Maintained and Clean						
8. Is litter, waste and recycling managed?	NG	G	A	R	The site is remarkably clean and free of litter. Possibly the type of visitors the site attracts are very responsible. Human excrement is recycled through the compost toilets.	
		✓				
9. Is there a good standard of horticulture maintenance?	NG	G	A	R	The site does not lend itself to formal horticulture.	
	✓					
10. Is there a good standard of arboriculture maintenance?	NG	G	A	R	There <u>are</u> no tree on the island due to conditions	
	✓					
11. Are buildings and infrastructure such as walls, paths, steps and structures in good condition?	NG	G	A		All walls, tracks, steps, fences, <u>buildings</u> and heritage ruins are all in remarkable condition for a windswept island.	
		✓				
12. Is equipment used by the public and staff in good condition?	NG	G	A	R	The equipment is just benches; all in good <u>condition</u>	
		✓				
Environmental Management						
13. Is there evidence that the site is managed to have a positive impact on the environment?	NG	G	A	R	The site is sensitively managed for the wildlife and unique flora. Compost toilets are on site and solar power was noticed. Much information on site regarding the safety/rescue of injured or in danger seals and dolphins.	
		✓				
Landscape and Heritage						
14. Are heritage and/or landscape features in good condition?	NG	G	A	R	The natural landscape of the island is <u>respected</u> and it appears that there is a positive and favourable 'minimal intervention' management. The focus on heritage is apparent and informed – all aspects are suitably conserved.	
		✓				
Community Involvement						
15. Is there evidence of community involvement and engagement?	NG	G	A	R	It is apparent by site (and slipway) signage and notices that there is much community engagement and potential to volunteer. Web sites and social media also give evidence.	
		✓				
16. Is user feedback positive?	NG	G	A	R	This is a <u>well loved</u> site to visit, attracting naturalists, historians and general interest.	
		✓				
Marketing and Communication						
17. Is there evidence of marketing and promotion, including <u>events</u> ? e.g. notice boards, in buildings, website & social media.	NG	G	A	R	Signage on site and at the slipway promotes the site well along with web sites and social media.	
		✓				
18. Is the correct year <u>flag</u> flying and certificate on display?	NG	G	A	R	Flag prominent and certificate displayed.	
		✓				
Overall Result (✓)	Is the site of Green Flag Award Standard?					
	Green		Amber		Red	

Final comments: *This is a well-received and well-managed site that is precious to locals and visitors. The level of management is perfect. Congratulations to all involved in retaining the Green Flag status.*

5.8 Green Flag Judging Results 2024

Manager's response to Green Flag Comments 2024:

Green waste is removed from the islands and taken to Wirral Country Park where we have a Green Waste Compound (with a licence exemption from the Environment Agency). We will be applying for a Green Flag Heritage Award supporting the work undertaken with the Friends of Hilbre and the newly constituted Hilbre Island Community Land Trust.

FEEDBACK REPORT: 2024-25

Name of Site	Hilbre Island
Managing Organisation	Wirral Council
Date of Assessment	3 rd May 2024

OVERALL RESULT	Pass <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Fail <input type="checkbox"/>
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NOTES ABOUT THIS REPORT

Strengths and recommendations are provided for each criteria.
Photographs are included, where appropriate, to support the feedback from the judge(s) in relation to both strengths and recommendations.
Please refer to the Raising the Standard guidance manual [here](#) for further information on the criteria.

DESK ASSESSMENT

(Management plan and supporting documentation)

Criteria	Strengths	Recommendations
Presentation	A very comprehensive management plan longer than I would like but full of very interesting information especially on Flora and Forna. Very easy to find the information that the Green Flag	None

Criteria	Strengths	Recommendations
	requires, and some great photograph (old and new) through the document that draws the reader in to discover more.	
Health, Safety & Security	Main pathways are easily defined, and some construction has been necessary over the years because of erosion to make them safe. A Defibrillator has been installed on the Island near the main buildings and is easy to find. Signed is very good because this is a natural site with cliff edges. Good site lines in the majority of the island. The notice board on the mainland by the boating lake. warns the public of the danger of being cut off by the tides as well as have a current tide 'Tide timetable' displayed. H&S workplaces are inspected every 3 months.	I would mention that all your Rangers are First Aid trained, and risk assessment are undertaken especially for guided walks.
Maintenance of Equipment, Buildings & Landscape	Because of the high winds and rain the buildings are inspected after each 'Named Storms'. The councils do provide electric tools, but conventional tools are need on this site as well.	Just mention about the progressive change to electric tools where possible and the council switching towards some electric vehicles (electric vehicles are Not suitable for this Job)
Litter, Cleanliness, Vandalism	Litter picks are undertaken and organised by the Rangers and deposited at the local supermarket recycling bins. Graffiti (if it occurs) is removed within 24 hours	None
Environmental Management	With the absence of main services on the island the toilets are being investigated to provide a	What happens to Green Waste? This section is a bit light but

Criteria	Strengths	Recommendations
	more environmental approach. Vehicles are washed down at the depot where the oil and water are separated before going it the main drains.	thought the document you can find information about the flower birds and seal management.
Biodiversity, Landscape & Heritage	An excellent section, good refences throughout especial about the rock formation being linked to that of North Wales and St Bees Head in Cumbria. The History is well coved with good use of old photographs depicting on how life was on the island. 'Listed Builds' are named.	None, this is good, and more information keeps cropping up throughout the documents.
Community Involvement	Very strong community commitment and they are listed but I think the two main one are the 'Friends Group' and the 'Bird Watchers' who contribute a lot more than you would expect from normal groups.	None
Marketing & Communication	Notice boards throughout the island providing maps and items of history there are displays in the old telegraph house and the Buoymaster's House. Information is also broadcasted through social media channels and the council's social communication channels.	None
Overall Management	A well put together document covering the management of the island and how it fits in with the surround countryside.	None

Comments: a really good document very comprehensive with some great photograph old and new and considering I am dyslexic I found it easy to read and interesting.

FIELD ASSESSMENT

Criteria	Strengths	Recommendations
A Welcoming Place	A large information board by the boating lake that provide information of how to get to Hilbre Island (walking, no vehicles) and safety requirements. Emergency contact numbers are provided. Once on the island the main path an information board.	None, all information on this board is related to safety.
Healthy, Safe & Secure	Signage containing warning of danger (cliffs), defibrillator has been installed near the main buildings. Fire extinguishers are in all the main building where people meet. Good open aspect across the island and natural footpaths, some mowed footpaths have been created. Rangers are trained to administrate First Aid.	None
Well Maintained & Clean	Because of the exposed location of the island general maintenance is carried out during the spring and summer months The ranges liaise with approved contractors for repairs. Litter picks are held and deposited at the local supermarket recycling bins regular. Visitors are encouraged to take litter home.	There has been a lot of bracken. cleaning to stop it taking over. What did you do with the green waste.
Environmental Management	The Ranger and the Friends regularly inspect and report dangerous issues as well as recording flora and fauna activity. There are solar panels to provide power to monitoring equipment and to some of the outbuildings. This is a SSSI and has to be managed to the standard required.	None

Criteria	Strengths	Recommendations
Biodiversity Landscape & Heritage	The balance between flora and fauna factors is important to the biodiversity of the island and is monitored by the Rangers and the associated groups. Landscape is controlled by the elements and the heritage is well displayed in the Telegraph House and the Buoymaster's House.	None
Community Involvement	Very strong links with lots of various institutions and organisations especially John Moores University. The Friends Group do a lot to assist the Rangers in events and guided walks.	None
Marketing and Communication	The island has its own social media outlet, so do the Friends. The Ranger does a monthly broadcast on Radio Merseyside about nature and other related items to the island. Posters are created and place in notice board around the mainland.	None
Management	Excellent, you need to appreciate nature to manage a site like this., and you can see it is. From restoration of the buildings to the recording of migrating birds.	None

Summary and additional comments:

(Highlighting the result, and the main areas of strength and recommendation)

What can you say, it is full of natural beauty that changes with the seasons, it provides a lot of habitat for various species and the electronic tracking of birds provides so much accurate information to recognised organisations all over the world. Who would think that you could have an organised Butterfly Walk on such a windswept island, but the Friends Group have! It's good how you interact with John Mores University not just on environmental projects but interior design and art as well. It is a privilege to be asked to assess this site - the

Rangers know what they are talking about and have the well-being of this site at heart. Have you ever thought of going for the Green Flag Heritage Award because you have got all there. Well, done you deserve a Green Flag



5.9 Wirral Parks and Countryside – Sustainability Statement

WIRRAL PARKS & COUNTRYSIDE TEAM

WIRRAL PARKS & COUNTRYSIDE SERVICE — SUSTAINABILITY

Aim : Wirral Parks & Countryside teams putting sustainability at the heart of decision making and service delivery.

Key Commitments:

In all our activities, We will :

- **Improve our sustainable performance** review, annually report, and continually improve our sustainability performance , including progressing on carbon reduction.
- **Comply with environmental legislation**, regulations and relevant codes of practise.
- **Purchase sustainability.** Select and promote goods and services , using purchasing criteria which balance economic, social and environmental factors, requiring our suppliers to address similar issues.
- **Use Natural resources sustainably.** Implement an efficiency programme to reduce energy and water demand and promote and install low carbon technologies in our buildings/ other constructions where possible, requiring contractors to address similar issues e.g. supplier miles, procurement, local labour etc.
- **Travel sustainably .** Encourage sustainable travel by staff, service users, contractors, residents and visitors.
- **Minimise waste.** Reduce, re-use and recycle resources, as far as is practicable , and ensure responsible disposal of all its residual waste.
- **Manage land sustainability.** Protect , conserve and enhance our natural and built environment, safeguarding heritage , enhancing habitats and biodiversity and the amenity value of the parks and countryside.
- **Raise awareness** of this policy and related sustainability issues amongst employees , contractors, service users, residents and visitors.
- **Work In partnership** with other organisations to promote wider responsibility towards sustainability, highlight best practice, share information and encourage joint working.



5.10: Quarterly Workplace Health and Safety Inspection Checklist



WORKPLACE ANNUAL INSPECTION CHECKLIST (ANNUAL)

Guidance on completing this form is available in the Health & Safety Management Arrangements for Risk Assessments

Name of building/workplace:	Click or tap here to enter text.		
Date inspection undertaken:	/ /		
Building / workplace description <i>(including old or new, location, number of floors, approx. number of rooms, etc.)</i>			
Click or tap here to enter text.			
Usage <i>(office, Childrens Centre, workshop, library, Leisure Centre, Community Centre, etc)</i>	Click or tap here to enter text.		
Public footfall <i>(high medium or low)</i>	Click or tap here to enter text.		
Additional risks <i>(frequented by young children, elderly, people with special needs, etc)</i>	Click or tap here to enter text.		
Level Of Risk (based on use or occupancy - see below)			
Low <input type="checkbox"/>	Medium/Moderate <input type="checkbox"/>	High <input type="checkbox"/>	Very High <input type="checkbox"/>

RISK VALUE	RISKS
Low	Primarily used as offices
Medium/Moderate	General access for the public or other workshops, etc
High	Part or whole of premises primarily or routinely used by vulnerable people, including young children (4yrs and under) and elderly
Very High	Sleeping accommodation

Hazard	Through observations of all areas identify the areas of control that should be in place to reduce the risk and tick either yes / no to indicate if they exist?	Yes	No	N/A	Further information required: 1) If ' yes ', the measures in place, or 2) If ' no ', any further action, which is to be included in the action plan below
Slip Trip Fall (Internal - public, communal rooms & areas, and unoccupied rooms) Failure to ensure that slip, trip, fall hazards could lead to accidents that result in injuries such as broken bones, bruising, etc	Are all walkways, entrances and exits free from obstructions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Is there adequate lighting to highlight slip, trip or fall hazards to staff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Are the areas free from trip hazards such as trailing cables, boxes, files or bags on the floor?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Are the floors and surfaces clean, tidy and in good condition? Note: this includes mats, floorboards and carpets and examples include uneven floors, loose floors, bubbled area's on the carpets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Are there sufficient areas to hang coats and store personal belongings so as not to cause slip or trip hazards?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Are the barrier mats near to entrances in good condition including not curling at the ends thereby posing trip hazards?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.

Hazard	Through observations of all areas identify the areas of control that should be in place to reduce the risk and tick either yes / no to indicate if they exist?	Yes	No	N/A	Further information required: 1) If ' yes ', the measures in place, or 2) If ' no ', any further action, which is to be included in the action plan below
	Is slip resistant flooring installed in appropriate areas such as toilets, showers, etc?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Is Slippery Floor signage used when surfaces are wet to cordon the area until safe?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Where possible, is the workplace cleaned early and late in the working day to prevent floor contamination throughout high footfall?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Are there any other slip trip fall hazards within the workplace?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	If ' yes ' provide details: Click or tap here to enter text.
Storage Failure to store items correctly could result in an accident of failing items or staff falling whilst collecting resulting in head or body injuries	Is there sufficient purpose made storage space to avoid using the floor?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Are all items securely stored / stacked? Note: items should NOT be stored on top of shelves, all items should be stored on the actual shelves and shelves should not be overloaded.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Are heavy items should be stored at waist height?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Are the shelving/racks/cabinets safe and secure with no missing bolts, no cracks/splits in the shelving, etc and, also not overloaded?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Is correct equipment available to access items stored at height e.g. mini steps / climbing stool?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Are there any other storage hazards within the workplace?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	If ' yes ' provide details: Click or tap here to enter text.
Offices, rooms & receptions	Sufficient areas to hang coats and store personal belongings so as not to cause slip or trip hazards?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.

Hazard	Through observations of all areas identify the areas of control that should be in place to reduce the risk and tick either yes / no to indicate if they exist?	Yes	No	N/A	Further information required: 1) If ' yes ', the measures in place, or 2) If ' no ', any further action, which is to be included in the action plan below
Failure to safely manage offices, rooms and receptions could lead to injuries and ill health	Is there sufficient natural light to carry out the work safely together with measures to protect against any glare such as blinds?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Are light bulbs and fluorescent tubes in good working order?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Are there adequate welfare facilities consisting of hot and cold running water, toilet facilities, somewhere to rest and eat meals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Is there a system for removing waste on a daily basis?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Is all furniture in good repair, that is undamaged and stable?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Are permanent fixtures in good condition and securely fastened, e.g. cupboards, display boards, shelving?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Are windows secure, in a good condition and, where required, open and close easily?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Is there a 'clear desk policy' for receptions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	For Medium , High and Very High Risk Premises: Any hazardous substances, including cleaning products, kept to a minimum and locked away in a secure location? Note: there should be COSHH risk assessments for all substances used	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	For High and Very High Risk Premises; Is safety glass fitted to doors and other windows or glazed areas that are lower than 80cm?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.

Hazard	Through observations of all areas identify the areas of control that should be in place to reduce the risk and tick either yes / no to indicate if they exist?	Yes	No	N/A	Further information required: 1) If ' yes ', the measures in place, or 2) If ' no ', any further action, which is to be included in the action plan below
	For High and Very High Risk Premises: Are lock and security catches fitted to windows to restrict openings to 10cm or less?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	For High and Very High Risk Premises: Are finger guards fitted to the hinged areas of doors that present a risk pinching, crushing or amputating?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Are there any other hazards relating to offices, rooms and receptions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	If ' yes ', provide details: Click or tap here to enter text.
Electricity (Internal) Failure to manage electricity in the workplace could expose staff to live electricity leading to injuries such as electric shock, heart attack or secondary injuries	Are all areas free from overloaded extension cables e.g. 'daisy chaining' extension cables, additional extension plug on a 4-gang extension lead, etc?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Have all portable electrical appliances that are not hand-held and are moved occasionally (e.g. fan heaters, table lamps, etc.) been PAT tested within the last year with labels to show their last test date? Note: this includes all equipment which staff have brought in been tested i.e. radio's, toasters, fans, cables, etc. All equipment MUST be tested before being used. Office/IT equipment (e.g. desktops, VDU screens, MFD's, etc.) should be PAT tested within the last 4 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Are flexible cables secured to the baskets or to the floor?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Staff have been informed that they are not allowed to interfere with or repair electrical equipment unless it is safe and they are authorised?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	There are arrangements for electrical equipment to be switched off when not in use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.

Hazard	Through observations of all areas identify the areas of control that should be in place to reduce the risk and tick either yes / no to indicate if they exist?	Yes	No	N/A	Further information required: 1) If ' yes ', the measures in place, or 2) If ' no ', any further action, which is to be included in the action plan below
	Are there procedures to ensure that defective equipment is removed from use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Staff have been informed that they are not allowed to bring in their own electrical equipment unless they have been authorised?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Have visual checks of cables, plugs and insulation been carried out to see if they are damaged or worn? Note: all cables are in an acceptable condition and not split or damaged. Wires should not be exposed. Plugs are not cracked or in unsafe condition. If unsure please isolate the equipment and speak to the relevant manager.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	For premises routinely used by young children (i.e. 4yrs and under), are there measures to prevent them coming into contact with live electrical sockets?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Do automatic internal doors function correctly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Are there any other hazards relating to electricity in the workplace?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	If ' yes ', provide details: Click or tap here to enter text.
Asbestos (Internal) Failure to manage ACM's could result in disturbance and the release of asbestos fibres leading to chronic health issues such as mesothelioma, and asbestosis	Is there an Asbestos Management Plan on site and has it been kept up to date?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Are there arrangements for the copy of the asbestos survey and inspection report to be kept on site and be viewable to all contractors prior to any work carried out and for the contractors to sign to confirm that they have read and understood the report before any work starts on site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	If any staff are liable to disturb asbestos in the workplace, are there measures to prevent access and/or warn them not to touch or disturb the material?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.

Hazard	Through observations of all areas identify the areas of control that should be in place to reduce the risk and tick either yes / no to indicate if they exist?	Yes	No	N/A	Further information required: 1) If ' yes ', the measures in place, or 2) If ' no ', any further action, which is to be included in the action plan below
	Are there arrangements for annual asbestos inspections and for submitting their return to Corporate Asset and Facilities Management?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Are there emergency arrangements to deal with potential exposure to asbestos if suspected?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
General Procedures (Internal)	Are there sufficient First Aiders (see First Aid Management Arrangements)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
Failure to manage and communicate appropriate procedures could lead to delays in responding to emergencies or not following recognised procedures	Do First Aiders ensure that first aid boxes are replenished and, if required, carry out weekly checks of defibrillators? Note: First aid box should be available with the HSE's minimum recommendation of stock (see First Aid Arrangements). The first aid box should be easily located (green sign with white cross), all stock should be within best before date	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Is there signage displayed showing first aiders, fire marshals and terrorist threat procedures? Note: ideally they should be displayed together. Signage should be updated if first aiders leave etc	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Other than fire signage, where required, is other safety signage visibly displayed and in good condition including, - blue Mandatory (e.g. wear PPE), - red Prohibition (e.g. No Smoking), - green Information (e.g. social distancing, contra flow systems) and - yellow Warning (e.g. slippery surface) such as covering including	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Is the Health and Safety at Work Policy Notice displayed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.

Hazard	Through observations of all areas identify the areas of control that should be in place to reduce the risk and tick either yes / no to indicate if they exist?	Yes	No	N/A	Further information required: 1) If ' yes ', the measures in place, or 2) If ' no ', any further action, which is to be included in the action plan below
	Are there procedures to ensure that all staff and visitors wear their visitor badges?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Do the emergency alarms at receptions function correctly and is there a 'tried and tested' response if activated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Have the alarms on the disabled toilets been tested and staff aware on what to do in the event of an emergency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Are there procedures to ensure that all staff including new starters are aware of the emergency procedures, e.g. fire, terrorist threats, etc	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Are the fire extinguishers in the correct position and not moved or used to prop open doors?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Are the extinguishers on an annual inspection programme (should be a sticker on the extinguisher showing the date of the last inspection)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Are there records that the fire alarm has been tested on a weekly basis and drills carried out every 6 months?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Are there procedures to ensure fire exits are never blocked and are clear at all times?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
External Hazards Failure to ensure that external hazards including, slips, trips, falls and traps could	Is there adequate lighting on the main access and egress routes (including car parks) to highlight slip, trip or fall hazards to staff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Are all paving slabs secure and paths on the main access and egress routes in good condition to give a flat, even surface?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.

Hazard	Through observations of all areas identify the areas of control that should be in place to reduce the risk and tick either yes / no to indicate if they exist?	Yes	No	N/A	Further information required: 1) If ' yes ', the measures in place, or 2) If ' no ', any further action, which is to be included in the action plan below
lead to accidents that result in injuries such as broken bones, bruising, etc	Are the parking areas free of potholes on the main access and egress routes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Are the main access and egress routes free from leaves, mud and algae?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Is the nosing of steps covered in an anti-slip coating?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	In car parks, are there barriers or others means to separate vehicles from pedestrians?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Are there arrangements for the grit bins to be checked in October to ensure that there is sufficient grit and a shovel?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Have areas to be gritted in the event of icy periods been identified including main paths and emergency exits?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Are there procedures to be alerted when there are going to be icy periods and for someone to grit the identified areas before the arrival of staff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Do automatic gates open and close correctly? Note: motion or optical sensors installed on the side will trigger the opening and closing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Do manual gates open and close correctly and are there measures to ensure that they do not trap fingers/hands when opened (e.g. stoppers to prevent opening fully, latches to ensure they don't swing shut, etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap here to enter text.
	Are there any other external hazards?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	If ' yes ', provide details: Click or tap here to enter text.

5.11 Annual Parks Safety Inspection Checklist

Parks and Open Spaces Annual H&S Inspection

SITE		
Date of inspection:		Signed:
Inspector (1):		
Inspector (2):		
Items referred to (Asset Department) / (External Contractor) for repairs:		
General comments/observations/recommendations:		
Items for Managers attention:		
Manager name:		Signed:
Date checked:		
Manager's comments:		

ENVIRONMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A	FURTHER ACTION
Is the tree canopy above footpaths and play areas visibly free of dead, dying, diseased or loose branches?				
Is the tree canopy above surrounding pavements/roads visibly free of dead, dying, diseased or loose branches?				
Are all footpaths clear of overhanging vegetation/branches that could make contact at head height or below?				
Are all invasive or poisonous plant species identified with the team and either cordoned off, due to be removed or on a treatment plan?				
Have all known hotspots been checked for sharps/needles/drug paraphernalia or broken glass?				
Are there clear sightlines that enable people and vehicle users to see what's ahead and around them?				
INFRASTRUCTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A	FURTHER ACTION
Are footpaths in a safe condition and free of trip hazards?				
Are steps in a safe condition and free of trip hazards?				
Are bridges in safe condition with no visible subsidence of the balustrades, walking surfaces safe and railings securely fitted?				
Are fencing and gates safe with no gaps, sharp edges, or protruding fixings?				
Are culvert grills safe, clear, adequately fixed, and free-flowing?				
STREET FURNITURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A	FURTHER ACTION
Are the benches safe to sit on with no cracks or visible signs of damage? Are the legs free from cracks and have no visible sign of damage?				
Are the bins set in the ground correctly? Are the frames free from visible signs of damage? Does the bin have a liner in it?				
Are the lampposts/Telegraph poles structurally sound (free of cracks/splits), free of damage and access hatch securely fastened?				
Are the feeder pillars free of paint damage, structurally sound (free of cracks/splits), and door secure and locked?				
Are CCTV camera poles structurally sound (free of cracks/splits), free from damage? Are the cameras/LED units damaged at all?				
SITE SIGNAGE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A	FURTHER ACTION
Are water safety warnings visible and free of surrounding vegetation?				
Are fence notice boards or signage in a safe condition with no damage, securely fastened, with no sharp edges or protruding fixings?				

Are interpretation lecterns in a safe condition with no damage, securely fastened, with no sharp edges or protruding fixings? Are they eligible and free of graffiti?				
Are upright notice boards/interpretations in a safe condition with no damage, securely fastened, with no sharp edges or protruding fixings? Are they eligible and free of graffiti?				
Are entry signs in a safe condition with no damage, securely fastened, with no sharp edges or protruding fixings?				
Fire assemble points are present, and are the signs visibly clear and in the correct position?				
Vehicle restrictions - are they in the correct place and are clear to read?				
Service yard site safety signages - are they in the correct place and are clear to read?				
MONUMENTS AND SCULPTURES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A	FURTHER ACTION
Do monuments, bandstands, flagpoles, and sculptures appear structurally sound? Are they free from damage/graffiti?				
Do walls appear structural sound: free from bowing, large mortar cracks, loose/missing bricks, or copings.				
SPORTS AND PLAY FACILITIES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A	FURTHER ACTION
Are tennis court surfaces, signage, nets, fencing, gates and surrounds safe and in visibly good condition?				
Are MUGA surfaces, signage, fencing, gates and surrounds, goalmouths, and basketball hoops safe and in visibly good condition?				
Are Outdoor Gym surfaces, signage, and equipment safe and in visibly good condition?				
Are Play Area landscape features: Shelters, fencing, trees and vegetation safe and in visibly good condition?				
Are games greens fencing, surrounds, gates, and surfaces safe and free from damage or deterioration? Has the irrigation system been tested recently and serviced?				
EXTERNALS OF BUILDINGS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A	FURTHER ACTION
Are building roofs visibly in good condition with no missing tiles or lead?				
Are building walls visibly in good condition? (Timber cladding, brick, plaster)				
Are gutters, downpipes and surface water drains visibly clear?				
Are manholes sitting flush and secure to the frame? Is drainage from buildings free from issues?				

EXTERNAL ACCESS AND EGRESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A	FURTHER ACTION
Are all access routes kept clear of combustible materials?				
Are external access and exit routes clear, in good order and free from trip and slip hazards?				
EXTERNAL AREAS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A	FURTHER ACTION
Are structures, i.e., sheds, containers, and external storage, in good repair and secure?				
Are fragile roofs adequately safeguarded and signed?				
Are adjoining walls, fences, and gates in good condition?				
Are service yard materials stored safely and secure? Are walking/driving surfaces free from slip/trip/puncture hazards?				



Hilbre Island, Hoylake

[1549]

5.12 Annual Property Return

Facility Name: _____

Facility Address _____

Postcode: _____

1. Servicing, Testing and Inspections

Please enter all details requested. If not applicable then put N/A in the box.

		<i>insert Company name or persons name</i>	Date:
Fire Alarm system			
Fire Co-ordinator & 6 monthly drill			
Emergency Lights			
NICEIC certificate			
PAT certificate		Test: Visual:	
Boiler/s	Serviced/Maintained by		
	Zurich Inspection		
Lift/s	Serviced/Maintained by		
	Zurich Inspection:		
Catering equipment			
Asbestos 6 monthly to Tech Serv			
Water Hygiene – Temps			
Shower heads last disinfected			
Lightning Conductors			
Air conditioning Units			

2. Energy Monitoring

	Meter ref Number	Reading
Electricity		
Gas		
Water		

3. Declaration

This is to confirm that the above servicing, test and inspections have been carried out by a competent person/contractor and all items will have a valid test/servicing certificate within the period

Responsible Person (Print name): _____

Job Title: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____